Sample Exam Questions

The sample questions that follow illustrate the relationship between the curriculum framework and the redesigned AP World History Exam and serve as examples of the types of questions that appear on the exam. Each question is followed by the main learning objectives and key concepts it addresses. For multiple-choice and short-answer questions, the historical thinking skills they address are also provided. A question may partially address other learning objectives, skills, or key concepts, but only the primary ones are listed.

For multiple-choice questions, an answer key is provided. A description of what good responses will include appears at the end of each short-answer question, the document-based question, and the long essay questions.

Sample rubrics for the document-based question and long essay questions are available on the AP World History home page on AP Central. These rubrics are the same for all three AP history courses and are closely aligned with the historical thinking skills.
Section I

Part A: Multiple-Choice Questions

As demonstrated in the following examples, question sets will be organized around two to five questions that focus on a primary source, secondary source, or historical issue.

Set 1: The stela depicting King Hammurabi with an inscription of The Code of Hammurabi provides evidence of state governance in Babylon during the second millennium B.C.E. The accompanying questions require that students have an understanding of the basis and means by which political elites ruled in early civilizations. Students must analyze this source within this specific historical context.

Questions 1–3 refer to the image below.

Basalt stela showing King Hammurabi of Babylon (circa 1750 B.C.E.) on the left and the sun god Shamash on the right. The Code of Hammurabi is inscribed at the bottom of the stela.
1. The relationship between Hammurabi and Shamash as depicted in the image best illustrates which of the following features of ancient civilizations?
(A) Rulers deferred to the priestly class for religious guidance.
(B) Rulers asserted that royal laws were superior to divine laws.
(C) Rulers created new religions to unify conquered peoples.
(D) Rulers claimed that their authority derived directly from divine power.

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<td>SB-1 Explain and compare how rulers constructed and maintained different forms of governance.</td>
<td>Contextualization</td>
<td>1.3.II.A</td>
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2. In addition to commissioning the creation of objects such as the one shown in the image, rulers of early civilizations most commonly used which of the following activities to demonstrate their religious authority?
(A) The creation of systems of record keeping
(B) The creation of epic mythologies
(C) The construction of water-control systems
(D) The construction of monumental architecture

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<tr>
<td>CUL-8 Explain how economic, religious, and political elites defined and sponsored art and architecture.</td>
<td>Contextualization</td>
<td>1.3.III.A</td>
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3. Which of the following best describes the significance of legal codes to early civilizations?
(A) They granted citizens the right to choose their rulers and representatives.
(B) They reflected and reinforced existing social and political hierarchies.
(C) They facilitated the introduction of monotheistic religions.
(D) They effectively settled disputes between pastoralist and agrarian communities.

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<td>SOC-4 Analyze ways in which legal systems have sustained or challenged class, gender, and racial ideologies.</td>
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Questions 4–7 refer to the chart below.

4. Which of the following best explains the changes illustrated in the chart during the period 400 B.C.E. to 600 C.E.?
   (A) The development of the Silk Road trade networks
   (B) The rise and collapse of the Han dynasty
   (C) The increased number and variety of domesticated animals
   (D) The development of large cities as social and administrative centers

Learning Objective

| SB-4 | Explain and compare how social, cultural, and environmental factors influenced state formation, expansion, and dissolution. | Causation | 2.2.I | 2.2.IV |
5. Which of the following best explains the changes illustrated in the chart during the period 800 C.E. to 1200 C.E.?
(A) Lower mortality rates in new trading cities
(B) Daoist support for commerce
(C) Large-scale migrations of Asian peoples
(D) Technological innovations in agricultural production

6. Which of the following best explains the changes illustrated in the chart during the period 1200 C.E. to 1400 C.E.?
(A) The Mongol invasions and spread of the bubonic plague
(B) An increase in peasant revolts against taxation
(C) An increase in the use of coerced labor
(D) The military expansion of the Islamic caliphate

7. Which of the following best explains the change illustrated in the chart after 1650?
(A) The influx of European merchants and trading companies into Asia
(B) The widespread adoption of American food crops in Asia
(C) The increase in Chinese agricultural exports to Europe and Japan
(D) The environmental effects of the Little Ice Age
**Set 3:** This set of questions is centered on documents that represent interactions between communities within the Persian and Roman empires in the eastern Mediterranean in the period 600 B.C.E. to 600 C.E. Based on their knowledge of governance and political authority within these states, students must make inferences about the relationships between these empires and religious minorities within their borders. In doing so, students must utilize the skills of argumentation and contextualization as well as causation.

Questions 8–10 refer to the two sources below.

**Source 1:**

“Petition to the Persian governor, from your servants, the Jews of the city of Elephantine [in southern Egypt]: May the God of Heaven seek your welfare and give you favor before the Persian Emperor Darius II. Three years ago, the local priests of Khnub, a local Egyptian river god, conspired with the local Persian commander to wipe out the temple of our God. The troops and the Egyptians entered the temple and razed it to the ground. Now we, your servants, all say thus: ‘If it please our lord, please rebuild this temple. If you send a letter to that effect to the city authorities, then the offerings and incense in the new temple shall be offered in your name and all the Jews will pray for you at all times. And you shall have a merit before the God of Heaven even more than a man who offers Him burnt offerings and sacrifices worth a thousand weights of silver and gold.’”

Response from the governor: “Let this be an instruction to you in Elephantine . . . to rebuild the temple on its site as it was before, and offerings to be made and incense to be poured on that altar as they used to be.”

*Petition of Jewish citizens of Elephantine and response by the Persian governor, 407 B.C.E.*

**Source 2:**

“When news of the recent fighting between Greeks and Jews in Alexandria reached me, I was not willing to assign any specific blame, but I have stored up great anger against anyone who begins fighting again. And I will say that if you do not end this deadly conflict, I will be forced to show you what even a benevolent leader is like when he is turned to righteous anger. Therefore, I command you, the Alexandrian Greeks, to behave tolerantly and benevolently towards the Jews, since they have lived in the same city as you for many years, and not to abuse the religious rites which they practice, but to allow them to observe their own customs which they observed also in the time of the Emperor Augustus. However, I also order the Jews not to agitate for greater privileges than they enjoyed in the past, and not to send to me in the future another separate delegation to advocate their cause, without first referring the matter to the Roman municipal authorities in Alexandria.”

*Roman Emperor Claudius, letter to the people of Alexandria in Roman Egypt, 41 C.E.*
8. The presence of Jewish communities in Elephantine and Alexandria was most directly the result of which of the following?
(A) The proselytizing activities of Jewish priests and missionaries
(B) The migration of Jews as a result of foreign conquest and trade opportunities
(C) The unification of Israel and Judea under the House of David
(D) The expansion of Hellenism in the eastern Mediterranean under the successor states to the Macedonian empire

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<tr>
<td>CUL-2 Explain how religious belief systems spread as a result of expanding communication and exchange networks.</td>
<td>Causation</td>
<td>2.1.I.A</td>
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9. Taken together, the two sources best illustrate which of the following aspects of political authority in the period circa 600 B.C.E.–600 C.E.?
(A) Rulers claimed to rule by virtue of having the approval and support of the gods.
(B) Rulers used local administrative institutions to manage the affairs of far-flung regions.
(C) Rulers relied on the consent of the governed to prevent religious conflicts.
(D) Rulers’ ability to set policies and resolve conflicts was limited by existing legal codes and precedents.

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10. Taken together, the two sources best support which of the following inferences about large empires and religious minorities in the period circa 600 B.C.E.–600 C.E.?
(A) Many empires used their militaries to persecute religious groups suspected of being disloyal to the state.
(B) Led by a desire to preserve political unity, many empires curbed intercommunal conflicts and offered minorities limited religious toleration.
(C) Seeking to expand trade, many imperial governments actively encouraged the immigration of religious minorities and their settlement in imperial cities.
(D) Because of their traditions of democratic government, empires relied on petitions and delegations from local populations to help them formulate policies.
Questions 11–14 refer to the map below.

Set 4: This set of questions is based on the analysis of a plan of the capital city of the Tang Empire in the eighth century C.E. The accompanying questions require student understanding of urban and religious development in China within a larger Eurasian context during the period 600 C.E. to 1450 and the establishment and changing nature of relevant trade routes over time. In addition to contextualization, students must also employ the historical thinking skill of causation.
11. Based on the map and your knowledge of world history, which of the following likely encouraged the development of cities such as Chang’an?

(A) The growth, in volume and extent, of overland trade and commerce

(B) Improvements in maritime technology, such as the compass and lateen sail

(C) The spread of Buddhism into East Asia

(D) Long-distance migrations of central Asian peoples

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<td>Causation</td>
<td>3.1.I.A</td>
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12. The layout of the city as shown in the map most clearly reflects which of the following developments of the time period?

(A) Societies using technological adaptations to deal with changing environments

(B) Populations increasing as a result of new crops such as Champa rice

(C) Cities and towns implementing new measures to control the spread of epidemic disease

(D) Governments building infrastructure to promote economic activity

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<td>SB-5</td>
<td>Contextualization</td>
<td>3.1.I.D</td>
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13. The variety of temples shown on the map of Chang’an was most likely the result of which of the following broader processes from 600 to 1450 C.E.?

(A) Diffusion of cultural traditions along the Silk Roads

(B) Conquests by nomadic Central Asian groups

(C) Religious conflict resulting from the An Lushan rebellion

(D) Neoconfucian influence on the Tang government

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<td>Causation</td>
<td>3.1.III.D</td>
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</table>
14. The integration of natural bodies of water and waterways in the plans for the palace most likely shows the influence of which of the following?

(A) Daoism
(B) Confucianism
(C) Zoroastrianism
(D) Buddhism

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<td>CUL.1</td>
<td>Contextualization</td>
<td>2.1.II.C</td>
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<tr>
<td>Compare the origins, principal beliefs, and practices of the major world religions and belief systems.</td>
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**Set 5:** The questions accompanying this excerpt from the Charter of the Dutch West India Company require that students understand the context, causes, and consequences of global economic rivalries and strategies between European states within the period 1450 to 1750.

Questions 15–18 refer to the charter below.

“We know that the prosperity of the Netherlands and the welfare of their inhabitants depends principally on navigation and trade, and we find by experience that without the common help, assistance, and interposition of a General Company, Dutch merchants cannot be profitably protected and maintained in their great risk from pirates, extortion, and otherwise, which will happen in so very long a voyage. We have found it good that navigation, trade, and commerce in the West Indies and Africa should not henceforth be carried on any otherwise than by the common united strength of the merchants and inhabitants of the Netherlands. And for that end there shall be erected one General Company.

Moreover, we furnish the General Company with a proper charter and with the following privileges and exemptions, namely that for 24 years none of the natives or inhabitants of the Netherlands who are not affiliated with the General Company shall be permitted to sail to the Americas or the West Indies.”

Charter of the Dutch West India Company, 1621

15. The risks mentioned in the first paragraph are best understood in the context of which of the following historical developments?

(A) Competition with African states for the profits from the slave trade
(B) Competition with Catholic European states to convert Amerindian peoples
(C) Competition with European states for the profits of global trade
(D) Competition with Asian empires for the profits of the spice trade
### Multiple-Choice Questions

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<td><strong>ECON-3</strong> Assess the economic strategies of different types of states and empires.</td>
<td>Contextualization</td>
<td>4.3.III</td>
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16. The privileges and exemptions mentioned in the second paragraph of the passage are best seen as an example of which of the following?

(A) Social Darwinism  
(B) Feudalism  
(C) Laissez-faire economics  
(D) Mercantilist practices

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<tr>
<td><strong>ECON-13</strong> Analyze how international economic institutions, regional trade agreements, and corporations–both local and multinational–have interacted with state economic authority.</td>
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17. Organizations of the type created by the charter most directly contributed to which of the following developments in the period 1450–1750 c.e.?

(A) An increase in peasant revolts  
(B) The emergence of new economic and political elites  
(C) The implementation of restrictions on religious freedom  
(D) The spread of Chinese and Indian technologies

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<td><strong>SB-4</strong> Explain and compare how social, cultural, and environmental factors influenced state formation, expansion, and dissolution.</td>
<td>Causation</td>
<td>4.2.II.A</td>
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</table>
18. The economic activities referenced in the charter most directly contributed to which of the following in the period 1450–1750 C.E.?

(A) A decrease in the publication of travel narratives

(B) Increased funding for the visual and performing arts

(C) Decreased spending on the construction of religious centers

(D) Dutch becoming the predominant language for commercial transactions

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<tr>
<td>CUL9 Explain the relationship between expanding exchange networks and the emergence of various forms of transregional culture, including music, literature, and visual art.</td>
<td>Causation</td>
<td>4.1.VII</td>
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Set 6: This set of questions — centered on the speech by the British governor of Bombay Presidency in 1863 — explores the causes and consequences of intensifying industrialization and changes in communication and transportation technologies on European colonies such as India. Students must analyze the ideas expressed in the governor’s speech within their historical context.

Questions 19–23 refer to the passage below.

“I can safely say that before the commencement of what I may call the Railway Period, not only were the wages in most parts of the country established by tradition and authority, rather than by the natural laws of supply and demand, but the opportunity to work was in general restricted to particular spots. For the first time in history the Indian finds that he has in his power of labor a valuable possession which, if he uses it right, will give him something much better than mere subsistence. Follow him to his own home, in some remote village, and you will find that the railway laborer has carried to his own village not only new modes of working, new wants, and a new feeling of self-respect and independence, but new ideas of what government and laws can offer him. And he is, I believe, a better and more loyal subject, as he is certainly a more useful laborer.”

Bartle Frere, British governor of the Bombay Presidency, India, speech on opening of a rail line, 1863

19. Frere’s speech is best understood in the context of which of the following?

(A) Governments in Asian empires undertaking economic reforms to catch up with European powers

(B) Governments undertaking political and social reforms to mitigate the effects of industrial capitalism

(C) Governments expanding and consolidating their empires using their increasing industrial power

(D) Governments promoting redistributionist policies to reduce income inequality between labor and capital
Multiple-Choice Questions

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<td>SB-3 Analyze how state formation and expansion were influenced by various forms of economic organization, such as agrarian, pastoral, mercantile, and industrial production.</td>
<td>Contextualization</td>
<td>5.2.I.A</td>
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20. The developments described in the speech regarding the lifting of traditional restrictions on Indian labor contributed most directly to which of the following global processes?

(A) Protests for improved sanitation and living conditions in industrial cities
(B) Long-distance and overseas migrations of contractual and coerced workers
(C) The decline of Spanish and Portuguese influence in the Indian Ocean
(D) The emergence of new racial ideologies that supported European imperialism

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<tr>
<td>ECON-6 Explain and compare the causes and effects of different forms of coerced labor systems.</td>
<td>Causation</td>
<td>5.4.II.B</td>
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21. Which of the following best explains Frere’s characterization of the time of his speech as the “Railway Period” in British India?

(A) Railways provided a means for Hindu pilgrims to visit sacred sites quickly and cheaply.
(B) Railways allowed British missionaries to spread Christianity more effectively.
(C) Railways opened up access to interior markets and resources for British commercial interests.
(D) Railways eased the overcrowding in Indian cities by allowing industrial workers to commute from suburban areas.

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<td>ECON-12 Evaluate how and to what extent networks of exchange have expanded, contracted, or changed over time.</td>
<td>Contextualization</td>
<td>5.1.IV</td>
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22. Frere’s view of the changing opportunities for Indian labor most directly reflects the influence of which of the following?

(A) The ideals of classical liberalism as stated by Adam Smith and John Stuart Mill
(B) The ideals of communism as stated by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels
(C) The ideals of the Enlightenment as stated by political revolutionaries such as Simon Bolivar
(D) The ideals of mercantilism as developed by state-sponsored joint-stock trading companies such as the British East India Company

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23. Which of the following later developments would most undermine the hopes set forth by Frere in the last sentence of his speech?

(A) Easier access to Indian raw materials led to a decrease in prices of British manufactured goods.
(B) Japanese emulation of Western models of development spurred imperial rivalries that led to the Second World War.
(C) Improved transportation and communication in India helped develop a shared sense of identity that led to greater Indian nationalism.
(D) Increased migration would lead to the creation of Indian ethnic enclaves in Great Britain and other parts of the British Empire.

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Questions 24–26 refer to the passage below.

**Political Consequences of the Spanish Conquest of Mexico**

Because Mexico was the most important of the Spanish conquests, it was governed by rulers of very high standing, almost equal to that of the Spanish kings. In this way the inhabitants of our Republic—Indians of different races, *mestizos* [people of Spanish and Indian parentage], and *criollos* [American-born people of European ancestry]—all became accustomed to feeling Mexican and to loving one another as compatriots. This was surely the most important consequence of the conquest, because it was for this reason that dispersed and different tribes of Indians came to be patriotic Mexicans, without distinction of race and color.

**Ethnic Consequences of the Conquest**

The Spaniard as an individual is sometimes a proud man, and prone to violent short-temperedness; however, the populating of the lands that he conquered and colonized is a living testimony to the fact that his soul contains a profound feeling for all humanity. He never accepted the hateful idea that there are inferior races that are destined to perish en masse or serve forever others who consider themselves superior. The consequence of this worldview was that, beginning with Cortés himself and his captains, the conquistadors and colonizers fully mixed with the Indians, which brought into being the *mestizo*, which currently constitutes the most important element of the Mexican population. A moment will soon come when the people of Mexico are unified by the love for their country.”

Elementary school history book approved for use in all Mexican schools by Mexico’s Ministry of Education, 1951

24. The interpretation of Mexican history presented in the passage is most strongly influenced by which of the following?

(A) Marxism

(B) Anticolonialism

(C) Social Darwinism

(D) Nationalism
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<td>Interpretation</td>
<td>5.3.II</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SOC-7</strong> Analyze the ways in which colonialism, nationalism, and independence movements have sustained or challenged class, gender, and racial ideologies.</td>
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25. The reference in the second paragraph to “the hateful idea that there are inferior races” is best understood in the context of which of the following twentieth-century developments?

(A) The Spanish Civil War

(B) The final dissolution of the Spanish colonial empire

(C) The Holocaust in Europe during the Second World War

(D) The migration of former colonial subjects to Europe

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<td><strong>SB-7</strong> Assess how and why internal conflicts, such as revolts and revolutions, have influenced the process of state building, expansion, and dissolution.</td>
<td>Contextualization</td>
<td>6.2.III.C</td>
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26. Present-day historians would most likely agree with which of the following aspects of the interpretation in the 1951 school textbook?

(A) The omission of the demographic effects of the Spanish conquest on the Indians

(B) The claim that the ethnic and racial hierarchies of colonial Mexico were egalitarian in nature

(C) The gendered language and use of ethnic stereotypes to describe the conquerors

(D) The suggestion that the Spanish conquest of Mexico resulted in the formation of new identities

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<td><strong>SOC-4</strong> Analyze ways in which legal systems have sustained or challenged class, gender, and racial ideologies.</td>
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Questions 27–29 refer to the passage below.

“The suggestion made by the prosecution in its opening statement that the [anti-Apartheid movement] in South Africa is under the influence of foreigners or communists is wholly incorrect. I have done whatever I did, both as an individual and as a leader of my people, because of my experience in South Africa and my own proudly felt African background.

South Africa is the richest country in Africa and could be one of the richest countries in the world. But it is a land of extremes and remarkable contrasts. The Whites enjoy what may well be the highest standard of living in the world, while Africans live in poverty and misery. Forty percent of the Africans live in hopelessly overcrowded and, in some cases, drought-stricken reserves. Thirty percent are laborers, labor tenants, and squatters on White farms and work and live under conditions similar to those of the serfs of the Middle Ages.

The complaint of Africans, however, is not only that they are poor and the Whites are rich, but that the laws which are made by the Whites are designed to preserve this situation. The lack of human dignity experienced by Africans is the direct result of the policy of White supremacy.”

Nelson Mandela, speech to a South African court while standing trial for acts of sabotage, 1964

27. The state’s claim as described in the first paragraph is best understood in the context of which of the following?

(A) The Non-Aligned Movement
(B) Decolonization
(C) The Cold War
(D) Economic nationalization

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<th>Key Concept in the Curriculum Framework</th>
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<tr>
<td>SB-8 Assess how and why external conflicts and alliances have influenced the process of state building, expansion, and dissolution.</td>
<td>Contextualization</td>
<td>6.2.IV.C</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOC-7 Analyze the ways in which colonialism, nationalism, and independence movements have sustained or challenged class, gender, and racial ideologies.</td>
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</table>
28. The economic conditions described by Mandela in the second paragraph would lead many former European colonies to embrace which of the following?

(A) The reestablishment of European rule

(B) The sale of state-owned land to Western entrepreneurs

(C) The implementation of redistributionist economic policies

(D) The encouragement of immigration to Europe

Learning Objective

SOC-3 Assess the impact that different ideologies, philosophies, and religions had on social hierarchies.

<table>
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<td>Causation</td>
<td>6.2.II.D</td>
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29. Which of the following provided justification for the South African government’s policies as described by Mandela in the third paragraph?

(A) Anti-Imperialism

(B) Liberal Nationalism

(C) Socialism

(D) Social Darwinism

Learning Objective

SOC-6 Analyze the extent to which philosophies, medical practices, and scientific theories sustained or challenged class, gender, and racial ideologies.

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## Answers to Multiple-Choice Questions

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