

Globalization

AP World History: Modern

Advances in Technology and Exchange

Unit 9 covers **1900 to the present**. A message, a container of goods and a cultural product can cross long distances more easily than before, but access and influence remain unequal. Explain what changed, how it changed and how far the evidence supports the claim. Follow the task: explanation, comparison and evaluation require different answers. A benefit-and-cost list is useful only when it answers the question.

The syllabus identifies several mechanisms:

- **New modes of communication**, including radio, cellular communication and the internet, reduced barriers created by distance.
- Air travel and **shipping containers** also reduced the difficulty of moving people and goods over long distances. Communication and transportation are related but distinct changes.
- **Energy technologies**, including **petroleum** and **nuclear power**, increased productive capacity. Their environmental consequences differ; do not assign every energy source the same emission mechanism.
- **Medical innovations**, including **vaccines** and **antibiotics**, helped people survive and **increased lifespans**.
- The **Green Revolution** and commercial agriculture increased agricultural productivity and the food supply. Production gains do not by themselves prove that food reached everyone equally.
- More effective **birth control** increased control over **fertility** and contributed to falling fertility rates in much of the world. Access, social expectations and institutions affected how opportunities changed.

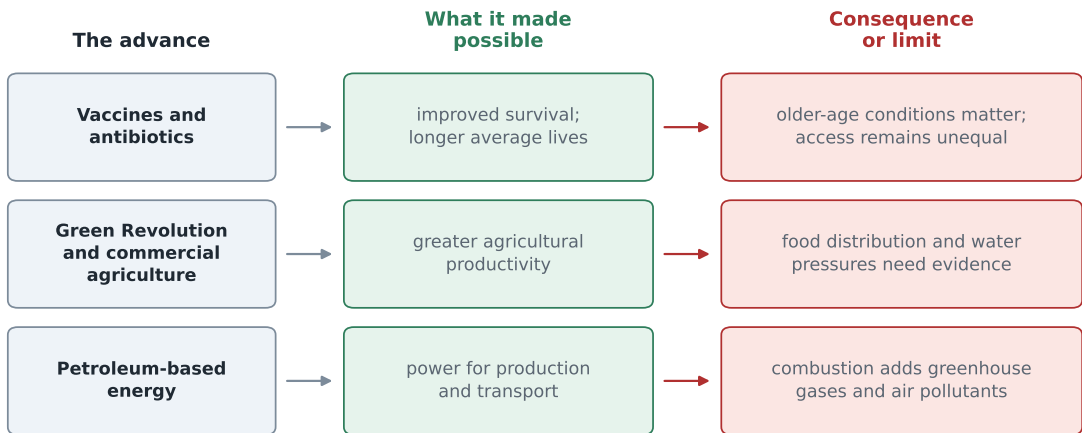
Worked explanation: distance and exchange. Shipping containers made goods easier to transfer between different stages of transport, supporting longer supply chains. Radio, cellular communication and the internet helped people exchange information over distance. These changes reduced obstacles to coordinating production and trade; they did not eliminate borders, transport costs or unequal access.

Practice. Choose communication or transportation. Name a specific syllabus example, explain its mechanism and state one limit. Attempt this before comparing with the worked explanation.

Technological Advances and Limitations: Disease

Disease and scientific developments affected populations in different ways. The syllabus distinguishes persistent diseases associated with poverty, emerging epidemics and diseases more common at older ages.

- Malaria, tuberculosis and cholera are syllabus examples of diseases associated with poverty. This association does not mean only poor people can be affected.
- The 1918 influenza pandemic, Ebola and HIV/AIDS illustrate epidemic threats. Their different causes and histories should not be collapsed into one disease.
- Longer survival increased the number of people reaching ages at which some conditions, such as heart disease and Alzheimer's disease, are more common. Medical progress is not the sole cause of those conditions.



Explain the mechanism; answer the actual task.

Worked causal chain. Medical innovations helped reduce some infectious-disease deaths. More people survived, contributing to longer average lives. Where death rates fell before birth rates, population could grow more rapidly. Birth rates, migration and access to treatment also matter; the chain is not a prediction that every country changed at the same rate.

Practice. Explain why a population can experience longer average lives while still facing disease. Use one persistent or emerging disease example and distinguish it from conditions associated with older ages.

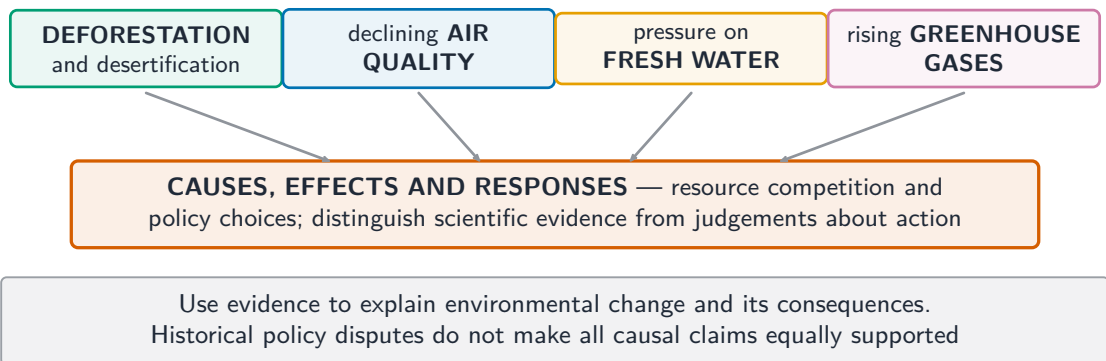
Debates About the Environment

Human activities contributed to **deforestation**, **desertification**, a **decline in air quality** and greater consumption of **fresh water**. These pressures intensified competition over resources. Explain the activity, the environmental change and its consequences rather than treating the terms as interchangeable.

Worked distinction. Clearing woodland removes forest cover. Heavy demand for irrigation can place pressure on a fresh-water supply. Burning petroleum releases **greenhouse gases** and can contribute to air pollution. These are related environmental issues, but removing trees, using water and emitting gases are different

mechanisms.

The syllabus includes historical **debates about climate change**. Analyse who made claims, what evidence they used, and how responses were disputed. That historical wording does not make all scientific claims equally supported: the IPCC's 2023 assessment attributes global warming to human activities, principally greenhouse-gas emissions. Policy disagreements include how quickly to reduce emissions and how to share costs. Distinguish evidence about causes from arguments about a response. IPCC, Summary for Policymakers, A.1.



Practice. Compare “burning petroleum adds greenhouse gases” with “richer states should pay a larger share of the response.” Explain which is a causal claim and which is a policy judgement. They require different kinds of support.

Economics in the Global Age

The late twentieth century saw several connected changes. They did not all begin in 1990 or progress uniformly.

- Many governments encouraged **free-market economic policies** and economic liberalisation; the end of the Cold War accelerated this trend.
- Information and communications technology supported **knowledge economies** in some regions. The syllabus gives Finland, Japan and the United States as examples.
- Manufacturing became increasingly situated in parts of Asia and Latin America, with Vietnam, Bangladesh and Mexico among the syllabus examples. These are not claims that a country has only one kind of economic activity.
- Economic institutions, **multinational corporations** and **regional trade agreements** reshaped cross-border production and trade. The WTO, ASEAN and historical NAFTA are syllabus examples of institutions or agreements; Nissan and Mahindra and Mahindra illustrate multinational corporations. Keep their different roles clear.

Worked comparison with Unit 6. Both periods involved international production

and unequal economic influence. A late-twentieth-century multinational supply chain, however, is not automatically the same political arrangement as nineteenth-century colonial rule. Compare the particular power relationship, institutions and legal control. Continuity in unequal influence can coexist with change in political sovereignty and coordination technology.

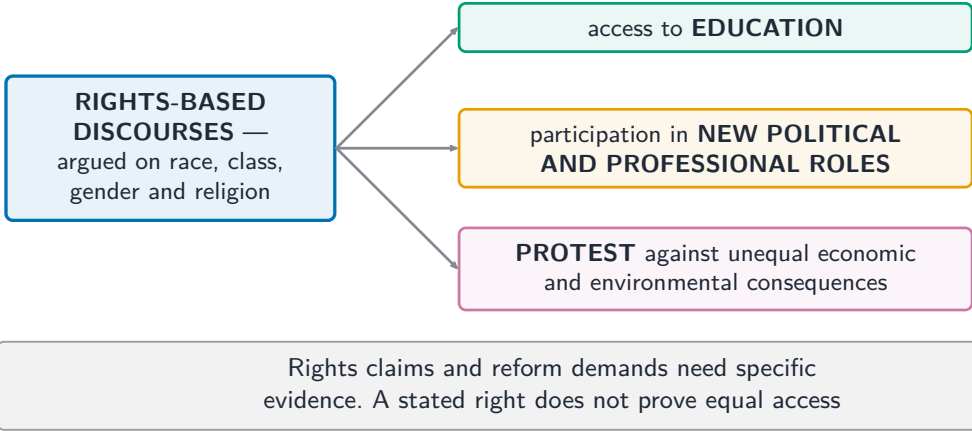
Practice. Explain one economic change using a named example, then qualify a claim that all regions became knowledge economies.

Calls for Reform and Responses

Rights-based discourses challenged assumptions about race, class, gender and religion. **Access to education** and participation in political and professional roles became more inclusive in much of the world, unevenly. Other movements protested unequal environmental and economic consequences of **global integration**.

Primary-source example. Article 26 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights states: “Everyone has the right to education.” Its universal language presents education as a right, rather than a privilege limited to one social group. The statement is evidence of a declared principle. It is not evidence that every person already had a school place or equal educational outcomes. To assess implementation, examine additional evidence about access and barriers. United Nations, UDHR, Article 26.

The syllabus also names global feminism, the end of apartheid, the Green Belt Movement in Kenya and fair-trade organisations. Select an example appropriate to the claim: political inclusion, environmental action and fairer trade are connected concerns but not identical demands.



Practice. What can Article 26 establish about rights language? What additional evidence would be needed to establish expanded access to education? Attempt both parts before using the model distinction above.

Globalized Culture

Three developments need separate explanations: political and social changes affected the arts; cultural forms circulated and were adapted across regions; and **consumer culture** increasingly crossed national borders. Arts and entertainment **increasingly reflected global influence**, but circulation does not prove that all audiences interpreted a work identically.

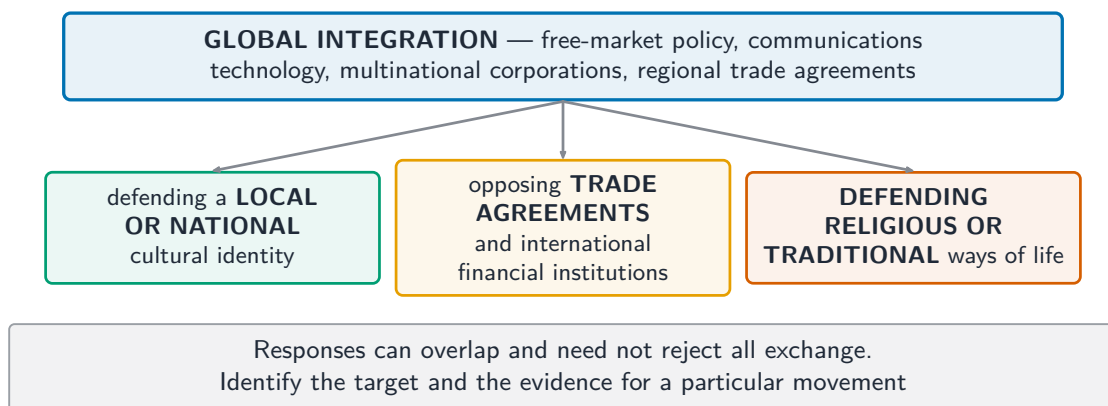
Worked evidence choices. The syllabus names reggae and Bollywood as cultural examples, World Cup soccer and the Olympics as global sports, and Toyota and Coca-Cola as global brands. A claim about cultural circulation could use the spread of music or film; a claim about consumer goods could use a brand across markets. Neither example alone proves the disappearance of local languages, tastes or cultural production.

Practice. Choose evidence for “consumer culture crossed borders” and for “culture was adapted across regions.” Explain why those claims are related but not interchangeable. Identify what additional evidence the adaptation claim requires beyond a brand’s presence.

Resistance to Globalization

Responses to globalisation varied. Movements could defend local or national cultural identity, oppose trade agreements or international financial institutions, or defend a religious or traditional way of life. **Religious and traditionalist movements** did not all have the same programme. Categories can overlap and are not exhaustive.

The syllabus’s examples include anti-IMF and anti-World Bank activism and locally developed social media such as Weibo in China. These illustrate different responses: opposing an institution is not the same as creating a local platform within a connected world. A local platform’s existence alone does not establish its users’ political motives or rejection of every form of exchange.



Practice. Compare opposition to an international financial institution with developing a local media platform. State the target or change in each case, then explain why

neither should automatically be labelled opposition to all international contact.

Institutions in a Globalized World

New international organisations , including the **United Nations** , formed with stated goals of maintaining peace and facilitating cooperation. The UN Charter’s Article 1 identifies peace and security, friendly relations and cooperation on international problems among its purposes. Shared problems help explain why states created institutions to coordinate responses. United Nations Charter, Article 1.

Worked source judgement. The Charter is strong evidence for the UN’s stated aims. To establish whether it succeeded in preventing a particular conflict, examine the events and the institution’s actions and limits. A founding purpose is not an outcome. Do not assume every international institution has the same role or was created in response to exactly the same failure.

Practice. Explain one reason for international cooperation and identify one source that would test an institution’s effectiveness beyond its founding statement.

Continuity and Change in a Globalized World

Use an argument about extent, supported with specific evidence. Identify the baseline, the change and a meaningful continuity; a cross-period reference helps only when the relationship is explained.

Original practice question, not an authentic AP item. Explain one way technological developments after 1900 affected human populations.

Worked response. “Medical innovations such as vaccines and antibiotics helped reduce deaths from infectious diseases. By improving survival, they contributed to longer average lives and could accelerate population growth where birth rates remained high.” This supplies a development and a mechanism. It claims neither universal access nor a guaranteed mark.

Extended practice. Assess the extent to which technology reduced the importance of geographic distance after 1900. Use communication and transportation evidence and one limit.

Possible argument. Radio, cellular communication and the internet reduced the barriers to sending information, while air travel and shipping containers supported movement over long distances. Yet access, borders and resource inequalities continued to shape participation. Technology changed how distance could be managed without making location irrelevant. To develop an essay, support these claims with specific historical examples and explain their relationships.

Exam tips

- Answer the command and scope of the actual task; do not force every explanation into a benefit-and-cost list.
- Name a development and explain a mechanism, then qualify its reach where relevant.
- Distinguish persistent disease, epidemic threats and conditions associated with older ages.
- Treat climate-policy disputes historically while distinguishing their claims from scientific evidence.
- Compare economic power across periods without equating every international firm with colonial government.
- Separate declared rights or institutional aims from evidence of implementation and success.
- Distinguish cultural circulation, adaptation and consumption; a shared product does not prove an identical culture.

■ Sources for this lesson

Scope and illustrative examples: the project's *AP World History: Modern Course and Exam Description*, effective Fall 2026, Unit 9 (PDF pages 167–176), and its topic extracts 9.1–9.9. The IPCC and United Nations sources are linked beside the claims they support. Worked responses and practice questions are original teaching material.

Vocabulary card meanings

New modes of communication: Later tools such as radio, television, and the internet. shipping containers: Standardised boxes that made global freight faster and cheaper. Energy technologies: Ways of producing power, from oil to nuclear reactors. petroleum: Oil extracted from the ground and refined into fuel. nuclear power: Electricity generated from controlled nuclear reactions. Medical innovations: New treatments and tools that changed health. increased lifespans: People living longer, on average. birth control: Methods that let people limit or time pregnancies. fertility: The rate at which a population has children. decline in air quality: Air becoming more polluted. fresh water: Water with very little salt, which is not always safe to drink. debates about climate change: Arguments over warming caused by human activity and what to do about it. free-market economic policies: Policies that reduce state control and rely on private buying and selling. and regional trade agreements: Treaties that lower barriers among countries in one part of the world. Rights-based discourses: Arguments that frame political claims as human rights. access to education: The chance to attend school, which spread unevenly. global integration: Economies and cultures becoming more tightly linked across borders. increasingly reflected global influence: Culture and politics showing more influence from outside any one country. Consumer culture: A way of life organised around buying goods and brands. Religious and traditionalist movements: Groups that defend older beliefs against rapid social change.

New international organisations: Bodies founded to coordinate states, such as the UN and the World Bank. United Nations: The organisation founded in 1945 to maintain international peace.