

**APUSH Contextualization**

**Contextualization: Response must relate the topic of the prompt to broader historical events, developments, or processes that occur before, during, or continue after the time frame of the question.**

Samples taken from <https://apprend.io/apush/apush-dbg-breakdown/>

**Example Prompt:** Evaluate the relative importance of different factors that caused the movement for American Independence between 1754 and 1776. In your response, consider both the underlying forces and specific events that contributed to the growing support for independence.

**Contextualization Sample 1:**

There were many reasons for the American Revolution. The colonists were angry at the British and wanted to revolt. There were also many events that led to the Revolution between 1754 and 1776.

In Document 1, the snake shows disunity in the colonies. The colonists were probably angry over how the king was trying to divide them. In the Virginia Resolves, Document 2, the colonists said that they had the right to tax themselves. Taxes seemed to make them very angry. This was in response to the Intolerable Acts and other taxes. George Washington also did not like these taxes and said that manufacturers would help American industry. (3)

**Contextualization Sample 2:**

Enlightenment ideas were ideas about liberty and individual rights. They began in the 18th century. The colonists thought that their rights were being taken away. In Common Sense, Thomas Paine states that hereditary rights of kings could not be the basis of a good government. (6) Other rights taken away were stated in the Declaration of Independence in an attempt to convince the colonies to unify to revolt against the British monarchy. The Declaration included John Locke's idea of a social contract. (7) Even Tories brought up enlightenment principles. In 1775, a Tory wrote that colonists enjoyed the natural right of petitions and that the Crown and Parliament were listening to colonial concerns. (5) If not for enlightened ideas there wouldn't have been a revolution.

**Contextualization Sample 3:**

Fundamentally, the colonists had always thought of themselves as economically independent. Since the day the English landed at Jamestown and became economically viable with tobacco they were in many ways independent from England. England, like other European monarchies of the 18th century, had created the mercantile system of trade between the colonies and the mother country whereby they sold manufactured goods to the colonists in exchange for colonial agricultural goods and raw materials. Though both sides benefited to some degree, the colonists beginning in the early 18th century, began to skirt the very laws that England had emplaced to control this trade. They discovered that they could smuggle goods to the Spanish and French West Indies and make much larger profits than they could by only trading with the British West Indies. The mercantile system forced them to be paid less for their goods so that English middlemen could then sell their valuable goods (such as tobacco) to the Spanish and French. When the British caught on to colonial smuggling they began to crack down on smugglers with the Sugar Act of 1764. They took away trial by jury in the new Vice-Admiralty courts created. Unbeknownst to the King, they had now taken the first steps towards creating the Revolution.

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**Contextualization #1:** There is no attempt at contextualization.

**Contextualization #2:** The attempt at the beginning the paragraph to establish a contextualization point with the discussion of Enlightenment ideas does not get over the bar for the point. The discussion needs more elaboration as to what the individual rights and Enlightened principles were and how they were a fundamental force causing the revolution.

**Contextualization #3:** In the paragraph, the student thoroughly explains the system of mercantilism that existed in the 18th century as the trade development that preceded and continued during the period of the question. This context directly establishes the fundamental economic trend and why its monopolistic tendencies were a cause of the revolution. This is an extremely healthy explanation and points would have been awarded even if it was half this length.