A.P. United States History (APUSH)

A Guide to Success:
- Textbook Reading
- Disciplinary Practices and Reasoning Skills
- Thematic Learning Objectives
  - The Exam
- Multiple Choice Strategies
  - Analysis Tools
  - Short Answer Tips
  - Thesis Statements
- Essay Writing Rubrics
- DBQ/Long Essay

Mr. Crum – History Nerd
Utilizing your Textbook

The key to success in terms of content knowledge in class is reading your textbook. More accurately, it will be REMEMBERING what you read in your textbook. Lectures in class will help explain many of the ideas, but the true content comes from your reading. With that in mind, there is a way to read that will help this process:

1. **Browsing:**
   Look through the chapter. Read the headings of the chapter, sections, and sub-sections. Read and look at all of the maps, drawings, paintings, graphs, and charts. Just "look around" at what you will be reading. You may absorb some things, but all you really want is a quick glance. Do not read the chapter at this point. Just look. (5 min)

2. **Read the Chapter Questions that you will be answering:**
   Look at what questions you will be answering when you read. This gives you the road map for direction and will make it easier to look for certain things. (5 min)

3. **Careful Reading:**
   Now, read the chapter from start to finish. Carefully read every sentence and word. Re-read all the captions. Look up any words you do not know. Be sure to spend time reading the whole chapter. Do this in one or, at most, two settings. Notice we didn’t say just find the answers to the questions. You need to READ the entire chapter first (1-2 hours).

4. **Answer the Chapter Questions:**
   Now go back and answer the questions. Find the information and be sure to answer each question completely. If it is a deeper question, more time needs to be spent. (30 min)

The day before the test, do not try to reread entire chapters. Instead, rely on your “Chapter Questions” notes and your lecture notes as well as any homework you did. Then a quick skim isn’t a bad idea.
AP History Disciplinary Practices

Practice 1: Analyzing Historical Evidence

Students will be assessed on their ability to ...

**Primary Sources**
- Describe historically relevant information and/or arguments within a source.
- Explain how a source provides information about the broader historical setting within which it was created.
- Explain how a source's point of view, purpose, historical situation, and/or audience might affect a source's meaning.
- Explain the relative historical significance of a source's point of view, purpose, historical situation, and/or audience.
- Evaluate a source's credibility and/or limitations.

**Secondary Sources**
- Describe the claim or argument of a secondary source, as well as the evidence used.
- Describe a pattern or trend in quantitative data in non-text-based sources.
- Explain how a historian's claim or argument is supported with evidence.
- Explain how a historian's context influences the claim or argument.
- Analyze patterns and trends in quantitative data in non-text-based sources.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of a historical claim or argument.

Practice 2: Argument Development

- Make a historically defensible claim in the form of an evaluative thesis.
- Support an argument using specific and relevant evidence.
- Use historical reasoning to explain relationships among pieces of historical evidence.
- Consider ways that diverse or alternative evidence could be used to qualify or modify an argument.

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AP History Reasoning Skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill 1: Contextualization</th>
<th>Skill 2: Comparison</th>
<th>Skill 3: Causation</th>
<th>Skill 4: Continuity and Change over Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Describe an accurate historical context for a specific historical development or process.</td>
<td>Describe similarities and/or differences between different historical developments or processes.</td>
<td>Describe causes or effects of a specific historical development or process.</td>
<td>Describe patterns of continuity and/or change over time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explain how a relevant context influenced a specific historical development or process.</td>
<td>Explain relevant similarities and/or differences between specific historical developments and processes.</td>
<td>Explain the relationship between causes and effects of a specific historical development or process.</td>
<td>Explain patterns of continuity and/or change over time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use context to explain the relative historical significance of a specific historical development or process.</td>
<td>Explain the relative historical significance of similarities and/or differences between different historical developments or processes.</td>
<td>Explain the relative historical significance of different causes and/or effects.</td>
<td>Explain the relative historical significance of specific historical developments in relation to a larger pattern of continuity and/or change.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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II. Thematic Learning Objectives

The thematic learning objectives describe, at a high level, the knowledge colleges expect students to develop in the AP U.S. History course in order to be qualified for credit and placement. In order to help students develop this knowledge, teachers will need to anchor their locally developed AP syllabus in historical content and historical thinking skills. The 19 learning objectives are grouped into seven themes typically included in college-level U.S. history courses:

- American and National Identity
- Politics and Power
- Work, Exchange, and Technology
- Culture and Society
- Migration and Settlement
- Geography and the Environment
- America in the World

These themes focus on major historical issues and changes, helping students connect the historical content they study to broad developments and processes that have emerged over centuries in what has become the United States. The pages that follow describe each theme.

The tables for each theme contain the thematic learning objectives under the heading “Students are able to ...” Student understanding of these objectives should be developed by engaging in course-long historical inquiries.

The tables of thematic learning objectives in this section serve as an index to the concept outline by indicating where content related to each learning objective can be found in the concept outline. These tables help to highlight the relationship between specific historical content and broader historical developments.
The AP U.S. History Exam

Exam Description

The AP U.S. History Exam is 3 hours and 15 minutes long and includes both a 105-minute multiple-choice/short-answer section and a 90-minute free-response section. Each section is divided into two parts, as shown in the table below. Student performance on these four parts will be compiled and weighted to determine an AP Exam score.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Question Type</th>
<th>Number of Questions</th>
<th>Timing</th>
<th>Percentage of Total Exam Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Part A: Multiple-choice questions</td>
<td>55 questions</td>
<td>55 minutes</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Part B: Short-answer questions</td>
<td>4 questions</td>
<td>50 minutes</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>Part A: Document-based question</td>
<td>1 question</td>
<td>55 minutes</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Part B: Long essay question (chosen from a pair)</td>
<td>1 question</td>
<td>36 minutes</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Time Management

Students need to learn to budget their time so that they can complete all parts of the exam. Time management is especially critical with regard to Section II, which consists of two essay questions. Time left is announced, but students are not forced to move to the next question. Students often benefit from taking a practice exam under timed conditions prior to the actual administration.

How Student Learning Is Assessed on the AP Exam

Each AP Exam question will measure students' ability to apply historical thinking skills (section I, pages 7-9) to one or more of the 19 thematic learning objectives (section II, pages 10-21). Both the multiple-choice and free-response questions on the exam require students to apply a historical thinking skill to a learning objective within a particular historical context. Additionally, the free-response section also requires students to provide specific historical evidence.

Student understanding of the course content will be assessed on the AP Exam in one of two ways. First, multiple-choice questions will expect that students are familiar enough with the concepts in each period of American history to be able to analyze related primary and secondary source material. Second, all of the free-response questions will reward students for accurately citing the content and evidence their local curriculum prioritized for each concept statement.

The wording of each concept statement gives teachers flexibility to select specific historical content for use in helping students develop mastery. AP Exam questions do not require that all students know the same example for a given concept statement, so teachers can focus on teaching one example of that concept well, rather than many examples superficially.
The AP U.S. History Exam

It is the nature of history as a discipline that individual statements are open to differences of interpretation. Like all historical claims, the statements in the concept outline should be examined in light of primary sources and evidence as well as historical research. Teachers can help students examine these concepts as claims, based on current scholarship about United States history, similar to those typically analyzed in a college-level survey course. Teachers may wish to use differences of interpretation as opportunities for student analysis of multiple perspectives.

In addition, the following are general parameters about the relationship between the components of the curriculum framework and the questions that will be asked of students on the AP Exam:

- Students’ achievement of the thematic learning objectives will be assessed throughout the exam.
- Students’ use of the historical thinking skills will be assessed throughout the exam.
- Students’ understanding of all nine periods of U.S. history will be assessed throughout the exam.
- No document-based question or long essay question will focus exclusively on events prior to 1607 (Period 1) or after 1980 (Period 9). However, document-based and long essay questions may span two or more periods, requiring students to address events or documents from these periods (e.g., Periods 1–2 or Periods 7, 8, and 9).
- Students will always write at least one essay (in either the document-based question or long essay question) that examines long-term developments that span historical time periods.
- The coverage of the periods in the exam as a whole will reflect the approximate period weightings (see page 22).

Multiple-Choice Questions

The multiple-choice section will contain a number of sets of questions, with between two and five questions per set, that ask students to respond to stimulus material: a primary or secondary source, including texts, images, charts, graphs, maps, etc. This stimulus material will reflect the types of evidence that historians use in their research on the past. The set of multiple-choice questions about the material will draw upon knowledge required by the curriculum framework, and each question will address one of the learning objectives for the course. While a set may focus on one particular period of U.S. history, the individual questions within that set may ask students to make connections to thematically linked developments in other periods.

Multiple-choice questions will assess students’ ability to reason about the stimulus material in tandem with their knowledge of the historical issue at hand. The possible answers for a multiple-choice question will reflect the level of detail present in the required historical developments found in the concept outline for the course.
The AP U.S. History Exam

Short-Answer Questions
Short-answer questions will directly address one or more of the thematic learning objectives for the course. At least two of the four questions will have elements of internal choice, providing opportunities for students to demonstrate what they know best. All of the short-answer questions will require students to use historical thinking skills to respond to a primary source, a historian's argument, nontextual sources such as data or maps, or general propositions about U.S. history. Each question will ask students to identify and analyze examples of historical evidence relevant to the source or question; these examples can be drawn from the concept outline or from other examples explored in depth during classroom instruction.

Document-Based Question
The document-based question measures students' ability to analyze and synthesize historical data and to assess verbal, quantitative, or visual materials as historical evidence. As with the long essay, responses to the document-based question will be judged on students' ability to formulate a thesis and support it with relevant evidence. The documents included in the document-based question are not confined to a single format, may vary in length, and are chosen to illustrate interactions and complexities within the material. Where suitable, the documents will include charts, graphs, cartoons, and pictures, as well as written materials. In addition to calling upon a broad spectrum of historical skills, the diversity of materials will allow students to assess the value of different sorts of documents. The document-based question will typically require students to relate the documents to a historical period or theme and, thus, to focus on major periods and issues. For this reason, outside knowledge beyond the specific focus of the question is important and must be incorporated into students' essays to earn the highest scores.

Long Essay Question
To provide opportunities for students to demonstrate what they know best, they will be given a choice between two comparable long essay options. The long essay questions will measure the use of historical thinking skills to explain and analyze significant issues in U.S. history as defined by the thematic learning objectives. Student essays must include the development of a thesis or argument supported by an analysis of specific, relevant historical evidence. Questions will be limited to topics or examples specifically mentioned in the concept outline but framed to allow student answers to include in-depth examples of large-scale phenomena, either drawn from the concept outline or from topics discussed in the classroom.
MULTIPLE CHOICE TEST TAKING STRATEGIES

GENERAL INFORMATION:
The APUSH test includes 55 Multiple Choice questions with 4 possible answers. The questions will be presented in sets of 2-6 questions and each set will be based on a primary or secondary source stimulus. All questions must be related to information in the Concept Outline, a Thematic Learning Objective, and at least one Historical Thinking Skill. The multiple choice portion of the examination counts for 40% of the total grade. In order to achieve a score of 3, 4, or 5 on the AP Examination, students must consistently achieve a score of 60% (30-35 correct) or better.

Each Question:
- Uses a Stem (question/direction/prompt based on stimulus)
- 1 Correct answer
- 3 Distractors that are incorrect but seem plausible

TIME RELATED STRATEGIES:
1. You have 55 minutes for 55 Questions including the reading of each set of stimulus. You do the math. Getting bogged down on one question or section can hurt you. Skip items for which you cannot give a quick response and return to them later. Each question is worth the same amount of points.
2. Mark skipped items but remember to back check to see that you have left a space blank for the skipped answer, otherwise you will be out of sequence.
3. Read the entire question carefully, underlining important words as you read. Before you look at the answer choices, try to answer the question. If you know the answer, then go directly to the choices, skim through all of them, find the correct answer, and mark the space on the answer sheet. If you do not know the answer, then read through all the choices making eliminations as you go along.

DEDUCTIVE REASONING STRATEGY AND GUESSING:
1. Eliminate options which you know are incorrect and choose from among the remaining options. Each question will always contain at least one very tempting choice, an answer that is incorrect, but so convincing that you will be tempted to choose it.
2. If you arrive at a question, the subject matter of which is vaguely familiar to you, try to eliminate answer choices that you know are absolutely incorrect. If you can narrow down the list of possibilities to 2 or 3, then take your most educated guess. Never leave an answer blank.

CUE USING STRATEGY
1. Watch for key words in the answers to the questions such as always, all, most, never, and none. Usually answers which contain these words are not the correct answers.
2. For many students their first choice of an answer is usually the correct one, so do not keep changing answers unless you know you have read the question wrong. When practicing multiple choice questions, keep track of how many times you change a correct answer to an incorrect answer and vice versa, and then follow these cues.
HIPPO
The KEY to Document/Stimulus Analysis

The AP Exam will require you to constantly analyze stimulus. Stimulus includes text, diagrams, charts, pictures, artwork etc. To be able to understand these documents you need a STRATEGY. This strategy is HIPPO:

H- HISTORICAL CONTEXT
- When was the document created? What do you know about the historical events that are being referenced?
- What is happening during this time PERIOD that gives you insight into the document?
- Do you get the “Big Picture” that this document falls in?

I- INTENDED AUDIENCE
- Who was this document prepared for? Why was it created for them?
- Why does this matter?
- What insight might it give to you about the document?

P- PURPOSE
- Why was the document created?
- What caused the Author to write, draw, paint, make the document?
- What did the Author want to the document to do and does this matter?

P- POINT OF VIEW
- What do you know about the creator of the document? Does this matter?
- Does the document take a side or create a specific opinion on a topic?
- Is the document trying to influence people’s thoughts in a certain way?
- What does this tell you about the document?

O- ORGANIZE AND USE
- The most important part!
- Using the HIPP above, how are you going to use the document to help you make an argument?
- Is there one of the above that stands out more than others?
- Once you have analyzed the document using HIPP, “SO WHAT”? What new insights do you now have that help “Open” the documents contents.
APUSH
Writing Stems for HIPP

Historical context writing stems:

It is similar to...
It is related to...
At the same time...
Was due to...
During this time...
Concurrently with...
At the same time...
At the time the document was written...
Influenced by...
This was an era...
Coincided with...
Came as a result of...
The historical backdrop for this document was...

Intended Audience

Written for...
Targeted for...
Was meant for...
Sought to address...
Wanted to have the...
The author was reaching out to...
Greatest Impact on...
Resonates with...
Tried to persuade...

Purpose

The intent was...
Tried to persuade...
Created with the intention of...
It was the intention of the author...
Attempted to...
The reason for this document is...
The author wrote this in order to...
The author clearly wanted to...

Point of View

From the perspective of...
Written by...
Author was a... therefore his/her writing was influenced by
Author’s approach to this topic was affected by...
May present a biased point of view because...
Only shows one side of the story because...
The author believed that...
The author felt that...
The author saw this as...
APUSH Short Answer Writing Tips

The APUSH Exam includes 4 Short Answers and is 20% of your Exam grade. These Questions will directly address one or more of the thematic learning objectives and can come from any of the 9 Concept Outline periods. There is some choice involved here.

At least two of the 4 questions will give you an internal choice- you get to choose what part of the question you know best- so demonstrate your knowledge. You will be given either a primary source, a historian’s argument, or non-textual sources such as maps, data, or propositions of history. The question will then ask you to identify an analyze examples of historical evidence relevant to the source of the question- You draw from your knowledge of the Concept Outline or information covered in your textbook and from classroom instruction/discussion.

Tips:
1) Read the Question very well (3 times at least) and underline the verbs
   a. What does it want you to do?
   b. How many different parts of the question are there?
2) Make sure you answer all parts of the question directly- There will be at least 2 parts, sometimes three...don’t skip a sub-question.
   a. Restate the question as you begin to write the answer.
3) You can separate the different questions or combine them. Its easier to separate!
4) Be specific in your examples. Use critical nouns from the Concept Outline that prove your knowledge.
5) Use the Historical Thinking Skills to help guide your answers
6) Pace yourself- You only have 11-12 minutes/question as this is a 45 minute section of the test and there are 4 questions.
7) Brevity (Be brief but complete). You must use complete sentences but be brief and to the point. You only get 23 lines to answer all parts of each question. Anything over and it is not scored. Get to the point, be specific in your example, and answer the question.

Scoring:
• 3 points possible for each question
• Either you answer it or you don’t
How To Write an A.P. U.S. History Thesis Statement....I mean Thesis Position

A Thesis statement isn’t really a statement. It is a position or argument that you make that answers a specific question. However, it isn’t a fact, it is your informed interpretation of the facts. It also, however, isn’t an opinion. It is your answer to the question that you will be able to defend with evidence and analysis later in the essay. Students always need to carefully weigh all of the historical evidence and then craft a response that best articulates their understanding of the historical record. In other words, students should not feel free to argue any side simply because they can believe they can support it. Instead, they should feel compelled to support the side with the most evidence behind it. It is also important to realize that this isn’t your English class. It is Historical writing and there may be some differences.

A Thesis Position is a one-sentence answer to all parts of the question:

   a. Sets up your relevant argument (answer) and Addresses the TARGETED SKILL
   b. You should take a clear and concise approach that answers the question. However, taking an “all or none” approach rarely works. State your position but understand that there is never Black or White in history as perspective matters. On the flip side, trying to “Straddle the fence” and staying in the middle of an argument is worse. Be sure you make a solid argument and then defend it.

The type of sentence that you use also is important:

Examples of thesis statements:

   Bad: George Washington set many important precedents as president. This is a fact not a position. THERE IS A DIFFERENCE!
   Good: The precedents that Washington set as America’s first president greatly benefited the American political system. This is a clear position that can be supported or opposed.
   Strong: The Revolutionary War ushered in a slew of wide-ranging and permanent social changes in American society. This is a clear, strong, and debatable thesis.

Sample Prompt:

Analyze major changes and continuities in the social and economic experiences of African Americans who migrated from the rural South to the urban areas in the North in the period 1910-1930.

Types of Thesis Statements:

1. Direct Compound: Can Use this approach when trying to prove two main points.
   The migrating African Americans experience in America saw great social change to their lives but did not change their economic status.

3. Complex: Uses a subordinate clause to answer the question.
   Although African Americans lives were greatly changed due to their environment, from 1910-1930 they did experience vast changes in both their social or economic lives.

Remember:

1) Take a stand and answer the prompt in a complex yet direct way
2) Answer all parts of the prompt including the targeted Thinking Skill in one sentence

It's a position....not a statement
# AP History DBQ Rubric (7 points)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reporting Category</th>
<th>Scoring Criteria</th>
<th>Decision Rules</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A THESIS/CLAIM (0–1 pt)</td>
<td>1 pt. Responds to the prompt with a historically defensible thesis/claim that establishes a line of reasoning.</td>
<td>To earn this point, the thesis must make a claim that responds to the prompt rather than restating or rephrasing the prompt. The thesis must consist of one or more sentences located in one place, either in the introduction or the conclusion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B CONTEXTUALIZATION (0–1 pt)</td>
<td>1 pt. Describes a broader historical context relevant to the prompt.</td>
<td>To earn this point, the response must relate the topic of the prompt to broader historical events, developments, or processes that occur before, during, or continue after the time frame of the question. This point is not awarded for merely a phrase or reference.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C EVIDENCE (0–3 pts)</td>
<td><strong>Evidence from the Documents</strong>&lt;br&gt;1 pt. OR 2 pts. Uses the content of at least three documents to address the topic of the prompt.</td>
<td>To earn one point, the response must accurately describe — rather than simply quote — the content from at least three of the documents. To earn two points, the response must accurately describe — rather than simply quote — the content from at least six documents. In addition, the response must use the content of the documents to support an argument in response to the prompt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Evidence beyond the Documents</strong>&lt;br&gt;1 pt. Uses at least one additional piece of the specific historical evidence (beyond that found in the documents) relevant to an argument about the prompt.</td>
<td>To earn this point, the response must describe the evidence and must use more than a phrase or reference. This additional piece of evidence must be different from the evidence used to earn the point for contextualization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D ANALYSIS AND REASONING (0–2 pts)</td>
<td>1 pt. For at least three documents, explains how or why the document's point of view, purpose, historical situation, and/or audience is relevant to an argument.</td>
<td>To earn this point, the response must explain how or why (rather than simply identifying) the document's point of view, purpose, historical situation, or audience is relevant to an argument about the prompt for each of the three documents sourced.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| | 1 pt. Demonstrates a complex understanding of the historical development that is the focus of the prompt, using evidence to corroborate, qualify, or modify an argument that addresses the question. | A response may demonstrate a complex understanding in a variety of ways, such as:  
  • Explaining nuance of an issue by analyzing multiple variables  
  • Explaining both similarity and difference, or explaining both continuity and change, or explaining multiple causes, or explaining both cause and effect  
  • Explaining relevant and insightful connections within and across periods  
  • Confirming the validity of an argument by corroborating multiple perspectives across themes  
  • Qualifying or modifying an argument by considering diverse or alternative views or evidence  
  This understanding must be part of the argument, not merely a phrase or reference. |

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## AP History LEQ Rubric (6 points)

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<tr>
<td><strong>C</strong> EVIDENCE (0–2 pts)</td>
<td>1 pt. Provides specific examples of evidence relevant to the topic of the prompt. OR 2 pts. Supports an argument in response to the prompt using specific and relevant examples of evidence.</td>
<td>To earn one point, the response must identify specific historical examples of evidence relevant to the topic of the prompt. To earn two points the response must use specific historical evidence to support an argument in response to the prompt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>D</strong> ANALYSIS AND REASONING (0–2 pts)</td>
<td>1 pt. Uses historical reasoning (e.g. comparison, causation, CCOT) to frame or structure an argument that addresses the prompt. OR 2 pts. Demonstrates a complex understanding of the historical development that is the focus of the prompt, using evidence to corroborate, qualify, or modify an argument that addresses the question.</td>
<td>To earn the first point, the response must demonstrate the use of historical reasoning to frame or structure an argument, although the reasoning might be uneven or imbalanced. To earn the second point, the response must demonstrate a complex understanding. This can be accomplished in a variety of ways, such as: • Explaining nuance of an issue by analyzing multiple variables • Explaining both similarity and difference, or explaining both continuity and change, or explaining multiple causes, or explaining both causes and effects • Explaining relevant and insightful connections within and across periods • Confirming the validity of an argument by corroborating multiple perspectives across themes • Qualifying or modifying an argument by considering diverse or alternative views or evidence This understanding must be part of the argument, not merely a phrase or reference.</td>
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