

*A.P. United States History*  
*Slavery and Sectionalism*  
Pat McLarty, Kathleen High School

*Directions:* The following question requires you to construct a coherent essay that integrates your interpretation of Documents A-G *and* your knowledge of the period referred to in the question. In your 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.

**Assess the validity of the following statement: Southern slaveholders are commonly thought of as being calloused toward the treatment of their slaves. To what extent are these characterizations valid?**

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**Document A**

“...I advance it therefore as a suspicion only, that the blacks, whether originally a distinct race, or made distinct by time and circumstances, are inferior to the whites in the endowments both of body and mind. It is not against experience to suppose, that different Species of the same genus, or varieties of the same species, may possess different qualifications...Comparing them by their faculties of memory, reason, and imagination, it appears to me that in memory they are equal to the whites; in reason much inferior...

This unfortunate difference of colour, and perhaps of faculty, is a powerful obstacle to the emancipation of these people. Many of their advocates, while they wish to vindicate the liberty of human nature are anxious also to preserve its dignity and beauty. Some of these, embarrassed by the question ‘What further is to be done with them?’ join themselves in opposition with those who are actuated by sordid avarice only. Among the Romans emancipation required but one effort. The slave, when made free, might mix with, without staining the blood of his master. But with us a second is necessary, unknown to history. When freed, he is to be removed beyond the reach of mixture...”

Source: Thomas Jefferson, “Notes on the State of Virginia” (1781)

**Document B**

“...I have examined schoolboys and young men of colour in different parts of the country...and not more than one in thirty was able to give a correct answer to my interrogations...Here is a fact, which I this very minute take from the mouth of a young coloured man, who has been to school in this state (Massachusetts) nearly nine years, and who knows grammar this day, *nearly* as well as he did the day he first entered the schoolhouse, under a white master...’The school committee,’ said he “forbid the coloured children learning grammar – they would not allow any but the white children to study grammar.” It is a notorious fact, that the major part of the white Americans, have, ever since we have been among them, tried to keep us ignorant, and make us believe that God made us and our children to be slaves to them and theirs. *Oh, my God, have mercy on Christian Americans!!!!!!*”

Source: David Walker, “An Appeal to Blacks”, Article II (1829)

### Document C

“... But the chief and far most important enquiry is, how does slavery affect the condition of the slave? ...We (the slave owner) provide for each slave, in old age and in infancy, in sickness and in health, not according to his labor, but according to his wants. The master's wants are more costly and refined, and he therefore gets a larger share of the profits. A Southern farm is ...a joint concern, in which the slave consumes more than the master, of the coarse products, and is far happier, because although the concern may fail, he is always sure of a support; he is only transferred to another master to participate in the profits of another concern; he marries when he pleases, because he knows he will have to work no more with a family than without one, and whether he live or die, that family will be taken care of; he exhibits all the pride of ownership, despises a partner in a smaller concern, 'a poor man's Negro,' boasts of 'our crops, horses, fields and cattle;' and is as happy as a human being can be. And why should he not? – he enjoys as much of the fruits of the farm as he is capable of doing, and the wealthiest can do no more.”

Source: George Fitzhugh, “Failure of Free Society”, Slavery Justified (1854)

### Document D

“...The fact is, that, in wandering from my native soil to other parts of the world, I have seen slavery in many forms and aspects. We have all heard enough of the colliers and factory operatives of England, and the thirty thousand costermongers [peddlers] starving in the streets of London; as also of the serfs and crown-peasants of Russia, who are considered not even as chattels, but as part of the land, and who have their wives selected from them by their masters. I have seen the hideous slavery of Asia. I have seen the coolies of China 'housed on the wild sea with wilder usages,' or creeping with dejected faces into the suicide houses of Canton. I have seen the Siamese slave creeping in the presence of his master on all-fours – a human quadruped. It was indeed refreshing, after such sights, to get back to the Southern institution, which strikes one after no many years of absence, with a novelty that makes him appreciate more than even the evidences of comfort and happiness on the plantations of the South.”

Source: Edward A. Pollard, “Black Diamonds Gathered in the Darkey Homes of the South”, 1859.

### Document E

“...My opinion has ever been that, until more can be done for them, we should endeavor, with those whom fortune has thrown on our hands, to feed and clothe them well, protect them from ill usage, require such reasonable labor only as is performed voluntarily by freemen, and be led by no repugnancies to abdicate them, and our duties to them.”

Source: Thomas Jefferson, *Letter to Edward Coles*, August 25, 1814

## Document F



Source: Porte Crayon, "A Southern Planter Arming His Slaves to Resist Invasions" [HarpWeek](#), November 19, 1859

## Document G

"...I ask, is there any evil connected with their condition? And if so; upon whom is it to be charged? I answer for myself, and the reader can do the same. Our government stands first chargeable for allowing slavery to exist, under its own jurisdiction. Second, the states for enacting laws to secure their victim. Third, the slaveholder for carrying out such enactments, in horrid form enough to chill the blood. Fourth, every person who knows what slavery is, and does not raise his voice against this crying sin, but by silence gives consent to its continuance, is chargeable with guilt in the sight of God..."

Source: Theodore D. Weld, *American Slavery As It Is, Narrative of Mr. Caulkins* (1830)

## Scoring Guide for Document-Based Questions

(from: *U.S. History: Preparing for the A.P.Exam*, AMSCO Publishers, 1998, pp. xxix-xxx)

| SCORE | COMMENT   |
|-------|---|
| 8 - 9 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contains a well-developed thesis that clearly addresses the question.</li> <li>• Presents an effective analysis of all parts of the question, although treatment may be uneven.</li> <li>• Uses a substantial number of documents effectively.</li> <li>• Makes substantial use of relevant outside information to support thesis.</li> <li>• Clearly organized and well written.</li> <li>• May have insignificant errors.</li> </ul>   |
| 5 - 7 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thesis addresses question, but not as focused or comprehensive as above.</li> <li>• Analysis deals with part of the question in some depth, other parts in a more general way.</li> <li>• Uses some of the documents effectively.</li> <li>• Supports thesis with some outside information.</li> <li>• Shows evidence of acceptable organization and writing.</li> <li>• May contain errors that do not seriously detract from the quality of the essay.</li> </ul>                              |
| 2 - 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presents a limited, confused, and/or poorly developed thesis.</li> <li>• Deals with one aspect of the question in a general way or all parts in a superficial way with simplistic explanations.</li> <li>• Quotes or briefly cites documents.</li> <li>• Contains little outside information or information that is inaccurate or irrelevant.</li> <li>• Demonstrates weak organization and/or writing skills that interfere with comprehension.</li> <li>• May contain major errors.</li> </ul> |
| 0 - 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contains no thesis or a thesis that does not address the question.</li> <li>• Inadequate or inaccurate understanding of the question.</li> <li>• Contains little or no understanding of the documents or ignores them completely.</li> <li>• Inappropriate or no use of outside information.</li> <li>• Disorganized and poorly written.</li> <li>• Numerous errors, both major and minor.</li> </ul>  |