
AP[®] World History

Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary

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AP[®] WORLD HISTORY

2019 SCORING GUIDELINES

Question 3 — Long Essay Question

“In the period 600 to 1450 C.E., trade networks expanded and economic productive capacity increased. Technological innovations and transfers often contributed to this process.

Develop an argument that evaluates the extent to which technological innovations or transfers led to increased economic growth in this period.”

Maximum Possible Points: 6

Scoring Note: Student responses may discuss advances in agricultural, commercial, or financial practices under the rubric of “technological innovations.”

Points	Rubric	Notes
A: Thesis/Claim (0–1)	<p>Thesis/Claim: Responds to the prompt with a historically defensible thesis/claim that establishes a line of reasoning. (1 point)</p> <p><i>To earn this point, the thesis must make a claim that responds to the prompt, rather than merely restating or rephrasing the prompt. The thesis must consist of one or more sentences located in one place, either in the introduction or the conclusion.</i></p>	<p>The thesis statement must make a historically defensible claim about the extent to which technological innovations or transfers led to increased economic growth in the period 600 to 1450 C.E., with some indication of the reasoning for making that claim.</p> <p><i>The thesis is <u>not</u> required to encompass the entire period, but it must identify a relevant development or developments in the period.</i></p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “In the period 600–1450 C.E., the Abbasid Caliphs promotion of science and trade led economic growth by expanding mathematical and geographic knowledge as well as by encouraging the development of new economic practices such as the use of camels and caravans.” (<i>Responds to the prompt with an evaluative claim that establishes a line of reasoning.</i>) • “Trade in particular grew in the period because of the invention of tools such as the compass.” (<i>Responds to the prompt with a minimally acceptable claim that establishes a line of reasoning.</i>)
B: Contextualization (0–1)	<p>Contextualization: Describes a broader historical context relevant to the prompt. (1 point)</p> <p><i>To earn this point, 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. This point is not awarded for merely a phrase or a reference.</i></p>	<p>To earn this point, the essay must accurately describe a context relevant to technological innovations/transfers and increased economic growth in the period circa 600 to 1450 C.E.</p> <p><i>Example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “In Eurasia, the period 600 to 1450 was one of greatly increased connections between regions, caused in large part by the spread of religions such as Islam and Buddhism.” (<i>Relates broader events and developments to the topic.</i>)

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Question 3 — Long Essay Question (continued)

C: Evidence (0–2)	<p>Evidence: Provides specific examples of evidence relevant to the topic of the prompt. (1 point)</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Supports an Argument: Supports an argument in response to the prompt using specific and relevant examples of evidence. (2 points)</p>	<p><i>To earn the first point, the response must identify at least two specific historical examples relevant to whether technological innovations or transfers led to increased economic growth in the period 600 to 1450 C.E.</i></p> <p><i>Scoring note: Count new commercial practices as technologies; count camels, caravans, and caravansarais as technologies.</i></p> <p><i>Example (acceptable):</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “One innovation that encouraged economic growth during this period was the practice of merchants carrying letters of credit instead of cash.” (<i>Counts toward earning the point because there is a specific historical example relevant to the prompt.</i>) <p><i>Example (unacceptable):</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “During the period 600-1450 C.E., economic growth occurred because of the expansion of trade networks and the rise in economic productive capacity.” (<i>Does not count toward earning the point because there is no specific information beyond what is provided in the introductory statement.</i>) <p>OR</p> <p><i>To earn the second point, the response must <u>use at least two specific historical examples to support an argument</u> in response to the prompt.</i></p> <p><i>If a response has a multipart argument (e.g., technological innovations treated separately from technological transfers), then the response can earn the second evidence point by using only one specific historical example for <u>each</u> part of the multipart argument (but the total number of examples used must still be at least two).</i></p> <p><i>Evidence used to support an argument might include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovations in navigational technology (compass, astrolabe, lateen sail, stern-post rudder, etc.) helped significantly increase the volume and extent of trade in the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean. • New crops (such as Champa rice in China) greatly boosted agricultural productivity in some regions and led to considerable economic growth.
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Question 3 — Long Essay Question (continued)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New agricultural technologies and innovations, (such as the three-field system, the heavy plow, the horse collar, windmills, etc.) boosted economic productivity, which permitted more people to engage in commercial activities and move to urban areas. • Scientific and technological exchanges between regions (such as the transfer of Indian numbers to the Abbasid Empire and subsequently to Europe, the transfers Muslim and Greco-Roman science to Europe via Muslim al-Andalus, or the transfer of Chinese technologies via the Mongol Empires) led to advances in mathematics, engineering, and manufacturing, which in turn increased economic growth. • Some innovative state practices, such as the Chinese use of paper money or the Mongol post system, contributed to economic growth.
D: Analysis and Reasoning (0-2)	<p>Historical Reasoning: Uses historical reasoning (e.g., comparison, causation, continuity and change over time) to frame or structure an argument that addresses the prompt. (1 point)</p> <p><i>To earn the first point, the response must demonstrate the use of historical reasoning to frame or structure an argument about the extent to which technological innovations or transfers led to increased economic growth in the period from 600 to 1450 C.E.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p>Complexity: Demonstrates a complex understanding of the historical development that is the focus of prompt, using evidence to corroborate, qualify, or modify an argument that addresses the prompt. (2 points)</p> <p><i>To earn the second point, the response must demonstrate a complex understanding of the extent to which technological innovations or transfers led to increased economic growth in the period from 600 to 1450 C.E.</i></p>	<p><i>Essays must use historical reasoning to explain the extent to which technological innovations or transfers led to increased economic growth in the period from 600 to 1450 C.E.</i></p> <p><i>Examples of using historical reasoning might include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explaining how technological innovations or transfers led directly to economic growth by making production of and/or trade in goods faster, cheaper, or more efficient • Explaining how technological innovations or transfers led indirectly to economic growth by increasing demand for goods, freeing up labor supply, or concentrating producers and consumers in cities <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p><i>Demonstrating complex understanding might include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explaining the nuance of an issue by analyzing multiple variables or by considering diverse or alternative perspectives or evidence, such as <u>constructing an argument</u> that discusses technology as one factor affecting economic growth in that period (among other factors such as political change, spread of religions, or environmental processes)

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Question 3 — Long Essay Question (continued)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Qualifying or modifying the main argument of the essay to demonstrate awareness of historical complexity, such as <u>constructing an argument</u> that explains how technological innovations of transfers, which usually lead to increased economic growth, may, in some cases or circumstances, have negative or unintended economic consequences (for example, soil erosion and salinization in heavily cultivated areas of the Mediterranean or the Middle East or the inflationary effects of paper money in Song and Yuan China)• Explaining relevant and insightful connections across time and space, such as <u>explaining why</u> the economic effects of technological innovations and transfers during the period 600–1450 C.E. were smaller and more limited in scope compared to the economic effects of technological innovations and transfers in the period after 1450 C.E. <p><i>This demonstration of complex understanding must be part of the argument, not merely a phrase or reference.</i></p>
If response is completely blank, enter - - for all four score categories: A, B, C, and D.		

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Question 3 — Long Essay Question (continued)

Scoring Notes

Introductory 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.

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

A. Thesis/Claim (0–1 point)

Responses earn 1 point by responding to the prompt with a historically defensible thesis that establishes a line of reasoning about the topic. To earn this point, the thesis must make a claim that responds to the prompt rather than simply restating or rephrasing the prompt. The thesis must suggest at least one main line of argument development or establish the analytic categories of the argument.

The thesis must consist of one or more sentences located in one place, either in the introduction or the conclusion.

The thesis must take a position on the extent to which technological innovations or transfers led to increased economic growth in the period from 600 to 1450 C.E.

The thesis does not need to encompass the entire period, but it must identify a relevant development or developments in the period.

Scoring Note: Student responses may discuss advances in agricultural, commercial, or financial practices under the rubric of “technological innovations.”

Examples of acceptable theses (hypothetical):

- “In the period 600-1450 C.E., the Abbasid Caliphs promotion of science and trade led economic growth by expanding mathematical and geographic knowledge as well as by encouraging the development of new economic practices such as the use of camels and caravans.” (*Responds to the prompt with an evaluative claim that establishes a line of reasoning.*)
- “In Europe, new commercial and financial practices developed during the late Middle Ages that greatly expanded the economy and prosperity some regions such as Renaissance Italy or the cities of the Hanseatic League” (*Responds to the prompt with an evaluative claim that establishes a line of reasoning.*)
- “Trade in particular grew in the period because of the invention of tools such as the compass.” (*Responds to the prompt with a minimally acceptable claim that establishes a line of reasoning.*)

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Question 3 — Long Essay Question (continued)

Examples of unacceptable theses (hypothetical):

- “Technological advances and transfers often contributed to increased economic growth in the period between 600 and 1450 C.E.” (*Offers a historically defensible claim, but it includes no additional information beyond what is provided in the introductory statement and no indication of a line of reasoning.*)
- “Technological innovations in the period 600-1450 C.E. completely transformed the agricultural economies of the previous period into commercial economies.” (*Not a historically defensible claim.*)
- “Between 600 and 1450 C.E., many important technologies spread from one Eurasian region to another via the Silk Roads.” (*Potentially relevant to the prompt, but it does not reference a specific technology or an effect on economic growth.*)
- “During this period, great changes occurred because of the invention of the compass.” (*Potentially relevant but has no clear link to trade or economic growth.*)

B. Contextualization (0–1 points)

Responses earn 1 point by describing a broader historical context relevant to the prompt. To earn this point, the response must relate the topic of the prompt to broader historical events, developments, or processes that occurred before, during, or continued after the time frame from 600 to 1450 C.E. This point is not awarded for merely a phrase or a reference.

To earn the point, the essay must accurately describe a context relevant to technological innovations/transfers and increased economic growth in the period circa 600 to 1450 C.E.

Examples of acceptable contextualization (hypothetical):

- “The Crusades, for example, despite being a religious and political conflict, also made it possible for scientific knowledge and new technologies to be exchanged between the Muslim world of the eastern Mediterranean and the Christian world of western Europe.” (*Relates broader events and developments to the topic.*)
- “In Eurasia, the period 600 to 1450 was one of greatly increased connections between regions, caused in large part by the spread of religions.” (*Relates broader events and developments to the topic.*)

Examples of unacceptable contextualization (hypothetical):

- “The Crusades were one of the most significant historical developments during this period.” (*Potentially relevant, but it is merely a reference and does not meet the requirement of “describe,” nor does it provide a link to technology or economic growth.*)
- “In Mesoamerica, the Maya developed highly sophisticated mathematical and astronomical knowledge to use in performing their religious ceremonies.” (*Potentially relevant but has no clear link to technology or economic growth.*)

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Question 3 — Long Essay Question (continued)

C. Evidence (0–2 points)

Evidence

Responses earn 1 point by providing at least two specific examples of evidence relevant to the **topic** of the prompt. Responses can earn this point without earning the point for a thesis statement. To earn this point, the response must identify specific historical examples of evidence relevant to the topic of whether technological innovations or transfers led to increased economic growth in the period circa 600 to 1450 C.E. These examples of evidence must be different from the information used to earn the point for contextualization.

Typically, statements credited as **contextualization** will be more general statements that place an argument or a significant portion of it in a broader context. Statements credited as **evidence** will typically be more specific information.

Example of a statement that counts toward earning 1 point for evidence (hypothetical):

- “One innovation that encouraged economic growth during this period was the practice of merchants carrying letters of credit instead of cash.” *(Counts toward earning the point because there is a specific historical example relevant to the prompt.)*

Example of a statement that does not count toward earning 1 point for evidence (hypothetical):

- “During the period 600-1450 C.E., economic growth occurred because of the expansion of trade networks and the rise in economic productive capacity.” *(Does not count toward earning the point because there is no specific information beyond what is provided in the introductory statement.)*

OR

Supports an Argument

Responses earn 2 points if they support an **argument** in response to the prompt using specific and relevant examples of evidence. To earn the second point, the response must use specific historical evidence to support an argument regarding the extent to which technological innovations or transfers led to increased economic growth in the period from 600 to 1450 C.E.

Example of successfully supporting an argument with evidence (hypothetical):

- “Maritime trade was one area of increased economic growth that greatly benefitted from technological innovations and transfers in this period. In both the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean economic growth received a boost from the increased volume of trade resulting from the expanded use of astrolabes, compasses, lateen sails (originally developed in the *dhow*s of the Indian Ocean), stern-post rudders, and overall sturdier ship designs.” *(Uses multiple, specific pieces of evidence in accurate support of an argument that addresses the prompt.)*

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Question 3 — Long Essay Question (continued)

D. Analysis and Reasoning (0–2 points)

Historical Reasoning

Responses earn 1 point by using a historical reasoning skill to frame or structure an argument about the extent to which technological innovations or transfers led to increased economic growth in the period from 600 to 1450 C.E. To earn this point, the response must demonstrate the use of historical reasoning to frame or structure an argument, although the reasoning might be uneven, imbalanced, or inconsistent.

Examples of using historical reasoning might include:

- Explaining how technological innovations or transfers led directly to economic growth by making production of and/or trade in goods faster, cheaper, or more efficient
- Explaining how technological innovations or transfers led indirectly to economic growth by increasing demand for goods, freeing up labor supply, or concentrating producers and consumers in cities

OR

Complexity

Responses earn 2 points by demonstrating a complex understanding of the extent to which technological innovations or transfers led to increased economic growth in the period from 600 to 1450 C.E. by using evidence to corroborate, qualify, or modify an argument that addresses the question.

Demonstrating a complex understanding might include:

- Explaining the nuance of an issue by analyzing multiple variables or by considering diverse or alternative perspectives or evidence, such as constructing an argument that discusses technology as one factor affecting economic growth in that period (among other factors such as political change, spread of religions, or environmental processes)
- Qualifying or modifying the main argument of the essay to demonstrate awareness of historical complexity, such as constructing an argument that explains how technological innovations or transfers, which usually lead to increased economic growth, may, in some cases or circumstances, have negative or unintended economic consequences (for example, soil erosion and salinization in heavily cultivated areas of the Mediterranean or the Middle East, or the inflationary effects of paper money in Song and Yuan China)
- Explaining relevant and insightful connections across time and space, such as explaining why the economic effects of technological innovations and transfers during the period 600-1450 C.E. were smaller and more limited in scope compared to the economic effects of technological innovations and transfers in the period after 1450 C.E.

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Mandatory 1	Circle one 2 or 3 or 4
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From 600-1400 CE, this period began with the fall of classical civilizations such as Rome, Han China and the Gupta dynasty. While these main civilizations collapse, the trade networks between them, for the most part stayed. While some exchanges would not be invigorated until after this time period, as manorialism led to much of Western Europe being isolated from Afro-Eurasian trade, new technological innovations and transfers would lead to increased trade and stimulate economic growth. In this post-classical period, the invention of dhows with lateen sails and the proliferation of ^{banking and credit systems.} ~~dhows~~ caused economic growth across Eurasia, with the rise of Mansa Musa as a notable effect of this economic growth.

First, dhows with lateen sails invigorated Arabic trade in the Indian Ocean by providing the technological leap necessary to reach new ports of trade. Economic growth came with dhows because their sails allowed for ships to sail against the wind while monsoons still dictated the Arabic trade voyages, lateen sails allowed for the navigation of turbulent waters of the Indian Ocean. ~~With increased travel opportunities~~ with increased travel opportunities came increased trade, and with that came growth. Evidence for this link between dhows and growth comes in the form of coins found in India. Storage units reveal coins from Arabia and the Abbasid caliphate in power from the ^{late} 700s onwards, showing the economic exchange made capable by dhows. Before the development of dhows, India received money and trade from other cultures on overland routes, such as the Greeks during Alexander the Great and the Hellenistic period. However in this period, dhows were what allowed more efficient trade by sea, contributing to the economic growth of the Abbasids that allowed them to construct large public works and architecture at urban centers like their capital, Baghdad.

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~~the~~ credit systems and banks

Secondly, the spread of the use of ~~the~~ ^{Tang and Song} ~~credit systems and banks~~ contributed to economic growth in ~~China~~ ^{China}. ~~The~~ The reason for this was because credit systems and the innovation of banks allowed for merchants to make dangerous trade voyages without risking their valuable assets. With the increased capability to guarantee success in riskier trade ventures, ~~the~~ ^{Chinese} merchants could make greater profits trading farther away. Evidence for this lies in the cultural productivity of the Tang and Song Chinese. This time period in China's history encapsulated some of its greatest achievements in poetry and the arts, with emperors patroning artistic endeavors with the wealth they had. Additionally, Empress Wu made great strides in patroning Buddhist art, with all the money from China's economic growth in this period. These cultural achievements were the fruits of economic growth, which itself came from the credit and banking innovations of the Tang and Song Chinese. Thus, this ~~was~~ innovation increased economic growth in China from ~~1000~~ 600-1400 CE.

While discussing the causes of economic growth, it is also relevant to highlight the significant effects of this growth, as seen in Mali Emperor Mansa Musa. He ~~was~~, and ~~the~~ Mali Empire, were ~~known~~ ^{known} for their economic growth in terms of gold being so great that his name spread throughout ^{Afro-} Eurasia, thanks to writers like Ibn-Battuta. The economic growth that allowed him to reach his wealth resulted ~~in~~ ^{from} innovations at the beginning of this time period: ~~the~~ caravans and Islamic traders establishing trade across the formerly impenetrable Sahara desert. With the use of camels, caravans, and influx of trade during the Umayyad ~~Empire~~ ^{Caliphate} and onwards, West Africa could trade its enormous sources of gold and salt to the north, using that technology to cross a natural barrier. As Musa came into power in the Mali Empire, this technology had long been established and fueling the

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2 or 3 or 4

trade necessary for the degree of economic growth ~~that~~ that Musa came to be known for.

Thus, in the discussion of these causes and effects, one can see the significance of technological innovations and how they increased civilizations' capabilities for trade, leading to economic growth. Dhows and caravans with camels expanded trade between Arabic caliphates in the Indian ocean and Africa, economically growing the Abbasids and the Mali as a result. In China, cultural heights were achieved from growth due to the emergence of banking. Of course, ~~this period alone~~ innovation and trade went related in only the 600s-1000s, as innovation both before and after ~~this time~~ this time has impacted

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3B 192

Trade has always been an important part of human society. Trade not only helps goods spread throughout the world but it also helps with cultural diffusion and economic growth. In the period between 600 C.E. and 1450 C.E. the transfer of the compass and stirrup through silk road trade increased economic growth. Most things that were exchanged at this time helped society in one way or another but the compass and stirrup were the most important goods that were traded.

The compass and stirrup have one key detail that makes them both similar. They both help people move from one place to another. Without movement trade wouldn't be able to occur and there would be no economic growth. Take for example, the silk road, without movement people wouldn't be able to get from China all the way to Europe. If this movement wasn't present then the economy of China would have probably collapsed. The compass helped trade occur on water whereas the stirrup helped trade occur on land. The compass helped people sail in a direction without having to keep the coastline in view. This meant that merchants and explorers could look for new sea routes to get to major trade ports. These new routes could cut back the amount of time it takes to get to the port. This means that money is saved and economic growth would be facilitated because more trade could occur. Similarly, the stirrup also helped reduce the amount of time that people are traveling to get to major trade cities. The stirrup was a part of the saddle for horses. Your feet would go inside the paddles in the stirrup, helping give you extra balance. With the stirrup, merchants wouldn't always have to keep their hands on the reins, they could let go and use their hands to do other things while riding, like eating. This meant that time was saved so merchants could ride even further out to trade cities that are further away and could trade goods. Thus increasing economic growth.

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3B2g2

Mandatory 1	Circle one 2 or 3 or 4
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The compass and the stirrup helped facilitate trade. They ~~assisted~~ helped reduce the amount of time it took merchants to get from one place to another. Time is money, so with the travel time reduced, the cost of trade was also reduced. The money that was saved could be spent trading more goods or simply be put back into the economy. In the end the compass and stirrup helped economic growth between 600 C.E and 1450 C.E.

Circle the question number that you are answering on this page.

3C 1g1

Mandatory

1

Circle one

2 or 3 or 4

In the period of 600-1450 CE, the world saw ~~many~~ a huge increase in trade as more trade routes were established. Many new technologies accompanied this rise in trade. ~~The~~ New technological innovations, such as stirrups, the magnetic compass, and junkships had a huge impact on increased economic growth.

The invention of stirrups had a large impact on economic growth. Stirrups ~~are~~ are devices used to help a person when riding a horse. Stirrups helped control the horse and kind of made riding the horse more comfortable. Perhaps the reason why the stirrups contributed so much to the economic growth in this time period is because it allowed merchants to travel much faster. ~~Without having to deal with sea~~

The invention of the magnetic compass also had a large impact on economic growth. The magnetic compass helped sailors know where to go.

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Question 3 — Long Essay Question

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

Overview

Responses to this question were expected to demonstrate students' knowledge of the technological developments in the years 600 C.E. to 1450 C.E. that impacted economic growth. The question addressed Key Concepts 3.1.I, 3.3.II, and 3.3.III from the AP World History Curriculum Framework. The question primarily tested students' ability to deploy the historical reasoning skills of Causation and Contextualization and the history disciplinary practice of Argument Development. Students were not, however, limited to using the skill of causation as there were opportunities to demonstrate historical understanding by comparing the relative impacts of a variety of technological developments in different areas (e.g., navigational technologies compared to overland travel technologies) or technological developments in different regions (e.g., the impact of technological developments in China compared to the impact of technological developments in Europe). The question was open geographically to allow responses from multiple areas, with a specific chronological tie to the Post-Classical Era.

Sample: 3A

Score: 6

The response earned 1 point for thesis/claim at the end of the first paragraph. The thesis identifies specific innovations (“dhows with lateen sails” and “the proliferation of banking and credit systems”) that “caused economic growth across Eurasia.” The response also earned 1 point for contextualization. The introductory paragraph contains an effective contextualizing discussion addressing the collapse of classical empires at the beginning of the period 600–1450 C.E., the persistence of some earlier trade networks, and the relative isolation of medieval Europe from the rest of Afro–Eurasian trade.

The response earned 2 points for evidence. There is plentiful evidence provided, and it is clearly and explicitly used in support of multiple arguments, often linking several categories of historical analysis throughout the response. For example, the discussion of the dhow and the lateen sail (paragraph 2) not only reveals knowledge of the basic importance of these technological developments in stimulating economic growth, but also explains their precise application in Indian Ocean trade, cites archaeological evidence (Abbasid coins found in India) illustrating the effects of their use, and offers a brief evaluation of the effects of dhow trade on Abbasid economic growth. Similarly, the discussion of credit arrangements in China is explicitly linked to more funds available for elite art patronage and thereby to “the increased cultural productivity of the Tang and Song Chinese.” Lastly, the discussion of the use of camel caravans on the trans-Saharan trade routes is used to illustrate the growing wealth of sub-Saharan elites, culminating in the pilgrimages of Mansa Musa.

With regard to the Analysis and Reasoning category, the response earned both the historical reasoning point and the complexity point. There are plentiful examples of successful deployment of multiple historical reasoning skills throughout, including multilayered cause-and-effect explanations for all three main lines of argument, explorations of the cultural and political effects of economic transformations, as well as insightful comparisons across other periods (both in the contextual discussion in the introductory paragraph and, in the second paragraph, in the comparison of West Asia–South Asia economic connections during the Hellenistic period and after the emergence of Islam). Overall, the response builds a nuanced and complex argument that is extremely well supported with evidence.

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Question 3 — Long Essay Question (continued)

Sample: 3B

Score: 4

The response earned 1 point for the thesis/claim located in the first paragraph. The response states that “the transfer [of the] compass and stirrup through silk road trade increased economic growth.” Although open to debate, that claim nonetheless establishes a historically defensible position and indicates, however minimally, a line of reasoning that is then developed in the rest of the response. The response did not, however, earn the point for contextualization. The opening sentence of the introductory paragraph does seem to be an attempt to situate the argument in a broader context, but it is limited to truisms (“Trade has always been an important part of human society. Trade not only helps goods spread throughout the world but it also helps with cultural diffusion and economic growth”) that are not connected to actual historical events or processes.

The response earned 2 points for evidence, albeit by providing the minimum of information necessary to do so. Both in terms of the number of specific pieces of evidence identified (two, the compass and the stirrup) and in terms of the way in which the evidence is used to support the argument (descriptions of the uses of these technologies, connected to general claims that they facilitated trade because they “both help people move from one place to another”) the evidence discussion is only barely sufficient to earn the points.

The response earned 1 point for historical reasoning because it successfully develops an argument explaining causal connections between the technological innovation evidence presented and its effect on trade. This is accomplished in the second paragraph, where the response connects the navigational advantages of the compass to the ability to search for new, shorter trade routes that ultimately increased trade profitability. The response did not, however, earn the point for complexity because its argument is mainly straightforward, with minimal development of explanation or nuance.

Sample: 3C

Score: 2

The response earned 1 point for the thesis/claim located in the first paragraph. The response states, “New technological innovations such as stirrups, the magnetic compass, and junkships had a huge impact on increased economic growth.” While oversimplified, this claim nonetheless establishes a historically defensible foundation for the response and indicates a minimally acceptable line of reasoning. The response did not earn the point for contextualization because there is no discernible attempt to provide contextual information.

The response earned 1 point for evidence. While two technological innovations, the stirrup and the compass, are discussed, each in its own short paragraph, only the discussion of the stirrup is clearly, albeit weakly, linked to an argument or claim about trade (“[p]erhaps the reason why the stirrup contributed so much to the economic growth in this time period is because it allowed merchants to travel much faster”). The discussion of the compass, on the other hand, indicates only an understanding of the navigational uses of this technology, not of its effects on trade. The response, therefore, earned the point for identifying at least two specific pieces of evidence but not the point for using at least two pieces of evidence in support of an argument about the prompt.

The response did not earn either the historical reasoning or the complexity point because it is very minimal and does not demonstrate sophisticated use of historical skills or historical reasoning processes to develop the argument, nor does it demonstrate awareness of historical nuance or complexity.