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AP<sup>®</sup>

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# AP<sup>®</sup> United States History

## Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary

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**Question 1: Short Answer Secondary Source****3 points****General Scoring Notes**

- Each point is earned independently.
- **Accuracy:** These scoring guidelines require that students demonstrate historically defensible content knowledge. Given the timed nature of the exam, responses may contain errors that do not detract from their overall quality, as long as the historical content used to advance the argument is accurate.
- **Clarity:** Exam responses should be considered first drafts and thus may contain grammatical errors. Those errors will not be counted against a student unless they obscure the successful demonstration of the content knowledge, skills, and practices described below.
- **Describe:** Provide the relevant characteristics of a specified topic. Description requires more than simply mentioning an isolated term.
- **Explain:** Provide information about how or why a historical development or process occurs or how or why a relationship exists.

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- (A)** Briefly describe one major difference between Billington’s and Schwantes’s historical interpretations of the American West. **1 point**

**Examples that earn this point include the following:**

- Billington emphasizes the agricultural expansion of the frontier, while Schwantes emphasizes wage labor in western lands.
- Billington emphasizes the importance of farmers in settling the frontier, while Schwantes emphasizes the importance of wageworkers in frontier expansion.
- Billington argues that farmers were central to settling the American West, and the frontier was generally closed to workingmen because they did not have the necessary skills, while Schwantes claims that wageworkers played a significant role by providing their manual labor and creating an area of transition between the growing industrial sector and western lands.
- Billington argues that most industrial workers did not have the skills to be successful in the West, while Schwantes claims that many industrial workers were employed in the region.
- Billington expresses the romanticized view of the rugged individual settling the West, while Schwantes indicates that industrial wagework in the West required lots of workers and connections with industrial centers in the East.

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- (B)** Briefly explain how one historical event or development in the period from 1848 to 1898 that is not explicitly mentioned in the excerpts could be used to support Billington’s interpretation. **1 point**

**Examples that earn this point include the following:**

- The passage of the Homestead Act encouraged many individuals to move into frontier regions to establish farms, which supports Billington’s claim that farmers and ranchers were the primary groups spurring westward expansion.
  - The requirements of the Homestead Act granted farmers 160 acres of land for free, but they needed to improve the land. Homesteaders would have to build a shelter, would have to plant trees, and would have to fence off property with barbed wire.
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This supports Billington’s claims because these tasks would not be easy for an untrained industrial worker.

- The creation of political organizations in support of farmers’ interests, like the Grange movement in the late nineteenth century, reinforces Billington’s assertion of the West being defined primarily by agricultural interests.

**Examples that earn this point might include the following, if appropriate elaboration is provided:**

- African American Exodusters
- Populist Party
- Innovative farming techniques

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- (C)** Briefly explain how one historical event or development in the period from 1848 to 1898 that is not explicitly mentioned in the excerpts could be used to support Schwantes’s interpretation. **1 point**

**Examples that earn this point include the following:**

- The miners in the California Gold Rush supports Schwantes’ claim that wage workers were prevalent in the western frontier.
- The demand for unskilled laborers in the construction of the Transcontinental Railroad reinforces Schwantes’ argument about the demand for wage laborers in the West.
- The establishment of “Boomtowns” around resource extraction like logging helps to support Schwantes’ argument that western settlements looked like factory towns in the East.
- Cowboys herded cows to towns that processed meat and shipped it away from the West, which supports Schwantes’ argument that western wage work was closely tied to supplying eastern industrial demands.
- Ranchers would have hired a lot of men to watch and guide the cattle towards their destination, usually the Railroad. These hired hands would be an example of what Schwantes terms “wagework.”
- The railroads provided the connection to markets for the western industry to succeed and form jobs for wage workers.

**Examples that earn this point might include the following, if appropriate elaboration is provided:**

- Canning industry
- Labor by Chinese workers

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**Total for question 1 3 points**

Write your answer to SHORT-ANSWER QUESTION 1 on this page only. Do NOT write outside the box. Do not skip lines.

Ⓐ Billington explains that farmers were primarily responsible for westward expansion in the United States. However, Schwantes' interpretation places wageworkers at the forefront of westward expansion.

Ⓑ After the Civil War, the Homestead Act allowed veterans to gain western farming land. This ~~was~~ caused more farmers to move west and cultivate the land, supporting Billington's interpretation.

Ⓒ The California Gold Rush caused a huge influx of people in the extractive industry. This large increase in population proves that wageworkers were pushing America's frontier, ~~and~~ thereby proving Schwantes' interpretation.

Write your answer to SHORT-ANSWER QUESTION 1 on this page only. Do NOT write outside the box. Do not skip lines.

A.) ~~One~~ One major difference between Billington and Schwantes historical interpretations of the American West was that Billington viewed it as a land full of skilled farmers whereas Schwantes viewed it as a transition into an industrial society. Evidence that supports this would be how Billington said that the strong men who performed manual labor tended to farm and Schwantes said that commodities shipped out the west & that wageworkers dominated the area. This is significant because § this is showing growth in the west.

B.) One historical event or development from 1848-1898 that could be used to support Billington's argument would be the Homestead Act. Evidence that supports this would be how this gave 160 acres of land to farmers to farm the land. This is significant because this brought more and more people to the west.

C.) One historical development to support Schwantes argument would be the Gold Rush in California.

Write your answer to SHORT-ANSWER QUESTION 1 on this page only. Do NOT write outside the box.  
Do not skip lines.

Billington and Schwantes' both have different interpretations of <sup>the</sup> American West.

Billington believes that agriculture and farming was a main success in the American West.

He believes that farming was a high technical profession and helped America to thrive. Schwantes' historical interpretation was the opposite. He believed wageworkers and manual labor was needed and expand economic growth.

B) A historical ~~event~~ <sup>development</sup> that supports Billington's interpretation would be trading because America was able to prosper well since farming progressed & lots of foods and crops were exported and imported, helping economically.

C) An increase in labor workers and migration supports Schwantes' historical interpretation that industry is what expanded American West. There were loads of factory workers helping increase the economy.

## Short Answer Question 1

**Note:** Student samples are quoted verbatim and may contain spelling and grammatical errors.

### Overview

- This question asked students to describe the difference between two excerpts from secondary source texts about the development and expansion of the United States western frontier. The first excerpt by Ray Billington argues that westward expansion was established by skilled farmers that had knowledge to manage the land that few people possessed. He also indicates that while there were many heroic figures as part of westward migration, the true hero was the farmer. The second excerpt by Carlos Schwantes claims the expansion of westward migration was influenced by wage workers who were connected to markets outside of the West.
- Students had to understand the fundamental differences between the two authors' arguments, use evidence not found in the excerpt to demonstrate Billington's argument, and then use evidence not found in the excerpt to demonstrate Schwantes's argument.
- Responses had to provide and explain relevant evidence (between 1848–1898) that supported each author's argument.
- This question focused on analyzing historical evidence and secondary sources.
- This question primarily addressed Topics 5.2, 6.2, and 6.3.

### Sample Identifier: 1A

#### Score: 3

The response to part (a) earned 1 point by briefly describing the contrast between Billington's and Schwantes's claim about farmers and wageworkers.

The response to part (b) earned 1 point by explaining how the Homestead Act encouraged farmers to move West and establish farms, which supports Billington's interpretation that skilled farmworkers were central to westward expansion.

The response to part (c) earned 1 point by explaining how the Gold Rush was a catalyst for large numbers of wageworkers to move West, supporting Schwantes's interpretation that wage workers played a significant role on the United States frontier.

### Sample Identifier: 1B

#### Score: 2

The response to part (a) earned 1 point by accurately describing the difference between Billington's and Schwantes's interpretations, writing that Billington sees the West as being settled by skilled farmers, and Schwantes sees the West as dominated by wageworkers and the production of commodities shipped out of the West.

The response to part (b) earned 1 point by successfully explaining how the Homestead Act provided land that brought farmers to the West, supporting Billington's interpretation.

### **Short Answer Question 1 (continued)**

The response to part (c) did not earn a point because while it cites the Gold Rush, it does not explain how it supports Schwantes's interpretation.

#### **Sample Identifier: 1C**

#### **Score: 1**

The response to part (a) earned 1 point by accurately describing Billington's argument that growth in the West was a result of farmers and contrasting this interpretation with Schwantes's claim that growth in the West needed wageworkers and manual labor.

The response to part (b) did not earn a point because it does not identify and explain a specific historical development to support Billington's interpretation. The response provides no explanation for farming as a catalyst for westward expansion, and the mention of trade and the export of goods through farming does not support Billington's argument.

The response to part (c) did not earn a point because it does not identify and explain a specific historical development to support Schwantes's interpretation. Although the response mentions factory workers, there is no historical context for westward expansion.