

Free Response Essay Questions Hints on How to Write a successful FRQ Essay

1. Underline the *operative terms*. Does it ask you to analyze, assess, compare, etc. KNOW exactly what the question is asking you to do!
2. Begin with a solid thesis- get to it early and keep reinforcing it. Link all analysis and historically relevant details to your thesis. Do this at the end of each body paragraph.
3. Avoid just being descriptive. Use names, dates, etc, to support your thesis.
4. Organize- make an outline. Do not start writing until you have brainstormed, crafted a thesis, and written your outline.
5. Avoid long sentences.
6. Be mindful of word choice. “Big Words” do add to the sophistication of your essay but ONLY if you use them correctly.
7. Write as neatly as you can- print if you cannot write legibly.
8. Define your terms.
9. When continuing an idea use terms like “furthermore” and “moreover.”
10. When changing ideas use transition terms like “yet” or “however.”
11. Follow your outline.

FRQ Scoring Guideline AP Grading Scale ranges from 1-9. Maximum Point: 9

The 8-9 Essay:

- § Contains a well-developed thesis that addresses all components of the question.
- § Discusses and analyzes all components of the question effectively and with relatively equal treatment.
- § Supports thesis with substantial and relevant detail.
- § Is clearly organized and well-written.
- § May contain only minor errors.

The 5-7 Essay:

- § Contains a thesis that addresses the question.
- § Discusses some components of the question, but in an uneven manner. May address only part of the question.
- § Supports thesis with some relevant detail.
- § Shows evidence of acceptable organization and writing; language errors do not interfere with comprehension of the essay.
- § May contain errors that do not seriously detract from the quality of the essay.

The 2-4 Essay:

- § Contains a limited, confused, and/or poorly developed thesis.
- § Deals with the question in a general manner; simplistic explanation of answers only part of the question.
- § Contains little detail or information that is generally inaccurate or irrelevant.
- § Has problems in organization.
- § Many contain major errors.

The 0-1 Essay:

- § Contains no thesis or a thesis which does not address the question.
- § Exhibits inadequate or inaccurate understanding of the question.
- § Contains little or no detail or information that is generally irrelevant or inaccurate.
- § Is so poorly written or organized that it inhibits understanding.
- § Contains numerous errors, both major and minor.

FRQs are worth 30 points in the essay category. See below for a translation of the AP 1-9 scale.

9= 30	5=25	1=18	This does not represent writing at an AP level.
8=28	4=24	0=0	This is inappropriate for an AP course.
7=27	3=22		
6=26	2=20		