

Long Essay Question 3

Note: As explained in the Preface, the instructions shown here are the ones that students will be given beginning with the 2016 AP U.S. History Exam.

Question 2 or Question 3

Suggested writing time: 35 minutes

Directions: 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).
2. Evaluate the extent to which the Seven Years' War (French and Indian War, 1754–1763) marked a turning point in American relations with Great Britain.

In the development of your argument, analyze what changed and what stayed the same from the period before the war to the period after it. (*Historical thinking skill: Periodization*)

3. Evaluate the extent to which the Mexican-American War (1846–1848) marked a turning point in the debate over slavery in the United States.

In the development of your argument, analyze what changed and what stayed the same from the period before the war to the period after it. (*Historical thinking skill: Periodization*)

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

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Scoring Guidelines and Notes for Long Essay Question 3

Evaluate the extent to which the Mexican-American War (1846–1848) marked a turning point in the debate over slavery in the United States.

In the development of your argument, analyze what changed and what stayed the same from the period before the war to the period after it. (*Historical thinking skill: Periodization*).

Curriculum Framework Alignment

Learning Objectives	Historical Thinking Skills	Key Concepts
WOR-1.0 Explain how cultural interaction, cooperation, competition, and conflict between empires, nations, and peoples have influenced political, economic, and social developments in North America.	Targeted: › Periodization	5.1 I 5.2 II
NAT-3.0 Analyze how ideas about national identity changed in response to U.S. involvement in international conflicts and the growth of the United States.	Additional Skills: › Argumentation › Synthesis	
POL-1.0 Explain how and why political ideas, beliefs, institutions, party systems, and alignments have developed and changed.		

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 nor respond to all parts of the question.

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

Targeted Skills: Argumentation (E2 and E3) and Periodization (D5 and D6)

- 1 point** Describes the ways in which the historical development specified in the prompt was different from and similar to developments that preceded AND followed.
- 1 point** Explains the extent to which the historical development specified in the prompt was different from and similar to developments that preceded AND followed.

0 points Does not describe the ways in which the historical development specified in the prompt was different from and similar to developments that preceded AND followed.

Scoring Note:

- ♦ *If the prompt requires evaluation of a turning point, then responses must discuss developments that preceded AND followed in order to earn either point.*
- ♦ *If the prompt requires evaluation of the characteristics of an era, then responses can discuss developments that EITHER preceded OR followed 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 or C5)

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)

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: Test-taker responses define the chronological beginning and end points for the essay; the focus of the response helps determine what information is considered appropriate.

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 not split between the two.

Examples of acceptable thesis:

- ♦ “The Mexican-American War marked a turning point in the debate over slavery in the United States by unleashing a massive tension between the North and South on what land would be free and what land would be slave.”
- ♦ “The Mexican-American War marked a huge turning point in the debate over slavery because it brought to light the controversy of territorial self-determination and asked the question that would define America on a fundamental level: is this country one of slavery or one of freedom?”
- ♦ “The Mexican-American War was not a significant turning point in the debate over slavery because sectional divisions over the Mexican Cession did not increase until after the Compromise of 1850, a much more significant turning point.”

Examples of unacceptable thesis:

A thesis that does not address the debate over slavery and/or does not evaluate the extent to which the war was a turning point:

- ♦ “The Mexican-American War marked a turning point in the debate over slavery in the U.S.”
- ♦ “The addition of vast territories as a result of the Mexican-American War opened up tremendous lands to slave cotton production.”
- ♦ “The Compromise of 1850 with its controversial points, not the Mexican-American War, was the major turning point of 19th century.”

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

Note: In evaluation of a turning point, responses must discuss developments that preceded AND followed in order to earn either point.

a) Argument Development – Describes

Responses earn one point by *describing* the way in which the debate over slavery that resulted from the Mexican–American War was different from and similar to the debates over slavery that preceded it (1 point).

Examples of acceptable descriptions of difference and similarity:

- ♦ An example that focus on similarities: “Although the U.S. acquired more land after the war, the debate remained the same as before: how to admit the states and decide whether they would be free or slave.”
- ♦ An example that focus on differences: “The Mexican War did exacerbate sectionalism significantly. Before the war, the debate over the expansion of slavery and the balance of free and slave states had been somewhat settled by the Missouri Compromise. However, in the Treaty of Guadalupe – Hidalgo, the U.S. was granted vast new lands, including California and New Mexico. Debate immediately ensued over the state of slavery in the new lands.”

Examples of unacceptable descriptions of difference and similarity:

- ♦ Responses that do not address the situation before and after the war; responses that focus only on differences without address similarities or vice versa; responses with confused chronology; responses that are vague or not tied to the debate over slavery:
- ♦ The following response is not tied to the debate over slavery: “After the Mexican-American War, U.S. gained land in the southwest. Because this would upset the balance of slave and free states too much, the government decided to implement popular sovereignty.”
- ♦ The following response is an example of confused chronology: “After the Mexican-American War, the issue of slavery arose and led to the Missouri Compromise.”

b) Argument Development – Explains

Responses earn one separate point by *explaining the extent to which* the debate over slavery after the Mexican–American War was different from and similar to the debates over slavery that preceded it (1 point).

Examples of acceptable explanations of the extent of difference and similarity:

- ♦ In a response claiming that the war was not a turning point: “Long before the war, sectional conflicts could be seen in the Missouri Compromise, in which both North and South argued about the spread of slavery. After the war, these conflicts continued much as before, in episodes such as the Compromise of 1850 and the Kansas-Nebraska Act, which both addressed the issue of slavery. ”
- ♦ In a response claiming that the war was a turning point (and having already addressed the level of debate before the war): “After the Mexican-American War, the debate became over what to do with the newly acquired

territory and ultimately led to the creation of new parties. . . . Though the United States was unwilling to admit it, the political aspect of the country was turning into one all about slavery. The demographic of political parties changed and foreshadowed the civil war.”

Examples of unacceptable explanations of the extent of difference and similarity:

- ♦ Explanations that do not clearly tie to a development before or after the war; explanations that do not explain the extent of change or continuity but simply note that there was or was not a change: The following merely describes change without addressing the extent: “When the war ended, the acquisition of new land led to debates over the status of slavery in those territories.”

C. Argument Development: Using Evidence (2 points)

a) Using Evidence – Examples

Responses earn one point by *addressing* the topic of the question with specific examples of relevant evidence (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:

- ♦ Manifest Destiny
- ♦ Missouri Compromise (1820)
- ♦ Increasing fear of slave power
- ♦ William Lloyd Garrison, *The Liberator* (1830)
- ♦ Gag rule
- ♦ Frederick Douglass
- ♦ Annexation of Texas (1845)
- ♦ Opposition to Mexican–American War among northern Whigs
- ♦ Abraham Lincoln Spot Resolutions (1846)
- ♦ Wilmot Proviso
- ♦ Popular sovereignty
- ♦ Stephen A. Douglas
- ♦ Compromise of 1850
- ♦ California enters as free state
- ♦ Stricter fugitive slave law
- ♦ Popular sovereignty in Utah and New Mexico Territory
- ♦ Slave trade banned in Washington, D.C.
- ♦ Kansas–Nebraska Act (1854)
- ♦ Formation of Republican Party (1854)
- ♦ Bleeding Kansas (1855)
- ♦ *Dred Scott v. Sandford* (1857)

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

Evidence that is factually incorrect, confused about chronology, or not directly tied to the question (i.e., not connected to the debate over slavery):

- ♦ The following use of evidence does not clearly connect to the debate over slavery: “The Missouri Compromise was an act that banned slavery in states above a certain parallel. The Kansas Nebraska Act allowed for popular sovereignty in those new states west of the Mississippi.”
- ♦ The following example confuses chronology and is factually incorrect: “Prior to the war, the issue of slavery in the states was settled by the Compromise of 1850, which banned slavery in Missouri.”

b) Using Evidence – Effective Substantiation

Responses earn a separate point by utilizing specific examples of evidence *to fully and effectively substantiate a thesis or relevant argument* about the degree to which the Mexican–American War marked a turning point in the debate over slavery (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 degree to which the war was a turning point.

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

Evidence that could be used to argue the Mexican–American War was not a turning point:

- ♦ Ongoing debates over slavery that continued before and after the war including William Lloyd Garrison, *The Liberator* (1830), and the passage of the Gag Rule prior to the war; prior expansion of slavery into the Texas territories and debates over this expansion, including debates over Texas annexation; possibly more significant turning points, such as The Compromise of 1850 or the Kansas–Nebraska Act.

Evidence that could be used to argue the Mexican–American War was a turning point:

- ♦ The increased debate over “free soil” and expansion of slavery; debates surrounding the Wilmot Proviso; the need for addressing the influx of new territories and the effect that had on increasing sectional debates over slavery; the changes to the party system, including the death of the Whigs and the rise of the Republican Party, much of it centered on issues of expansion of slavery into the territories acquired by through the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.

Examples of unsuccessfully attempting to substantiate an argument with evidence:

- ♦ Examples that lack explanation of how evidence supports the argument that the war was or was not a turning point: “The Compromise of 1850 was drafted that made more of the newly acquired states free, and to appease the South it created the fugitive slave law, which returned ‘escaped’ slave to their owners, but this was abused since many slaves captured and returned were actually free.”

D. Synthesis (1 point)

Responses earn a point for synthesis by extending their argument in one of two 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.

Possible connections might include: assessing the impact of the Mexican–American War and the debate over slavery on American Indian and Hispanic people living in the territory transferred from Mexico to the United States; concretely and explicitly linking the Mexican–American War and the debate over slavery to earlier imperial conflicts such as the Seven Years' War; concretely and explicitly linking the Mexican–American War and the debate over slavery to subsequent developments, such as the Civil War and Reconstruction.

Note: An essay that discussed the Civil War in its main turning point argument would not also receive a synthesis point for doing so.

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

- ♦ “The increased tensions over the debate over slavery that resulted from the Mexican-American War continued to show themselves in racial tensions in the Civil War and beyond. These tensions boiled up again in the 1960s as Southerners fought the expansion of rights to African Americans. While the Mexican-American War amounted to a great turning point in the debate over slavery, Johnson’s War on Poverty amounted to a turning point in the Civil Rights Movement.”

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

- ♦ Responses that do not address the connection between the two contexts in relation to the question. For example, in the following sample, the response does not connect the debate over slavery to the debate over imperialism but merely states that both wars resulted in acquisition of land: “This era is very similar to that of the very late 1800s in which the U.S. instigated a war with Spain in order to attain land, as done in Mexico during this period.”

- 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)

Possible connections might include: explicitly calling out the cultural, gender, or racial elements of a largely diplomatic/political development.

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

- ♦ In an otherwise political essay: “The Mexican War created political imbalance because the balance between slave and free states from the Missouri Compromise ended. This loss of power in Congress resulted in an increase in the slaveowners’ oppression of their slaves. They were afraid

of also losing control of the social class structure seen in the South and the risk of losing their social and economic status. So the political crisis caused by the Mexican War also had a social element as well.”

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

- ♦ Students' failed attempts to link the central argument of the essay to a different course theme can take many different forms. They may not land on a central theme focus of analysis, may not include an alternate theme, or may not link an alternate theme well to the original theme in response to the prompt.

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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During the 1840s the US was extending beyond its traditional east coast borders and embracing the idea of Manifest Destiny: that it was God-given right to expand from sea to shining sea. Thus this time period saw the acquisition of lots of new land both by peaceful & violent means, and this usage of his new land sparked a hot topic of debate. At the end of the Mexican American war in 1848, the US received the Mexican cession, which constituted much of the modern day American SW, however this victory celebration was soon short lived when the US plummeted into an era of intense sectionalism. ~~What despite~~ Throughout this period the northern and southern regions of the US remained fundamentally different and opposed to each other. However, the debate as to what to do with the new land acquired from Mexico sparked intense political turmoil, marked a period of heightened animosity between the regions, and was the pre of the most important events leading the nation into the Civil war. Thus, the end of the Mexican-American war forever changed the course of American history.

First, the acquisition of the Mexican cession sparked heated political debate as to how to handle slavery & the addition of these new

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Mandatory 1	Circle one 2 or 3
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territories and states into the union. The Missouri Compromise had been put in place in 1820 saying slavery couldn't extend past a certain point along an imaginary parallel dividing the nation. ~~was the first~~ This first place up of sectionalism settled back down until around 1848. When the US got all the new territory from Mexico, it didn't take action right away on deciding how to handle the admittance of new territories. This proclamation proved to be an issue when gold was found in California and the California gold rush of 1849. CA was soon populated enough to become a state, and would be a free one, but this infuriated southerners because it would upset the balance of free vs. slave states. This sparked intense political debate as how to remedy the situation and Henry Clay proposed the Compromise of 1850. This admitted CA in as a free state along w/ another slave state to keep the balance, called for a stricter fugitive slave act, and ended the slave trade in DC. This may have temporarily postponed the civil war, but as more states appeared to be added to the union, problems kept arising — which can be seen in the issue over Kansas & Nebraska

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

Mandatory 1	Circle one 2 or (3)
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and the presence of slavery in these states coming to a head with Bleeding Kansas. Congress was just as violent and incapable of compromise, too and the coming of Charles Sumner epitomizes the political tensions that the issue of the expansion of slavery created. Thus, starting with the acquisition of the Mexican cession and only mounting with time & increased population in the territories, the issue of slavery created a dividing line amongst political leaders like no one before.

Secondly, after 1848, the Northern and Southern regions became more and more opposed to each other. ~~Over~~ time, the regions had become so different just due to the nature of their respective economies. The north was exponentially more industrial than the south, especially after the pre-Civil War era Market Revolution. The south was much less developed and ~~dependent~~ agriculture, which depended on slave labor, was the cornerstone of their society. Therefore, the south saw an attack/opposition to slavery as a direct threat & act of aggression towards them. This increased ~~external~~ internal animosity reached new heights with John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry, ~~which~~ and his followers destroyed everything in their paths and caused massive destruction & violence. This was a turning point in the road to the Civil War because now

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

Mandatory 1	Circle one 2 or (3)
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The South felt as though the northerners' only goal was to destroy them, when in actuality, this had been just an example of radicalism. Nevertheless, the animosities continued to build, all stemming from the issue of the expansion of the institution of slavery, which had been sparked in 1850.

~~Despite~~ ^{Despite} extreme changes in the political and social climate of the US during this time, many aspects of the issue of slavery stayed the same. Slavery had been an institution in America since before the revolutionary war and remained to be one until the end of the Civil War. In addition, during this time of sectionalism, the differences developed between the North and the South decades before became even more enduring as neither side wanted to concede to the other. During Reconstruction, there were attempts made to "industrialize the South," but even today, the South remains fundamentally different from the North in its landscape, values and way of life. This ~~despite~~ ^{despite} although it instilled a remarkable amount of change in American society, the divisions slavery created between the North and the South remained entrenched in the hearts of the people for years to come.

While ~~to~~ ^{to} certain aspects of Southern vs Northern life remained unchanged after the

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

Mandatory

1

Circle one

2 or (3)

sectionalist period, ~~the~~ an overwhelming amount of things changed. As the era of Manifest Destiny wound down and the US was awarded the Mexican Cession, the country was at a crossroads, and had to decide how to handle the issue of slavery, one of the most divisive issues in history. Following the Civil War, the nation was never the same again, but the S vs N. issues still persisted throughout Reconstruction and beyond. This is much like the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s, while America went thru a drastic transformation and African-Americans received a great amount of advancements and improvement in their standings in society, issues of racism continue to persist today, especially with the hand in hand with the issue of police brutality. As the saying goes, the more things seem to change, the more they stay the same.

Sample 3B

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

Mandatory 1	Circle one 2 or 3
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As America began to expand ^{its} ~~the~~ borders it began to overstep its own boundaries. However the Manifest Destiny was still alive and Americans continued west, whether it was their land or next. This led to the conflict of the Mexican-American War which eventually resulted in the U.S. gaining Texas, California, New Mexico and additional land. While it did ~~increase~~ ^{increase} the U.S. territory by ~~one~~ ^{more} third it also resulted in many conflicts due to the topic of slavery. As the U.S. entered the 1850s it ~~was~~ tensions were rising between the North and South. Ultimately ^{this debate} it was one of the causes of the Civil War, thus playing a major point in the debate over slavery.

According to the Missouri Compromise the line between slave states and free states had been drawn. However, as the U.S. acquired the territory of California the topic of slavery became an issue again. This was the Compromise of 1850 which allowed California to join the Union as a free state, ^{though it was about the set slavery line,} and allow the south to be slave states.

However, it also included the strengthening of the Fugitive Slave Act which angered many Northerners as well as banning the slave trade in the nation's capital, though slavery was still legal. This was a temporary fix. Tensions increased even more with the Kansas-Nebraska Act which would allow Kansas to become a slave or free state based on popular sovereignty. This led to events like Bleeding Kansas. Another

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

Mandatory

1

Circle one

2 or 3

issued that stoked up resentments between the North and South was the results of the Dred Scott case, which the Supreme Court stated that slaves were property and Congress could not ~~exceed~~ ^{exceed} their powers by removing property and that states would decide on its status. Events like these increased tensions that eventually accumulated to the Civil War.

As a result of the Mexican-American War, the new territories gained sparked many debates of over slavery. However, some things did remain the same. Slavery was still strongly supported in the South as well as deemed a necessity to the prosperity of the Southern economy. Although there were also many changes. Tensions increased and popular sovereignty became the new method of deciding a states status in the Union. Furthermore, the number of slave states and free states started to become unbalanced.

Though the Mexican-American War didn't directly affect the status of slavery, its results, as in the territories acquired, did become a turning point in the ratio of slave states to free states as well as escalate the tensions between the North and South. This was a pivotal aspect that led to the Civil War and the debate over slavery with the election of 1860.

Sample 3C

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

Mandatory 1	Circle one 2 or 3
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The issue of slavery has been a pivotal point of conflict in many countries for generations, while each struggle has been unique in its own way, they have all had several turning points ~~that~~ that changed their course forever. For America and the issue of slavery, one specific turning point occurred between the years of 1846 and 1848. The Mexican-American war brought about essential differences when the issue of how to deal with the new territory arrived, yet remained constant in the fact that the tensions between the North and the South were still ~~was~~ very intense.

First of all, the victory in the Mexican-American war left the United States with the issue on how to deal with its new territory. The ~~compromise~~ ^{compromise of 1850} to resolve this issue involved letting the states choose for themselves through the process of popular sovereignty. This brought about change because it meant that the states would get to make their own choices regardless of how this had been determined in the past. It also brought about a key difference ~~was~~ because it opened up the door to having an unequal amount of slave or free states depending on what the majority of people in each individual wanted. From the evidence ~~above~~ above, it is clear that the Mexican-American war caused significant differences in the debate over slavery during this time.

While there were many changes, the overall tension

Scores and Commentary

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

Overview

This long essay question asks students to evaluate the extent to which the Mexican-American War marked a turning point in the debate over slavery in the United States. Students must write an essay that contains a plausible thesis, develops an argument, supports the argument with relevant evidence, and synthesizes the information to make a larger argument about U.S. history. This question primarily assesses student understanding of events in Period 3 (1754 to 1800), the themes of America in the World (WOR), American and National Identity (NAT), and Politics and Power (POL), and the historical thinking skills of periodization, argumentation, and synthesis.

Sample: 3A

Score: 6

A. Thesis (1 point)

The thesis is located in the last two sentences of a well-developed introduction. The thesis clearly demonstrates the long-term impact of the Mexican–American War in terms of the heightened tensions over the status of the newly acquired lands, and it evaluates the impact of the Mexican–American War on the sectional question.

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

a) Argument Development – Describes (1 point)

This response describes both similarities and differences before and after the war. In terms of similarities, the essay notes that the economic base for both sections remained throughout the era, “slavery had been an institution in America since before the Revolutionary War,” and the southern agrarian economy and northern industrialization. Differences are addressed by the heated political debate sparked by the acquisition of the Mexican Cession.

b) Argument Development – Explains (1 point)

The response goes beyond mere description by explaining the impact of California’s entry into the Union on the political debate. The relatively sophisticated account of the failed attempt to “industrialize the South” provides a deeper explanation of the similarities: “the South was much less developed”... “and depended on slave labor as the cornerstone of their society. Therefore, the south saw an attack/opposition to slavery as a direct threat and act of aggression towards them.”

C. Argument Development: Using Evidence (2 points)

a) Using Evidence – Examples (1 point)

The response employs a plethora of accurate evidence: the Missouri Compromise, the Fugitive Slave Law, the Kansas–Nebraska Act, John Brown, Harper’s Ferry, and Manifest Destiny.

b) Using Evidence—Effective Substantiation (1 point)

Specific pieces of evidence were deployed accurately to support the thesis about the heightened political debate and the road to the Civil War. For example, the essay points to the admission of California as a free state, and how the Compromise of 1850 temporarily postponed the Civil War but did not alleviate sectional tensions.

D. Synthesis (1 point)

The response attempted linkage between the sectional tensions to the civil rights movement of the 1960s at the end of the essay is not fully developed. However, on page 4, the essay notes that in spite of the failed attempts to industrialize the South during Reconstruction, the sectional tensions born in the debate over slavery persist in the Southern “landscape, values and way of life.” This is a good example of synthesis by extending the argument to address a different historical period (Synthesis proficiency C4). The student establishes a connection between the acquisition of territory during the war and sectional differences that have persisted in U.S. history, explaining how the Mexican-American War marks a turning point in that larger story.

Sample: 3B**Score: 4****A. Thesis (1 point)**

The thesis is located in the introductory paragraph and clearly addresses the question with defensible claims. The thesis — that conflicts arose over slavery in the territories acquired through the Mexican–American War — is clearly identified as a major turning point in the debate over slavery.

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

This response does a solid job of describing the differences in the slavery debate that were a result of the Mexican–American War. The accurate employment of the Missouri Compromise, the Compromise of 1850, the Kansas–Nebraska Act, and *Dred Scott v. Sandford* clearly describe the differences. While the section on similarities is significantly shorter, it does provide sufficient information to earn the point. The essay states, “slavery was still strongly supported in the South as well as deemed a necessity to the Southern economy.”

b) Argument Development – Explains (0 points)

This response does explain the extent to which the debate over slavery changed after the Mexican–American War, and it employs accurate historical evidence to support its explanation. The claim that the Compromise of 1850 was a temporary fix and that heightened tensions spilled over into other regions and led to further conflict is well argued and supported. The essay fails to earn the point, however, as it fails to adequately explain the similarities in the debate from before to after the war. Its only point regarding similarities is that “slavery was still strongly supported in the South as well as deemed a necessity to the Southern economy.” To earn the point, the essay should have expanded on its description of the similarities it identified to explain how slavery was debated before and in a similar fashion after the war.

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

This response contains relevant evidence in its argument, including the Missouri Compromise, the Compromise of 1850 the Kansas–Nebraska Act, Bleeding Kansas, *Dred Scott v. Sandford*, as well as the concept of Popular Sovereignty and the tension over the balance of slave and free state in the Union.

b) Using Evidence – Effective Substantiation (1 point)

The response uses the information well in order to fully and clearly substantiate its thesis. For example, the essay argues that “as the US acquired the territory of California the topic of slavery became an issue again.” The essay then accurately explicates the provisions of the Compromise of 1850 and connects several to the expanding debate over slavery. Other information is also employed in a fashion that indicates clear understanding, including the Missouri Compromise, the Compromise of 1850, the Kansas–Nebraska Act, Bleeding Kansas, *Dred Scott v. Sandford*, as well as the concept of Popular Sovereignty and the tension over the balance of slave and free state in the Union.

D. Synthesis (0 points)

The response does not succeed in extending the argument to address a different historical period (Synthesis proficiency C4). While a passing reference exists to the election of 1860 (erroneously written as 1960), due to the lack of explanation it does not achieve sufficiency for the synthesis point. Indeed, it appears to be simply a part of the essay’s conclusion. The essay makes no other discernable attempt at synthesis.

Sample: 3C**Score: 2****A. Thesis (0 points)**

While the intended thesis at the end of the introductory paragraph does clearly indicate that both differences and continuities will be discussed in the essay, there is no link in the introduction or thesis to the debate over slavery. The mention of “the issue of slavery” would indicate the existence of slavery, but is not the same as a discussion related to the debate over slavery. To earn the thesis point, the argument presented in the thesis would need a clear link to the question’s focus on the debate over slavery.

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

The response does describe the changes brought by the war, namely, the use of popular sovereignty in the Compromise of 1850. The essay states that “the states would get to make their own choices regardless of how this had been determined in the past,” as an indication of the change occurring and then continues by arguing that this “opened up the door to having an unequal amount of slave or free states.” The discussion of continuities is based on the ongoing tension between the North and South, as evidenced in the earlier Missouri Compromise. The student states that “this shows that the tension

remained the same because both the North and the South were already concerned about the equality in the Senate.” This description is enough to earn the point.

b) Argument Development – Explains (0 points)

While this response includes references to what changed (the introduction of popular sovereignty) and what stayed the same (tension between the North and the South), it did not earn this point because the discussion is largely descriptive. It does not thoroughly explain the extent to which developments that followed the war are different from and similar the developments preceding the war. The essay could potentially have earned the point by including and explaining examples of the resistance to both the Missouri Compromise and the Compromise of 1850.

C. Argument Development: Using Evidence (1 point)

a) Using Evidence – Examples (1 point)

The response provides clear understanding for the key examples included in the essay. The essay indicates that popular sovereignty permitted the states to “chose for themselves” and that this “opened the door to having an unequal amount of slave or free states.” The response also exhibits an understanding of the provisions of the Missouri Compromise and argues that this “clearly demonstrates how the attitudes of the North and South” were a continuity from the prewar to postwar period

b) Using Evidence – Effective Substantiation (0 points)

This response did not earn the point due to the minimal quantity of evidence provided. To fully and effectively substantiate the argument, a broad range of evidence relevant to the question is necessary. The essay could have earned the point by extending the discussion of popular sovereignty to the issues it caused in the Kansas and Nebraska territories, as part of the ongoing debate over slavery. The student could also have provided additional examples related to ongoing conflict between the North and South from both the prewar and postwar periods.

D. Synthesis (0 points)

This response makes an attempt to earn the point by extending the argument to a different time period; in this case, comparing the debate over slavery in the Mexican–American War to the American Revolution (Synthesis proficiency C4). However, it does not satisfactorily explain the conceptual linkage between the two events; the statement that “in both situations there was territory that was gained . . . and then debates and conflict over what to do with it” lacks thoroughness and specificity. If the response had included a discussion of the connections between acquisition of and debates over the administration of both the Mexican Cession and the Northwest Territory, then this essay might have earned the point.