

SHORT ANSWER QUESTION (SAQ) GUIDE

AP US History



3 Questions
40 Minutes

4 Minutes for Pre-Reading
12 Minutes Per Question

20%
of your exam score



YOU'VE GOT TIME. TAKE IT.

The SAQ section is designed to give you enough time to answer all three questions without rushing your answers. You can take about 12 minutes per question, which will give you a few minutes to plan your answers.

- (A) Each question will have three parts: A, B, and C. These parts are each
- (B) scored separately and count equally in terms of scoring.
- (C)

SAQ FORMAT

There will be four questions, the first two being required and the student having a choice between answering questions three or four.

REQUIRED QUESTIONS:

Question 1 (Secondary Source Analysis)

Periods 3-8 (1754-1980)

The first question will require the student to analyze one or two secondary sources. In the latter case, the student will typically be required to compare the interpretations of two historians regarding the same historical figure or event. The student will be required to use outside evidence to support their analysis.

Question 2 (Skill-Based Primary Source Assessment)

Periods 3-8 (1754-1980)

The second question will be skill-based, requiring the student to use primary sources (written or visual) to assess **causation** or **comparison** using the source material and outside evidence.

CHOOSE ONE:

Question 3 (Skills-Based Assessment [No Source])

Periods 1-5 (1491-1877)

Question 4 (Skills-Based Assessment [No Source])

Periods 6-9 (1865-Present)

These questions will be skills-based, focusing on the skill that *was not addressed* in Question Two. Neither question will have a stimulus. Both will ask general historical questions directly related to the topics covered in the key concepts.

TIPS FOR ANSWERING THE SAQ

First, it's important to understand what an SAQ is NOT:

- **This is NOT an essay.** It is simply a series of formulaic tasks that can each be completed by writing three complete sentences.
- **This is NOT about right vs. wrong answers, but about valid vs. invalid answers.** The part of the test where you are searching for a single correct answer is OVER. From now on, there are only two types of answers: those that are backed by sound argument and evidence and those that are not. When you are given options, none of the options will be any more valid or invalid than the others. Make sure that you understand what the question is asking, and answer the question directly providing valid evidence and analysis to support your answer.

The best way to answer the SAQ is to be DIRECT and TO THE POINT!

Your answer must be supported with factual evidence that directly relates to what the question is asking. Be as specific as possible with your facts. If the question is asking for Progressive reforms that focused on political corruption and you can offer the grader particular names of reforms or amendments and the reformers involved then your answer is stronger than the answer that simply reviews the types of political reforms.

Write in complete and complex sentences.

Each part of the question (there will be three parts) can be fully answered in about 2-3 sentences. You have 23 lines in which to write your entire answer for each SAQ so you need to use the space wisely. Most successful SAQ answers use at least half of the space provided. Writing one sentence for each part will weaken your chances for earning all three points. You do not have to answer the questions in order but it is best to label each answer, with A, B or C, as it corresponds with the question. If you only know the answers for part of the question, then just answer what you know. You will be given one point for each part you answer correctly, so don't worry if you only know answers for A and B and not C.

Write in black or blue ink. If your handwriting is messy then print.

Each SAQ answer is scanned into a computer and sent to a grader. Pencil does not scan very well and pen is much easier to read on a computer screen. **If your handwriting is challenging to read (and you know who you are) then PRINT!** Practice printing and space your words out more if you write your words too close together. If you like to write in very small print then please practice writing in a bigger font. Your teacher and the AP grader will thank you.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS AVAILABLE!

CLICK HERE if you are interested in purchasing a sample question set complete with detailed answer explanations.

