

AP US History Document Based Question

Directions: The following question requires you to construct an essay that integrates your interpretation of Documents A-H and your knowledge of the period referred to in the question. In the essay you should strive to support your assertions both by citing key pieces of evidence from the documents and by drawing on your knowledge of the period.

Prompt:

Compare and contrast the degree to which Washington, Adams, and Jefferson were successful at maintaining neutrality. Include analysis of the domestic response to their policies.

Document A

James Madison's Criticism of Jay's Treaty, 1795

"...Indeed, the Treaty from one end to the other must be regarded as a demonstration that the Party to which the Envoy belongs & of which he has been more than the organ than of the United States, is a British party systematically aiming at an exclusive connection with the British Government & ready to sacrifice to that object as well the dearest interests of our commerce as the most sacred dictates of National honour. . . . The leaders of this Party stand self condemned in their efforts to plaite [sic] the Treaty by magnifying the necessity of the British commerce to the U.S. & the insufficiency of the U.S. to influence the regulation of it.

Document B

The Convention of 1800:

"There shall be a firm, inviolable, and universal peace, and a true and sincere Friendship between the French Republic, and the United States of America....

The Ministers Plenipotentiary of the two Parties, not being able to agree at present respecting the Treaty of Alliance of 6th February 1778,... the Parties will negotiate further on these subjects at a convenient time, and until they may have agreed upon these points, the said Treaties, and.... shall have no operation, and the relations of the two Countries shall be regulated as follows. The Public Ships, which have been taken on one part, and the other, or which may be taken before the exchange of ratifications shall be restored. Property captured, and not yet definitively condemned, or which may be captured before the exchange of ratifications, ... shall be mutually restored.... This article shall take effect from the date of the signature of the present Convention....."

Document C

An early 20th century woodcut depicting the Captain of HMS Leopard on the USS Chesapeake.

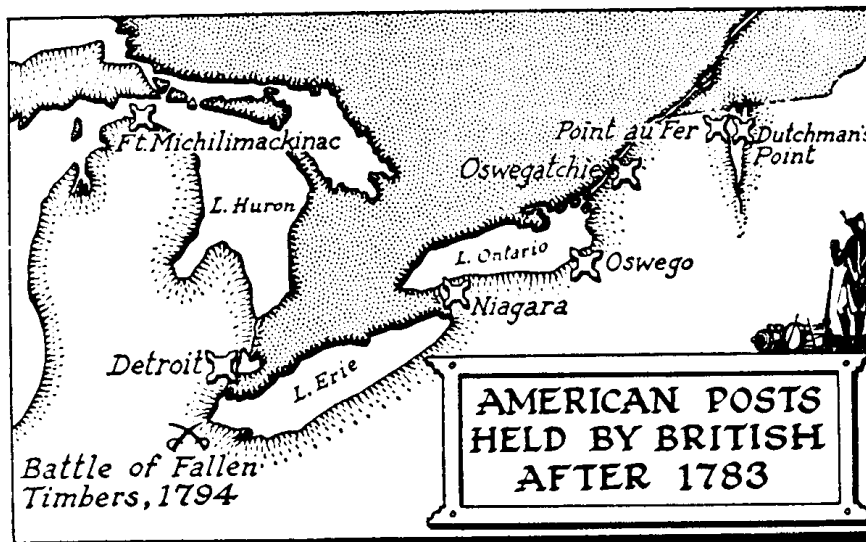


Document D

Washington's Proclamation of Neutrality, 1793

“Whereas it appears that a state of war exists between Austria, Prussia, Sardinia, Great Britain, and the United Netherlands, of the one part, and France on the other; and the duty and interest of the United States require, that they should with sincerity and good faith adopt and pursue a conduct friendly and impartial toward the belligerent Powers;

Document E



Document F

Writings of Thomas Jefferson (1897),

“The cession of Louisiana . . . by Spain to France works most sorely on the United States. On the subject the Secretary of State has written to you fully. It completely reverses all the political relations of the United States and will form a new epoch in our political course.....There is on the globe one single spot, the possessor of which is our natural and habitual enemy. It is New Orleans, through which the produce of three-eighths of our territory must pass to market, and from its fertility it will ere long yield more than half of our whole produce and contain more than half our inhabitants. France, placing herself in that door, assumes to us the attitude of defiance. . . .The impetuosity of her temper, the energy and restlessness of her character . . . render it impossible that France and the United States can continue long friends when they meet in so irritable a position. The day that France takes possession of New Orleans fixes the sentence which is to restrain her forever within her low-water mark. It seals the union of two nations who in conjunction can maintain exclusive possession of the ocean. From that moment we must marry ourselves to the British fleet and nation..”

Document G

"A Federalist (Philip Barton Key) Attacks the Embargo (1808)

“But, Mr. Chairman, let us review this [embargo] law and its effects. In a commercial point of view, it has annihilated our trade. In an agricultural point of view, it has paralyzed industry. . . . Our most fertile lands are reduced to sterility, so far as it respects our surplus product. As a measure of political economics, it will drive (if continued) our seamen into foreign employ, and our fishermen to foreign sandbanks. In a financial point of view, it has dried up our revenue, and if continued will close the sales of Western lands, and the payment of installments of past sales. For unless produce can be sold, payments cannot be made. As a war measure, the embargo has not been advocated.”

It remains then to consider its effects as a peace measure--a measure inducing peace. I grant, sir, that if the friends of the embargo had rightly calculated its effects--if it had brought the belligerents of Europe to a sense of justice and respect for our rights, through the weakness and dependence of their West India possessions--it would have been infinitely wise and desirable.... But, sir, the experience of near four months has not produced that effect....”

Document H



British engraving satirizing Franco-American relations after the XYZ Affair. Frenchmen plunder female "America," while five figures (lower right) representing other European countries look on.