

APUSH Writing Format Guide

SAQ=Short Answer Question

The ACE Format → Each part of the SAQ should be 3-4 quality sentences that are specific.

A → Answer the Prompt

C → Cite Specific Evidence

E → Explain how your evidence supports your answer

Thesis Statements

Thesis Statements → Focus on the topic of your paper and it should align with the evidence/argument you will be making. Do not list specific evidence here; instead list overarching ideas which will be the focus of your body paragraphs.

Example Below:

Although westward migration in the later 19th century promoted the spirit of manifest destiny and white dominance, the movement westward fostered change to a greater extent than it maintained continuity. Change came economically with new technology, resources, and labor, politically with new, western political organizations and agendas, and geographically with dramatic changes to the environment.

Complexity Point

Topics for the Complexity Point:

- Explaining nuance by analyzing multiple variables
- Explaining both similarity and difference, both continuity and change, or multiple causes, or 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

At the end of each argument in your paragraphs, discuss the significance of your ARGUMENT (from the TOPIC SENTENCE). Use verbiage like:

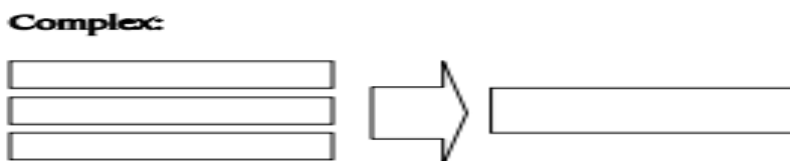
- a. This _____ leads to _____. (Give a specific example of whatever it leads to.) (Ex: This change in gender roles leads to women entering the workforce and being better prepared to support industry during the world wars, where they will work in factories, like those making TNT.)
- b. This is similar to _____, yet different from _____. (Give a specific example of how this is similar to something in another time period.) (The comparison option will get points, but is typically not as strong of a complexity point.)

DBQ & LEQ Formats (Paragraph Structures) (This covers both formats)

Historical Causation: Historical thinking involves the ability to identify, analyze and evaluate multiple cause-and-effect relationships in a historical context, distinguishing between the long-term and proximate.

Paragraph 1: Contextualization & Thesis (5-7 Sentences)

- Contextualization → 3-4 Quality sentences that describes a broader historical context relevant to the prompt. 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 a reference.
- Thesis → 1-3 well thought out sentences that clearly argue a viewpoint/perspective/idea. The thesis will include the “themes” of your essay.
 - Your thesis should address the causes and effects based on the prompt.



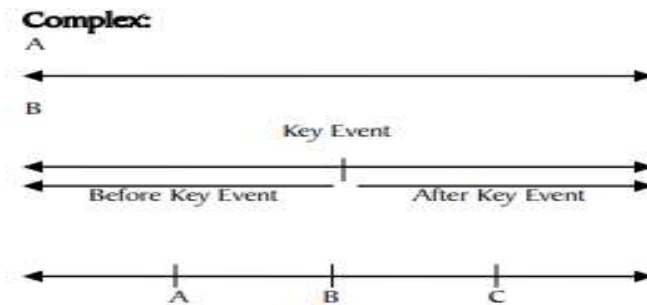
Paragraph 2, 3, & 4: (Three Separate Themes) (6-8 Sentences)

- Overall, each of your paragraphs should have a theme (Topic/Focus). The theme should then be applied to supporting your thesis. If you do not apply the theme to your thesis, you cannot get the points. The specifics for the LEQ & DBQ are below.
 - LEQ → Your theme will be based on the evidence you supply. You should write three arguments about the prompt using three separate groups of evidence that supports your thesis. (Hence 3 Paragraphs).
 - DBQ → Your paragraphs will be based on how you pair the documents (i.e; Docs 4, 6, & 7). When you are reviewing the documents, you should be able to pair all of them and have three separate topics. **Remember to HIPP the documents and use the documents to support your thesis.**
 - DON'T DORGET TO INCLUDE OUTSIDE EVIDENCE TO EARN THAT POINT!!!

Paragraph 5: Conclusion/Complexity/Historical Argument

- This paragraph is used to clearly restate your thesis and historically argue your position. This is the paragraph where many go in-depth to address the complexity point.
 - Possible Areas of Focus for Complexity:
 - How the factors you selected were more significant than that of others not selected.
 - Relate it appropriately to other time periods of American History.

Continuity and Change Over Time: Historical thinking involves the ability to recognize, analyze and evaluate the dynamics of historical continuity and change over periods of time of varying lengths, as well as relating these patterns to larger historical processes or themes.



Paragraph 1: Contextualization & Thesis (5-7 Sentences)

- Contextualization → 3-4 Quality sentences that describes a broader historical context relevant to the prompt. 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 a reference.
- Thesis → 1-3 well thought out sentences that clearly argue a viewpoint/perspective/idea. The thesis will include the “themes” of your essay.
 - Your thesis should address the idea of continuity or change over time. (Take a position)

Paragraph 2: Beginning/Earlier	Paragraph 3: Middle	Paragraph 4: End/Later
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This paragraph should focus on the early part of the timeframe addressed in the prompt. • In the DBQ, try to use documents that fit this early time frame (Apply the documents to your thesis.) • In the LEQ, select evidence that comes from the earlier time frame in the prompt. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This paragraph should focus on the middle part of the timeframe addressed in the prompt. • In the DBQ, try to use documents that fit this middle time frame. (Apply the documents to your thesis.) • In the LEQ, select evidence that comes from the middle time frame in the prompt. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This paragraph should focus on the later part of the timeframe addressed in the prompt. • In the DBQ, try to use documents that fit this part time frame. (Apply the documents to your thesis.) • In the LEQ, select evidence that comes from the later part of the time frame in the prompt.

On the DBQ: DON'T DORGET TO INCLUDE OUTSIDE EVIDENCE TO EARN THAT POINT!!!

Paragraph 5: Conclusion/Complexity/Historical Argument

- This paragraph is used to clearly restate your thesis and historically argue your position. This is the paragraph where many go in-depth to address the complexity point.
 - Potential Topics → Explain Continuity & Change, Compare to another time period, Multiple Variables

Periodization: Historical thinking involves the ability to describe, analyze, evaluate and construct models of historical periodization that historians use to categorize events into discrete blocks and to identify turning points, recognizing that the choice of specific dates favors one narrative, region or group over another narrative, region or group; therefore, changing the periodization can change a historical narrative.

Example of a prompt: Evaluate the extent to which the War of 1812 marked a turning point in American History.

Approaches to write about: 1) Political 2) Social 3) Economic

Paragraph 1: Contextualization & Thesis (5-7 Sentences)

- Contextualization → 3-4 Quality sentences that describes a broader historical context relevant to the prompt. 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 a reference.
- Thesis → 1-3 well thought out sentences that clearly argue a viewpoint/perspective/idea. The thesis will include the “themes” of your essay.
 - Your thesis must take a stance on if/how the event was a turning point/key moment/etc.
 - You may be able to argue that a period in question had both continuity and change.

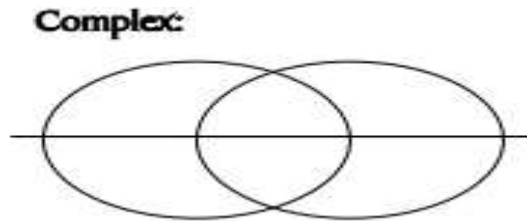
Paragraphs 2, 3, & 4: Themes (6-8 Sentences Each)

- Each paragraph should discuss the political, social, or economic factors of the time period.
 - You must note the continuities (things that remained the same) during the time periods.
 - If you argue continuity → Explain how things stayed the same (Before & After the event) and how perceived changes did not really change anything.
 - You must address the changes (things that changed) during the time periods.
 - If you argue change → Explain what changed (Before & After the event) and apply it to your thesis
- In the DBQ → Use the documents to frame your argument → Apply the Docs & HIPP to your thesis and to prove your point. (Manipulate the docs to support your ideas).
 - DON'T DORGET TO INCLUDE OUTSIDE EVIDENCE TO EARN THAT POINT!!!
- In the LEQ → Use your own evidence to frame the argument. Pick evidence that fits your thesis and downplays the other perspective.

Paragraph 5: Conclusion/Complexity/Historical Argument

- This paragraph is used to clearly restate your thesis and historically argue your position. This is the paragraph where many go in-depth to address the complexity point.
 - A good argument point here for complexity is to explain how historians may have the opposite viewpoint/interpretation of the topic and why it is incorrect or less accurate than your viewpoint.

Compare and Contrast: Historical thinking involves the ability to describe, compare and evaluate multiple historical developments within one society, one or more developments across or between different societies, and in various chronological and geographical contexts. It also involves the ability to identify, compare and evaluate multiple perspectives on a given



Key Point of the Writing: What similarities and differences are there between the two things, are there more similarities or differences, and why, account for those similarities or differences?

Paragraph 1: Contextualization & Thesis (5-7 Sentences)

- Contextualization → 3-4 Quality sentences that describes a broader historical context relevant to the prompt. 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 a reference.
- Thesis → 1-3 well thought out sentences that clearly argue a viewpoint/perspective/idea. The thesis will include the “themes” of your essay.
 - Your thesis needs to address to similarities and differences in a broader sense and evaluating the degree to which the topics are similar or different.

Paragraphs 2, 3, & 4: Areas of Focus (6-8 Sentences (May Be Longer)

- Each paragraph should focus on three different areas based on the focus of the prompt. Each paragraph should aim to compare and contrast a different topic.
 - Each compare and contrast paragraph should include evidence from both sides involved.
 - Think about it in terms of political, social, and economics. You may discuss key individuals, legislation, business/government factors, society, etc.
- In the DBQ → When you pair the documents; they should be paired toward areas of focus that you can write about.
 - DON'T DORGET TO INCLUDE OUTSIDE EVIDENCE TO EARN THAT POINT!!!
- In the LEQ → Pick topics that give you options on areas of focus.

Paragraph 5: Conclusion/Complexity/Historical Argument

- This paragraph is used to clearly restate your thesis and historically argue your position. This is the paragraph where many go in-depth to address the complexity point.
 - Potential Topics: Analyze Multiple Variables, Connections across time periods; validate your argument while discrediting others.