

In developing your answer to Part III, be sure to keep this general definition in mind:

discuss means “to make observations about something using facts, reasoning, and argument; to present in some detail”

Part III

DOCUMENT-BASED QUESTION

This question is based on the accompanying documents. It is designed to test your ability to work with historical documents. Some of the documents have been edited for the purposes of the question. As you analyze the documents, take into account the source of each document and any point of view that may be presented in the document.

**Historical Context:**

After World War I, events in Europe caused the United States to review its foreign policy. This review led to controversies between those who supported a return to isolationism and those who wanted to see the United States take a more active role in world affairs.

**Task:** Using information from the documents and your knowledge of United States history, answer the questions that follow each document in Part A. Your answers to the questions will help you write the Part B essay in which you will be asked to

- Discuss United States foreign policy toward Europe prior to World War II. In your discussion, include the arguments used by those who *supported* isolationism **and** those who were *opposed* to it.

## Part A

### Short-Answer Questions

*Directions:* Analyze the documents and answer the short-answer questions that follow each document in the space provided.

#### Document 1

... No people came to believe more emphatically than the Americans that the Great War [World War I] was an unalloyed [absolute] tragedy, an unpardonably costly mistake never to be repeated. More than fifty thousand American doughboys [soldiers] had perished fighting on the western front, and to what avail? So far from being redeemed by American intervention, Europe swiftly slid back into its historic vices of authoritarianism and armed rivalry, while America slid back into its historic attitude of isolationism. Isolationism may have been most pronounced in the landlocked Midwest, but Americans of both sexes, of all ages, religions, and political persuasions, from all ethnic groups and all regions, shared in the postwar years a feeling of apathy toward Europe, not to mention the rest of the wretchedly quarrelsome world, that bordered on disgust. "Let us turn our eyes inward," declared Pennsylvania's liberal Democratic governor George Earle in 1935. "If the world is to become a wilderness of waste, hatred, and bitterness, let us all the more earnestly protect and preserve our own oasis of liberty." . . .

Source: David M. Kennedy, *Freedom from Fear*, Oxford University Press, 1999

- 1 Based on this document, state **one** reason many Americans wanted to return to a policy of isolationism after World War I. [1]

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Score

## Document 2

. . . It seems to be unfortunately true that the epidemic of world lawlessness is spreading.

When an epidemic of physical disease starts to spread, the community approves and joins in a quarantine of the patients in order to protect the health of the community against the spread of the disease.

It is my determination to pursue a policy of peace. It is my determination to adopt every practicable measure to avoid involvement in war. It ought to be inconceivable that in this modern era, and in the face of experience, any nation could be so foolish and ruthless as to run the risk of plunging the whole world into war by invading and violating, in contravention [violation] of solemn treaties, the territory of other nations that have done them no real harm and are too weak to protect themselves adequately. Yet the peace of the world and the welfare and security of every nation, including our own, is today being threatened by that very thing. . . .

War is a contagion [virus], whether it be declared or undeclared. It can engulf states and peoples remote from the original scene of hostilities. We are determined to keep out of war, yet we cannot insure ourselves against the disastrous effects of war and the dangers of involvement. We are adopting such measures as will minimize our risk of involvement, but we cannot have complete protection in a world of disorder in which confidence and security have broken down. . . .

Source: President Franklin D. Roosevelt, Quarantine Speech, October 5, 1937

- 2 According to this document, what was President Franklin D. Roosevelt's viewpoint about United States involvement in war? [1]

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Score

### Document 3

In this speech, Senator Robert A. Taft agrees with President Franklin D. Roosevelt's policy concerning the war in Europe.

. . . Secondly, it has been widely argued that we should enter the war to defend democracy against dictatorship. The President himself, less than a year ago, suggested that it was our duty to defend religion, democracy, and good faith throughout the world, although he proposed methods short of war. I question the whole theory that our entrance into war will preserve democracy. The purpose of the World War [I] was to save democracy, but the actual result destroyed more democracies and set up more dictatorships than the world had seen for many days. We might go in to save England and France and find that, when the war ended, their governments were Communist and Fascist. Nothing is so destructive of forms of government as war. . . .

The arguments for war are unsound and will almost certainly remain so. The horrors of modern war are so great, its futility is so evident, its effect on democracy and prosperity and happiness so destructive, that almost any alternative is to be desired. . . .

Source: Senator Robert A. Taft, speech in Minneapolis, September 6, 1939

- 3 Based on this document, state **one** reason Senator Taft was opposed to the United States entering the war in Europe. [1]

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Score

**Document 4**

This cartoon is a view of United States foreign policy from the perspective of a British cartoonist in 1940.



“So this is isolationism.”

Source: David Low, *Evening Standard*, July 4, 1940

4 According to this cartoon, what is threatening the United States policy of isolationism? [1]

Score

## Document 5

In the spring of 1940 opinion polls indicated, as they had for some time, that two thirds of the American public believed it was more important to keep out of war than to aid Britain; by September less than half of the American public held this view; and by January 1941 70 per cent were prepared to aid Britain at the risk of war. The German victory in the West, climaxed by the fall of France in June 1940, brought about a change in American public opinion and in public policy which the nation's most influential political leader of the twentieth century [President Franklin D. Roosevelt] had tried but failed to bring about since at least 1937. By every index [opinion poll], a substantial majority of Americans came at last to the view that the avoidance of British defeat was sufficiently in the American interest to justify the risk of war. On the basis of that shift in public opinion the presidential campaign of 1940 was fought and the groundwork laid for Lend-Lease and accelerated rearmament. . . .

Source: W. W. Rostow, *The United States in the World Arena*, Harper & Brothers, 1960

5a According to this document, how did public opinion change between the spring of 1940 and January 1941? [1]

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Score

b Based on this document, identify **one** event that caused public opinion to change during this time period. [1]

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Score

## Document 6

. . . The lend-lease-give program is the New Deal's triple A foreign policy; it will plow under every fourth American boy.

Never before have the American people been asked or compelled to give so bounteously [much] and so completely of their tax dollars to any foreign nation. Never before has the Congress of the United States been asked by any President to violate international law. Never before has this Nation resorted to duplicity [deception] in the conduct of its foreign affairs. Never before has the United States given to one man the power to strip this Nation of its defenses. Never before has a Congress coldly and flatly been asked to abdicate.

If the American people want a dictatorship—if they want a totalitarian form of government and if they want war—this bill should be steam-rolled through Congress, as is the wont [desire] of President Roosevelt.

Approval of this legislation [Lend-Lease bill] means war, open and complete warfare. I, therefore, ask the American people before they supinely [passively] accept it, Was the last World War worth while? . . .

Source: Senator Burton K. Wheeler, speech in Congress, January 21, 1941

- 6 Based on this document, state **one** reason Senator Wheeler was opposed to the Lend-Lease bill. [1]

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Score

## Document 7

. . . War is not inevitable for this country. Such a claim is defeatism in the true sense. No one can make us fight abroad unless we ourselves are willing to do so. No one will attempt to fight us here if we arm ourselves as a great nation should be armed. Over a hundred million people in this nation are opposed to entering the war. If the principles of democracy mean anything at all, that is reason enough for us to stay out. If we are forced into a war against the wishes of an overwhelming majority of our people, we will have proved democracy such a failure at home that there will be little use fighting for it abroad. . . .

Source: Charles Lindbergh, speech at a rally of the America First Committee, April 23, 1941

- 7 Based on this document, state **one** reason Charles Lindbergh believed that the United States should stay out of the war. [1]

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Score



## Document 8

. . . It has been said, times without number, that if Hitler cannot cross the English Channel he cannot cross three thousand miles of sea. But there is only one reason why he has not crossed the English Channel. That is because forty-five million determined Britons in a heroic resistance have converted their island into an armed base from which proceeds a steady stream of sea and air power. As Secretary Hull has said: "It is not the water that bars the way. It is the resolute determination of British arms. Were the control of the seas by Britain lost, the Atlantic would no longer be an obstacle — rather, it would become a broad highway for a conqueror moving westward."

That conqueror does not need to attempt at once an invasion of continental United States in order to place this country in deadly danger. We shall be in deadly danger the moment British sea power fails; the moment the eastern gates of the Atlantic are open to the aggressor; the moment we are compelled to divide our one-ocean Navy between two oceans simultaneously. . . .

Source: *The New York Times*, "Let Us Face the Truth," editorial, April 30, 1941

- 8 According to this editorial excerpt, what is **one** reason Americans should oppose the United States policy of isolationism? [1]

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Score

## Part B

### Essay

*Directions:* Write a well-organized essay that includes an introduction, several paragraphs, and a conclusion. Use evidence from *at least five* documents in your essay. Support your response with relevant facts, examples, and details. Include additional outside information.

#### Historical Context:

After World War I, events in Europe caused the United States to review its foreign policy. This review led to controversies between those who supported a return to isolationism and those who wanted to see the United States take a more active role in world affairs.

**Task:** Using information from the documents and your knowledge of United States history, write an essay in which you

- Discuss United States foreign policy toward Europe prior to World War II. In your discussion, include the arguments used by those who *supported* isolationism **and** those who were *opposed* to it.

#### Guidelines:

**In your essay, be sure to:**

- Develop all aspects of the task
- Incorporate information from *at least five* documents
- Incorporate relevant outside information
- Support the theme with relevant facts, examples, and details
- Use a logical and clear plan of organization, including an introduction and a conclusion that are beyond a restatement of the theme