

Short-Answer Question 3

“As to the history of the revolution, my ideas may be peculiar, perhaps singular. What do we mean by the revolution? The war? That was no part of the revolution; it was only an effect and consequence of it. The revolution was in the minds of the people, and this was effected from 1760 to 1775, in the course of fifteen years, before a drop of blood was shed at Lexington.”

Former president John Adams to former president Thomas Jefferson,
August 1815

“There is nothing more common than to confound the terms of the American Revolution with those of the late American war. The American war is over; but this is far from being the case with the American Revolution. On the contrary, nothing but the first act of the great drama is closed. It remains yet to establish and perfect our new forms of government; and to prepare the principles, morals, and manners of our citizens, for these forms of government, after they are established and brought to perfection.”

Benjamin Rush, signer of the Declaration of Independence and delegate
to the Continental Congress, January 1787

3. Using the excerpts, answer (a), (b), and (c).
- Briefly describe ONE significant difference between Adams’ understanding and Rush’s understanding of the American Revolution.
 - Briefly explain how ONE specific historical event or development from the period between 1760 and 1800 could be used to support Adams’ interpretation.
 - Briefly explain how ONE specific historical event or development from the period between 1760 and 1800 could be used to support Rush’s interpretation.

Curriculum Framework Alignment and Scoring Guidelines

Learning Objectives	Historical Thinking Skills	Key Concepts
NAT 1.0 Explain how ideas about democracy, freedom, and individualism found expression in the development of cultural values, political institutions, and American identity.	Interpretation	3.2 II

AP[®] UNITED STATES HISTORY 2015 SCORING GUIDELINES

Short Answer Question 3

0–3 points

Score 3

Response accomplishes **all three** tasks set by the question.

Score 2

Response accomplishes **two** of the tasks set by the question.

Score 1

Response accomplishes **one** of the tasks set by the question.

Score 0

Response accomplishes **none** of the tasks set by the question.

Score —

Is completely blank.

SCORING NOTES

a) Describes ONE significant difference between Adams' understanding and Rush's understanding of the American Revolution.

- Adams thought that the revolutionary spirit that led to fighting was the revolution; out of a growing resistance to British regulation, the emergence of an American identity completed the revolution.
- Rush argued that the revolution was changing political systems and seeing if this new form of government could work; the revolution came after fighting ended.

b) Explains how ONE specific historical event or development from the period between 1760 and 1800 could be used to support Adams' interpretation.

- Developments: Growing separateness from Britain ("American mind," end of "salutary neglect")
- Stamp Act, Stamp Act Congress, and public demonstrations, including Sons of Liberty
- Movement to boycott British goods
- Boston Tea Party and Intolerable Acts
- *Common Sense* by Thomas Paine
- Declaration of Independence — list of grievances from 1760-1775

c) Explains how ONE specific historical event or development from the period between 1760 and 1800 could be used to support Rush's interpretation.

- Developments: republican form of government, American identity, nationalism
- Declaration of Independence — statement of "principles, morals" as basis of government
- Articles of Confederation
- Slavery as unresolved within the time period (Northwest Ordinance)
- Constitutional Convention and United States Constitution
- Bill of Rights
- Election of Washington's presidency, e.g., cabinet selection, Jay's Treaty
- Election of 1800 and the development of the first party system

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Student Responses

Sample SA-3A

Use a blue or black pen only for the short-answer questions. Do NOT write your name. Do NOT write outside the box.

QUESTION 3

Adams' understanding of the American Revolution, as explained in 1815, is that the Revolution occurred before the actual war. However, in contrast, Benjamin Rush's view implies that the Revolution, even though the war had ended, was far from over.

Adams suggests that the colonists had already mentally rebelled against the monarchy before actual bloodshed. Events such as The Boston Tea Party support his claim. After England began taxing the colonists heavily on goods such as paper, sugar, and tea, the colonists began to despise the monarchy and mentally rebel. In turn, the Boston Tea Party occurred when colonists started a rebellion and threw tea off of British ships into the harbor. Evidently, they were already in a mental revolution.

However, Rush's interpretation can be supported as well. Rush details how the nation had "yet to establish and perfect [its] new forms of government," which was apparent through the failure of the Articles of Confederation after the Revolution (Rush 1787). The United States was still coming together as a nation and had yet to create a stable government and "law of the land," therefore the Revolution was not quite over.

Sample SA-3B

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QUESTION 3

The American Revolution is thought of as happening at many different times. John Adams believes that the American Revolution was ~~over~~ ^{over} before the war. He believes the war was just an effect and consequence of the Revolution. However, Benjamin Rush believes that the war was only the "first act of a great drama" and that the revolution didn't even begin until the war shots were fired at Lexington. The revolution could be thought of as over before the war started considering we issued the Declaration of Independence before the battle at Lexington and ~~the~~ citizens started to form an American identity. ~~Now~~ On the other hand the war could have just been the ~~beginning~~ ^{beginning} of the revolution because after America had beaten Britain the British didn't just leave the ~~New world~~ Americas. They still had their troops stationed in America after the war. Britain had lost control ~~of~~ over America but that doesn't mean that they wouldn't try to regain control. Therefore, the ~~real~~ revolution wouldn't be over until Britain no longer occupied America.

Sample SA-3C

Use a blue or black pen only for the short-answer questions. Do NOT write your name. Do NOT write outside the box.

QUESTION 3

a) Rush is saying that the Revolutionary war is long from over while ~~Adams~~ Adams is saying that there was a consequence from it.

b) The civil war was a consequence of the Revolutionary war because we couldn't effectively figure out whether slaves should be free or not. Maybe if our government would have been stronger & more established ~~there~~ then we ~~at~~ could have resolved the slavery issue.

c) After the revolutionary war our government wasn't in the best shape. It had to establish & perfect our new forms of government. So we formed the Constitution, Bill of rights, & many other things to try & perfect our government the best we could.

Scores and Commentary

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

Overview

Short-answer question 3 asks students to contrast competing interpretations of the causes and significance of the American Revolution, written by two of the Revolution's participants: John Adams and Benjamin Rush.

Sample SA-3A

Score: 3

- a. 1 point: This response earns the point by explaining that Adams and Rush differed over the nature of the Revolution. Although it is limited in its discussion, the response correctly explains the two authors as differing over when the Revolution can be said to have occurred.
- b. 1 point: This response earns the point by explaining how evidence, in this case the Boston Tea Party, can be used to support Adams's position. The student's statement that the Boston Tea Party was evidence that "the colonists began to despise the monarchy and mentally rebel" explains the connection between the evidence and Adams's position.
- c. 1 point: This response earns the point by explaining how the failure of the Articles of Confederation can be used to support Rush's interpretation that the nation had "yet to establish and perfect [its] new forms of government."

Sample SA-3B

Score: 2

- a. 1 point: This response earns the point for correctly explaining the different interpretations of the Revolution held by Adams and Rush, locating the difference in when the Revolution can be said to have occurred.
- b. 1 point: Although this response is not well structured, it earns the point for explaining how the Declaration of Independence and development of "American identity" both occurred before the battle at Lexington and therefore could be used to support Adams's position.
- c. 0 points: This response does not earn a point for supporting Rush's position with evidence, as the example of British troops does not support Rush's case. This response seems to confuse the Revolution with the war, which is precisely the kind of confusion Rush's interpretation is refuting.

Sample SA-3C

Score: 1

- a. 0 points: This response does not provide enough information about Adams's and Rush's interpretations to earn the point for explaining the difference between them. To earn the point, the response needed to go beyond a restatement of the quote and explain why the authors held those views.

- b. 0 points: This response earns no point for supporting Adams's view of the Revolution because the Civil War is outside of the time period, and it is not clear how it could be used to support Adams's viewpoint.
- c. 1 point: This response earns the point by explaining that the Constitution and Bill of Rights are evidence that United States had to “perfect our new form of government,” supporting Rush’s contention that the Revolution was an ongoing, evolving process.