

Answers to the essay questions are to be written in the separate essay booklet. In developing your answers to Parts II and IIIB, be sure to keep these general definitions in mind:

- (a) ***discuss*** means “to make observations about something using facts, reasoning, and argument; to present in some detail”
- (b) ***describe*** means “to illustrate something in words or tell about it”
- (c) ***evaluate*** means “to examine and judge the significance, worth, or condition of; to determine the value of”

## PART II: THEMATIC ESSAY

*Directions:* Write a well-organized essay that includes an introduction, several paragraphs addressing the task, and a conclusion.

**Theme: Presidential Decisions**

During the last 100 years, United States Presidents have made important decisions in an effort to solve crucial problems.

**Task:**

From your study of United States history, identify two important Presidential decisions made during the last 100 years.

For each decision identified:

- State one goal the President hoped to accomplish by making the decision
- Discuss the historical circumstances surrounding the Presidential decision
- Describe the extent to which the decision achieved the President's original goal
- Discuss one immediate or one long-term effect of the decision on United States history

You may use any important Presidential decision from your study of 20th-century United States history. Some suggestions you might wish to consider include: Woodrow Wilson seeks ratification of the Versailles Treaty (1918); Franklin D. Roosevelt institutes the New Deal program (1933); Harry Truman decides to drop atomic bombs on Japan (1945); Dwight D. Eisenhower sends Federal troops to Little Rock, Arkansas (1957); John F. Kennedy places a naval blockade around Cuba (1962); Lyndon Johnson proposes the Great Society program (1965); and Jimmy Carter meets with Anwar Sadat and Menachem Begin at Camp David (1978).

**You are *not* limited to these suggestions.**

**Guidelines:**

**In your essay be sure to:**

- Address all aspects of the *Task*
- Analyze, evaluate, or compare and/or contrast issues and events whenever possible
- Fully support the theme of the essay with relevant facts, examples, and details
- Write a well-developed essay that consistently demonstrates a logical and clear plan of organization
- Introduce the theme by establishing a framework that is beyond a simple restatement of the *Task*
- Conclude your essay with a strong summation of the theme

## Part II

### Thematic Essay Specific Rubric

5

- Shows a thorough understanding of specific Presidential decisions. The overall response must indicate that the student understands the complexities of Presidential decisions—why they are made and their effect on United States history.
- Addresses all aspects of the *Task*. This means that the student must discuss *two* important Presidential decisions during the last 100 years. For each decision, the student must:
  - (1) state one goal the President hoped to accomplish by making the decision
  - (2) discuss the historical circumstances surrounding the Presidential decision
  - (3) describe the extent to which the decision achieved the President's original goal
  - (4) discuss one immediate or one long-term effect of the decision on United States history.

Note: The two decisions selected may be two different decisions made by the same President or decisions made by two different Presidents.

- Shows an ability to analyze and evaluate Presidential decisions by completing all aspects of the *Task*. Includes comments of an analytical and/or evaluative nature throughout the paper. The response does more than simply state or describe accurate facts.
- Richly supports the theme with relevant facts, examples, and details concerning Presidential decisions. The facts and examples are discussed or explained fully.
- Is a well-developed essay, consistently demonstrating a logical and clear plan of organization. Usually the student identifies one Presidential decision and discusses all required aspects of the *Task* and then does the same for a second Presidential decision.
- Introduces the theme of Presidential decisions by establishing a framework that is beyond a simple restatement of the task and concludes with a summation of the theme.

4

- Shows a good understanding of two Presidential decisions. The overall impression of the response is that the student is able to discuss the complexities of Presidential decisions—why they are made and their effect on United States history.
- Shows an ability to analyze and evaluate Presidential decisions by completing all aspects of the *Task*. Discussion includes some comments of an analytical and/or evaluative nature.
- Includes relevant facts, examples, and details, but may not evenly support all aspects of the Presidential decisions chosen.
- Is a well-developed essay, demonstrating a logical and clear plan of organization. The student may not address all aspects of the *Task* as consistently as addressed in a “5” response.
- Introduces the theme by establishing a framework that is beyond a simple restatement of the *Task* and concludes with a summation of the theme.

3

- Shows a satisfactory understanding of two Presidential decisions. The overall impression of the response is that the student is making a serious attempt to discuss the nature of Presidential decisions—why they are made and their effect on United States history.
- Addresses most aspects of the *Task* for each of two different Presidential decisions chosen or addresses all aspects in a limited way.
- Shows an ability to analyze and/or evaluate Presidential decisions, but not in any depth. There may be at least one comment of an analytical and/or evaluative nature, but the essay as a whole does not consistently show a depth of analysis or evaluation.
- Includes some facts, examples, and details about Presidential decisions.
- Is a satisfactorily developed essay, demonstrating a general plan of organization.
- Introduces the theme of Presidential decisions by repeating the *Task* and concludes by repeating the theme.

2

- Shows a limited understanding of two Presidential decisions. The overall impression of the response is that the student is making some attempt to discuss the nature of Presidential decisions—why they are made and their effect on United States history.
- Attempts to address the task, but fails to do so in one of the following ways:
  - (1) discusses only one Presidential decision, not the required two
  - (2) discusses two different Presidential decisions, but fails to discuss two or more aspects of the *Task* for both.
- Develops a faulty analysis or evaluation of issues and events related to Presidential decisions
- Includes few facts, examples, and details, and may include information that contains inaccuracies. The response tends to mention rather than discuss and explain.
- Is a poorly organized essay, lacking focus. The response does not make clear what aspect of the *Task* is being discussed. The response may include digression from the required tasks.
- Fails to introduce or summarize the theme. The response may lack an introduction and/or conclusion. The introduction might not refer to the theme. The summary might not refer to the theme.

1

- Shows a very limited understanding of the Presidential decisions chosen. The overall impression of the response is that the student has made little effort to address the different aspects of the *Task*.
- Lacks an analysis or evaluation of the issues and events related to the Presidential decisions being discussed. Information is mentioned but not explained. No attempt is made to make judgments about the Presidential decisions.
- Includes little or no accurate or relevant facts, examples or details. No specific accurate information is presented; the response deals in generalities.
- Attempts to complete the *Task*, but demonstrates a major weakness in organization.
- Fails to introduce or summarize the theme. The response may lack an introduction and/or conclusion. The introduction might not refer to the theme. The summary might not refer to the theme.

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- Fails to address the *Task*.
- Paper is illegible, or is a blank paper.

## Score Level 5

During the last 100 years, American Presidents have made important decisions in an effort to solve crucial problems. Some of these important Presidential decisions were Harry Truman's decision to drop the atomic bomb on Japan in 1945. Another decision was Franklin D. Roosevelt's decision to institute the New Deal Program.

During World War II, the Japanese would not surrender to end the war. They insisted to stay in the war, they didn't want to just give up. Harry Truman wanted to end the war as fast as he could. As the war went on, the more troops were being injured or killed. One of the decisions Truman could make was to use the atomic bomb that was being developed. It had never been used before and Truman began to think about using it. Since Truman wanted to end the war as soon as possible, he saw this as a way to end it. In 1945, the Enola Gay was loaded with the bomb and flown over Japan. The plane flew over Hiroshima and dropped the bomb. Many people began to disagree with Truman's decision. Many people

felt that Truman should have dropped it in another area, where there weren't so many people. The bomb caused a great deal of destruction. Many people died, and buildings were destroyed. The U.S. dropped another bomb on Nagasaki to finally end the war. Japan finally gave in and decided to surrender. The decision did end the conflict that Truman was trying to solve. He did accomplish his goal, the war was now over. However, many innocent people died because of this decision. Not only was the immediate explosion intense, but there was radiation that was spreading from the aftermath. This decision by the President brought about a lot of controversy. Many people thought that even if the bomb wasn't dropped, Japan would have surrendered. This was the first time that any weapon like this has been used. This decision did accomplish Truman's goal, however it caused a lot of destruction and controversy.

Another major Presidential decision was Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal program in 1933. The U.S. had just gone through a

terrible depression. The Stock market crashed and many people were left extremely poor. There were many people who were jobless. The unemployment rate was very high during this time. F.D.R. wanted to do something about this. He had to make some changes to put the United States back in order. He introduced many new programs to help the poor. Some of the programs were to help improve the conditions in some areas. He had new roads and bridges built. There were programs to help people get jobs. There was the Social Security Program. The program helped mothers and disabled people. People that were unable to work, and mothers that had children to take care of. This program helped many people get back on their feet. However, this decision also brought about some controversy. Some people didn't like this new program installed by F.D.R.

During the last 100 years, American Presidents have made crucial decisions in order to solve a major problem. Truman

and Roosevelt were two Presidents that had to make major decisions. During their Presidency, large problems arose that they had to deal with. These decisions may have accomplished the goals of the Presidents, however they brought about some controversy.

### **Commentary Score Level 5**

- Shows a thorough understanding of the theme. The overall impression of the response is that the student understands the complexities of Presidential decision making.
- Extensively discusses Truman's decision to drop the atomic bomb and adequately discusses Franklin Roosevelt's decision to institute the New Deal.
- Completes all required aspects of the task for each Presidential decision. The response makes several evaluative and analytical comments ("crucial" decisions, bomb as a way to quickly end the war, first-time use of such a destructive bomb, controversy of the decision to drop the bomb).
- Richly supports the theme with relevant facts, examples, and details.  
Examples: Enola Gay aircraft, cities of Nagasaki and Hiroshima, idea that Japan might have surrendered even without dropping the bomb, stock market crash, New Deal programs to help the poor, building roads and bridges, Social Security program.
- Well-developed essay, good introduction and concluding paragraph.

### **Conclusion**

Overall, the response best fits the criteria for a score of 5. The essay is much stronger in the discussion of Truman's decision to drop the bomb but has an adequate discussion of Roosevelt and the New Deal for this score point.

It is self evident that in the last 100 years, American Presidents have made important decisions to solve crucial problems. When Woodrow Wilson sought to ratify the Versailles Treaty in 1918 he was attempting to create a long term peace among equals, while in 1945 Harry Truman was attempting to bring a quick denouement to the debacle of World War II.

The period of time immediately following the end of World War I was very tumultuous. Many nations of the world, especially France, England, and Italy wanted to make Germany pay for <sup>its</sup> ~~the~~ actions during the war. In the treaty, these and other nations were going to place Germany as the sole cause of the war. Along with holding Germany fully responsible for the war, Germany would also have to fully repay every debt and make the necessary reparations that would fully satisfy the victors. To Wilson, these were the worst ~~the~~ actions that could have been taken. He knew that the only way that peace could be sought and maintained was through not being

so unductive towards the loser, Germany. What he believed in was the creation of a group of nations devoted to the idea of peace among equals. This group, the League of Nations, he thought would provide collective security and protect the world from aggressor nations. Unfortunately, due to conflicting agendas on the part of leaders such as Clemenceau and George, and conflicting interests <sup>held by</sup> such as Senator Lodge, Wilson's ideas were not fulfilled. Yet despite Wilson's lack of success in his attempt to establish the <sup>U.S. in the</sup> League of Nations, and to ratify the Treaty, it would become obvious to the U.S. and the other nations of the world that a collective security in the world was critical to have and maintain. Hence in later years the United Nations was created.

The decision by President Truman to drop the bomb on Japan is still one of the most fiercely debated topics. In 1945 Truman was confronted with what could be described as literally a "no win situation" in whatever decision he would make, the consequences were grave. In dropping the bomb on Japan, it was obvious

quite.  
that the war would end, But what was the cost of this? The cost was tens of thousands of lives of Japanese people. Not to mention the destruction and desolation that an atomic bomb would have ~~on~~ ecologically and geographically on the area in and around Japan. Yet the American people and the warring nations of the world wanted to end the war, to save American lives and quickly end a war that was projected to last years longer. Hence, asking the question, "Why not end it now?" ~~and so~~, Wilson and the U.S. dropped the atomic bomb, and hastened the end of World War II.

Crucial problems have, and always will plague the administration of the President. Many times these problems are so difficult to correctly assess and analyze that they are not always correctly decided. However, especially in the decisions of Wilson and Truman, the decisions made ~~are~~ <sup>were and are usually</sup> decided in the good of the American people, or in the good of people in general. For example, in Wilson's idea to create

The League of Nations and peace among equals, he was trying to successfully allow WWII, which was dubbed the "war to end all wars" to really be the last war ever. However ideal this may have been, it was an idea deeply rooted in the basis of the good of the people, for the present, and the future. In relation to Truman's decision, he and the American people simply wanted the war to end. The disillusionment of the war had set in and the road, in their eyes, was well overdone.

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### Commentary Score Level 5

- Shows a thorough understanding of the theme. The overall impression of the response is that the student understands the complexities of Presidential decision making.
- Extensively discusses Wilson and the League of Nations and adequately discusses Truman's decision to drop the atomic bomb.
- Completes all required aspects of the *Task* for each Presidential decision and makes several evaluative and analytical comments (tumultuous time period after World War I, attempt of France and England to hold Germany fully responsible for the war, Wilson feels this is worst mistake to make, later support for collective security in the form of the United Nations, "no-win situation" decision for Truman, quicker way to end the war).
- Richly supports the theme with relevant facts, examples and details.  
Examples: German reparations, collective security, European leaders Clemenceau and George, Senator Lodge, bomb decision is a no-win situation, thousands of Japanese lives lost, ecological and genetic damage of bomb, save American lives, quicker end to war.
- Is a well-developed essay that deals with two Presidential decisions. Excellent writing style.
- Has an excellent introduction and conclusion.

### Conclusion

Overall, the response best fits the criteria for a score of 5. The discussion of Wilson and the League of Nations is particularly good. The discussion of Truman's decision to drop the bomb has more detail than a first glance might indicate. The organization is strong with the essay including many details. The erroneous reference to Wilson (rather than Truman) in dropping the bomb is a minor error within the context of an otherwise strong essay. It does not detract from the overall good effort in completing the *Task*.

## Score Level 4

The President of the United States is often faced with crucial problems, ~~that~~ The solutions to these problems are not always. Presidents are sometimes forced to make tough decisions. These decisions often play an important part in the future of the U.S. Two ~~Presidents~~ ~~important~~ Presidents that made these decisions were Harry Truman, and John F. Kennedy.

In 1945, the Second-World War was coming to an end. Germany had surrendered, and we had pushed the Japanese army back to their mainland. Truman, being the Commander in Chief ~~was~~ was left the decision of what to do next. He could risk thousands of American lives in an invasion, or he could ~~use~~ use the newly developed weapon, the atom bomb. To accomplish his goal of ending the war with the fewest possible allied casualties, he gave the order to drop the bomb. Atom bombs were dropped on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Days later, Japan surrendered. The war had ended and no more American lives were lost. Truman's decision to drop the bomb had far reaching consequences. It brought the world into the nuclear age, and signaled the beginning of the Cold War.

Another President who made a crucial

DECISION WAS John F. Kennedy. While he was President, it was learned that the Soviets had been stocking Cuba with missiles and launching ~~devices~~ equipment. Cuba was only 90 miles off the coast of Florida, and this caused great fear in ~~the~~ U.S. that the U.S. was about to be attacked. It ~~add~~ added to tension that was already built up as a result of the Cold War. Kennedy had to decide whether to do nothing, or to make a stand and ~~to~~ stop the build-up. He chose to put a naval blockade on Cuba. Russian ships trying to get to the island, and after a tense standoff that lasted for days, the Russian ships turned and went back. America had won, and Cuba was no longer an immediate threat to the U.S. As a result of Kennedy's decision, the threat of nuclear war was averted.

Harry Truman, and John F. Kennedy are examples of Presidents who ~~have~~ were forced to make tough decisions to solve crucial problems. ~~From~~ These decisions also have affected future generations, ~~even~~ helping them, but also causing ~~to~~ preceding Presidents tough problems.

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## **Commentary Score Level 4**

- Shows a good (but not thorough) understanding of the theme.
- Addresses, with some detailed information, all required aspects of Truman's decision to drop the bomb and JFK's actions in the Cuban missile crisis.
- Discussion includes some comments that are analytical and evaluative (Truman's decision brought the world into the nuclear age; Cuba added to tension already existing as a result of the Cold War).
- Includes relevant facts, examples and details (World War II coming to an end in 1945 with Germany having surrendered, Truman is commander-in-chief, cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, beginnings of Cold War, Soviets stocking missiles in Cuba, Cuba 90 miles from Florida) but without explaining them fully or using them in an analytical manner.
- Is a well-developed essay with a logical and clear plan of organization. The last sentence should be a reference to "subsequent" Presidents rather than "preceding" Presidents.
- The introduction and conclusion introduce and summarize the theme and do more than just restate the *Task*.

### **Conclusion**

Overall, the response best fits the criteria for a score of 4. All aspects of the *Task* are addressed with some detailed discussion, but the degree of detail and analytical or evaluative discussion is not sufficient for a score of 5.

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## Score Level 4

Decision making is one of the greatest powers we as people have. We decide where we want to live & who we want to have live with or near us. Our lives move along the path that we choose to move along. Throughout history, the leaders of our country have had to make some crucial decisions which have had dramatic affects on the way we live. Their choices have made it possible for us to live our lives in safety and comfort.

World War II was one of Americas hardest times. It was almost as if we were fighting two wars. At one front we were fighting the Nazis. On the other, we were fighting the Japanese. The war seemed as though it would rage on forever. A clear end to the fighting was not visible. Battles were won and battles were lost and still the war continued. In 1945 President Roosevelt died and Harry Truman became president. President Truman could not see how to end this horrible quarrel. Finally, in 1945, Truman made a decision that would later shock the world. He decided to drop the atomic bomb on the towns of Hiroshima & Nagasaki in Japan. The war had ended in Europe, but by doing this, the president hoped to end the war in Asia and save millions of American lives. In essence, Truman's plan worked. The dropping of the second bomb brought a final end of the war. One long term effect was that other nations thought twice before

Challenging the U.S. we had shown superior power in a time of crisis. We won a war in which the odds were stacked against us. Our use of nuclear weapons shocked the world and we thought we would never be challenged again. We were wrong.

17 years after the bombing of Japan, nuclear weapons became a part of America's history once again. Word reached President Kennedy that Russia was sending nuclear war heads (missiles) to the Island of Cuba. Fearful of our country's safety, Pres. Kennedy set up a heavily armed naval blockade around Cuba. He hoped that this blockade would enforce his request for the missiles to be removed from Cuba. After many tense days the missiles were sent back to Russia. This decision showed that the United States would stand up to protect its borders. It eventually brought both Russia and the United States together to discuss limiting atomic weapons.

To conclude, the decisions stated above are very crucial to the United States. Both decisions were made during a crisis where our country was in danger. We should realize how lucky we are that the people we elect to office can make such tough decisions under any amount of pressure and still help the U.S.A.

### **Commentary Score Level 4**

- Shows a clear understanding of the theme.
- Addresses with some detail all aspects of two Presidential decisions. The discussion of both decisions is adequate for this score point, but not extensive, especially for Kennedy and the Cuban missile crisis.
- Discussion includes some comments that are analytical and evaluative (nations think twice before challenging the United States).
- Includes relevant facts, examples and details using some analysis and/or evaluation of the content. A few minor factual mistakes are made (death of FDR).
- Is a well-developed essay with a logical plan of organization.
- Both the introduction and conclusion establish a framework beyond a simple restatement of the *Task*, although both are somewhat general in nature.

#### **Conclusion**

Although both the introduction and conclusion are particularly interesting, this response best fits the criteria for a 4. Two Presidential decisions are discussed, but with a limited amount of detail. Overall, it is too limited and less analytical and evaluative than is necessary for a score of 5.

During the last 100 years, American Presidents have made important decisions in an effort to solve crucial problems. The decisions that they made ~~were~~ affected the U.S. in a major way. Two such Presidential decisions are Harry Truman's decision to drop atomic bombs on Japan in 1945, and Franklin D. Roosevelt's decision to institute the New Deal program.

Truman's main goal in his decision to drop the atomic bombs on Japan in 1945 was to end W.W. II permanently <sup>and save lives.</sup> Although Japan would have surrendered, it has been said by experts that it would have taken 3 months for American forces to get to ~~the~~ Japan in order for the war to end. By killing the Japanese military w/ the bombs, Truman managed to save American lives that were being risked. He ended the war quicker than it would have ended if the U.S. waited for Japan to surrender. The immediate effect of the decision on U.S. history was that it ended ~~the~~ World War II faster. The long-term effect was that it prevented the spread of Communism.

Truman wanted to quickly end the war in order to stop Russia from spreading Communism all around the world.

Franklin D. Roosevelt's institution of the New Deal program occurred before World War II when the Great Depression hit the U.S. Roosevelt's main goal was to get the U.S. back on its feet again. To do this he decided to concentrate on relief for the unemployed, recovery for the economy, reform for ~~the social part of~~ the social part of society. Roosevelt instituted the New Deal because the Great Depression put the Americans into horrible conditions. Unemployment was high, ~~and the~~ ~~banks~~ banks closed, businesses were doing extremely bad. To achieve his goal Roosevelt passed many ~~see~~ acts, such as AAA, to ~~all~~ help the farmers and CCC to help young men become employed. CCC gave them job opportunities ~~and~~ by making them build railroads, and highways. An immediate effect <sup>that the New Deal had</sup> on the American people was that it gave them hope. It gave the people a sense of hope for the future.

A long-term effect was that it got the American people out of the Great Depression. Unemployment decreased and the economy slowly began to boom again.

In conclusion, it is obvious that the decisions made by presidents are very important. They affect the nation as a whole.

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### Commentary Score Level 4

- Shows a good understanding of the theme. The paper shows an understanding of the basic complexities of Presidential decision making.
- Addresses all aspects for both Presidential decisions but not with much detailed information. The discussion of both decisions is adequate but not specific and extensive. Reference is made to “quickly ending the war to stop Russia from spreading communism all around the world,” but this idea is not developed. Both immediate and long-term effects of the bomb are mentioned without discussing either.
- Discussion includes some comments of an analytical and/or evaluative nature (although Japan would have surrendered...ending the war quicker/FDR’s New Deal gave people a sense of hope).
- Only a few specific details and facts are included (AAA and CCC as specific examples of New Deal program). Little in-depth analytical or evaluative use is made of these specific details. A few factual mistakes are made (estimate of three months to the end of the war), but these do not detract from the overall quality of the essay at this score point.
- Is a well-developed essay with good organization.
- The introduction does a little more than simply restate the theme. The conclusion is a simple summation of the theme.

### Conclusion

Overall, this response best fits a score for a low 4. All required aspects are discussed but not with the degree of detailed information necessary for a score of 5.

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American Presidents, throughout the nation's history, have been stuck with many problems that needed quick and good decisions. Such is the case with Harry Truman deciding to drop the atomic bomb on Japan in 1945 and Franklin D. Roosevelt instituting the New Deal program in 1933. Serious problems like these required drastic measures, good planning, and a strong leader to get the country through the trouble.

One goal that F.D.R. had when he made his New Deal program was to get the country out of the Great Depression and make the country financially stable again. He made a lot of different programs like social security and also had the Fire hose Chets to calm the people down in this time of despair. The result was that the country got out of the depression and many of the programs are still in tact now.

What President Harry Truman was trying to do when he decided to drop the atomic bomb on Japan was end WWII. The war was the biggest and most

destructive war in history. The result of the dropping of the bomb was the absolute surrender of the Japanese and the end of the war.

These two great presidents made some great decisions that helped the country very much. Even though we have had some big problems in the country's history, people have risen to the top and come up with solutions.

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**Commentary**  
**Score Level 3**

- Shows a satisfactory understanding of the theme. The introduction might lead the reader to expect a better response than was actually supported by the body of the paper.
- Addresses two different Presidential decisions but fails to address all of the required tasks for Truman's decision to drop the bomb.
- Shows some ability to analyze and evaluate Presidential decisions. The response superficially states that the New Deal made the country financially stable again without any discussion of this. Little attempt is made to evaluate Truman's decision to drop the bomb.
- Includes some facts, details and examples (Social Security, fireside chats). There is little specific information regarding Truman's decision to drop the bomb.
- Is a satisfactorily developed essay with a general plan of organization.
- The introduction and conclusion do more than simply state the theme.

**Conclusion**

Overall, this response best fits the criteria for a score of 3. However, the discussion of Truman is particularly weak, with little, if any, specific information, and it fails to address all required aspects.

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### Score Level 3

In the 19<sup>th</sup> Century the United States' Presidents have had to make important decisions in an effort to solve crucial problems. One decision which greatly effected American relations with other nations was when Harry Truman decided to bomb Japan. By doing this President Truman had hoped to end World War II. The bombing was just something that was going to happen in retaliation to Pearl Harbor. World War II had been going on for a few years and Truman felt it was time to end it.

The decision by President Truman achieved his original result. As a result of the bombing the Japanese did not want to lengthen the war and lose any more innocent lives. The effect the bombings had was a worsening of our relations with Japan.

Dwight E. Eisenhower sent troops into Little Rock, Arkansas in order to maintain stability while integrating the school system. Schools had been segregated for a while, but with a Supreme Court decision it was reversed. There were protests and riots between black and white students.

President Eisenhower's decision justified the actions that were occurring in Arkansas. He was able to maintain some stability, but he would never be able to

to stop all racism. The long term effect is that now all schools are integrated and there is not any need to use military force to maintain stability in ~~SA~~ public schools.

In the last century American Presidents have made important decisions in an effort to solve crucial problems. Both the actions taken by President Truman and President Eisenhower were wise decisions that solved the problems they faced. The long term effects that resulted ~~are~~ are both positive as a result of the previous actions taken by the earlier Presidents.

### Commentary Score Level 3

- Shows a satisfactory understanding of the theme. The reader feels that this student is making a serious attempt to discuss Presidential decision making.
- Addresses two different Presidential decisions in a limited manner. The discussion of Truman's decision to use the atomic bomb is very limited compared to the discussion for Eisenhower in the Little Rock incident.
- Some analytical or evaluative judgment is made in the essay. Evidence: statement that Truman's decisions worsened relations with Japan; Eisenhower would never be able to stop all racism. Very little explanation of these evaluative statements is provided.
- Includes some facts, examples and details (retaliation for Pearl Harbor, reference to a Supreme Court decision ending segregated schools) but they are not explained in much detail. A few minor factual errors are also made (19th century).
- Is a satisfactorily developed essay with appropriate use of paragraphs that demonstrate a general plan of organization.
- The introduction and conclusion are good, and go beyond a simple restatement of the *Task* (a descriptor of a 4)

#### Conclusion

Overall, this response best fits the criteria for a score of 3. Two Presidential decisions are discussed but not all required aspects are addressed. Insufficient specific information and failure to address all required aspects of the *Task* keep this a 3. The essay tends to mention facts rather than analyze and evaluate them.

### Score Level 3

During the last 100 years, American Presidents have made important decisions in an effort to solve crucial problems. Two of these presidents are Harry Truman and Franklin D. Roosevelt.

President Harry Truman had a goal to stop the World War II quickly between Japan and US. US and Japan were in a constant war for a while and the only way to stop it was by dropping an atomic bomb. But what was the real effect of this bomb was Japan bombing Pearl Harbor. So from that point Japan was bombed twice with an atomic bomb. The first time they didn't give up, but after the second one they just surrendered. A long term effect that was as a result, was US taking control over the government and taking out the military.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt was another great man who had many goals to fix the gov't. He came up with the New Deal, in which he addressed no more unemployment. That was the time when the stocks crashed (1929) and people were in many debts and lost ~~the~~ their jobs. That was when President Franklin D. Roosevelt came up with the New Deal in which he saved the unemployment. He promised to give everyone a job, so that way if people have jobs, people have money and

prices go back up so the economic business goes up. And it was also made up that government will not interfere with economy in any way. And one of the things that stayed with the up for a long term was social security which gave an pension after they retire and also helped out the unemployed and sick.

In conclusion all of presidents always had a good cause which they achieved, but also achieved a long term effect which helps out even now.

### Commentary Score Level 3

- Shows a satisfactory understanding of the theme. The student does seriously attempt to discuss historical circumstances that led the President to make a decision.
- Two different Presidential decisions are addressed (i.e., Truman's decision to use the atomic bomb, and Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal) but in a limited manner for both. Not all of the required aspects are discussed.
- Some evaluative and/or analytical comments are made (i.e., implies that the atomic bomb was in retaliation for the Pearl Harbor attack, conclusion paragraph statement that Presidents have good cause for making their decisions). These are not fully discussed.
- Some specific facts, examples and details are included (i.e., two bombings, Pearl Harbor, unemployment concerns, stock market crash in 1929, creating jobs, Social Security). They tend to be mentioned rather than fully discussed.
- Is a satisfactory essay with a general plan of organization.
- The introduction and conclusion basically restate the *Task*.

#### Conclusion

Overall, this response best fits the criteria for a score of 3. Two different Presidential decisions are discussed with some limited specific information, but not all required aspects of the *Task* are addressed.

During the last 100 years, American Presidents have made important decisions in effort to solve crucial problems. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century there were two American presidents who were faced with a crisis, Harry Truman during World War II and ~~Dwight D Eisenhower~~ in deciding ~~to enter the United States in WWII~~ Dwight D. Eisenhower to integrate an all white school, by including Black students.

Both Harry Truman and Dwight D. Eisenhower had difficult decisions to make, decisions that would affect millions of American lives. During this time (1945 - 1957) there was conflict between the U.S. and Japan and ten years later the battle against white supremacy was at its worst. Harry Truman was president in 1945, the U.S. had just suffered a blow when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. This was a surprise attack that cost the U.S. hundreds of American lives. This event was the "last straw" for the American people. President Truman decided that in order to stop the conflict between England and France against Japanese. The U.S. joined England and France in the battle of WWII.

Truman's reasons for entering the war was partly retaliation for the Japanese for Bombing of Pearl Harbor. The U.S. hoped to accomplish some end of communism. Even at the end of WWII the US. was disappointed because communism still existed, and thousands of lives were lost. The main conclusion of WWII was to remain neutral from then on, which was the US. original plan.

Dwight D. EISENHOWER was faced with a very different problem but equally as important. In the 1950's discrimination was thriving, white only facilities existed and separate but equal was the order of the day. Eisenhower wanted to break the color barriers by integrating a school in Little Rock, Arkansas. He called upon a special group of guards for the task. The reason this decision was so drastic was because segregation was a hot issue. Whites were enriched w/ supremacists and Blacks were resentful. The result of this event was the beginning of Black and white schools.

Both Eisenhower and Truman demonstrated very presidential decision making tactic. In order to protect & preserve the U.S. these were necessary steps.

## **Commentary Score Level 2**

- Shows a limited understanding of the two Presidential decisions chosen. The introductory paragraph leads the reader to expect a better essay than is actually supported in the body of the paper.
- Two different Presidential decisions are discussed; however, several of the required aspects are not addressed. Truman's decision to use the atomic bomb is particularly weak and off *Task*.
- The faulty analysis and discussion for Truman is the serious weakness of this essay. There are numerous factual errors (conflict between England, France, and Japan; the United States remaining neutral).
- Only a few correct facts, examples and details are included in this essay (i.e., Pearl Harbor attack, segregation).
- Is a satisfactorily developed essay (a descriptor for a score of 3) in terms of organization. The response does include a digression from the required *Task*.
- Introduces the theme in both the introduction and conclusion (another descriptor for a score of 3).

### **Conclusion**

Overall, this response best fits the criteria for a score of a low 2. Although the essay shows a satisfactory organization, with an introduction and conclusion, the weaknesses in discussing Truman's decision and the limited amount of adequate specific information weaken the overall quality of the essay. The reasonably accurate, yet brief, discussion of Eisenhower and his role in Little Rock raises this essay to a low 2.

When Harry Truman dropped the atomic bomb on Japan in 1945 he had hoped it would end the war between the United States and Japan. Unfortunately Japan did not want to end the war. The atomic bomb caused many of Japan's people to die or be injured. When Japan did not surrender Truman decided to drop another bomb on the country. After the second devastating bomb was dropped Japan finally decided to surrender to the United States. Many American's did not like the idea of the atomic being dropped on Japan once let alone twice. The devastation that the bomb left on Japan was great. Many people wonder if the decision Truman made was the best one. The United States helped rebuild Japan after the damage it cause but is that really enough to make up for the

thousands of people who died from  
the bomb or from the radiation  
the bomb caused afterward.

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**Commentary**  
**Score Level 2**

- It is difficult to determine if the student has a basic understanding of the theme because there is no introduction or conclusion.
- Paper only discusses one Presidential decision (i.e., Truman and the atomic bomb).
- Some evaluative or analytical statements are used (i.e., hopes that use of the bomb would bring a quicker end to the war, not sure that the aid to Japan to rebuild after the war compensates for the use of the atomic bomb) without fully discussing or explaining them.
- Includes few specific facts and examples and those that are included are mentioned rather than discussed
- The essay is basically organized despite no introduction and conclusion.
- Lacks both an introductory paragraph and a conclusion.

**Conclusion**

Overall, this response best fits the criteria for a score of 2. Dealing with only one Presidential decision prevents this paper from receiving a higher score. The response is not lower than a 2 because (1) the response is satisfactorily organized, and (2) shows some analysis of the decision made by President Truman.

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Throughout the United States history our Presidents have been faced with many crucial decisions, some of them cost the lives of many innocent people. Many of us would find it very hard to make a decision like that, but that is why we have a President and that is his job.

A President that had to make a very crucial decision was Harry Truman. His decision was whether or not to drop the atomic bombs on Japan. The one goal of the President was to end the war quickly and in the long run, save many American soldiers lives.

The historical circumstances surrounding the Presidential decision is that it did end the war, and in ending the war, killed thousands upon thousands of Japanese, men, women, and children just in the dropping of one atomic bomb.

A long term effect of the decision in United States History is that first of all, we ended up helping and paying for the rebuilding of Japan, and also

to this very day, we are not to attack Japan, we are to protect it.

Another President that had to make a very crucial decision was Lyndon B. Johnson. His decision had to deal with the Great Society Program. His goal was for people to have a little amount of money taken out of their wages and put into social security.

The historical circumstances surrounding the decision is that the people loved the idea, because they knew that when they retired, they would have money coming towards them.

To achieve the goal, L.B.J. passed the Social Security Act. This way people did not feel like charity cases. This was their own money coming back to them, when they retired.

A long term effect of the decision in United States history is that it is the only one of programs that ever lasted this long.

Without our Presidents, our country

would not be as great as our country  
is today.

## Part I

### Commentary Score Level 2

- Shows limited understanding of the theme. There is an attempt to discuss the nature of Presidential decisions—why they are made and their impact.
- Basically addresses correctly only one Presidential decision (i.e., the discussion of LBJ and the Great Society is filled with incorrect information and assumptions).
- Some evaluative or analytical statements are made (helping and paying for the rebuilding of Japan) but without full discussion or explanation.
- Includes few facts, examples and details in the discussion of Truman's decision to use the atomic bomb.
- Is a satisfactorily developed essay, with a general plan of organization (more like the descriptor of a score of 3 rather than 2).
- Introduces the theme by repeating the *Task*. Has both an introduction and a conclusion (more like the descriptor of a score of 3 rather than 2), but the conclusion is weak.

#### Conclusion

Overall, this response best fits the criteria for a score of 2. The strengths of the essay's organization are outweighed by the serious weaknesses in social studies content. Discussion of LBJ and the Great Society is particularly weak.

## Regents Examination in United States History and Government Sampler Key

### Multiple Choice Items

During the LAST 100 years, American presidents have made important decisions in an effort to solve crucial problems. These decisions have a serious impact on society.

When Harry TRUMAN decided to drop the bomb on Hiroshima, it solved a crucial problem.

After the bombings, Japan dropped out of the war. They declared from any more future violence.

When John F. Kennedy placed a naval blockade around Cuba, it solved problems and had an impact on society. It solved crucial problems by closing us off to them. It isolated Cuba and put us in control.

In conclusion, presidents have made important decisions to take care of political problems. In some cases it caused more problems.

**Commentary  
Score Level 1**

- Shows a very limited understanding of the theme or problem. The student has made little effort to address all of the required aspects of the *Task*.
- Lacks an analysis or evaluation of the issues and events. Information is mentioned but not explained.
- Includes little or no accurate or relevant facts, examples or details. The response clearly deals in generalities.
- Attempts to complete the *Task* but in a very limited manner. Little information is provided in the essay. It is difficult to figure out what aspect of the theme the student is attempting to address.
- Contains a basic introduction and conclusion.

**Conclusion**

Overall, this response best fits the criteria for a score of 1. The basic plan of organization and the very limited social studies content in this response support a score of 1.

## Score Level 1

By dropping the Atomic bomb on Japan Harry Truman hoped to make a example of Japan showing the rest of the world what can happen.

The reason for dropping the bomb was a number of attacks on United States. The bomb did fulfill his goal even though thousands of people died.

Japan immediately surrendered from the war as a result.

### Commentary Score Level 1

- Shows a very limited understanding of the theme. The student has made little effort to address all of the required tasks in discussing Truman's decision to use the atomic bomb. No other Presidential decision is mentioned.
- Lacks an analysis or evaluation of issues and events. Information is mentioned but not explained. No evaluative or judgmental comments are made.
- Includes few facts, examples and details. The response relies too heavily on generalities.
- Attempts to complete the *Task*, but is very brief and incomplete.
- Lacks both an introduction and conclusion.

### Conclusion

Overall, this response best fits the criteria for a score of 1. Only one Presidential decision is included and the discussion of that decision is very superficial.

