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# Advanced Placement United States History Textbook Survey

Summary Report

School Year 2016–17

Prepared by Andrew Muriuki, PhD  
MPS Division of Research and Evaluation

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## **INTRODUCTION**

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The Division of Research and Evaluation was contacted by Advanced Academic Programs to conduct a brief survey related to the new Advanced Placement (AP) United States (US) History textbooks in early spring 2017. The textbooks had been disseminated to schools in fall 2016. The survey opened on April 12, 2017, and closed on May 5, 2017. The survey asked AP US History teachers and students to provide feedback on the new textbook they were using this academic year. A brief summary of the results follows.

## DATA ANALYSIS

A total of 13 schools were invited to participate in the survey with 12 schools responding. In these 12 schools, 191 respondents completed the AP US History textbook survey. About 7% of the respondents were teachers and 93% were students (Figure 1). In three schools, only the teachers responded, while in two schools, only the students responded (Table 1).

Figure 1: AP US History Survey Respondents

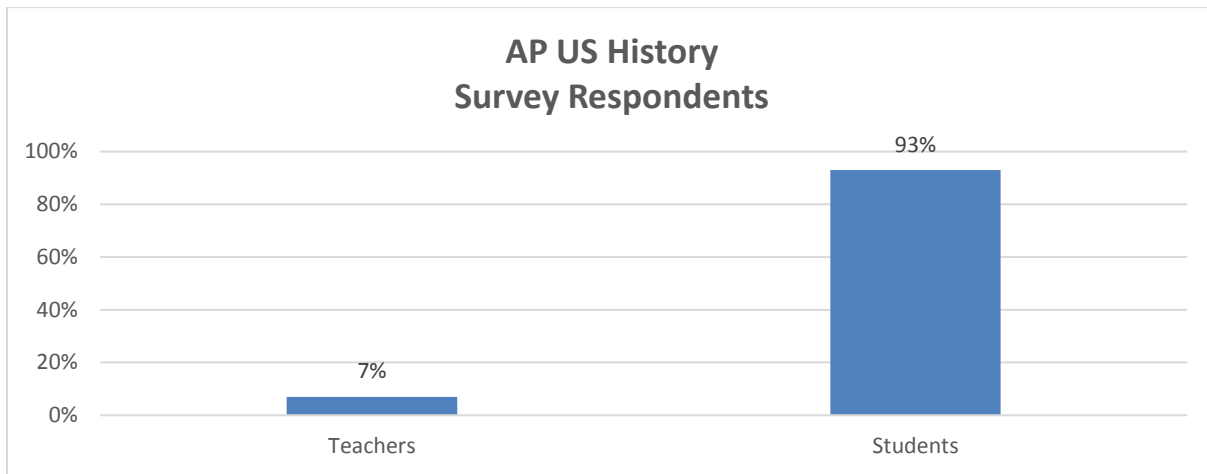
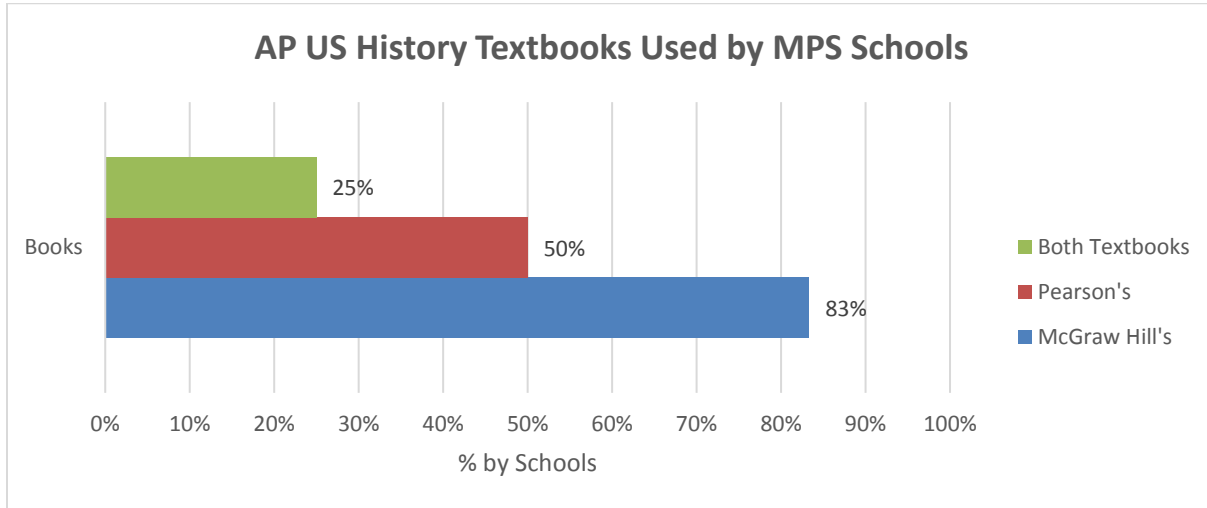


Table 1: Number of Respondents by School

Schools	Student	Teacher	Grand Total
Bay View HS	11	1	12
Bradley Tech	14	1	15
Golda Meir	16	1	17
Hamilton HS	72	1	73
James Madison (JMAC)		1	1
Marshall HS		4	4
Milwaukee School of Languages		1	1
North Division HS	3	1	4
Riverside HS	42		42
South Division HS	10	1	11
Vincent HS	1		1
Washington HS	9	1	10
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>191</b>

Ten of the schools reported using McGraw-Hill’s *American History: Connecting with the Past*, 15th Edition, by Alan Brinkley, while six schools used Pearson’s *By the People: A History of the United States*, AP Edition, by James Fraser. Three schools reported using both textbooks.

Figure 2: Type of Textbook Used by Schools



Note: Textbook used by school legend. McGraw-Hill’s = McGraw-Hill’s *American History: Connecting with the Past*, 15th Edition, by Alan Brinkley; Pearson’s = Pearson’s *By the People: A History of the United States*, AP Edition, by James Fraser

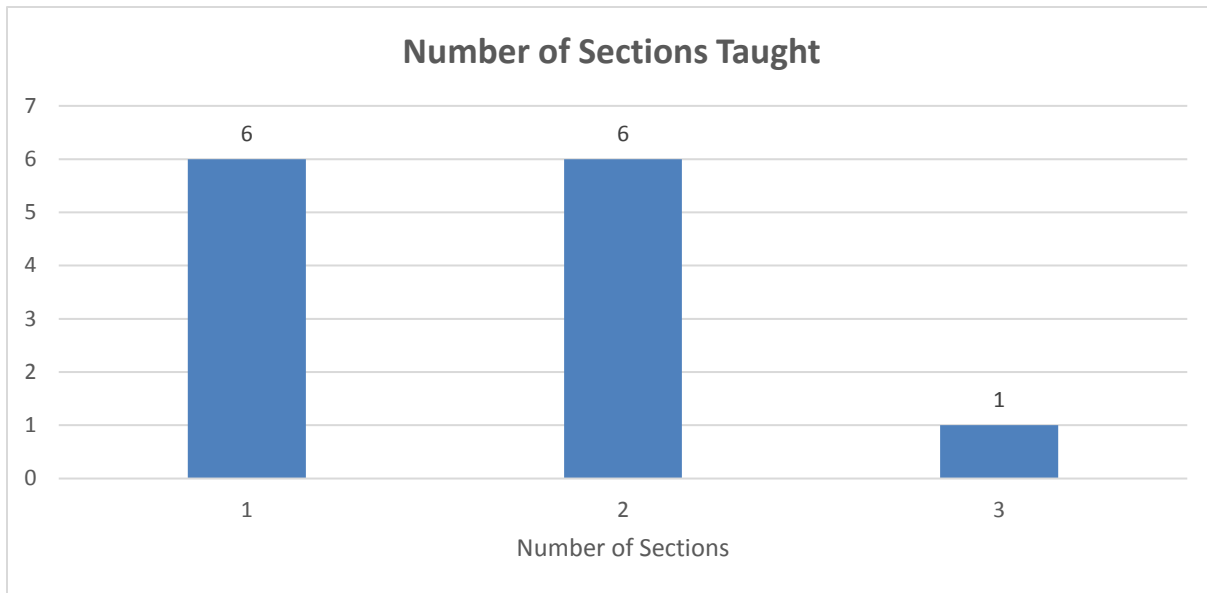
Table 2: Textbook Use by Respondents

Row Labels	McGraw-Hill’s	Pearson’s	Grand Total
Bay View HS	12		12
Bradley Tech	15		15
Golda Meir	2	15	17
Hamilton HS	3	70	73
James Madison (JMAC)	1		1
Marshall HS		4	4
Milwaukee School of Languages	1		1
North Division HS		4	4
Riverside HS	42		42
South Division HS	1	10	11
Vincent HS	1		1
Washington HS	9	1	10
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>191</b>

McGraw-Hill’s = McGraw-Hill’s *American History: Connecting with the Past*, 15th Edition, by Alan Brinkley; Pearson’s = Pearson’s *By the People: A History of the United States*, AP Edition, by James Fraser. Golda Meir, Hamilton HS, South Div., and Washington HS used both textbooks.

Teachers were queried as to the number of AP US History sections they taught during the 2016–17 academic year. Out of the 13 teachers who responded, six teachers reported teaching only one section, while another six teachers taught two sections. Only one teacher reported teaching three sections at their school.

Figure 3: Number of Sections Taught by Teachers



Most teachers used multiple resources to teach the AP US History class. The most popular option was lecture, followed by other texts and documents, the textbooks, and other media.

Figure 4: Class Instructions Methods

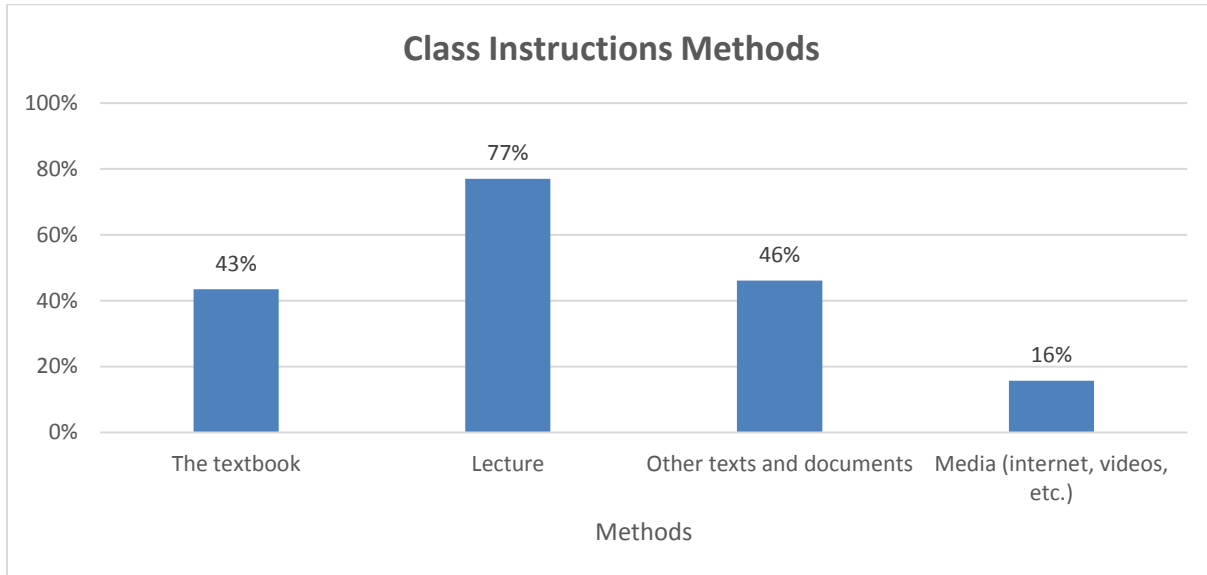
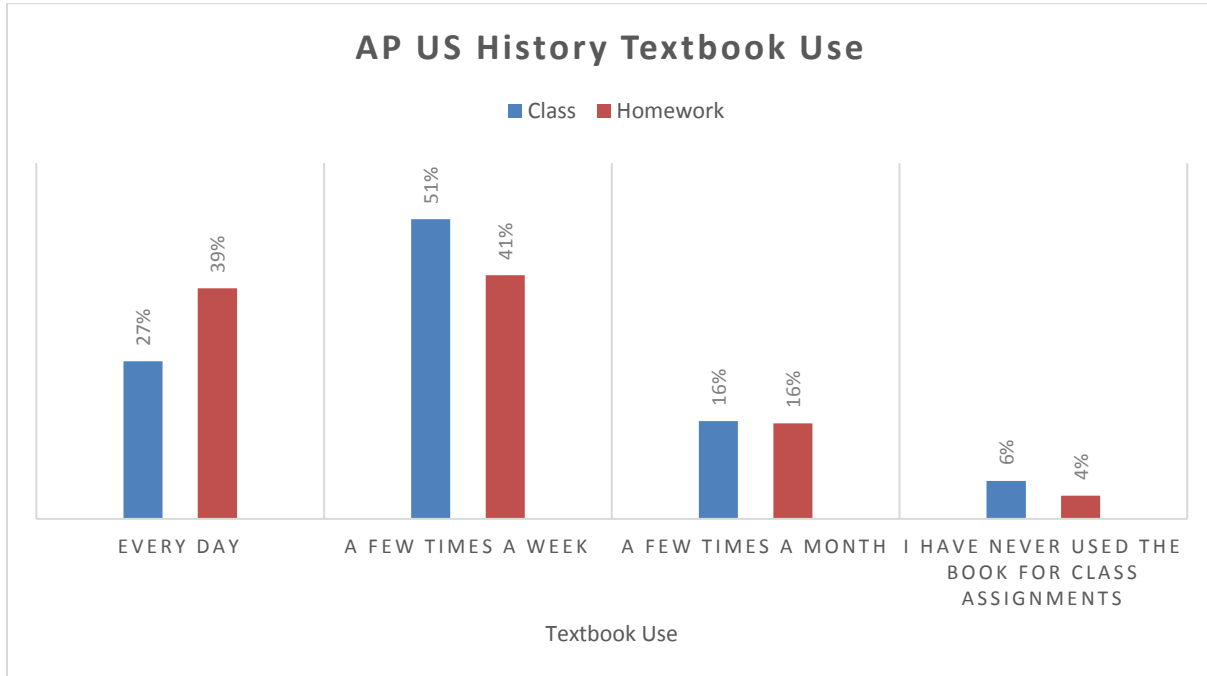


Table 3: Class Instructions Methods by Schools

Schools	The textbook	Lecture	Other texts and documents	Media (internet, videos, etc.)
Bay View HS	1	11	4	2
Bradley Tech	13	10	8	2
Golda Meir	4	15	5	2
Hamilton HS	44	62	31	5
James Madison (JMAC)	1			1
Marshall HS			4	
Milwaukee School of Languages		1		
North Division HS			4	
Riverside HS	10	37	17	7
South Division HS	4	2	7	3
Vincent HS		1	1	1
Washington HS	4	6	6	7
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>30</b>

Students reported using both books frequently for class and homework assignments. About 27% of students responding to the survey reported using the textbooks every day in class, while 51% of students reported using the books a few times a week. Few students claimed to have never used the books in class (6%). More students used the books to do their homework every day (39%) compared to class use.

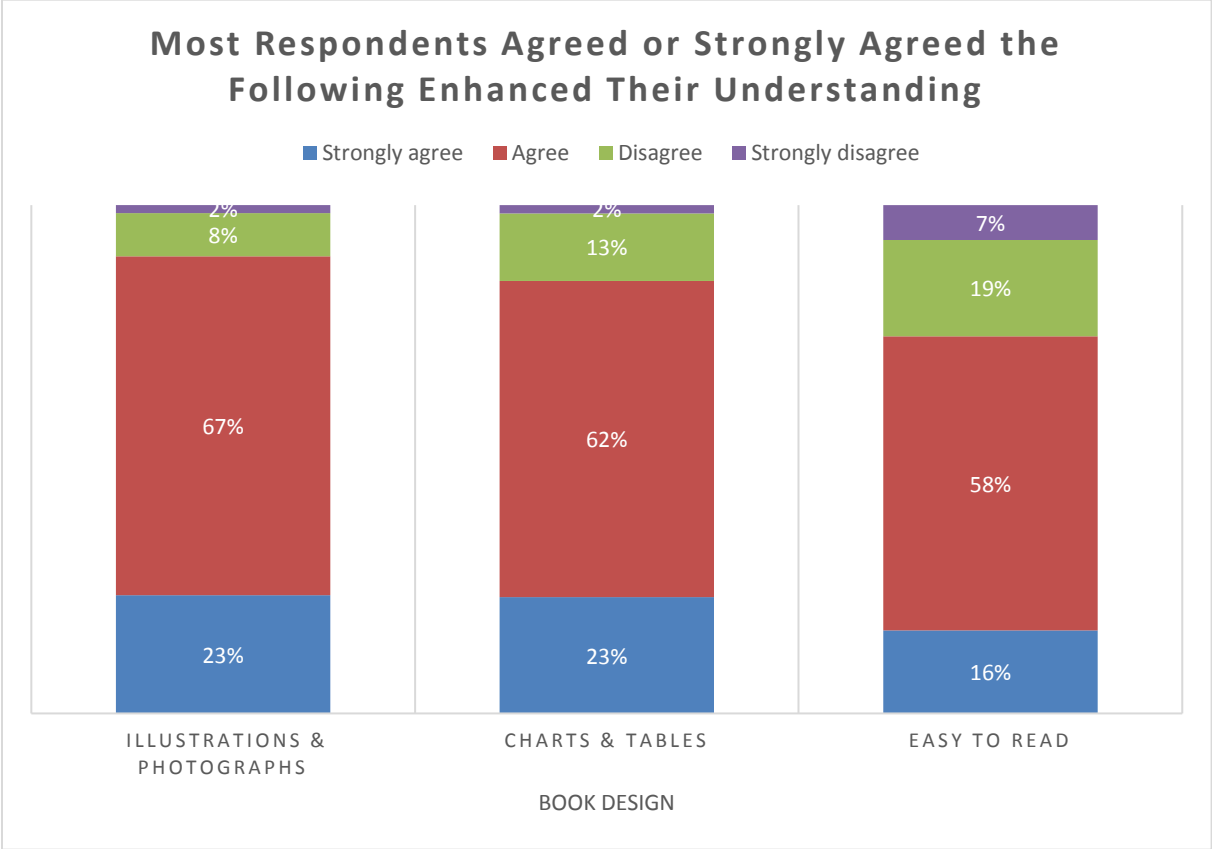
Figure 5: Respondent Use of AP History Textbook for Class and Homework Assignments





Many students thought the design of the books helped them to understand the book contents. Ninety percent of the students agreed or strongly agreed that the illustrations and photographs helped, and 85% agreed or strongly agreed that the charts and tables helped. About 75% of the students agreed or strongly agreed that the textbooks were easy to read.

Figure 6: Book Design Enhanced Understanding



## Accessing Online Content

Only 38% of the survey respondents reported accessing the books' online material and contents. For those respondents who used online content, about 84% agreed and strongly agreed that it was easy to access the support and materials.

Figure 7: Percentage of Survey Respondents Who Accessed the Books' Online Material

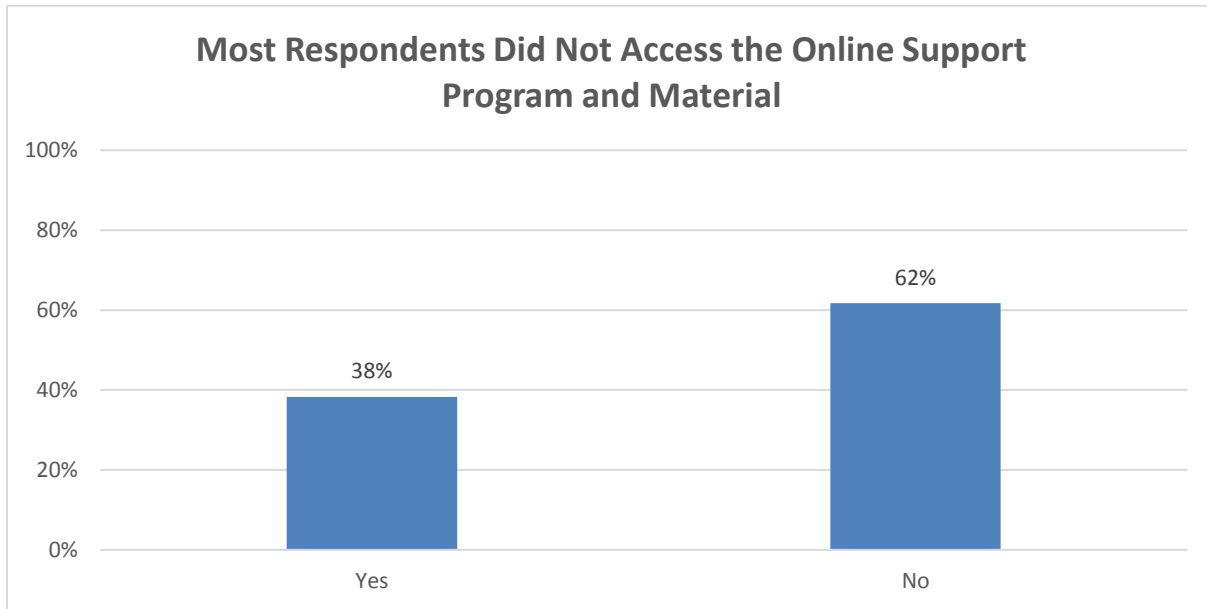
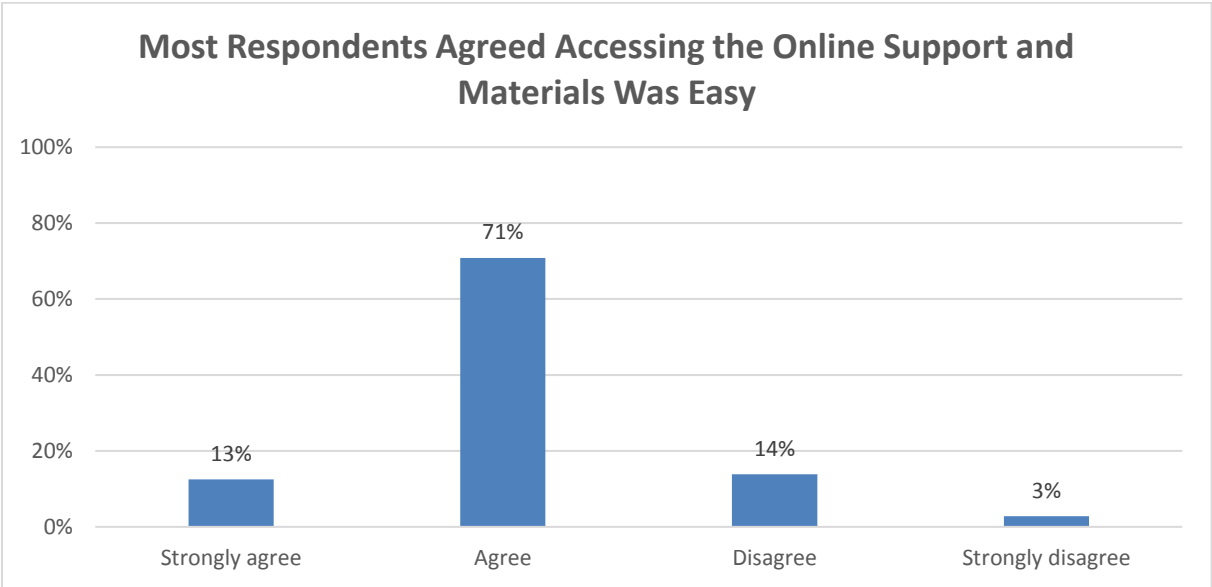
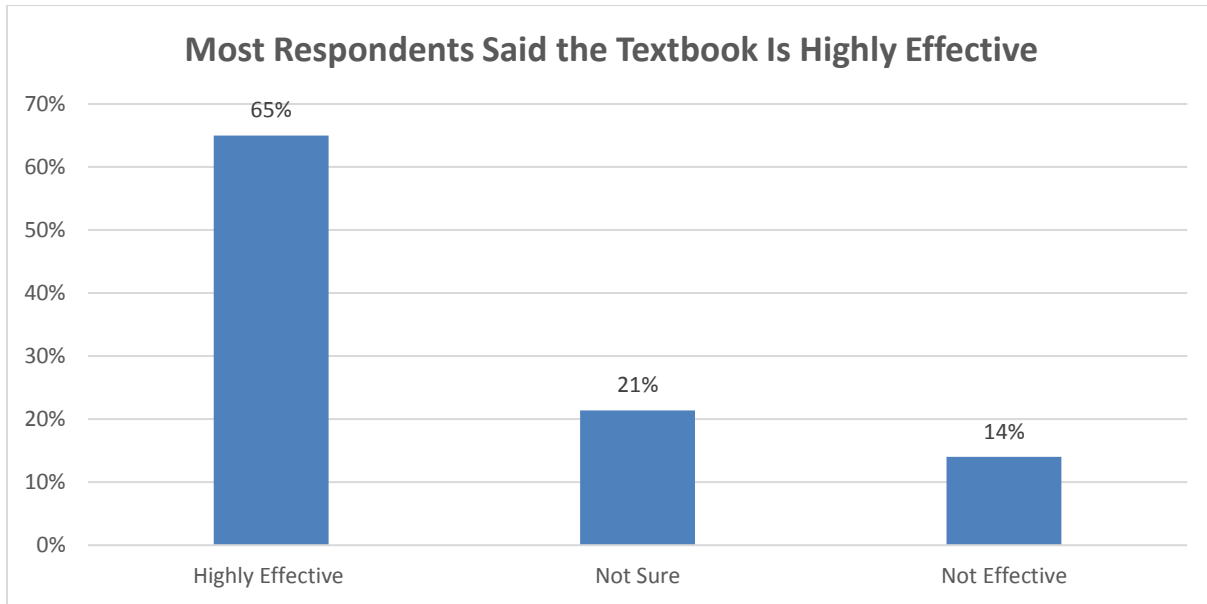


Figure 8: Accessing Online Support and Materials Was Easy



Students were asked to rate the effectiveness of the textbook in preparing them for the AP US History examination on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest. A majority of the students who took the AP US History textbook survey thought the books were effective in preparing them for the AP US History examination.

Figure 9: The Textbook Was Effective in AP US History Exam Preparation



*Note: For ease of reporting, scores were recoded. "Highly Effective" includes scores from 7 to 10; "Not Effective" includes scores from 1 to 4; and "Not Sure" includes scores from 5 to 6.*