

Watergate: The Condensed Version

Grade 11: American History

Melanie Harden

May 2009

Directions: The following question is based on the accompanying documents (1-8). Some of these documents have been edited for the purpose of these exercises. This question is designed to test your ability to work with historic documents. As you analyze these documents, take into account both the sources of the document and the author's point of view.

Historic Content: On June 17, 1972, five men broke into offices of the Democratic National Committee in Washington, D.C. A security guard at the Watergate building, where the offices were located, caught the men. But the burglars were unusual – they wore suits and carried bugging, or wiretapping devices.

At first, the Watergate burglars' intentions were unclear. Their actions, however, were part of a larger pattern of abuse of presidential power. Nixon tended to view critics of his policies as a threat to national security. He even developed an "enemies" list that included reporters, politicians, and celebrities whom he viewed as being unfriendly to his administration.

The president also showed grave concern for secrecy. He set up his own White House security operation to investigate leaks of damaging information to the press. The group received the nickname "the plumbers" because their main job was to "plug" leaks. It was "the plumbers" who carried out the Watergate burglary.

With the help of a confidential informant, two *Washington Post* reporters began to piece together information that eventually revealed President Nixon's and several of his top aides' involvement in the burglary and the attempted cover-up that followed. They discovered that Nixon's reelection campaign had paid the plumbers to bug the Democrats' offices. Then, during the plumbers' trial, more information was revealed about the President's and his aides' involvement.

The Senate formed a committee to investigate the Watergate affair. It was then that a former Nixon aide revealed that Nixon had installed a recording system in the White House Oval Office that taped every conversation he had there. The Senate Watergate Committee subpoenaed Nixon to release the tapes, but Nixon refused. Finally, in July 1974, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the president must release the tapes to the Senate.

When the tapes were released, the Senate heard evidence on them that incriminated the president in the Watergate affair. Late in July of 1974, the House Judiciary Committee approved three articles of impeachment against Nixon. The articles accused him of obstruction of justice, abuse of power, and contempt of Congress. Rather than face trial and almost certain conviction in the Senate, Nixon announced his resignation on August 8, 1974.

Source: *History Alive! Pursuing American Ideals*, pgs. 704-705

Question: What events influenced President Nixon's fall from power?

Part A: Short Answer

Directions: Analyze the following documents and answer each question(s) accompanying each document.

Document # 1

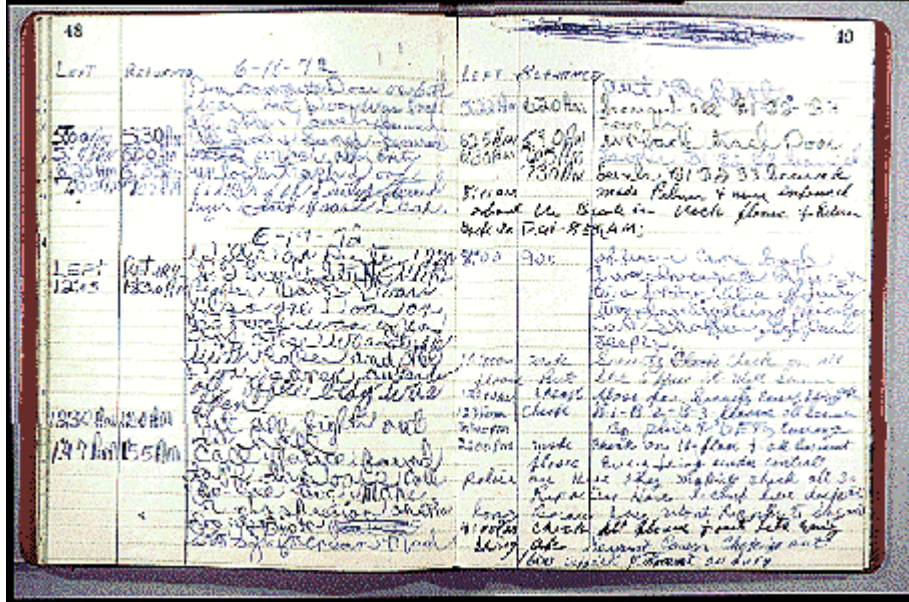


Question 1: Who is phone company man supposed to be?

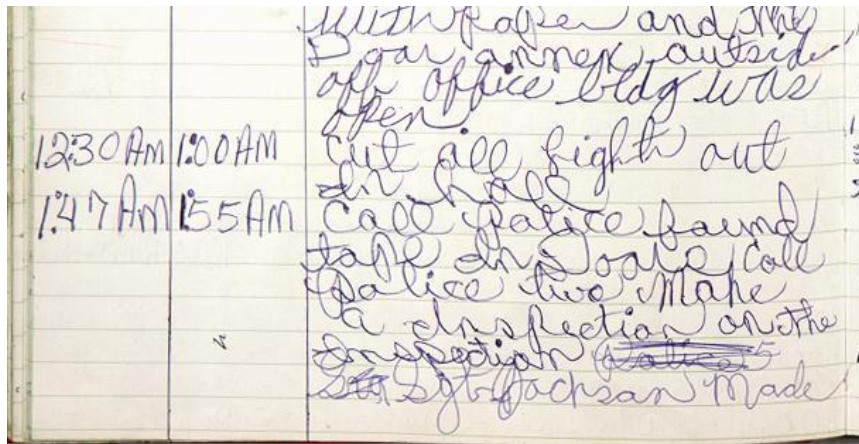
Question 2: What is he doing?

Question 3: Why did the cartoonist draw him doing this?

<http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/swann/herblock/crook.html>



http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/american_originals/willentr.jpg



This is the Watergate Building's security guard's log showing the time when the guard made an entry after noticing tape on a lock and calling the police. The bottom picture is a magnified view of the entry from the log book shown at top.

Question 4: Why would this log entry be considered important evidence?

Document # 3



HIS OWN WORST ENEMY

http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/paulconrad/gal_18.html

Question 5: Why would President Nixon put someone on his “enemies list?”



Question 6: What does this cartoonist think about the list?

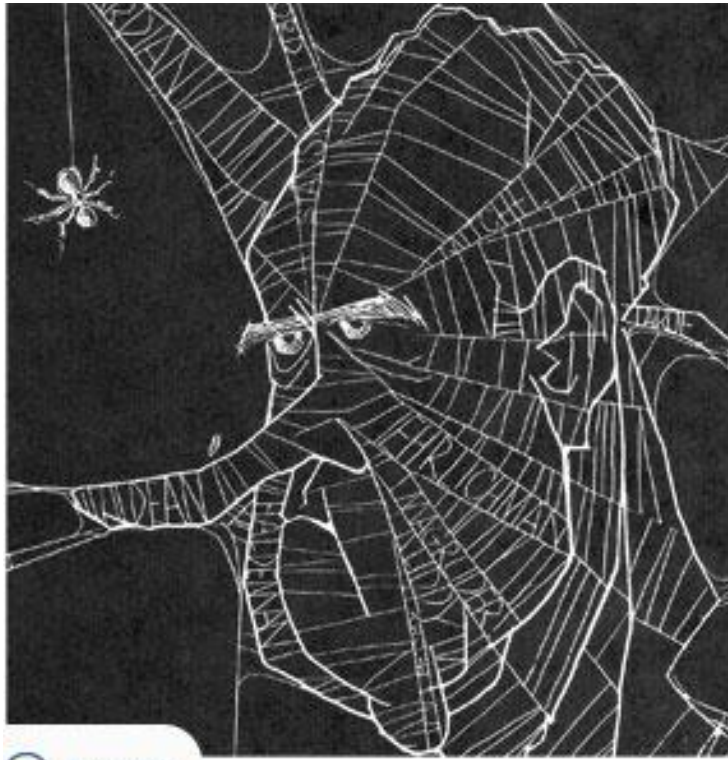
http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/paulconrad/gal_18.html

Question 7: What is Nixon holding on to?

Question 8: What do you think Nixon is doing?

Question 9: What is the cartoonist's opinion of the situation?

Document # 5



http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/paulconrad/gal_18.html

Question 10: Why would the cartoonist depict Nixon in a spider's web?

Question 11: Who are the people whose names are in the web? Why are their names there?



http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/american_originals/nixon.html

The Los Angeles Times newspaper refused to run this cartoon on Easter Sunday believing it was too offensive.

Question 12: Why would this cartoon be considered too offensive?

Question 13: At what point in the Watergate investigation would this cartoon be drawn? Why?



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

August 9, 1974

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I hereby resign the Office of President of the
United States.

Sincerely,

The Honorable Henry A. Kissinger
The Secretary of State
Washington, D. C. 20520

H. 35 A 17

HK

http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/american_originals/nixon.html



Question 14: Why did Nixon choose to resign rather than face trial?

http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/american_originals/nixon.html

This picture shows Nixon on the steps of the presidential helicopter preparing to leave the White House after resigning.

Question 15: What does Nixon's facial expression and body language say?

Question 16: What might the American people say about it?

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Question: What events influenced President Nixon's fall from power?

Part A: Short Answer

Directions: Analyze the following documents and answer each question(s) accompanying each document.

Part B: Essay Response

Directions: Write a 5-paragraph essay that answers the question:

What events influenced President Nixon's fall from power?

Your essay should be well organized with an introductory paragraph that states your opinion on the question. Develop your opinion in the next paragraphs and write a conclusion. Your essay should include specific historical details and refer to the specific documents you analyzed in Part A. Your essay needs to also consist of a significant amount of outside information.

General Rubric

	Excellent 100 - 90 A+, A	Very Good 90-80 B+, B	Good 80-70 C+, C	Satisfactory 70-65 D	Unsatisfactory 64 and under F
Accuracy	No mistakes, scholarly and accurate. Excellent knowledge of the topic shown	Few if any mistakes, any mistakes must be minor in nature, very good knowledge of the topic shown.	Some, but not many, mistakes made, good knowledge shown.	Several mistakes made, fair knowledge of the topic shown.	Many mistakes made. Does not show an adequate knowledge of the topic.
Use of historical details	Used many details in a thorough and expert manner.	Used many details to illustrate topic.	Used some details to illustrate topic	Used one or two details, alluded to details vaguely.	Used no historical details. Made factual errors.
Demonstrated learning and understanding	Applied integrated concepts; made connections between facts and ideas.	Clearly understood topic well.	Understood topic.	Followed directions, had a basic knowledge of the topic.	Thinking not justified; no evidence that knowledge was acquired.
Mechanics (Grammar or Art)	Grammar and/or art work were without flaws and professional in nature.	Grammar and/or art work are quality in nature.	Occasional errors but not enough to distract.	Distracting errors, difficult to read.	Fragmented sentences and grammar. Art completed in a haphazard manner. Very difficult to understand
Neat and orderly	Professional appearance	Quality appearance	Neat and orderly, easy to follow.	Moderately neat, almost distracting.	Lacks neatness and orderliness. Hard to understand
Word Usage	Word choice and usage are professional.	Word choice makes piece interesting.	Word choice simple but acceptable.	Some mistakes in word choice and usage. Could be clearer.	Word choice is inadequate or inappropriate.

Message	Message flows and is passionate.	Message is clear and easy to understand.	Message can be understood.	Message not easily understood.	Very hard to understand message.
Creativity	Very clever; creatively designed	Displays creative thinking	Shows some creative thinking	Lacks creativity	Copied from another source.

Source: <http://www.socialstudieshelp.com/rubric.htm>

(Optional)

Student who wrote essay:

Student scoring essay:

Signature: