

2023

AP[®]



AP[®] United States History

Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary Set 1

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Question 2: Short Answer Primary 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timed nature of the exam, responses may contain errors that do not detract from their overall quality, as long as the historical content used to advance the argument is accurate.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.

(A) Briefly describe one point of view suggested in the excerpt. **1 point**

Examples that earn this point include the following:

- The point of view of the excerpt is that of a reformer.
- The point of view of the excerpt is that the Standard Oil Company is too big.
- The author believes that government needs to step in to regulate large corporations.

(B) Briefly explain how one specific historical development between 1865 to 1904 contributed to the development described in the excerpt. **1 point**

Examples that earn this point include the following:

- The development of trusts like Standard Oil was partly a result of the popularity of laissez-faire policies that opposed government intervention in the economy.
- The federal government supported policies that placed few restrictions on companies like Standard Oil, allowing it to become a trust.
- Companies like Standard Oil eliminated their competition to create monopolies, which made them very powerful.
- Policies that restricted the power of labor organizations contributed to companies like Standard Oil becoming more powerful.
- Westward expansion and imperialism opened new markets and resources, leading to some companies gaining a monopoly.

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

- The processes of horizontal integration
- The processes of vertical integration

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- (C)** Briefly explain how ideas such as those reflected in the excerpt resulted in one specific effect between 1904 and 1920. **1 point**

Examples that earn this point include the following:

- The concerns raised by Tarbell contributed to calls by Progressives for federal legislation that they believed would effectively regulate the economy.
- By publishing her ideas, Tarbell gained support from the public, which contributed to trust-busting by the government.
- The criticisms of reforms about the power of corporations like Standard Oil resulted in the increased power of the federal government over the economy.
- The concerns raised by Tarbell promoted expanded union membership and agitation for higher wages, shorter hours, and safer working conditions.

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

- The impact of muckraking
- Application of federal laws such as the Sherman Anti-Trust Act (1890)
- The passage of laws such as the Clayton Anti-Trust Act (1914)

Total for question 2 3 points

A. One point of view suggested in the excerpt is that of a Progressive muckraker who is against monopolies and trusts and intends to reveal the corrupt nature of a dominant monopoly, such as the Standard Oil Company.

B. Between 1865 and 1904, a laissez-faire government attitude allowed for big businesses to virtually do whatever they pleased, regardless of the law. Additionally, political machines and bosses dominated the government and used their acquired power to push pro-business policies.

C. A specific effect of the exposing of monopolies and corrupt businessmen was the enforcement of the Sherman Anti-trust Act and the creation of the Clayton Anti-trust Act under the presidency of Progressive president Theodore Roosevelt, who was often referred to as the "trust-buster".

- a.) The excerpt expresses the point of view of those who saw Rockefeller as a robber baron. The excerpt argues that the shady, backhanded business which Rockefeller participated in went against everything the law and the public stood for.
- b.) There were no anti-trust acts during the Gilded age, which led to the massive growth of monopolies. These monopolies existed for the sole gain of the owners, and cared little about their workers, or the public welfare.
- c.) This massive public outcry against the robber barons led to legislative motions to bust the trusts. The public supported politicians who promised to take action against the trusts, such as Teddy Roosevelt.

a) One point of view that is suggested in this excerpt is that the Oil industry or the Standard Oil trust was one of the most important trusts during this time. This point of view describes how lots of people and industries rely on the Standard Oil company so if people start to doubt it or there is a problem, everything will crumble.

b) One historical development could be the era of the Gilded age and vertical and horizontal integration. This development contributed to the excerpt because vertical and horizontal integration were strategies used by companies to try and gain control of the industry that they were in. This included the Oil industry as the excerpt explained how the larger class have control of businesses just like it is in horizontal and vertical integration.

c) The ideas reflected in the excerpt resulted in lots of things including the increase of large companies taking control in the US. One specific effect could be the increase of effect that trusts had during this period. This could include how the government was not regulating businesses so they were taking control of everything from the whole industry to politics. This also contributed to the creation of secret ballots so that companies wouldn't be able to see who people voted for.

Short Answer Question 2

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

Overview

- The question asked students to describe the point of view of the author and then explain a specific event or development that led to and resulted from calls for increased government regulation of trusts and big business activities of the Gilded Age. Responses were confined to 1865 to 1904 for part (b) and 1904 to 1920 for part (c).
- Responses could utilize a wide range of content knowledge, including events, documents, people, and developments related to Gilded Age business practices, muckraking journalism, and Progressive legislation during the period from 1865 to 1920.
- The question primarily addressed Topics 6.2, 6.5, 6.6, 6.10–6.13, and 7.4.

Sample: 2A

Score: 3

The response to part (a) earned 1 point by describing Ida Tarbell’s point of view as a Progressive muckraker who opposed the corrupt practices of Standard Oil, a dominant monopoly.

The response to part (b) earned 1 point by explaining how laissez-faire government policies allowed big businesses to act with little government oversight.

The response to part (c) earned 1 point by explaining how the exposure of monopolistic business practices led to the enforcement of existing antitrust laws (Sherman Antitrust Act) and the passage of new antitrust laws (Clayton Antitrust Act).

Sample: 2B

Score: 2

The response to part (a) earned 1 point by accurately describing that Tarbell viewed Rockefeller as a “robber baron” who used unlawful tactics to conduct business, going against the interests of the public.

The response to part (b) did not earn a point because it does not accurately explain a historical development that led to corrupt business practices.

The response to part (c) earned 1 point by explaining that the public supported presidents, such as Theodore Roosevelt, who worked to “bust the trusts.”

Short Answer Question 2 (continued)

Sample: 2C

Score: 1

The response to part (a) did not earn a point because it describes Tarbell's point of view on trusts as positive.

The response to part (b) earned 1 point by correctly explaining how horizontal and vertical integration strategies were used by trusts to control particular industries.

The response to part (c) did not earn a point because the reference to the government policies of laissez-faire is vague and is out of the time period.