

NAME _____ SCHOOL _____

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 The question is designed to test your ability to work with historical documents.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

