

Long Essay Question 2

Question 2 or Question 3

Suggested writing time: 35 minutes

Directions: Choose EITHER question 2 or question 3.

In your response you should do the following.

- **Thesis:** Present a thesis that makes a historically defensible claim and responds to all parts of the question. The thesis must consist of one or more sentences located in one place, either in the introduction or the conclusion.
 - **Application of Historical Thinking Skills:** Develop and support an argument that applies historical thinking skills as directed by the question.
 - **Supporting the Argument with Evidence:** Utilize specific examples of evidence to fully and effectively substantiate the stated thesis or a relevant argument.
 - **Synthesis:** Extend the argument by explaining the connections between the argument and ONE of the following.
 - A development in a different historical period, situation, era, or geographical area.
 - A course theme and/or approach to history that is not the focus of the essay (such as political, economic, social, cultural, or intellectual history).
 - A different discipline or field of inquiry (such as economics, government and politics, art history, or anthropology).
2. Using specific examples, analyze causes of imperial expansion and consolidation in the period circa 600 B.C.E. to 600 C.E. (*Historical thinking skill: Causation*)
3. Using specific examples, analyze causes of imperial decline and collapse in the period circa 600 B.C.E. to 600 C.E. (*Historical thinking skill: Causation*)

WHEN YOU FINISH WRITING, CHECK YOUR WORK ON SECTION II IF TIME PERMITS.

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.

Scoring Guidelines and Notes for Long Essay Question 2

Using specific examples, analyze causes of imperial expansion and consolidation in the period circa 600 B.C.E. to 600 C.E. (*Historical thinking skill: Causation*)

Curriculum Framework Alignment

Learning Objectives	Historical Thinking Skills	Key Concepts in the Curriculum Framework
<p>ENV-4 Explain how environmental factors influenced human migrations and settlements.</p> <p>CUL-8 Explain how economic, religious, and political elites defined and sponsored art and architecture.</p> <p>SB-1 Explain and compare how rulers constructed and maintained different forms of governance.</p> <p>SB-2 Analyze how the functions and institutions of governments have changed over time.</p> <p>SB-4 Explain and compare how social, cultural, and environmental factors influenced state formation, expansion, and dissolution.</p> <p>SB-6 Assess the relationships between states with centralized governments and those without, including pastoral and agricultural societies.</p> <p>SB-9 Assess how and why commercial exchanges have influenced the processes of state building, expansion, and dissolution.</p> <p>SB-10 Analyze the political and economic interactions between states and non-state actors.</p> <p>ECON-2 Analyze the economic role of cities as centers of production and commerce.</p> <p>ECON-3 Assess the economic strategies of different types of states and empires.</p> <p>ECON-5 Explain and compare forms of labor organization, including families and labor specialization within and across different societies.</p>	<p>Primary Targeted Skill: Causation</p> <p>Additional Skills: Argumentation Synthesis</p>	<p>2.2 I 2.2 II 2.2 III</p>

Curriculum Framework Alignment (Continued)

Learning Objectives	Historical Thinking Skills	Key Concepts in the Curriculum Framework
<p>ECON-6 Explain and compare the causes and effects of different forms of coerced labor systems.</p> <p>SOC-4 Analyze ways in which legal systems have sustained or challenged class, gender, and racial ideologies.</p>		

Scoring Guidelines

Maximum Possible Points: 6

Please note:

- Each point of the rubric is earned independently e.g., a student could earn the point for synthesis without earning the point for thesis.
- Unique evidence from the student response is required to earn each point, e.g., evidence in the student response that qualifies for either of the targeted skill points could not be used to earn the point for thesis.

A. Thesis (1 point)

Targeted Skill: Argumentation (E1)

- 1 point** Presents a thesis that makes a historically defensible claim and responds to all parts of the question. The thesis must consist of one or more sentences located in one place, either in the introduction or the conclusion.
- 0 points** Does not present a thesis that makes a historically defensible claim and responds to all parts of the question.

B. Argument Development: Using the Targeted Historical Thinking Skill (2 points)

Targeted Skill: Causation (C2, D1, D2, D3/D4, D5, or D6)

- 1 point** Describes causes AND/OR effects of a historical event, development, or process.
- 1 point** Explains the reasons for the causes AND/OR effects of a historical event, development, or process.
- 0 points** Does not describe causes AND/OR effects of a historical event, development, or process.

Scoring Note: If the prompt requires discussion of both causes and effects, responses must address both causes and effects in order to earn either point.

C. Argument Development: Using Evidence (2 points)**Targeted Skill: Argumentation (E2 and E3)**

- 1 point** Addresses the topic of the question with specific examples of relevant evidence.
- 1 point** Utilizes specific examples of evidence to fully and effectively substantiate the stated thesis or a relevant argument.
- 0 points** Does not address the topic of the question with specific examples of relevant evidence.

Scoring Note: To fully and effectively substantiate the stated thesis or a relevant argument, responses must include a broad range of evidence that, through analysis and explanation, justifies the stated thesis or a relevant argument.

D. Synthesis (1 point)**Targeted Skill: Synthesis (C4, C5, or C6)**

- 1 point** Extends the argument by explaining the connections between the argument and one of the following.
- a) A development in a different historical period, situation, era, or geographical area
 - b) A course theme and/or approach to history that is not the focus of the essay (such as political, economic, social, cultural, or intellectual history)
 - c) A different discipline or field of inquiry (such as economics, government and politics, art history, or anthropology) (Note: For AP World and European History only)
- 0 points** Does not extend the argument by explaining the connections between the argument and the other areas listed.

*Scoring Note: The synthesis point requires an explanation of the connections to a different historical period, situation, era, or geographical area, and is **not** awarded for merely a phrase or reference.*

On Accuracy: The components of this rubric each require that students demonstrate historically defensible content knowledge. Given the timed nature of the exam, the essay may contain errors that do not detract from the overall quality, as long as the historical content used to advance the argument is accurate.

On Clarity: These 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 and skills described above.

Scoring Notes

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

A. Thesis (1 point)

Responses earn one point by presenting a thesis that makes a historically defensible claim that responds to all parts of the question (1 point). While the thesis does not need to be a single sentence, it does need to be discrete, meaning it cannot be pieced together from across multiple places within the essay. It can be located in either the introduction or the conclusion, but it cannot be split between the two.

Examples of acceptable theses:

- This thesis is an example of a comparative/general statement that identifies factors common to the expansion or consolidation of more than one empire: “While on opposite sides of the world, both the Roman Empire and China successfully created their powerful empires through a strong central government, technology, and cultural unity.”
- This thesis addresses only a single empire, but as long as two or more causes are identified, it is still acceptable: “Early China expanded by absorption of northern nomads . . . and was able to consolidate and hold tight because of their strong control on morals and religious background supporting government.”
- This is an example of a minimally acceptable thesis: “dominant armies and the strong government led to the expansion and consolidation of imperialism.”

Examples of an unacceptable theses:

- This attempted thesis provides only categories of causes, without specificity: “There were economic, political, and religious causes of imperial expansion and consolidation.”
- These attempted theses provide only an indication of multiple causes, without specificity: “There were many causes of imperial expansion” or “There were several causes of imperial expansion.”
- These attempted theses provide only a single cause: “Empires expanded and were consolidated due to having powerful rulers” or “Empires grew because they had large armies and their neighbors did not.”
- This attempted thesis hints at processes of imperial expansion and consolidation but is entirely embedded in the context of out-of-period or factually incorrect examples: “Between 600 B.C.E. and 600 C.E. the Mongols expanded in Asia, making an expansive empire. Power was consolidated under Genghis Khan.”

**B. Argument Development: Using the Targeted Historical Thinking Skill
(2 points)**

Note: If the prompt requires discussion of both causes and effects, responses must address both causes and effects in order to earn either point. In this case, the prompt only requires discussion of causes, so responses only need to address causes.

a) Argument Development — Describes

Responses earn one point by describing at least two causes of imperial expansion and/or consolidation in the period 600 B.C.E. to 600 C.E. (1 point).

Examples of acceptable description of causes:

- In most cases, examples of acceptable descriptions of causes will consist of statements that identify a cause but do not provide an explanation or analysis: “One cause of imperial expansion was the wealth that empires had through their taxes. Another cause was they made it easy to travel and trade through a system of roads.”
- An acceptable description of a cause or causes can also be developed over several sentences, as long as the connection between the sentences remains largely narrative and/or chronological: “The Roman imperial system knew how to grow, plain and simple. Their first tool became their armies. Their advanced knowledge of warfare allowed their military to become one of the best. As they conquered new lands, this came in their favor. Not only did it allow them to win but it instilled another great tool into the people they took over: fear. Fear is something that the Empire would use over the course of its existence ...” This paragraph is credited as a description rather than an explanation of causes because it uses only a narrative throughout, providing only a sequential/chronological link between the two identified causes: “armies” and “[instilling] fear.”

Examples of unacceptable description of causes:

- A narrative of historical events related to imperial expansion and consolidation that mistakes effects for causes or is generally unclear about causality: “Trade routes such as the Silk Roads and Indian Ocean trade network connected empires and allowed culture and ideas to spread. The Silk Road connected many areas on land and allowed them to reach areas on the other side of the continent more easily The Indian Ocean trade network did the same thing, except it involved the use of ships to cross oceans.”
- A narrative that identifies only a single cause of imperial expansion and consolidation.

b) Argument Development — Explains

Responses earn one point by analyzing or explaining the reasons for at least two causes of imperial expansion and/or consolidation in the period specified in the prompt (1 point).

Examples of acceptable explanation of reasons for causes:

- An essay that presents (in combination with an explanation of at least one other cause) causative factors in an explicitly analytical framework, including an explanation of factors for imperial expansion and consolidation that apply across multiple empires: “Another example of something that would aid empire building would be religious justification. Not only did the emperors use God to justify their rule, some of them even made the people believe that they themselves were gods, and forced the people to worship them. This religious justification allowed for emperors to almost brainwash the people into believing that they were supposed to be in power, that God had chosen them. This allowed for the rulers of the empire to inflict many harsh taxes and laws on the people, without very much opposition.”
- An essay that identifies (in combination with an explanation of at least one other cause) a cause of imperial expansion and/or consolidation and then proceeds to explain clearly how the cause resulted in the expansion and/or the consolidation. Specific evidence may be provided in support but is not required: “The use of technology was also critical in the empire building process for Rome and China. Advanced military technology allowed Rome and China to conquer nearby regions, effectively expanding their territory. Technology was also critical to maintaining these large empires. Agricultural technology, such as irrigation systems, maintained the populations of the empires, while infrastructure like canals and roads helped link all parts of the empire together. Without advanced technology, Rome and China would not have been able to maintain their empires.”

Examples of unacceptable explanation of reasons for causes:

- An essay may fail to earn this point if it is organized around a single cause, even if it is analyzed and explained competently and extensively, with multiple examples from more than one empire. For example, an essay that is organized around “charismatic leaders” as the single cause of imperial expansion is unacceptable: “As seen through much of history, nationalism may be inside every citizen of a certain nation, but charismatic leaders such as Alexander propel that nationalism outwards and thus causing imperial expansion towards neighboring countries . . . Rome can be analyzed the same way. With the collapse of the republic, and the advent of an emperor, Rome’s borders reached its farthest circa 116 C.E. Charismatic leaders such as Caesar, Augustus, Aurelius, and Hadrian projected their country’s nationalism and superior technology and culture towards groups such as the Gauls in France, the Picts and Celts in Britain and the Parthians east of modern-day Turkey.” In this example, the point for “explanation of causes” is not earned because the response explains only a single cause, albeit quite well and with a wealth of relevant supporting evidence. Two other possible causes of imperial expansion — “superior technology” and “culture” — are mentioned in passing, but neither one of them is explained.

C. Argument Development: Using Evidence (2 points)**a) Using Evidence — Examples**

Responses earn one point by *addressing* the topic of the question by referring to at least three pieces of relevant evidence from one or more appropriate examples of states or empires from 600 B.C.E. to 600 C.E. (1 point). Responses can earn this point without having a stated thesis or a relevant argument.

Examples of specific evidence that could be used to address the topic of the question:

- In-period examples of monarchs or leaders who were instrumental in expanding and/or consolidating their empires, e.g., Cyrus the Great, Alexander of Macedon, Julius Caesar, Octavian Augustus, Qin Shihuangdi, Han Wudi, Ashoka, Chandragupta Maurya, etc.
- In-period examples of specific religious or cultural traditions used to expand or consolidate imperial or dynastic rule, e.g., China's use of Confucianism, emperor worship and deification in the early Roman Empire; Constantine's conversion to Christianity, the Maurya and Gupta empires use of Buddhism and Hinduism, etc.
- In-period examples of specific government or bureaucratic structures that facilitated imperial expansion and consolidation, e.g., "Rome had a powerful emperor assisted by the Senate and other consuls" or "In China, the emperor held power and was advised by bureaucrats appointed through a rigorous examination."
- In-period examples of specific technological, military, or infrastructural developments that facilitated imperial expansion and consolidation, e.g., the Roman legion and Roman roads, Macedonian phalanx, China's Great Wall and network of canals, etc.

Examples of unsuccessfully using evidence to address the topic of the question:

- Out-of-period evidence, e.g., Arab/Muslim or Mongol expansion, Islam and the caliphates, the Crusades, factors in the consolidation of the Holy Roman Empire, presenting as new technology that which had either existed long before (e.g., archery) or did not exist during the period in question (e.g., gunpowder weapons, lateen sails, the magnetic compass); ahistorical causative factors (e.g., Social Darwinism), etc.
- Factually incorrect, unclear, or overgeneralized statements offered as evidence: "An example of new technology [under the Roman Empire] would be the domestication of large animals to be used for carrying more and more necessities as well as being able to carry people farther distances than they could walk, as well as being able to carry them away from the battlefield if someone got injured or needed to bring a message somewhere quickly."
- Statements offered as evidence that do not directly support a stated cause of expansion or consolidation: "That fact provided the [Roman] empire with an additional resource: diversity. The human resources were extremely high and this meant that talent in the land became a commodity. Take Augustine of Hippo for example. His skills of oration led him from a normal life to a lifestyle of wealth and success because he was able to travel for schooling."

b) Using Evidence — Effective Substantiation

Responses earn one point by utilizing at least three pieces of relevant evidence from one or more appropriate examples of states or empires from the time period specified in the prompt to *fully and effectively substantiate a thesis or relevant argument* about the causes of imperial expansion and consolidation (1 point). Fully and effectively substantiating the thesis goes beyond merely providing many examples. This point is earned by clearly and consistently linking significant evidence to the argument and showing how the evidence demonstrates the causes of imperial expansion and consolidation in the time period specified in the prompt.

Examples of evidence that could be utilized to substantiate an argument:

- This example includes multiple pieces of specific evidence (filial piety, benevolence, ancestor worship, “Son of Heaven”), which are embedded in an analysis that fully and effectively substantiates the claim that Confucianism contributed to China’s imperial expansion and consolidation:
 - “Confucianism became a unifying factor for China, because of the way it conceptualized society and people’s private and public relations. Confucius argued that different groups in Chinese society had the same basic set of obligations to other members of society (for example, filial piety, benevolence, loyalty, and performing religious rituals) but that one’s proper place in society decided who these obligations should be directed to. So the emperor or “the Son of Heaven” worships Heaven, must be benevolent to his subjects, and can expect to receive their loyalty and worship, provided he performs his duties well. Likewise, a father worships the family ancestors, must be benevolent to his wife and children, and can expect their loyalty if he acts according to his obligations. In this way, Confucianism holds the entire fabric of China’s society, from the family to the state, and helped empires consolidate and survive.”
- This example includes multiple pieces of specific evidence (legion, specific methods of military recruitment, specific information about legions’ deployment, Roman roads, etc.) that are embedded in an analysis that fully and effectively substantiates (despite some minor factual inaccuracies) the claim that Roman military organization contributed to Roman imperial expansion and consolidation:
 - “The Roman military organization was a major advantage allowing the empire to prosper. The legion was the basic unit and it was organized and used in such a way to make the most of the empire’s limited manpower. In the early days of the republic, army service was only open to Roman citizens of noble birth, but, as time went by, the poor citizens of Rome were allowed to enlist, and eventually any male in the empire could serve and some could even become citizens through their service. Thus military service became a way to bind the poorer members of society to Rome and increase their loyalty. The soldiers were also well paid, well trained, and each legion was posted in a different part of the empire. Often the ones that were

best off were those that were posted at the farthest or most dangerous borders of the empire. Thus, when an invasion happened, the legions could be dispatched to meet it either locally, or, because of the great Roman roads, from a nearby region.”

Examples of unsuccessfully attempting to substantiate an argument with evidence:

- A response that brings in multiple pieces of specific evidence but does not use the evidence in support of an argument or an assertion. In this response, even though the discussion contains a factually correct narrative of Ashoka’s reign and conversion to Buddhism with multiple examples of specific evidence, there is no linkage between the evidence and a discernible assertion or argument regarding causes of imperial expansion and consolidation:
 - “The Mauryan Empire’s most famous ruler was emperor Ashoka the Great. He fought many wars and conquered the Kalingas after much bloodshed and violence. But then, he had a personal ‘born again’ moment and discovered Buddhism. This made Ashoka regret all the wars he had fought to expand his empire. Based on the teachings of his new Buddhist faith, Ashoka built many stone columns throughout his realm proclaiming the teachings of Buddhism and announcing that he was against violence. It was during Ashoka’s reign that the Mauryans reached their greatest power.”

D. Synthesis (1 point)

Responses earn a point for synthesis by extending their argument in one of three possible ways (1 point).

- a) Responses can extend their argument by explaining the connections between their argument and a development in a different historical period, situation, era, or geographical area (Synthesis proficiency C4). These connections must consist of more than just a phrase or reference.

Example of synthesis by connecting the argument to a development in a different historical period, situation, era, or geographical area:

- A successful response may offer a cross-chronological comparison between territorial expansion and state consolidation in the Roman Empire and the territorial expansion and consolidation in post-1500 European overseas empires. To effectively extend the argument, such a comparison must effectively explain connections and commonalities between the two processes in terms of incorporating conquered populations, methods of projecting and maintaining rule, and/or ideologies or cultural traditions underpinning imperial rule.

Examples that did not accurately connect the argument to a development in a different historical period, situation, era, or geographical area:

- This attempt at a cross-chronological comparison is only a passing reference: “Like the Romans, all empires need to have a common religion to unify them and give them purpose. This is seen for example in the Spanish and Portuguese empires in later periods.”

- This attempt at a transregional comparison presents an accurate narrative but does not provide an analytical connection between that narrative and imperial expansion and consolidation in core areas: “Other places, like The Roman Empire’s German border, China’s border with the Xiongnu, and India’s northern border, remained outside the reach of imperial expansion and consolidation. These places were too remote and their climate too harsh for the empires to control effectively. So they only had a series of nomads coming and going, with many of them attacking the empires in the process.”

b) Responses can extend their argument by explaining the connections between their argument and a course theme and/or approach to history that is not the focus of the essay (such as political, economic, social, cultural, or intellectual history) (Synthesis proficiency C5). These connections must consist of more than just a phrase or reference.

Examples of synthesis by connecting the argument to a different course theme or approach to history:

- Although the main focus of the question is on the themes of State Building, Expansion, and Conflict and Creation, Expansion, and Interaction of Economic Systems, this response draws upon a different course theme by extending the argument to address specific environmental factors in China’s imperial expansion. As part of the analysis of the causes of imperial expansion and consolidation, this response brings in specific and relevant information concerning the way in which empires’ environmental settings facilitated their expansion: “China also had a lot of land they could take control of and use for farming. . . . With the Yellow River creating fertile farm land along the banks and making flooding something they could track.”
- An extension of the analysis that explicitly brings up social causes of imperial consolidation and stability, such as linguistic or cultural cohesion: “Cultural unity was necessary to maintain the Roman and Chinese Empires. Both empires had pride in their respective nationalities and identified with their empires. The people were bound by common languages, like Latin and Chinese, and shared similar belief systems. This cultural unity made consolidation of many various peoples possible.”

Example that did not accurately connect the argument to a different course theme or approach to history:

- This response attempts to connect the theme of imperial expansion and consolidation to environmental factors, but it is insufficient because of inaccuracies and over-simplification: “The Romans were also lucky that their empire was based in the Mediterranean and their colonies faced each other across the Mediterranean ‘like frogs around a pond.’ The Mediterranean’s mild climate allowed them to grow all sorts of crops, and, though they only controlled a narrow stretch of land along the coast, that was all they needed to build a might empire.” In this example, the synthesis point is not earned because the essay shows a misunderstanding of the great extent to which the Roman Empire expanded inland from the Mediterranean, as well as a confusion between Phoenician/Greek and Roman methods of expansion.

- c) Responses can extend their argument by explaining the connections between their argument and a different discipline or field of inquiry (Synthesis proficiency C6). These connections must consist of more than just a phrase or reference.

Example of synthesis by connecting the argument to a different discipline or field of inquiry:

- A response may earn this point by offering insights from human geography and demographics; for example, by utilizing a core-periphery analysis to describe the relationship between population growth and imperial expansion. The response might discuss, for example, how certain geographic and environmental settings allow for a combination of high agricultural productivity and relative safety from invasion that can lead to sustained and sizable population growth as well as the formation of durable linguistic and cultural identities. Such insights can then be linked to imperial expansion and consolidation to point out how some world regions (notably China) become imperial cores, despite the numerous dynastic changes.

Example that did not accurately connect the argument to a different discipline or field of inquiry:

- This response attempts to bring insights from sociology or psychology but fall short of providing an explanation for the specific processes of imperial expansion and consolidation discussed in the essay: “Throughout history, the rich have oppressed the poor. But sooner or later the oppressed become conscious of the oppression and begin to plot and organize to change their fate. The Roman empire went on for hundreds of years making the rich richer and keeping the poor poorer. But finally they could not keep the con going. The poor had had enough of ‘bread and circus,’ they wanted real change. Gladiators revolted, soldiers didn’t want to fight because they were not getting paid, and imperial expansion came to an end.”

Student Responses

Sample 2A

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

Mandatory 1	Circle one 2 or 3
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The period from 600 B.C.E. to 600 C.E. was a time of imperial expansion and consolidation. Two of the most powerful and prominent empires of the time were the Roman Empire and China. While on opposite sides of the world, both ~~of~~ the Roman Empire and China successfully created their powerful empires through a strong central government, technology, and cultural unity.

Both Rome and China had strong central governments. Rome had a powerful emperor, assisted by the Senate and other consuls. In China, the emperor held power and was advised by bureaucrats appointed through rigorous examination. In both empires, the rulers wielded considerable political authority over their subjects. Thus, it was possible to build up and maintain large empires effectively.

The use of technology was also critical in the empire-building processes for Rome and China. Advanced military technology allowed Rome and China to conquer nearby regions, effectively expanding their territory. Technology was also critical to maintaining these large

Sample 2A

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

Mandatory 1	Circle one (2) or 3
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empire. Agricultural technology, ^{such as irrigation systems,} maintained the populations of the empire, while infrastructure like canals and roads helped link all parts of the empire together. Without advanced technology, Rome and China would not have been able to maintain their empires.

Cultural unity was ~~at~~ necessary to maintain the Roman and Chinese Empires. Both empires had pride in their respective nationalities and identified with their empires. ^{The people} ~~They were~~ bound by common languages, like Latin and Chinese, and shared similar belief systems. This cultural unity made consolidation of many various peoples possible. Unlike the Mauryan and Gupta Empire, where there were too many diverse ethnic groups, Rome and China could successfully create true empires.

Rome and China were successful in their imperial expansion and consolidation because they possessed a strong ~~central~~ central government, technology, and cultural unity in spite of the fact they are located on opposite ends of the world. Thus, it is evident that these factors are the most critical pieces to successfully creating strong empires.

Sample 2B

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

Mandatory 1	Circle one 2 or 3
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During the ^{middle of the} period from 600 BCE to 600 CE, the Han ruled China (more specifically from 200 BCE to 200 CE). This dynasty was one of the longest ruling Chinese dynasties. ~~Their centralized government and technological advances caused the Han to expand.~~ The Han were able to consolidate their empire due to their centralized government. After consolidating, technological and military advances caused the Han to expand.

The Han ruled through a bureaucracy, which allowed the government to be filled with qualified bureaucrats. Because of this system of government, the Han experienced long periods of political stability. This enabled the empire to become more unified and consolidated. This consolidation allowed a military to build up, which eventually led to expansion.

When the Han dynasty was stable enough, politically, to create a military, they did. The military started out small, but grew to a massive size. Because they weren't having to worry about the stability of the government, the Han were able to send the military out to conquer other areas. They conquered the other areas quickly and expanded the empire greatly. In fact, the expansion of the Han is one of the things that they are most well known for, other than their stable government.

Also during this time, the Han were working towards improving their technology. The advancement of things such as irrigation allowed many more crops to be grown. New

Sample 2B

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

Mandatory 1	Circle one (2) or 3
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inventions also helped the efficiency of people to increase. Because work was getting easier and food was more plentiful, people didn't have to worry as much about their quality of life and were able to have bigger ~~more~~ families due to the availability of natural resources and food. The population increase expanded the empire. Technological advances allowed the military to be more efficient, which also caused external expansion.

During the middle of the period from 600 BCE to 600 CE, the Han dynasty ruled in China. They were in power for almost 400 years, reigning from approximately 200 BCE to 200 CE. During their reign, the Han were able to consolidate their empire due to their centralized government. However, technological advances and the use of a military also allowed the Han to expand the borders of their empire.

Sample 2C

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

Mandatory 1	Circle one (2) or 3
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Between 600 B.C.E and 600 C.E. The imperial expansion of the Roman Empire was aided by different factors. Such things as the roman military which had a great sense of nationalism and massive numbers were a great asset to its expansion. Different and many factors lead to the imperial expansion of the roman empire.

One very large reason for the expansion of the roman empire between 600 B.C.E and 600 C.E. was ~~the~~ the roman army. The roman army had many people in it wanting for a great powerful empire. Another factor was the roads. The roman road covered the entire empire allowing for people and military forces to travel very quickly from point A to point B. And finally another cause of the roman expansion was that when the romans would conquer a place they would give them the opportunity to surrender and become a part of the roman empire without having to be taken over. Many different aspects lead to the imperial expansion of the Holy Roman Empire.

Scores and Commentary

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

Overview

This causation long essay question asks students to analyze the causes of imperial expansion and consolidation in the period c. 600 B.C.E. to 600 C.E.

Sample 2A

Score: 6

A. Thesis (1 point)

The thesis is found in the last sentence of the introductory paragraph: “While on opposite sides of the world, both the Roman Empire and China successfully created their powerful empires through a strong central government, technology, and cultural unity.” The response identifies three historically defensible claims about the consolidation and expansion of empires within the time period 600 B.C.E. to 600 C.E.: a strong central administration, technology, and cultural unity.

B. Argument Development: Using the Targeted Historical Thinking Skill (2 points)

a) Argument Development – Describes (1 point)

While only two causes of imperial consolidation and expansion were required, three causes are clearly identified and described:

- ♦ Strong central government: “Both Rome and China had strong central governments.”
- ♦ Technology: “Advanced military technology allowed Rome and China to conquer nearby regions, effectively expanding their territory. Technology was also critical to maintaining these large empires.”
- ♦ Cultural unity: “Cultural unity was necessary to maintain the Roman and Chinese Empires.”

b) Argument Development – Explains (1 point)

Although this question only required explanation of two causes to earn this point, the response provided explanations for all three causes that were identified:

- ♦ Strong central government: “Both Rome and China had strong central governments, Rome had a powerful emperor, assisted by the Senate and other consuls. In China, the emperor held power and was advised by bureaucrats appointed through rigorous examination. In both empires, the rulers wielded considerable political authority over their subjects.”
- ♦ Technology: “Advanced military technology allowed Rome and China to conquer nearby regions, effectively expanding their territory. Technology was also critical to maintaining these large empires. Agricultural technology, such as irrigation systems, maintained the populations of the empires, while infrastructure like canals and roads helped link all parts of the empire together.”

- ♦ Cultural unity: “Cultural unity was necessary to maintain the Roman and Chinese Empires. Both empires had pride in their respective nationalities and identified with their empires. The people bond by common languages, like Latin and Chinese, and shared similar belief systems. This cultural unity made consolidation of many various peoples possible.”

C. Argument Development: Using Evidence (2 points)

a) Using Evidence – Examples (1 point)

This response contains many concrete and specific historical examples associated with imperial consolidation and expansion within the specified time period, including the Chinese imperial examination system and the Roman Senate and consuls (paragraph 2), irrigation systems (paragraph 3), canals (paragraph 3), roads (paragraph 3), and the use of Chinese (paragraph 4) and Latin (paragraph 4).

b) Using Evidence – Effective Substantiation (1 point)

This essay contains concrete and specific historical examples that are utilized to support an assertion associated with the explanation of imperial consolidation. While three such examples were required to earn the point, this response provided four. In paragraph 3, two examples of technology are provided to explain the consolidation of China under Han rule: “canals and roads helped link parts of the [Han] empire together.” In paragraph 4, two specific examples of language are utilized: “The people were bound by common languages, like Latin and Chinese . . . that “made consolidation of many various people possible.”

D. Synthesis (1 point)

The response earns the point for synthesis by extending the argument through the use of an additional course theme or approach (cultural history) that is not the focus of the question (political history). In addition to analyzing how political structure and uses of technology affected imperial consolidation, the response also considers how “pride in their respective nationalities,” “common languages,” and “shared similar belief systems” facilitated cultural cohesion for both the Roman and Chinese empires.

Sample 2B

Score: 3

A. Thesis (1 point)

This response identified three causes for imperial expansion and/or consolidation using the Han Empire as an example, asserting the following thesis: “The Han were able to consolidate their empire due to their centralized government. After consolidating, technological and military advances caused the Han to expand.”

B. Argument Development: Using the Targeted Historical Thinking Skill (2 points)

a) Argument Development – Describes (1 point)

The response earns this point for describing the three causes of imperial expansion and/or consolidation that are identified in the thesis: bureaucracy, development of the military, and technological advances.

- ♦ Bureaucracy: “The Han ruled through a bureaucracy, which allowed the government to be filled with qualified bureaucrats.”

- ♦ Development of the military: “The military started out small, but grew to a massive size.”
- ♦ Technological advances: “The Han were working toward improving their technology. The advancement of things such as irrigation allowed many more crops to be grown.”

b) Argument Development – Explains (1 point)

Although at times simplistic in its execution, the response nevertheless earns this point for explaining the reasons for the three causes of imperial expansion and/or consolidation that were identified in the thesis:

- ♦ Bureaucracy: “The Han ruled through a bureaucracy, which allowed the government to be filled with qualified bureaucrats. Because of this system of government, the Han experienced long periods of political stability. This enabled the empire to become more unified and consolidated. This consolidation allowed a military to build up, which eventually led to expansion.”
- ♦ Development of the military: “The military started out small, but grew to a massive size. Because they weren’t having to worry about the stability of the government, the Han were able to send the military out to conquer other areas. They conquered the other areas quickly and expanded the empire greatly.”
- ♦ Technological advances: “The Han were working toward improving their technology. The advancement of things such as irrigation allowed many more crops to be grown. New inventions also helped the efficiency of people to increase. Because work was getting easier and food was more plentiful, people didn’t have to worry as much about their quality of life and were able to have bigger families due to the availability of natural resources and food. The population increase expanded the empire.”

C. Argument Development: Using Evidence (0 points)**a) Using Evidence – Examples (0 points)**

The response does not receive this point because it only provides two, rather than the required three, pieces of accurate, specific evidence: “qualified bureaucrats” and “irrigation.”) The response would have received the point if it had noted another specific piece of evidence such as a specific technological innovation or the ruler of the Han.

c) Using Evidence – Effective Substantiation (0 points)

The essay does not receive the point for effectively substantiating evidence because it only provides two, not the requisite three, pieces of evidence. The effectively substantiated pieces of evidence were:

- ♦ Linking the training of “qualified” bureaucrats to political stability and consolidation
- ♦ Connecting irrigation to plentiful food, which in turn lead to expansion

The essay would have received a point had another piece of specific evidence been utilized to support a relevant argument or the thesis.

D. Synthesis (0 points)

The response does not earn a point for synthesis. It makes no attempt to link the material to another period, geographic location, or situation, or to draw in an alternate historical approach or discipline.

Sample 2C**Score: 1****A. Thesis (0 points)**

This response identifies one accurate cause for expansion during the period — the Roman military. In order to earn this point, the thesis must make a historically defensible claim identifying at least two causes of imperial expansion and/or consolidation in the period 600 BCE to 600 C.E.

This point could have been earned had the response identified, in the thesis, the role of Roman roads or the role of Roman policies of encouraging surrender and incorporation into the empire as causes of imperial expansion. These causes are included in the body of the response, but not in the thesis.

B. Argument Development: Using the Targeted Historical Thinking Skill (1 point)**a) Argument Development — Describes (1 point)**

The response earns this point by identifying three causes of imperial expansion (one more than the requisite two to earn this point): the successful campaigns of the Roman army, the connectivity and efficiency of Roman roads, and Roman policies related to the surrender of conquered groups and their incorporation into the empire.

c) Argument Development — Explains (0 points)

The response explains only one cause of Roman imperial expansion: Roman roads. The essay explains that the roads allowed “for people and military forces to travel very quickly from point A to point B.” The essay could have earned this point had it explained an additional cause: for example, it would have earned the point if had it included one the following:

- ◆ Growth of the Roman army: The Roman military grew in size when the Marian reforms relaxed restrictions that had previously kept citizens from the lower socioeconomic classes from serving in the army on an equal footing with wealthier citizens.
- ◆ The incorporation of local communities into the Roman Empire: The Roman Empire successfully expanded due to its policy of giving conquered peoples a measure of legal and political rights within the empire, thereby strengthening the loyalty and participation of newly incorporated peoples in further imperial expansion.

C. Argument Development: Using Evidence (0 points)**a) Using Evidence — Examples (0 points)**

The response does not earn a point for using evidence because the essay does not provide specific factual evidence (place names, people, events, etc.) beyond what it identifies as the causes for the expansion. Had the response articulated all of the following pieces of specific additional evidence it would have received the point:

- ♦ The organization of the Roman military into legions around the empire
- ♦ Roman roads extended into Gaul
- ♦ The surrender of Greek city-states to the Roman Empire after Roman expansion into the region

b) Using Evidence — Effective Substantiation (0 points)

The response does not earn a point for effective substantiation of the evidence because the response does not provide any specific evidence points that could have been utilized to support an assertion about the causes of imperial expansion and consolidation.

D. Synthesis (0 points)

The response does not earn a point for synthesis. It makes no attempt to link the material to another period, geographic location, or situation, or to draw in an alternate historical approach or discipline.

Long Essay Question 3

Question 2 or Question 3

Suggested writing time: 35 minutes

Directions: Choose EITHER question 2 or question 3.

In your response you should do the following.

- **Thesis:** Present a thesis that makes a historically defensible claim and responds to all parts of the question. The thesis must consist of one or more sentences located in one place, either in the introduction or the conclusion.
 - **Application of Historical Thinking Skills:** Develop and support an argument that applies historical thinking skills as directed by the question.
 - **Supporting the Argument with Evidence:** Utilize specific examples of evidence to fully and effectively substantiate the stated thesis or a relevant argument.
 - **Synthesis:** Extend the argument by explaining the connections between the argument and ONE of the following.
 - A development in a different historical period, situation, era, or geographical area.
 - A course theme and/or approach to history that is not the focus of the essay (such as political, economic, social, cultural, or intellectual history).
 - A different discipline or field of inquiry (such as economics, government and politics, art history, or anthropology).
2. Using specific examples, analyze causes of imperial expansion and consolidation in the period circa 600 B.C.E. to 600 C.E. (*Historical thinking skill: Causation*)
3. Using specific examples, analyze causes of imperial decline and collapse in the period circa 600 B.C.E. to 600 C.E. (*Historical thinking skill: Causation*)

WHEN YOU FINISH WRITING, CHECK YOUR WORK ON SECTION II IF TIME PERMITS.

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.

Scoring Guidelines and Notes for Long Essay Question 3

Using specific examples, analyze causes of imperial decline and collapse in the period circa 600 B.C.E. to 600 C.E. (*Historical thinking skill: Causation*)

Curriculum Framework Alignment

Learning Objectives	Historical Thinking Skills	Key Concepts in the Curriculum Framework
<p>ENV-5 Explain how human migrations affected the environment.</p> <p>SB-3 Analyze how state formation and expansion were influenced by various forms of economic organization, such as agrarian, pastoral, mercantile, and industrial production.</p> <p>SB-4 Explain and compare how social, cultural, and environmental factors influenced state formation, expansion, and dissolution.</p> <p>SB-6 Assess the relationships between states with centralized governments and those without, including pastoral and agricultural societies.</p> <p>SB-8 Assess how and why external conflicts and alliances have influenced the process of state building, expansion, and dissolution.</p>	<p>Primary Targeted Skill: Causation</p> <p>Additional Skills: Argumentation Synthesis</p>	<p>2.2 IV 2.3 III</p>

Scoring Guidelines

Maximum Possible Points: 6

Please note:

- Each point of the rubric is earned independently e.g., a student could earn the point for argument development without earning the point for thesis.
- Unique evidence from the student response is required to earn each point e.g., evidence in the student response that qualifies for either of the targeted skill points, could not be used to earn the point for thesis.

A. Thesis (1 point)

Targeted Skill: Argumentation (E1)

- 1 point** Presents a thesis that makes a historically defensible claim and responds to all parts of the question. The thesis must consist of one or more sentences located in one place, either in the introduction or the conclusion.
- 0 points** Does not present a thesis that makes a historically defensible claim and responds to all parts of the question.

**B. Argument Development: Using the Targeted Historical Thinking Skill
(2 points)****Targeted Skill: Causation (C2, D1, D2, D3/D4, D5, or D6)**

- 1 point** Describes causes AND/OR effects of a historical event, development, or process.
- 1 point** Explains the reasons for the causes AND/OR effects of a historical event, development, or process.
- 0 points** Does not describe causes AND/OR effects of a historical event, development, or process.

Scoring Note: If the prompt requires discussion of both causes and effects, responses must address both causes and effects in order to earn either point.

C. Argument Development: Using Evidence (2 points)**Targeted Skill: Argumentation (E2 and E3)**

- 1 point** Addresses the topic of the question with specific examples of relevant evidence.
- 1 point** Utilizes specific examples of evidence to fully and effectively substantiate the stated thesis or a relevant argument.
- 0 points** Does not address the topic of the question with specific examples of relevant evidence.

Scoring Note: To fully and effectively substantiate the stated thesis or a relevant argument, responses must include a broad range of evidence that, through analysis and explanation, justifies the stated thesis or a relevant argument.

D. Synthesis (1 point)**Targeted Skill: Synthesis (C4, C5, or C6)**

- 1 point** Extends the argument by explaining the connections between the argument and ONE of the following.
- A development in a different historical period, situation, era, or geographical area
 - A course theme and/or approach to history that is not the focus of the essay (such as political, economic, social, cultural, or intellectual history)
 - A different discipline or field of inquiry (such as economics, government and politics, art history, or anthropology) (Note: For AP World and European History only)
- 0 points** Does not extend the argument by explaining the connections between the argument and the other areas listed.

*Scoring Note: The synthesis point requires an explanation of the connections to a different historical period, situation, era, or geographical area, and is **not** awarded for merely a phrase or reference.*

On Accuracy: The components of this rubric each require that students demonstrate historically defensible content knowledge. Given the timed nature of the exam, the essay may contain errors that do not detract from the overall quality, as long as the historical content used to advance the argument is accurate.

On Clarity: These 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 and skills described above.

Scoring Notes

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

A. Thesis (1 point)

Responses earn one point by presenting a thesis that makes a historically defensible claim that responds to all parts of the question (1 point). While the thesis does not need to be a single sentence, it does need to be discrete, meaning it cannot be pieced together from across multiple places within the essay. It can be located in either the introduction or the conclusion, but it cannot be split between the two.

Examples of acceptable theses:

- This thesis is an example of a comparative/general statement that identifies factors common to the decline and collapse of multiple empires: “Imperial decline/collapse in the period circa 600 B.C.E. to 600 C.E. was often characterized by a common over-expansion of empires/states, coupled with accompanying instability in government or caused by invasions or conflicting cultures.”
- This thesis addresses a single empire only, but since two or more causes are identified, it is still acceptable: “Due to problems in the noble class, disease, and outside invasions, the Roman empire started their decline and eventually collapsed.”
- This is an example of a minimally acceptable thesis: “The cause of the decline was bad leadership, invasion, and not a well-run government.”

Examples of unacceptable theses:

- This attempted thesis provides only categories of causes without specificity: “There were economic, political, and religious causes of imperial decline.”
- These attempted theses provide only an indication of multiple causes without specificity: “There were many causes of imperial decline” or “There were several causes of imperial decline.”
- This attempted thesis provides only a single cause: “Empires in this period collapsed because of weak leadership.”
- This attempted thesis hints at processes of imperial decline and collapse but is entirely embedded in the context of out-of-period or factually incorrect examples: “The founding of Islam in 622 C.E. greatly affected the Holy Roman Empire. The empire exhausted their troops by sending them

to the Holy Land to reclaim it from their Muslim neighbors. A plague of sickness also weakened the empire's defenses. The weakness was taken advantage of by nomadic people called Mongols."

B. Argument Development: Using the Targeted Historical Thinking Skill (2 points)

Note: If the prompt requires discussion of both causes and effects, responses must address both causes and effects in order to earn either point. In this case, the prompt only requires discussion of causes, so responses only need to address causes.

a) Argument Development — Describes

Responses earn one point by describing at least two causes of imperial decline and/or collapse in the period 600 B.C.E. to 600 C.E. (1 point).

Examples of acceptable descriptions of causes:

- In most cases, an acceptable description of causes will consist of statements that identify a cause but do not provide an explanation or analysis: "Imperial decline and collapse happened because empires faced economic crises and were attacked by nomadic peoples living outside their borders."
- An acceptable description of a cause can also be developed over several sentences, as long as the connection between the sentences remains largely narrative and/or chronological. In the following example, a description of a cause was credited (in combination with a description of another cause) because there is no attempt to explain: "The collapse of Rome was caused by nomadic invaders. Initially these invasions took territory on the outskirts of the Roman Empire. As the government weakened and its control loosened, the invaders were able to work themselves deeper into the Empire. Eventually, the invaders took Rome and the Empire collapsed."

Examples of unacceptable descriptions of causes:

- A generic doom-and-gloom narrative that does not provide any specific causes of imperial decline and collapse: "The dynasties kept dying out. The people of China were losing hope. The leaders were only trying to help themselves, not thinking about the future of China. They just could not find a strong leader to help China succeed."
- A narrative of historical events related to imperial collapse that mistakes effects for causes: "After the fall of Rome, the empire was split into 2 sections: East and West. West Rome did not reunify . . . The East, however, was reunified under emperor Constantine. This new empire became the Byzantine Empire . . ."
- A narrative that identifies only a single cause of imperial decline and collapse.

b) Argument Development — Explains

Responses earn one point by analyzing or explaining the reasons for at least two causes of imperial decline and/or collapse in the period specified in the prompt (1 point).

Examples of acceptable explanations of the reasons for causes:

- The response presents (in combination with an explanation of at least one other cause) causative factors in an explicitly analytical framework, including an explanation of general patterns of decline and collapse, before proceeding to offer specific examples: “The chief cause of imperial collapse during this period was an overexpansion of territory. During this time, power was defined by land, so empires/states focused on accumulating and controlling as much land as possible. While this strategy initially contributed to the power of the states, it ultimately led to their decline as the expanse of the empires became too much for the state to control. In the Roman Empire . . .”
- The response identifies (in combination with an explanation of at least one other cause) a cause of imperial decline and collapse and then proceeds to explain clearly how the cause resulted in the decline and collapse. Specific evidence may be provided in support but is not required: “Ineffective economic system also caused the weakening of Rome. From all the conquests and expansion, Rome was left with extensive wealth. This led to inflation. As the prices of food and materials rose dramatically, peasants and the lower class were now not able to afford food. Also, with the price of goods raised, farmers and soldiers . . . became in debt and were not being paid.”

Example of an unacceptable explanation of the reasons for causes:

- Attempts to explain a cause may be unsuccessful because they provide irrelevant or factually inaccurate information in support of a claim. In the following example, an attempt is made to explain two factors of imperial decline (disease and population decline), but the cause that is given (sanitation systems) is incorrect: “The development of sanitation systems led to a vulnerability to disease, so when plagues hit, the populations of both empires decreased rapidly.”

C. Argument Development: Using Evidence (2 points)**a) Using Evidence — Examples**

Responses earn one point by addressing the topic of the question by referring to at least three pieces of relevant evidence from one or more appropriate examples of states or empires in the period 600 B.C.E. to 600 C.E. (1 point). Responses can earn this point without having a stated thesis or a relevant argument.

Examples of specific evidence that could be used to address the topic of the question:

- In-period examples of nomadic invaders: Germanic tribes (Ostrogoths, Visigoths, Vandals), Xiongnu, Huns, Hephthalites, etc.
- In-period examples of specific imperial policies or ruling philosophies that weakened empires: “Legalism . . . fostered enmity of the citizens, leading to the decline and collapse of the Qin dynasty.”
- In-period examples of specific internal conflicts and/or revolts: the time of the Roman soldier emperors, the Yellow Turban rebellion in Han China.
- In-period examples of specific economic problems: inflation, peasant indebtedness, decline of traditional labor systems and agricultural practices.

- In-period examples of specific environmental factors, including disease, that contributed to the decline and collapse of empires: the plague of Justinian.

Examples of unsuccessfully using evidence to address the topic of the question:

- Out-of-period evidence: “Mongol or Viking invaders; Merovingian/ Carolingian Frankish empire building; the “Black Death . . .”
- Factually incorrect or overgeneralized statements offered as evidence: “The nobles of the Roman empire began to have children later in life and some didn’t have children before passing away. At the time the noble class were the ones who fought for the empire and with a smaller noble class you have a smaller army.”
- Statements offered as evidence that do not directly support a stated cause of imperial decline or collapse: “In India, the change from the Mauryan to the Gupta empire was very momentous because it led to the triumph of Hinduism over Buddhism and created Indian society as we now know it. Though it ended Ashoka’s well-intentioned experiment with Buddhism, this shows that imperial collapse can lead to positive outcomes.”

b) Using Evidence — Effective Substantiation

Responses earn one point by utilizing at least three pieces of relevant evidence from one or more appropriate examples of states or empires from the time period specified in the prompt to fully and effectively substantiate a thesis or relevant argument about the causes of imperial decline and collapse (1 point). Fully and effectively substantiating the thesis goes beyond merely providing many examples. This point is earned by clearly and consistently linking significant evidence to the argument and showing how the evidence demonstrates the causes of imperial decline and collapse in the time period specified in the prompt.

Examples of evidence that could be utilized to substantiate an argument:

- This example includes multiple pieces of specific evidence (Mandate of Heaven, the rise of the Qin state, Legalism, the persecution of Confucianism, the Xian terra cotta warriors’ tomb) that are embedded in an analysis that fully and effectively substantiates the claim that Shi Huangdi’s embrace of Legalism contributed to the Qin dynasty’s decline and collapse.
 - “The Chinese explained how empires rose and fell through the concept of the mandate of Heaven. According to this, when rulers rule according to Confucian principles and guide and protect the people, the dynasty grows and prospers. But when rulers become too harsh and exceed the norms of being good and wise kings, the dynasty loses the mandate of Heaven and is overthrown. A great example is the Qin Dynasty. Shi Huangdi, the greatest Qin ruler, defeated all other small states in China and became the only emperor. But then he began following the harsh teachings of legalism, which say that people should be kept on a tight leash, taxed and worked until they could no longer take it. Shi also banned Confucianism and burned their books. He wasted China’s resources by building a giant

tomb in the capital, with thousands of clay guards. In all these ways, he stretched China's resources and caused his dynasty to lose the mandate of Heaven."

- This example includes multiple pieces of specific evidence (emperor worship, Mithraism and other salvation religions, Roman persecutions of Christianity, Christian refusal to participate in emperor cults, early Christianity's emphasis on salvation in the afterlife) that are embedded in an analysis that fully and effectively substantiates the claim that the spread of Christianity contributed to the decline and collapse of the Roman empire.
 - "One of the main factors that led to the decline and fall of the Roman Empire was religious change, especially Christianity. For a long time, Romans had been unified by their embrace of their old pagan gods. They also worshipped the emperor and previous great emperors as gods. This gave the Romans a sense of belonging and loyalty to the empire. But, as the empire began to decline, the old religion did not appeal to people anymore. With the empire under constant attack by barbarians, people needed new religious beliefs that gave them hope for the afterlife. Some started worshipping Mithras, others chose other smaller religions. But most went for Christianity because it promised them salvation in the afterlife. Though Roman leaders banned and persecuted Christianity, it grew like wildfire. Christians would not worship the emperor because they could only pray to their God, and they were focused on saving their souls in the afterlife, and not on serving the emperors. So fewer and fewer people remained loyal to the empire and that continued until one of the emperors, Constantine, became a Christian himself. But by then it was too late and the Roman empire was too weak."

Example of unsuccessfully attempting to substantiate an argument with evidence:

- This example brings in multiple pieces of specific evidence but does not use the evidence in support of an argument or an assertion. Even though this discussion contains numerous examples of specific evidence (in addition to some minor errors), it does not link the evidence to any specific assertion or argument regarding causes of imperial decline and collapse.
 - "In the last century of the Rome it seemed like everyone could defeat the Roman armies. They were defeated by the Iranian Sassanid dynasty, the Goths in Greece, Vandals in Africa, Visigoths in Spain and Germans from the north. One commander of the Visigoths even attacked and took Rome itself (in 410), though he quickly moved on. Then there were the armies of Attila the Hun who swept through the European parts of the empire."

D. Synthesis (1 point)

Responses earn a point for synthesis by extending their argument in one of three possible ways (1 point).

- a) Responses can extend their argument by explaining the connections between their argument and a development in a different historical period, situation, era, or geographical area (Synthesis proficiency C4). These connections must consist of more than just a phrase or reference.

Example of synthesis by connecting the argument to a development in a different historical period, situation, era, or geographical area:

- A successful response may contain a cross-chronological comparison between imperial decline in the period specified in the question and other instances of imperial decline and collapse in other periods. The comparison must clearly explain the commonalities between the dynamics of imperial decline and collapse in the two contexts to earn the point; for example, in an essay that had identified territorial overextension as one of the causes of imperial collapse in the period 600 B.C.E. to 600 C.E.: “From a different historical context, at a much later time period, Napoleon’s state met similar causes of decline. While Napoleon’s wild ambition drove him to expand far beyond the stretches he was capable of maintaining, the stability of his power was compromised and reached a decline. In attempting to create a Europe-wide empire as well as an Empire in the New World, he reached his limits.”

Examples that did not accurately connect the argument to a development in a different historical period, situation, era, or geographical area:

- This example includes an attempt at a cross-chronological comparison that is only a passing reference: “Plagues and epidemics played a huge role in the decline of Rome and Han China, as they often do in the decline of empires in general.”
 - In this example, an attempt at a cross-chronological comparison presents an accurate narrative but does not provide an explicit analytical connection between that narrative and imperial expansion and consolidation in the period circa 600 B.C.E. to 600 C.E.: “The European colonial empires in the nineteenth and twentieth century also declined for various reasons. Especially after WWI, many people living in the colonies could no longer buy the civilizing mission excuse for why they were being colonized. This led to the formation of many decolonization movements, such as the Indian National congress, pan-Africanism, Negritude, the Vietnamese national movement, etc.”
- b) Responses can extend their argument by explaining the connections between their argument and a course theme and/or approach to history that is not the focus of the essay (such as political, economic, social, cultural, or intellectual history) (Synthesis proficiency C5). These connections must consist of more than just a phrase or reference.

Example of synthesis by connecting the argument to a different course theme or approach to history:

- Although the main focus of the question is on the themes of State Building, Expansion, and Conflict and Interactions between Humans and the Environment, this response draws on a different course theme by extending the argument to address specific social factors in the decline and collapse of the Roman Empire. The argument is extended by an explanation of how social dislocation led to imperial decline: “But as time progressed, the encapsulated people became more and more different and thus distant from imperial bureaucratic practices. For example, Rome held territory from Spain to the Middle East, and, as cultures diverged, the representation lessened, leading to the rise of feudal societies . . . Feudal states [also] became more common as urban areas were wiped out by disease.”

Example that did not accurately connect the argument to a different course theme or approach to history:

- This response attempts to connect the theme of imperial decline and collapse to environmental factors but fails to extend the argument because of factually incorrect statements or overgeneralizations. The synthesis point is not earned because the essay greatly overstates the historical significance of the environmental factor it identifies, leading to factually unsupported overgeneralizations (lead poisoning being a major cause of population decline):
 - “At the same time that the empire was under attack from outside, it was also undermined by a silent enemy from the inside—lead. The Romans used lead pipes in their water and sewer systems, and cooked their meals and stored their wine in lead pans and jugs. The wealthy Roman women even used makeup that had lead and mercury in it. If only they knew what we know now they would not have been doing those things because lead can leach out in your water and food and poison you. Lead poisoning was a major cause why the population of Rome plummeted and the survivors were weakened and couldn’t fight against the barbarians. They just had no idea what was killing them.”
- c) Responses can extend their argument by explaining the connections between their argument and a different discipline or field of inquiry (Synthesis proficiency C6). These connections must consist of more than just a phrase or reference.

Example of synthesis by connecting the argument to a different discipline or field of inquiry:

- A response may earn this point by offering insights from economics about the role of inflation, currency manipulation (including coinage debasement) and imposing politically motivated market regulations (e.g., attempts to impose uniform prices across a large territory) in destabilizing the economy. Such insights can then be linked to specific policies that led to the decline and collapse of empires in the period 600 B.C.E. to 600 C.E., particularly the Roman and Han empires.

Example that did not accurately connect the argument to a different discipline or field of inquiry:

- The response attempts to bring insights from cultural anthropology but falls short of providing a clear and explicit explanation for the processes of imperial decline and collapse discussed in the essay. In this example, the insight from an outside discipline, though promising, was not developed well enough to illustrate effectively how factors such as overextension and difficulties in maintaining political legitimacy played a role in the decline and collapse of the Roman and Han empires:
 - “Studies of indigenous tribes in Africa, New Guinea, and the Amazon show that the smaller the society the more closely people identify with their leaders (elders) and the more tight-knit the communities are. In bigger societies, ruling becomes harder as leaders feel more removed from ordinary people and, in the end, impossible. That was the problem of big world empires like the Romans and the Hans—they had grown too large for their own good and could not carry on.”

Student Responses

Sample 3A

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

Mandatory 1	Circle one 2 or 3
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Imperial decline/collapse in the period circa 600 B.C.E to 600 C.E. was often characterized by a common over-expansion of empires/states, coupled with ~~increasing~~ accompanying instability ~~in~~ in government or caused by invasions, conflicting cultures, as seen by the Roman Empire and Han China.

The chief cause of ^{imperial} decline/collapse during this period was an over-expansion of territory. During this time, ~~the~~ power was defined by land, so empires/states focused on accumulating and controlling as much land as possible. While this strategy initially contributed to the power of the states, it ultimately led to their decline, as the expanse of the empires became too much for the state to control. In the Roman Empire, the state expanded too far from its core location, ^{in Rome} ~~in~~ ^{leading} spanning cultures that did not blend in and overstepping the ability of the state to control its land. As the empire expanded into North Africa and ~~the~~ began to expand into ~~back~~ ~~the~~ ~~modern-day~~ ^{the} modern-day middle east, it reached its limits. These new areas had ~~was~~ different cultures and did not match the Christian ideology/structure of the empire's Roman center. As these lands became difficult to control, an unstable government plagued with power struggles was unable to meet new needs. ~~The~~ Han China also overexpanded, as it stretched out from its central location. New lands with new people and a financial/political inability of the established

Sample 3A

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

Mandatory 1	Circle one 2 or 3
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bureaucracy to control these newlands contributed to the state's decline.

Other factors contributed to this overall over-expansion, as outside groups disturbed the stability of the state. In the Roman Empire, Germanic peoples from the west and competing, powerful states from the East threatened the stability of the Empire. As it stretched from its center, it ~~was~~ ~~reached~~ pushed to the boundaries of other powers and peoples, who threatened the expansive tactics of the Romans. In Han China, ~~a~~ continuous ~~unending~~ conflicting powers and nomadic peoples disturbed the careful stability of the bureaucratic system. Both ~~the~~ locations were simply unable to maintain stability, as their precarious state from over-expansion met threats from outside and within.

The states themselves were also contributing factors to their decline, as many imperial states had not established a government strong enough for its ambitions. In the Roman Empire, a chronically conflicting central government and fragile bureaucracy met ~~the~~ individuals battling to be emperor, which did not create a strong/stable center to control its wild ambitions in expansion. In Han China,

Sample 3A

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

Mandatory 1	Circle one 2 or 3
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a careful Bureaucratic system ~~was~~ with elected officials was simply not strong enough, either, to meet expanding territory and threats to stability.

From a different historical context, at a much later time period, Napoleon's state met similar causes of decline. While Napoleon's wild ambition drove him to expand far beyond the stretches he was capable of maintaining, the stability of his power was compromised and reached a decline.

In attempting to create a Europe-wide empire as well as an Empire in the New world, he reached his limits.

Imperial collapse / decline in the period circa 600 B.C.E. to 600 C.E. was characterized by over-expansion as a key cause, accompanied by outside threats and internal weakness / instability, as evident in the Roman Empire and Han China.

Sample 3B

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

Mandatory 1	Circle one 2 or 3
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There are many reasons for an empire to fall and collapse. The Roman empire, once strong, powerful and one of the biggest empires in history, fell and declined for many reasons. Rome began to struggle in many areas, including pay of soldiers and corruption. Many other reasons led to its decline, as well. Rome's decline and fall can be connected with social, political, and economic weaknesses such as invasion, corruption, and inflation of currency.

There are many weaknesses in the social aspects of Rome that contributed to its collapse. At its height of power, the Roman empire conquered other lands for wealth and citizens. Once it began to stop conquering and expanding, the lack of money and resources led to decline in social status. Also, outside barbarian tribes, such as the Franks and the Vikings attacked the borders. With the army losing pride in Rome, they began to hire mercenaries. They were not as powerful, and they could not hold the borders that were being attacked. The declining social status of Rome led to its eventual fall.

Sample 3B

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

Mandatory 1	Circle one 2 or 3
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~~Political~~ ^{Economic} systems also
 Ineffective ~~political~~ also
 caused the weakening of Rome. From all of
 the conquest and expansion, Rome was left
 with extensive wealth. This led to inflation, and
 the prices of food and materials rose dramatic
 Peasants and the lower class were now not
 able to afford food. Also, with the price of
 goods raised, farmers and soldiers both
 became in debt and were not being paid.
 Rome was now not able to feed or
 protect its army. The economy of Rome
 dramatically declined, leading to the fall of Rome.
 Political aspects of Rome also
 played a part in Rome's collapse. Ineffective
 rulers came to power, and were not able
 to protect the empire. Also, greedy politicians
 stole ~~money~~ vast amounts of money,
 worsening the economic situation.
 Political aspects further hastened the
 fall of the great empire of Rome.

Sample 3C

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

Mandatory 1	Circle one 2 or 3
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Imperial decline + Collapse, specifically the Roman Empire, from 600 BCE to 600 CE was caused by nomadic invaders. These invasions weakened the empire, + ultimately led to its collapse.

The collapse of Rome was caused by nomadic invaders. Initially, these invasions took ~~away~~ territory on the outskirts of the Roman Empire. As the government weakened + its control loosened, the invaders were able to work themselves ~~into~~ deeper into the Empire. Eventually, the invaders took Rome, + the Empire collapsed.

After the fall of Rome, the empire was split into 2 sections: East + West. ~~that~~ ^{West} Rome did not reunify. It was split into many small kingdoms. No improvements or extensions were made to the Roman Empire in the ~~East~~ ^{West}. The ~~East~~ East however, was reunified under the emperor Constantine. This new empire became the Byzantine Empire. The Byzantine Empire sought to restore the Roman Empire. Though the Byzantine Empire flourished, it did not restore the glory of the Roman Empire completely.

In conclusion, the ^{imperial} decline + collapse from 600 BCE to 600 CE of the Roman Empire was

Scores and Commentary

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

Overview

This causation long essay question asks students to analyze the causes of imperial decline and collapse in the period c. 600 B.C.E. to 600 C.E.

Sample 3A

Score: 6

A. Thesis (1 point)

The thesis is the entirety of the first paragraph, where the response identifies a number of historically defensible claims about the decline of empires within the time period 600 B.C.E. to 600 C.E., including imperial overexpansion, invasions and cultural conflicts, and internal governmental instability.

B. Argument Development: Using the Targeted Historical Thinking Skill (2 points)

a) Argument Development – Describes (1 point)

While only two causes of imperial decline were required to earn this point, three causes are clearly identified and described:

- ♦ Territorial overexpansion: “The chief cause of imperial decline/collapse during this period was an over-expansion of territory.”
- ♦ Internal instability due to external threats: “Other factors contributed to this overall over-expansion, as outside groups disturbed the stability of the state.”
- ♦ Governmental weaknesses: “The states themselves were also contributing factors to their decline, as many imperial states had not established a government strong enough for its ambitions.”

b) Argument Development – Explains (1 point)

Only two causes of imperial decline require explanation to earn this point, but this response explains the three causes of imperial decline and/or collapse that it presents:

- ♦ Territorial overexpansion: “The chief cause of imperial decline/collapse during this period was an over-expansion of territory. During this time, power was defined by land, so empires/states focused on accumulating and controlling as much land as possible. While this strategy initially contributed to the power of the states, it ultimately led to their decline, as the expanse of the empires became too much for the state to control.”
- ♦ Internal instability due to external threats: “Other factors contributed to this overall over-expansion, as outside groups disturbed the stability of the state. In the Roman Empire, Germanic peoples from the West and competing, powerful states from the East threatened the stability of the Empire . . . In Han China, continuous conflicting powers and nomadic peoples disturbed the careful stability of the bureaucratic system.”

- ♦ Governmental weaknesses: “The states themselves were also contributing factors to their decline, as many imperial states had not established a government strong enough for its ambitions. In the Roman Empire, a chronically conflicting central government and fragile bureaucracy met individuals battling to be emperor, which did not create a strong/stable center to control its wild ambitions in expansion.”

C. Argument Development: Using Evidence (2 points)

a) Using Evidence – Examples (1 point)

The response identifies multiple specific historical examples associated with imperial decline and collapse. These include specific reference to Roman expansion in North Africa and the Middle East, the identification of Germans as invaders, and imperial dynastic rivalry.

b) Using Evidence – Effective Substantiation (1 point)

This response provides multiple instances where the specific evidence provided is used to effectively substantiate the thesis or argument:

- ♦ The response explains that the Roman expansion in North Africa and the Middle East led to Roman control over “cultures that did not blend in” (the statement that the expanding Roman Empire had a “Christian ideology” is chronologically inaccurate, but that error does not detract from the overall argument).
- ♦ The response explains that the Germanic invasions were caused by Roman infringement into “the boundaries of other powers and peoples.”
- ♦ The response explains that succession struggles weakened the Roman and Han empires because they coincided with chronic conflict between the “central government and [a] fragile bureaucracy.”

D. Synthesis (1 point)

The response earns the point for synthesis by extending and enriching the argument by bringing in an example of imperial decline from a different historical time period: “From a different historical context, at a much later time period, Napoleon’s state met similar causes of decline. While Napoleon’s wild ambition drove him to expand far beyond the stretches he was capable of maintaining, the stability of his power was compromised and reached a decline. In attempting to create a Europe-wide empire as well as an Empire in the new world, he reached his limits.”

Sample 3B

Score: 4

A. Thesis (1 point)

This response earns the point for thesis as it makes the historically defensible claim that “Rome’s decline and fall can be connected with social, political, and economic weaknesses such as invasion, corruption, and inflation of currency.” Had the response not included the specific references to invasion, corruption, and inflation of currency to support the claim, it would not have earned the point.

B. Argument Development: Using the Targeted Historical Thinking Skill (1 point)**a) Argument Development – Describes (1 point)**

The response includes a discussion of three causes. The discussion of the first cause (the “decline of social status” contributing to the decline of the empire) is too vague and broad to earn credit on its own. The response would have had to be more specific about which social classes were affected or be more precise about what is meant by “weaknesses in social aspects” for this cause to count toward the point. In this case, the discussion of the other two causes does qualify this response to earn this point. The response notes that “ineffective economic systems also caused the weakening of Rome” and that “ineffective rulers came to power . . . Also, greedy politicians stole vast amounts of money worsening the economic situation.”

b) Argument Development – Explains (0 points)

For the three causes identified, only one includes an explanation of the reasons for the decline and/or collapse; thus, the response does not earn this point. The one viable explanation the response provided pertained to how inflation led to economic decline: “From all of the conquest and expansion, Rome was left with extensive wealth. This led to inflation and the prices of goods and materials rose dramatically. Peasants the lower class were now not able to afford food. Also, with the price of goods raised, farmers and soldiers both became in debt and were not being paid.”

There is no explanation of how the decline of “social status” contributed to the decline of the empire. The response notes that attacks by “Franks and the Vikings” led to a loss of pride in the army, leading to the hiring of mercenaries and eventual collapse of the borders, but none of these are connected to “weaknesses in social aspects.” If the essay had argued that a cause of decline was overexpansion or the decline of the military, these explanations would have counted toward earning the point.

Similarly, there is no explanation of how political corruption led to decline. If the essay contained an such an explanation, it would have counted toward earning the point. The response also could have noted how increasing competition between political figures led to instability and then decline.

C. Argument Development: Using Evidence (2 points)**a) Using Evidence – Examples (1 point)**

The response includes multiple mentions of specific evidence; for instance, noting that the Franks threatened the Roman Empire, the empire employed mercenary soldiers, inflation was rampant within the empire, and the debts of farmers and soldiers increased rapidly within the empire.

b) Using Evidence – Effective Substantiation (1 point)

The response is awarded this point because it utilizes three pieces of evidence to fully and effectively substantiate the thesis, explaining how the invasions by the Franks contributed to the decline of the empire; explaining how the use of mercenaries, who were not as powerful as Roman soldiers, contributed to decline of the empire; and explaining how inflation and debt led to the decline of the empire.

D. Synthesis (0 points)

The response does not earn the point for synthesis because the essay does not attempt to develop arguments about a different historical period, situation, or era. It does not bring in an additional course theme or approach, nor does it introduce insights from a different discipline.

Sample 3C**Score: 1****A. Thesis (0 points)**

This response does not earn a point for thesis as it only provides one cause (nomadic invasion) for the decline and collapse of imperial states between 600 B.C.E. and 600 C.E. The response could have earned the point if it had clearly articulated in the thesis paragraph factors related to the political and cultural divisions within the Roman Empire, which the response begins to explore in the body of the essay.

B. Argument Development: Using the Targeted Historical Thinking Skill (0 points)**a) Argument Development – Describes (0 points)**

The response does not earn a point for describing the causes because it only accurately describes one cause of imperial decline and collapse in the body of the essay, whereas two are required to earn this point. The response achieves one description of a cause when it states, “The collapse of Rome was caused by nomadic invaders.” The statement, “After the fall of Rome, the empire was split into 2 sections: East & West” does not accurately describe a cause of the collapse of the empire. This statement describes imperial fragmentation, but not a cause of that fragmentation. Moreover, the essay asserts that the fragmentation caused the growth of the Byzantine Empire, which is not an example of decline or collapse. The response could have earned the point if it had accurately described a cause for the political or cultural fragmentation of the Roman Empire in the later part of the identified period.

b) Argument Development – Explains (0 points)

The response does not earn a point for explaining the causes because it successfully explains only one cause of imperial decline and collapse when two explanations are required. The one adequate explanation of a cause states that the invaders took advantage of government weakness to push further into the Roman territory, eventually being able to capture the capital, Rome.

C. Argument Development: Using Evidence (1 point)**a) Using Evidence – Examples (1 point)**

The response addresses the topic of the question with three pieces of specific evidence:

- ♦ The taking of the capital Rome
- ♦ The fragmentation of the empire as the split between East and West
- ♦ The leadership of the empire, Emperor Constantine

b) Using Evidence — Effective Substantiation (0 points)

The response does not effectively use evidence to substantiate the argument. The response identifies that invaders took Rome, but it does not extend this evidence to explain why or how the fall of the city led to full imperial collapse or decline. The response identifies the fragmentation of the empire during the period, but it does not specifically explain how this fragmentation led to collapse or decline. The response identifies a leader, Constantine, who is appropriate to the period and topic, but it does not explain how or why Constantine played a role in the empire's decline.

D. Synthesis (0 points)

The essay does not achieve synthesis because the essay does not attempt to develop arguments about a different historical period, situation, or era. It does not bring in an additional course theme or approach, nor does it introduce insights from a different discipline.