

2022

AP[®]

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AP[®] World History: Modern

Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary

Inside:

Long Essay Question 2

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Question 2: Long Essay Question, Pre-Columbian States

6 points

General Scoring Notes

- Except where otherwise noted, each point of these rubrics is earned independently; for example, a student could earn a point for evidence without earning a point for thesis/claim.
- **Accuracy:** The components of these rubrics require that students demonstrate historically defensible content knowledge. Given the timed nature of the exam, essays may contain errors that do not detract from their overall quality, as long as the historical content used to advance the argument is accurate.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 essays 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.

In the period before circa 1500, states in the Americas used a variety of institutions, policies, and practices to consolidate and expand their scope and reach.

Develop an argument that evaluates the extent to which ONE pre-Columbian state in the Americas was successful in consolidating and centralizing its authority during this period.

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
<p>Row A Thesis/Claim (0-1 points)</p>	<p>0 points Does not meet the criteria for one point.</p>	<p>1 point Responds to the prompt with a historically defensible thesis/claim that establishes a line of reasoning.</p>
Decision Rules and Scoring Notes		
<p>Responses that do not earn this point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are not historically defensible. • Only restate or rephrase the prompt. • Do not respond to the prompt. • Do not establish a line of reasoning. • Are overgeneralized. 		<p>Responses that earn this point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a historically defensible thesis or claim about the extent to which ONE pre-Columbian state in the Americas was successful in consolidating and centralizing its authority during the period before circa 1500, with some indication of the reasoning for making that claim OR establish analytic categories of the argument. Scoring Note: Pre-1200 material can be accepted for thesis or context.
<p>Examples that do not earn this point:</p> <p>Do not focus on the topic of the prompt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“The Ottoman Empire was a highly centralized Islamic land-based empire.”</i> <p>Provide a historically defensible claim, but do not establish a line of reasoning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“European conquistadores destroyed the Inca Empire in Peru.”</i> <p>Provide a claim that is not historically defensible</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“The Mayan empire developed a very centralized bureaucratic structure for regulating trade and taxation.”</i> 		<p>Examples that earn this point:</p> <p>Establish a line of reasoning that evaluates the topic of the prompt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“As their agrarian empire expanded through conquest, the Mexica Empire centralized their bureaucracies.”</i> <p>Establish a line of reasoning that evaluates the topic of the prompt with analytic categories</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“In the pre-Columbian Americas Inca rulers developed increasingly centralized state bureaucracies, an extensive infrastructure system, and a highly trained military in order to rule their expansive empires.”</i> <p>Establish a line of reasoning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“The Aztec Empire consolidated its authority through military conquest of other peoples.”</i> (Minimally acceptable thesis/claim)
<p>Additional Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The thesis or claim must consist of one or more sentences located in one place, either in the introduction or the conclusion (which may not be limited to the first or last paragraphs). • The thesis or claim must identify a relevant development(s) in the period, although it is not required to encompass the entire period. 		

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria			
<p>Row B Contextualization (0-1 points)</p>	<p>0 points Does not meet the criteria for one point.</p>	<p>1 point Describes a broader historical context relevant to the prompt.</p>		
Decision Rules and Scoring Notes				
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 5px;"> <p>Responses that do not earn this point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide an overgeneralized statement about the time period referenced in the prompt. • Provide context that is not relevant to the prompt. • Provide a passing phrase or reference. <p>Examples that do not earn this point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Native Americans all lived in tribes.”</i> • <i>“Chinese voyagers may have made contact with the Americas before Europeans did.”</i> </td> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 5px;"> <p>Responses that earn this point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurately describe a context relevant to the consolidation and centralization of pre-Columbian states. <p>Examples of relevant context that earn this point include the following if appropriate elaboration is provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Olmec and Toltec states • Expansion of land-based empires in Americas and Eurasia (connect to global themes) • Agrarian expansion connected to political consolidation in Americas, Africa, or Eurasia • Mexica conquests and expansion • Formation of state religions or centralized priesthods in premodern states • Societies with limited state systems, such as hunting and gathering or pastoralism • City-state or decentralized political systems, such as the Maya <p>Example of acceptable contextualization:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“As societies in the Americas expanded their use of agriculture, they increased the centralization of their states in order to regulate trade and taxation.”</i> </td> </tr> </table>			<p>Responses that do not earn this point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide an overgeneralized statement about the time period referenced in the prompt. • Provide context that is not relevant to the prompt. • Provide a passing phrase or reference. <p>Examples that do not earn this point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Native Americans all lived in tribes.”</i> • <i>“Chinese voyagers may have made contact with the Americas before Europeans did.”</i> 	<p>Responses that earn this point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurately describe a context relevant to the consolidation and centralization of pre-Columbian states. <p>Examples of relevant context that earn this point include the following if appropriate elaboration is provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Olmec and Toltec states • Expansion of land-based empires in Americas and Eurasia (connect to global themes) • Agrarian expansion connected to political consolidation in Americas, Africa, or Eurasia • Mexica conquests and expansion • Formation of state religions or centralized priesthods in premodern states • Societies with limited state systems, such as hunting and gathering or pastoralism • City-state or decentralized political systems, such as the Maya <p>Example of acceptable contextualization:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“As societies in the Americas expanded their use of agriculture, they increased the centralization of their states in order to regulate trade and taxation.”</i>
<p>Responses that do not earn this point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide an overgeneralized statement about the time period referenced in the prompt. • Provide context that is not relevant to the prompt. • Provide a passing phrase or reference. <p>Examples that do not earn this point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Native Americans all lived in tribes.”</i> • <i>“Chinese voyagers may have made contact with the Americas before Europeans did.”</i> 	<p>Responses that earn this point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurately describe a context relevant to the consolidation and centralization of pre-Columbian states. <p>Examples of relevant context that earn this point include the following if appropriate elaboration is provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Olmec and Toltec states • Expansion of land-based empires in Americas and Eurasia (connect to global themes) • Agrarian expansion connected to political consolidation in Americas, Africa, or Eurasia • Mexica conquests and expansion • Formation of state religions or centralized priesthods in premodern states • Societies with limited state systems, such as hunting and gathering or pastoralism • City-state or decentralized political systems, such as the Maya <p>Example of acceptable contextualization:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“As societies in the Americas expanded their use of agriculture, they increased the centralization of their states in order to regulate trade and taxation.”</i> 			
<p>Additional Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response must relate the topic of the prompt to broader historical events, developments, or processes that occur before, during, or continue after the time frame of the question. • To earn this point, the context provided must be more than a phrase or reference. 				

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria					
Row C Evidence (0-2 points)	0 points Does not meet the criteria for one point.	1 point Provides specific examples of evidence relevant to the topic of the prompt.	2 points Supports an argument in response to the prompt using specific and relevant examples of evidence.			
Decision Rules and Scoring Notes						
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td data-bbox="327 386 747 695" style="width: 33%; vertical-align: top;"> Responses that do not earn points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify a single piece of evidence. • Provide evidence that is not relevant to the topic of the prompt. • Provide evidence that is outside the time period or region specified in the prompt. • Repeat information that is specified in the prompt. </td> <td data-bbox="747 386 1377 1162" style="width: 33%; vertical-align: top;"> Responses that earn 1 point: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Identify at least two specific historical examples</u> relevant to consolidation or centralization in pre-Columbian states. Examples of evidence that are specific and relevant include the following (two examples required): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mit'a</i> system in Inca Empire • Inca monuments in Cuzco • Mexica tribute bureaucracy • Cahokia mound builders • Maya city-states • Olmec and Toltec states • Mexica religious practices • Writing systems and recordkeeping in the Americas Example of a statement that earns 1 point for evidence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Maya city-states used religious rituals and profited from long distance trade.”</i> </td> <td data-bbox="1377 386 1950 1162" style="width: 33%; vertical-align: top;"> Responses that earn 2 points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Use at least two specific historical examples</u> to support an argument regarding how ONE pre-Columbian state in the Americas was successful in consolidating and centralizing its authority. Examples that successfully support an argument with evidence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“The Mexica developed centralized religious and tributary systems to exert control over their clients, allies, and conquered peoples. Their monuments, human sacrifices, and bureaucracies helped them rule an expansive empire.”</i> (Uses multiple, specific pieces of evidence to support the argument regarding how one pre-Columbian state in the Americas was successful in consolidating and centralizing its authority) • <i>“One way the Inca were able to rule over such a vast empire was through the use of roads such as the Carpa Nan which spanned the entirety of the Inca Empire and allowed for efficient transport, trade, and communication.”</i> (Uses multiple, specific pieces of evidence to support the argument regarding how one pre-Columbian state in the Americas was successful in consolidating and centralizing its authority) </td> </tr> </table>				Responses that do not earn points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify a single piece of evidence. • Provide evidence that is not relevant to the topic of the prompt. • Provide evidence that is outside the time period or region specified in the prompt. • Repeat information that is specified in the prompt. 	Responses that earn 1 point: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Identify at least two specific historical examples</u> relevant to consolidation or centralization in pre-Columbian states. Examples of evidence that are specific and relevant include the following (two examples required): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mit'a</i> system in Inca Empire • Inca monuments in Cuzco • Mexica tribute bureaucracy • Cahokia mound builders • Maya city-states • Olmec and Toltec states • Mexica religious practices • Writing systems and recordkeeping in the Americas Example of a statement that earns 1 point for evidence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Maya city-states used religious rituals and profited from long distance trade.”</i> 	Responses that earn 2 points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Use at least two specific historical examples</u> to support an argument regarding how ONE pre-Columbian state in the Americas was successful in consolidating and centralizing its authority. Examples that successfully support an argument with evidence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“The Mexica developed centralized religious and tributary systems to exert control over their clients, allies, and conquered peoples. Their monuments, human sacrifices, and bureaucracies helped them rule an expansive empire.”</i> (Uses multiple, specific pieces of evidence to support the argument regarding how one pre-Columbian state in the Americas was successful in consolidating and centralizing its authority) • <i>“One way the Inca were able to rule over such a vast empire was through the use of roads such as the Carpa Nan which spanned the entirety of the Inca Empire and allowed for efficient transport, trade, and communication.”</i> (Uses multiple, specific pieces of evidence to support the argument regarding how one pre-Columbian state in the Americas was successful in consolidating and centralizing its authority)
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Additional Notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typically, statements credited as evidence will be more specific than statements credited as contextualization. • If a response has a multipart argument, then it can meet the threshold of two pieces of evidence by giving one example for one part of the argument and another example for a different part of the argument, but the total number of examples must still be at least two. (For example, discussion of the development of the Aztec tribute system; the development of the Inca management of their road system) 						

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria		
<p>Row D Analysis and Reasoning (0-2 points)</p>	<p>0 points Does not meet the criteria for one point.</p>	<p>1 point Uses historical reasoning (e.g., comparison, causation, continuity, and change) to frame or structure an argument that addresses the prompt.</p>	<p>2 points Demonstrates a complex understanding of the historical development that is the focus of the prompt, using evidence to corroborate, qualify, or modify an argument that addresses the question.</p>
Decision Rules and Scoring Notes			
<p>Responses that do not earn points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May include evidence but offer no reasoning to connect the evidence to an argument. • May assert the use of historical reasoning but does not use it to frame or structure an argument. 			
<p>Responses that earn 1 point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must demonstrate the use of historical reasoning to explain how ONE pre-Columbian state in the Americas was successful in consolidating and centralizing its authority. <p>Using a historical thinking skill to frame or structure an argument could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explaining how the expansion of empires such as the Aztecs resulted in conflict between competing kingdoms and ethnic groups. • Explaining how the decentralization of Mayan city-states limited the ability of rulers to consolidate their administrations. • Explaining increased centralization led to the creation of large monuments and the collection of precious metals and jewelry. <p>Example of acceptable use of historical reasoning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Aztec rulers used warfare and tribute collection to amass wealth that allowed them to build monuments to show their authority.”</i> (Establishes a development that contributed to the centralization of pre-Columbian states in the relevant period. This statement would need to be followed up with at least minimal discussion of the development introduced.) <p>Responses that earn 2 points:</p> <p>May demonstrate a complex understanding in a variety of ways, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explaining the nuance of an issue by analyzing multiple variables. • Explaining both similarity and difference, or explaining both continuity and change, or explaining multiple causes, or explaining both causes and effects. • Explaining relevant and insightful connections within and across periods. • Confirming the validity of an argument by corroborating multiple perspectives across themes. • Qualifying or modifying an argument by considering diverse or alternative views or evidence. <p>Demonstrating complex understanding might include any of the following, if appropriate elaboration is provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explaining the nuance of an issue by showing that the Mayan city states were prevented from consolidating a large empire through a combination of environmental challenges such as major droughts as well as competition from neighboring states. (Explains nuance, considers both causes and effects, and qualifies an argument) • Explaining relevant and insightful connections across time and space, such as demonstrating how the Incan and Aztec empire both expanded their states through a combination of conquest and political alliances, such as the alliance between major Aztec cities. (Explains relevant and insightful connections) • Qualifying an argument by demonstrating that while the mound building culture of the Mississippi River Valley built numerous monuments, there is limited evidence demonstrating centralized administration. (Qualifies an argument) • Corroborating an argument by demonstrating how the Iroquois confederation’s formation and expansion was a direct response to European colonial expansion into Canada and the Ohio River Valley. (Corroborates an argument, considers both causes and effects) 			
<p>Additional Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This demonstration of complex understanding must be part of the argument, not merely a phrase or reference. 			

Important: Completely fill in the circle that corresponds to the question you are answering on this page.

Mandatory
Question 1



Question 2



Choose one

Question 3



Question 4



Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

In the period before circa 1500, Afro-Eurasia was home to growing trade networks and maritime technology. This technology eventually led to Spanish State-Sponsored exploration across the Atlantic, which led to the 'discovery' of the Americas. They were surprised at what they found, because there were pre-existing states with different religions, arts, and governments than their own. The Incas, for example, were successful to a great extent in consolidating and centralizing ~~the~~ ^{their} authority during this period by the creation of infrastructure that connected their empire, and by ~~splitting their empire into sections so it could more easily be governed~~ using religion to justify rule.

In the period circa 1500, pre-Columbian states had been ~~home to~~ ^{home to} huge ~~innovations~~ ^{innovations}, such as the Chinampas of the Aztec Empire, ~~or~~ or astronomical discovery in the Mayans. However, from a political standpoint the Incas were extremely impressive as they consolidated their empire and were able to rule over a vast expanse of land. One way they did this was through the usage of the Corpa Nari, which spanned the entirety of the Incan empire and allowed for more efficient transport, trade, and communication. By this state-sponsored infrastructure, the Incas developed a method for ~~connecting~~ connecting the whole empire, and boosting the economy, ~~the~~ helping consolidate and centralizing their authority.

~~Furthermore, the Incas split their empire into different sections so that they could be governed more efficiently.~~

Page 6

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Important: Completely fill in the circle that corresponds to the question you are answering on this page.

Mandatory
Question 1

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Choose one
Question 3

Question 4

Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

A continuity across multiple empires in this time period is using religion as a justification to rule, such as the mandate of heaven in China and the Divine Right of Kings in Britain. We see this in the Incan Empire as well, as rulers are said to be related to the Great Sun. Rulers were something not just to be respected, but admired and a little feared as well. Religion in Latin American pre-Columbian states almost always had a distinction for the sun, or a special reservation for that particular deity. Also, we see human sacrifice for religious reasons occur. ~~The Aztecs were~~ While the Incas didn't partake in this activity as much as the Aztecs, (who made ^{one of} the primary tributaries of their tributary system people) the Incas still occasionally partook in it.

After

States in the pre-Columbian period were ~~the~~ highly accomplished, reflected in the ~~that~~ consolidation and centralization of authority in the Incas facilitated by religion as a justification to rule, as well as advanced infrastructure to connect the empire. However, perhaps it is less fit to say that the Incas were most successful in centralizing authority, and more fit to say that they were effective at governing over the entirety of the territory, even facilitating the invention of the quipu, a specialized method recording quantitative data.

~~However~~ Unfortunately, & put this into context, while the Incas flourished in their time, the arrival of the Europeans brought small-pox which would decimate their population and ultimately lead to the fall of the Incan Empire and many other native peoples as well. However, pre-Columbian America was home to a vast expanse of states with a vast expanse of

Page 7

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Important: Completely fill in the circle that corresponds to the question you are answering on this page.

Mandatory
Question 1

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Choose one
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Question 4

Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

architecture or governance such as the Cahokia mound in the Mississippi Valley, Pueblo architecture and the skills of artists, or the Aztec's extremely sophisticated systems. The Pre-Columbian states had rich histories and cultures before the Spaniards and other Europeans arrived.

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0044533



Important: Completely fill in the circle that corresponds to the question you are answering on this page.

Mandatory
Question 1



Question 2



Choose one

Question 3



Question 4



Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

In the period before circa 1500, states in the Americas used many rituals, infrastructure, and practices to expand their influence. There were many native populations in South America that developed into large, influential empires such as the Mayans and the Incans. However, the Aztec empire was the strongest pre-Columbian state in the Americas, through use of human sacrifices, large, impressive temples, and a consolidation of power used to expand their reach throughout South America before circa 1500.

The Aztecs had many rituals they used in day to day life to appease their gods, but the most notable, were the human sacrifices. Once they had conquered a local tribe, they would often take prisoners of war and use them in these sacrifices. On a temple built for the gods, they would cut off the sacrifice's heads and kick their body down the steps. They would do ^{often} ~~many~~ more than 50 per day. This display was not only showing a deep, powerful connection to the gods, but it was an unnering sight to any invaders from other tribes. The Aztecs did this mostly to benefit their gods, but they often used

Page 5

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0001611



Important: Completely fill in the circle that corresponds to the question you are answering on this page.

Mandatory
Question 1



Question 2



Choose one
Question 3



Question 4



Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

the heads as a warning after.

The infrastructure within the Aztec Empire also showed their strength and power. With towers and temples high enough to reach their gods, the power of the Aztecs would be known to even the European conquistadors who would come much later. Showing how close they were to the gods also struck a fear into invader's hearts: that if they dared to invade the Aztec empire, their gods would smite those who tried. In those temples, there would also be smaller sacrifices to individual gods for a good harvest or luck during a fight.

Aztecs consolidated their rule under one emperor. This emperor was given a message from the gods that they had been chosen to lead the Aztecs to greatness. The citizens of the Aztec Empire both feared and respected the emperor, for if the gods had chosen him then he must be worthy. This was also a fear for challengers to the Aztec Empire. A ruler selected by the gods would no doubt be a powerful foe and it often deterred many other peoples from trying to invade or fight the Aztecs.

Page 6

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Important: Completely fill in the circle that corresponds to the question you are answering on this page.

Mandatory
Question 1

Question 2

Choose one
Question 3

Question 4

Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

In conclusion, there were many empires and states pre-Columbus that ~~had~~ ^{had} a large ~~foundable~~ influence on South America. However, the empire with the largest influence ~~was~~ before circa 1500 was the Aztec Empire through their rituals, ~~culture~~ artistic temples, and their wealth and power brought on by the emperor chosen by the gods.

Page 7

Use a pen with black or dark blue ink only. Do NOT write your name. Do NOT write outside the box.

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Mandatory
Question 1

Question 2

Choose one
Question 3

Question 4

Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

One pre-Columbian state in the Americas that was successful in consolidating and centralizing its ~~authority~~ authority before circa 1500 was the Incas. They were successful in consolidating and centralizing their authority through military power. If you did not abide to their demands or rules, they would attack your village/city, destroying it, slaughtering your people, or turning ~~them~~ them into slaves used for either manual labor, or a sacrificial ritual to the gods. They centralized their power through City states, which was a group of big cities covered an area, and each city had a mini ruler in place that would listen to/take orders from the King whom lived in their capital city.

Page 3

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0144992



Question 2—Long Essay Question 2

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

Overview

Responses to the Long Essay Question 2 (LEQ 2) asked students to evaluate the extent to which one pre-Columbian state in the Americas was successful in consolidating its authority during the period before 1500. Students were expected to present a historically defensible thesis, describe a historical context relevant to the prompt, use at least two specific examples of evidence relevant to the topic of the prompt, use that evidence to support an argument in response to the prompt, use historical reasoning skills to frame or structure their argument, and demonstrate a complex understanding of the historical development that is the focus of the prompt. Successful responses that compared pre-Columbian states' consolidation explained the reason for successful or unsuccessful consolidation, or discussed how consolidation continued and ended in the period.

Sample: 2A

Thesis: 1

Contextualization: 1

Evidence: 2

Analysis and Reasoning: 2

Total Score: 6

A. Thesis/Claim (0–1 points): 1

The response earned 1 point for thesis/claim in the last sentence of the introductory paragraph: “The Incas, for example, were successful to a great extent in consolidating and centralizing their authority during this period by the creation of infrastructure that connected their empire, and by using religion to justify rule.”

B. Contextualization (0–1 points): 1

The response earned 1 point for contextualization in the introductory paragraph. The response explains how “growing trade networks and maritime technology” led to “Spanish state-sponsored exploration across the Atlantic.”

C. Evidence (0–2 points): 2

The response earned 2 points for evidence by providing several specific pieces of evidence about the Inca Empire and connecting them to arguments concerning Inca governance. In the second paragraph the response argues that the Carpa Nan (road network) was an example of “state sponsored infrastructure” that Inca rulers used in “boosting the economy, helping consolidate and centralizing their authority.” In the third paragraph the response argues that Inca rulers used religion “as a justification to rule,” “as rulers are said to be related to the Great Sun”). A third piece of evidence describing the use of human sacrifice (in the Aztec and Inca Empires) for religious reasons is also included in the third paragraph. Finally, in the fourth paragraph the response argues that “quipu, a specialized method recording quantitative data” enabled the Inca to be “affective at governing over the entirety of the territory.

Question 2—Long Essay Question (continued)

D. Analysis and Reasoning (0–2 points): 2

Using Historical Reasoning

The response earned 1 point for historical reasoning. The response explains how the use of religion as a justification to rule was a continuity in the Americas.

Demonstrating Complex Understanding

The response earned 1 point for complexity because it includes complex comparative argumentation and extensive use of evidence to corroborate the arguments. The response includes numerous additional (non-Inca) examples as comparison: the Mandate of Heaven, the Divine Rights of Kings, Cahokia and Pueblo culture, Aztec tribute system, Aztec chinampas, and Maya astronomical discoveries.

Sample: 2B

Thesis: 1

Contextualization: 0

Evidence: 2

Analysis and Reasoning: 1

Total Score: 4

A. Thesis/Claim (0–1 points): 1

The response earned 1 point for thesis/claim in the last sentence of the introductory paragraph with an acceptable claim that establishes a line of reasoning: “However, the Aztec empire was the strongest pre-Columbian state in the Americas, through us of human sacrifices, large, impressive temples, and a consolidation of power used to expand their reach throughout South America before circa 1500.” The placement of the Aztec Empire in South America is factually incorrect but does not disqualify the response from earning the thesis point.

B. Contextualization (0–1 points): 0

The response did not earn the point for contextualization. The first two sentences of the introductory paragraph attempt placing pre-Columbian states in a broader context, but they are too vague and overgeneralized.”

C. Evidence (0–2 points): 2

The response earned 2 points for evidence. Each of the three body paragraphs is organized around a distinct piece of evidence (human sacrifice, monumental temples, and the divine claims of the ruler) and connects that piece of evidence to an argument about the success of the Aztec Empire in consolidating and expanding its rule.

D. Analysis and Reasoning (0–2 points): 1

The response earned 1 point for historical reasoning. The response successfully explains the causal links between Aztec practices, such as human sacrifice, and religious beliefs, such as the belief that rulers were divinely chosen, and the success of the Aztec empire in consolidating its rule and expanding into new territories.

Question 2—Long Essay Question 2 (continued)

The response did not earn the point for complexity. The response does not expand beyond the core evidence of Aztec governance and religious practices and does not show a complex understanding either by exploring nuance or by comparisons between the Aztec Empire and other pre-Columbian states.

Sample: 2C

Thesis: 0

Contextualization: 0

Evidence: 1

Analysis and Reasoning: 0

Total Score: 1

A. Thesis/Claim (0–1 points): 0

The response did not earn the point for thesis/claim. The response attempts a thesis in the beginning of the essay: “One pre-Columbian state in the Americas that was successful in consolidating and centralizing their power before circa 1500 was the Myans. They were successful in consolidating and centralizing their authority through military power.” While this does establish a line of reasoning, it is not a historically defensible claim because the Maya were a society of decentralized city-states. Further in the paragraph, the response states that Maya “centralized their power through city states,” where “each city had a mini ruler in place that would listen / take orders from the king whom lived in their capital city.” While this description is reminiscent of the tributary arrangements between major and minor Maya city states, it again suggests that the response is arguing, inaccurately, that the Maya were organized in a politically centralized manner.

B. Contextualization (0–1 points): 0

The response did not earn the point for contextualization. The response did not attempt to describe a broader historical development relevant to the prompt.

C. Evidence (0–2 points): 1

While the information presented in the paragraph was not enough to earn the thesis point, some of it was sufficiently accurate to earn 1 point for evidence. Examples include the mention of Maya use of war captives in human sacrifices to the gods, the mention of “city states,” and the reference to local “mini ruler(s)” taking their orders from a higher ranking “king.”

D. Analysis and Reasoning (0–2 points): 0

The response did not earn the point for historical reasoning. The response does not accurately describe the causal connections between Maya political or religious practices and state consolidation or expansion.

The response did not earn the point for complexity. There is no attempt to demonstrate a complex understanding of how the Maya consolidated or expanded their power.