

Addressing the Short Answer Question (SAQ)

AP US History

Both the AP US History course and the AP US History exam will require you to respond to short answer questions (SAQs). Short answer questions will be used throughout the entirety of this course. The AP exam will consist of three SAQs, all of which you must answer. **The short answer questions comprise 20% of your final AP Exam score.** This portion of the test is often what separates the 3s, the 4s, and the 5s. Details on how to approach and answer the SAQs are provided below.

- Three short answer questions with three parts each
 - Question 1 will have a Part A, a Part B, and a Part C.
 - Question 2 will have a Part A, a Part B, and a Part C.
 - Question 3 will have a Part A, a Part B, and a Part C.
 - **You must address each part of each question!**
 - **Worth a total of nine points!**
- Responses should be two-three sentences **per part** of each question
 - Part A will have three sentences; Part B will have three sentences; Part C will have three sentences
- Manage your time well! You will have forty minutes to respond to the SAQ section!
 - Spend about 14 minutes each on questions one and two
 - Spend about ten minutes on question three
 - Use the remaining time to check your responses and make corrections/adaptations as necessary
- Don't leave any part blank! Write something!
 - Points are GIVEN, not taken away on the AP exam.
 - If you respond, there's a better chance you'll get a point! If you leave it blank, you're guaranteeing no points!
 - If you notice a mistake, cross out the portion you want to change with one line.
 - ~~For example, I crossed out this sentence with one line.~~ Then I continued writing.
- Make sure everything you write is put within the box provided on the AP exam by College Board. Anything not in the box cannot be scored.
- There are nine possible points on the SAQ section
 - Students who score five points are more likely to receive an overall score of 3 on the AP test
 - Students who score six points are more likely to receive an overall score of 4 on the AP test
 - Students who score seven points are more likely to receive an overall score of 5 on the AP test
 - Notice---I said **more likely**, not guaranteed.
- ANSWER. THE. QUESTION. (ATQ!)
 - No time for fluff—just get to the point!

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Now that you know the basics of how to approach the SAQ section, let's look at how each individual question.

SAQ 1—14 MINUTES

- The first SAQ will be a secondary source interpretation over any time between Periods 3-8.
 - The time span for Periods 3-8 is 1754-1980
- To answer SAQ 1, read the question (parts A, B, and C) first so you know what to look for
- After reading the questions, read both passages
- Use *what* and *why* when answering the question
 - Explain to the reader the point of view (PoV) between the two secondary sources
- Link an event during the time period with an author's PoV
 - If the question is addressing the 1820s, don't address the 1920s.

SAQ 2—14 MINUTES

- The second SAQ will require a comparison of a primary text or visual source over any time between Periods 3-8
 - The time span for Periods 3-8 is 1754-1980
- Explain to the reader the comparison or causation skill using historical evidence and context
 - Evidence and context must fit within the time period
 - Answer *what* an event was, *how* it answers the question, and *why* it answers the question

SAQ 3 or 4—10 MINUTES

- You will be provided two options for your third SAQ. Choose ONE to answer
 - If you answer both, the first one written, regardless of the order written in, will be scored...AND you'll have wasted time!
 - Make sure to answer this SAQ on the correct page!
- The timespan for these SAQs is 1491-1877 OR 1865-Present
- Use the WHY strategy
 - What, How, Why
 - What = name the (name) in a sentence that will answer the question best
 - How does the (name) answer the question best? Provide context
 - Why does the (name) answer the question best?
- *****Answer SAQ 3 or 4 FIRST, then question one, then question two**

CRITICAL REMINDERS!

- **Answer what you can—don't leave anything blank—remember, points are given, NOT taken!**
- **Time Matters! Use it wisely.**
- **Answer. The. Question.**