



FRQ Guidelines



Free Response Questions

This section includes a large number of Free Response Questions (FRQ) based off of the vocabulary and a variety of case studies and models. Use this as a way to become familiar with AP style questions- you should also review. On the exam you will have 75 minutes to answer three FRQs, you must answer all of them. Your goal is to score at least 50% on each FRQ and not get shut out on any one question.

How to be successful on the FRQ section: While the topics of FRQs are difficult to predict, there are some things you can expect in the FRQ section:

Types of questions

- Many FRQs have a map, table, model or graphic that you must analyze to answer the question - use your 4-level analysis to break these down and be sure to use actual geographic examples and description to support your ideas. You should use the graphic to help answer the question.
- Many questions require you to make an argument and explain a theory, concept, model or key geographic principle. Often these are identify, define, and explain in structure but usually require you to understand the background and depth of a concept and provide examples.
- Process questions - you will need to identify and explain patterns and processes and why they exist. ie map of world showing migration patterns and you have to explain why the patterns exist and give examples to support your assertions.
- Synthesis questions - these are the hardest questions because they often ask you to draw in information from multiple units and make linkages between concepts and units - these are often the questions that separate the 3 student from a 4 or 5.

Approach to a high scoring FRQ Section-

- Write the time the exam starts and end time for FRQ on your test book!!!
- Quickly read all three questions - you will probably see one you know, one you think you know something about and one you may go oh no!! Expect the unexpected - don't panic!!
- Start with the question you know best. We have trained you to write these essays all year don't forget what we have told you to do - Figure out what the question asking you to do? What is the purpose of the question, key ideas, what unit(s) does the question address.
- Underline key words and preplan (brainstorm) 3-5 minutes in the answer booklet or on your FRQ answer sheet- short word outline, small thinking map- refer to this when writing your essay.
- Write your response - 15-18 minutes - No need for a formal introduction but be sure to answer all parts of the question - A, B, C etc. Be sure to "**state the obvious**" and then build off of your points with explanations, definitions and specific geographic examples. If you have time, a short conclusion often helps your score because you may restate or refine your initial response.
- Label - Parts of your essay - if the question has and A,B and C. When you write response to A - label it A. When you start part B, create a new paragraph and label it B and so on.
- Always give examples and explain - when? Always - even if it does not ask for one. Stronger essays have specific examples and detailed refined explanations and definitions.
- And 1 principle- Every essay expects you to give examples to support your explanation - if it asks for one example, try to give two with your best example first. If it asks for 2 give 3... but don't laundry list.
- Remember the Geography- You are taking a geography class so the essays will all include and expect a rich knowledge of geography - locations, scale, regions, geographic concepts, spatial analysis and vocabulary - use it!!
- Assume the reader is not a geographer and you need to explain the answer in detail.

- Is there a specific region or scale for the question? Be on the look out if the question is asking you to address a certain part of the world (Europe, Africa, United States) and at what scale is the question (global, regional, local) - Being able to answer at multiple scales in your response is often a sign of a strong student.
- Read your response: Make sure you have ****answered the question****. Be sure your essay answers the question. Sounds like a duh but it happens a lot. Answer all parts of the question.
- How Long? Most of the high scoring responses are 2-3 pages in length.
- Repeat process for 2nd essay and 3rd essay - ANSWER ALL 3 questions
- The oh no FRQ - This is the FRQ that you don't think you know - but don't panic. A few years ago a question about poultry appeared and many students went oh no!!! - (See 2004- FRQ) Look closely at the question and try to figure out the main idea of the question. Follow the suggestions in associative thinking in MC section. Your logic might be like this - Poultry - oh chickens - Kentucky Fried Chicken - what unit? Agriculture maybe economics? What do I know about these topics and you will begin to move in the direction of an answer. Answer the question as best you can leaning on your knowledge and skills from the course and give it a rip. Students who go only a couple of points on this question had a big advantage over the field of students.
- Know your Vocabulary!!! If you haven't noticed a lot of question require a knowledge of key vocabulary - the better you understand these concepts the better your score. Definitions often open the door for high scores. Remember the devolution / suprnationalism question.

What do these terms mean in APHG FRQ?

- Define - give a definition with an example
- Discuss - define, explain and give examples - tell me what you know about the topic. Discussions often expect two sides of an argument- try to state both sides.
- Identify - List in a sentence
- Explain / Describe - see discuss
- Detailed - see discuss - be specific
- Assumptions - related to models - what are the rules of the model - accepted as true usually flat plain and _____.
- Analyze-means to break into parts and discuss each part. Usually associated with models and theories.
- Apply - use the model or concept to explain an event or situation. Should include a description of principle with examples and details and how the model works.
- Process - How and why something exists - usually has multiple steps.
- Distribution - where things are located
- Demographic - Population
- Social - Descriptions of society - culture, people, education, ethnicity, values, medical conditions
- Economic - relates to how the scarce resources (money, goods, services, products, jobs) are used in societies. Usually relates to businesses, jobs, trade, income and production of goods.
- Political - usually relates to government and how these governments make decisions and who makes decisions.
- Correlation (positive or negative) - look for a relationship (connection) with the data and the concept / term.

Remember, if you can score 50% on the FRQ section you are in good shape - but you can only get points for what you write. So write away and show the reader what you know about geography and the topic. Each FRQ question is equally weighted. Time may be an issue but never leave an FRQ unanswered - the first two points of an essay are always easier to get then the last points.

Tasks for Review

- Read through the different questions and create a quick outline for each FRQ and think of the concepts or units related to the question.
- Practice locating patterns and analyzing maps and graphics from sample tests and your textbook. (This is why we have you look at the graphics in your book - they could be the topic of an FRQ)
- Review suggestions for high scoring essays.
- Know your vocabulary and models.
- Included are two sample essays with responses - review comments and how they are written.