

In developing your answer, 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. The question is designed to test your ability to work with historical documents.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:

Since 1900, the mass media (newspapers, books, magazines, posters, photographs, newsreels, radio, films, and television) have had a significant influence on United States history and on American society.

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 the role that the mass media has played in influencing United States history *and/or* American society since 1900. Use historical examples to support your discussion.

Part A

Short-Answer Questions

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

Document 1A

. . . Meanwhile, radio network officials had agreed that the announcer of the presidential broadcast would be Robert Trout of the Columbia Broadcasting System's Washington station, whose manager was Harry C. Butcher. Two introductions were prepared; a formal one by Trout; a folksy one by Butcher. Both were submitted for review in the White House, whence word came promptly back that Roosevelt much preferred the folksy one. So it was that, at ten o'clock in the evening of March 12, Bob Trout's mellow voice told some 60 million people, seated before nearly 20 million radios, that "the President wants to come into your home and sit at your fireside for a little fireside chat."

And Roosevelt did so.

Riding his richly resonant tenor voice, he came as a smiling and reassuringly confident visitor into nearly 20 million homes to tell his friends there—a Buffalo shipping clerk, an elderly widow in Des Moines, a wheat farmer on the High Plains, a gas station operator in Birmingham, a secretary-typist in Memphis, an Oregon lumberman, a Chicago factory worker, a Kansas college professor, each in his or her own dwelling place—that they need have no fear. Everything that had gone wrong was being fixed up, and in a way that would keep things from going wrong again. . . .

Source: Kenneth S. Davis, *FDR: The New Deal Years, 1933–1937*, Random House, 1986 (adapted)

1a According to this document, how did President Franklin Delano Roosevelt use the fireside chats on the radio to influence the American people during the Depression? [1]

Score

Document 1B

. . . As a result we start tomorrow, Monday, with the opening of banks in the twelve Federal Reserve Bank cities — those banks which on first examination by the Treasury have already been found to be all right. This will be followed on Tuesday by the resumption of all their functions by banks already found to be sound in cities where there are recognized clearinghouses. That means about 250 cities of the United States. . . .

Source: Franklin D. Roosevelt, Fireside Chat, March 12, 1933

1b According to this document, what did the people learn about the banks during this fireside chat? [1]

Score

Document 2

Veteran radio reporter, Robert Trout, speaking about radio news programs in the 1930s:

. . . It was a standard evening ritual in houses: people would gather round these rather large radio sets when the news came on, and nobody would talk very much until it was over. They listened to H. V. Kaltenborn bringing them coverage of the Spanish Civil War with the crackle of the rifles in the distance, and certainly nobody had ever heard real gunfire on the air before. Radio was bringing things right into people's homes, and it was beginning to affect the way people felt about what was going on in the world. So when something important happened in Europe, the country was prepared to listen. Americans had always been somewhat interested in Europe's affairs, but they just didn't feel that they were intimately affected by them. Now they were fascinated.

When Hitler annexed Austria, we did a full half hour of reports from Europe, with correspondents in Paris, Berlin, Washington, and London, and me in New York, acting as what would now be called an anchorman. Then in 1939 came the Czech crisis, which was a major radio event, and the country was enthralled by it all. They listened as much as they possibly could. We just took over the radio, doing minute-by-minute coverage, monopolizing the attention of the country. It was a great novelty then to be able to hear somebody like Hitler speaking, or to hear Neville Chamberlain coming back from Munich and waving the paper and saying, "This means peace in our time." To hear his actual words was amazing.

It's no exaggeration to say that radio brought the whole country together, all at the same instant, everyone listening to the same things. And the country liked being tied together that way. In the morning people would say, "Did you hear that last night? Did you hear Hitler speaking again? What was he talking about? Did you hear them all cheering, 'sieg heil'? What did you think?" It was on the tip of everybody's tongue. People didn't quite see, just yet, exactly how all these things overseas were ever going to intimately affect their daily lives. But it was the greatest show they'd ever been offered. . . .

Source: Peter Jennings and Todd Brewster, *The Century*, Doubleday, 1998

2 Based on this description by Robert Trout, state **two** impacts that radio had on Americans in the 1930s. [2]

(1) _____

Score

(2) _____

Score

Document 3



Source: U. S. Army, Adolph Treidler, artist, 1943

3 What was *one* purpose of this World War II poster? [1]

Score

Document 4

Neal Shine, a reporter for *The Detroit Free Press*, writing of the newsreels shown in theaters during World War II:

. . . We watched the newsreels, the Hollywood version of World War II, with scenes from the battlefields where we were always winning. There was a lot of censorship, as we found out in later years, because nobody wanted anybody to know how bad it really was. If there were any dead bodies, they were Japanese bodies. But Hollywood's version of the war suited us kids just fine. We fought that war in the East End Theater, the Plaza Theater, and the Lakewood Theater. We were on Guadalcanal, we were in *Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo*, we were carried away to these places. I remember something called *The Boy from Stalingrad*, an absolutely hyped propaganda film about a kid who stopped the entire German army by himself. We identified with him because he was a kid and we were kids, and we damned well would do what he did if we had to. If the Germans ever ended up on the east side of Detroit, we would draw the line somewhere around Market Street and defend our territory, just like the boy from Stalingrad. . . .

Source: Peter Jennings and Todd Brewster, *The Century*, Doubleday, 1998

4 According to Neal Shine, what impact did newsreels and movies have on children during World War II? [1]

Score

Document 5

. . . Senator Joseph R. McCarthy, of Wisconsin, could not play upon the human emotions with the same skill as his friend, Richard Nixon. The trail that he [McCarthy] left on the face of my country will not soon fade, and there may be others who will try to follow in his footsteps. His weapon was fear. He was a politically unsophisticated man with a flair for publicity; and he was powerfully aided by the silence of timid men who feared to be the subject of his unfounded accusations. He polluted the channels of communication, and every radio and television network, every newspaper and magazine publisher who did not speak out against him, contributed to his evil work and must share part of the responsibility for what he did, not only to our fellow citizens but to our self-respect. He was in a real sense the creature of the mass media. They made him. They gave nation-wide circulation to his mouthings [opinions]. They defended their actions on the grounds that what he said was news, when they knew he lied. His initial appearances on television were in the role of a man whose sole desire was to oust communists from government and all responsible positions. That was his announced objective. The overwhelming majority of people undoubtedly sympathized with him. It has been said repeatedly that television caused his downfall. This is not precisely true. His prolonged exposure [on television] during the so-called Army-McCarthy Hearings, certainly did something to diminish [reduce] his stature. He became something of a bore. But his downfall really stemmed from the fact that he broke the rules of the club, the United States Senate, when he began attacking the integrity, the loyalty of fellow Senators, he was censured by that body, and was finished. The timidity of television in dealing with this man when he was spreading fear throughout the land, is not something to which this art of communication can ever point with pride, nor should it be allowed to forget it. . . .

Source: Edward R. Murrow, Guildhall Speech, London, 1959; Edward R. Murrow Papers

5 According to Edward R. Murrow, why was Joseph McCarthy a “creature of the mass media”? [1]

Score

Document 6

. . . To keep things moving, Hewitt asked Kennedy: “Do you want makeup?” Kennedy had been campaigning in California and looked tanned, incredibly vigorous, and in full bloom. He promptly said, “No!” Nixon looked pale. He had made a vow to campaign in all fifty states and had been trying to carry it out. Besides, he had had a brief illness and has lost a few pounds; his collar looked loose around his neck. But after Kennedy’s “no” he replied with an equally firm “no.” Later his advisors, worried about his appearance, applied some Lazy-Shave, a product recommended for “five-o’clock shadow.”

The first debate was disastrous for Nixon. This had little to do with what was said, which on both sides consisted of almost ritualized [typical] campaign ploys and slogans. What television audiences noted chiefly was the air of confidence, the nimbleness of mind that exuded [came] from the young Kennedy. It emerged not only from crisp statements emphasized by sparse gestures, but also from glimpses of Kennedy not talking. Don Hewitt used occasional “reaction shots” showing each candidate listening to the other. A glimpse of the listening Kennedy showed him attentive, alert, with a suggestion of a smile on his lips. A Nixon glimpse showed him haggard; the lines on his face seemed like gashes and gave a fearful look. Toward the end, perspiration streaked the Lazy-Shave.

Edward A. (“Ted”) Rogers, principal television adviser to Nixon, protested the reaction shots. But Hewitt said they were a normal television technique and that viewers would feel cheated without them. Such elements may have played a decisive part in the Nixon catastrophe. Among those who heard the first debate on radio, Nixon apparently held his own. Only on television had he seemed to lose. . . .

Source: Erik Barnouw, *Tube of Plenty*, Oxford University Press, 1975

- 6 According to this document, how did John F. Kennedy benefit from his first televised campaign debate with Richard Nixon in 1960? [1]

Score

Document 7

Martin Luther King, Jr., went to Birmingham in January 1963 to lead a campaign against segregation in public facilities, but his efforts there soon became a struggle against Jim Crow in all its insidious guises [subtle appearances]. In April King was arrested and jailed; on his release he and his aides began training children in techniques of nonviolent protest and sending them forth in orderly groups to be arrested. The strategy filled the city's jails with young blacks and provoked the city's pugnacious [combative] police commissioner, Bull Connor, into bringing police dogs and fire hoses into the fray. Charles Moore was there taking pictures for *Life* [magazine], and his unforgettable images of jets of water blasting demonstrators and of police dogs tearing into crowds helped put public opinion solidly behind the civil rights movement. Seldom, if ever, has a set of photographs had such an immediate impact on the course of history.

Source: Michael S. Durham, *Powerful Days: The Civil Rights Photography of Charles Moore, Stewart, Tabori, and Chang*

7 According to Michael S. Durham, how did photographs influence attitudes about the civil rights movement? [1]

Score

Document 8

. . . A decade later, Vietnam was a different story. As journalist Arthur Lubow reminds us, "it was not a declared war and therefore the president could not impose military censorship." Also, it was the first war fought on television. In his book about American war correspondents, *Under Fire*, M. L. Stein sums up what that meant: "Television reporters and photographers brought the war in Vietnam home. . . . Night after night, in the comfort of their living rooms, Americans witnessed the agony of the wounded and dying, the physical destruction, and the unremitting brutality of war. There were complaints, some from the Pentagon, . . . [of] a distorted picture of the conflict. . . ."

Source: Ted Gottfried, *The American Media*, Grolier Publishing, 1997 (adapted)

8 According to this passage, how did television influence public opinion during the Vietnam War? [1]

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 the body of the essay. Support your response with relevant facts, examples, and details. Include additional outside information.

Historical Context:

Since 1900, the mass media (newspapers, books, magazines, posters, photographs, newsreels, radio, films, and television) have had a significant influence on United States history and on American society.

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

- Discuss the role that the mass media has played in influencing United States history *and/or* American society since 1900. Use historical examples to support your discussion.

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