

Short Answer Questions

How to SAQ

Details

SAQs comprise 20% of the Exam score
SAQs can be taken from any unit
4 questions total
50 minutes to answer (12.5 minutes per question).

Why SAQ?

The SAQs allow students to use knowledge taught in their unique courses to answer broad questions derived from the Key Concepts, which also assess the students' use of various historical thinking skills. "Students may employ a wide variety of evidence drawn from the particular content of their AP World History course and materials." (College Board)

- Provides teachers more flexibility to teach their own content, and for the use of different textbooks across the country.
- Increased emphasis on development of historical thinking skills.
- Puts WHAP in line with AP US History and AP European History

What is an SAQ?

The short answer question requires students to accurately answer a question briefly, specifically, and accurately. Generally speaking students are able to answer questions with fewer sentences.

- Does **not** require a thesis statement
- **Does** require complete sentences
- All 3 parts of the question must be answered.
- Usually broken into 3 parts a, b, and c, but sometimes part a or part b will have 2 questions within—it always asks 3 questions—so read carefully.
- Limited space (a one page box with 23 lines) in which to write their answers. Anything written outside of the box will not be scored.
- Students give enough information to answer the question, but not write an essay.
- At least 2 of the 4 questions will include a stimulus of some kind: photo, political resources, chart, graph, or one or more documents (primary or secondary).

Scoring

Complete sentences.

Correct or incorrect.

1 point for each part = 0-3 points

Tips

- Read question carefully. Annotate the question and rephrase the question as your topic sentence (remember no thesis sentence necessary).
- Complete Sentences
- Do **NOT** bullet (bullets=zero points).
- Directly answer the question. Use the language of the prompt! (always)
- Pay close attention to what the question is asking of you: look for key action words such as describe, analyze, identify, explain, etc.
- Answer everything the question asks of you: you may have to do more than one thing such as "identify and explain."
- Look for plurals—asking you do more than one thing: reason vs. reasons; cause vs. causes. If it's plural you must do 2! You may not see many of these in SAQs, but be on the lookout.
- Use active verbs!

- Don't write outside the space—you should have enough space—don't panic!
- Label each part of the SAQ appropriately- (A), (B), and (C) for ease of understanding. Readers will read the question in such a way as to give you credit where credit is due, and not to nitpick where you provide your answer (although it must be IN THE BOX).
- USE SPECIFIC, PROPER NOUNS! Each part of the SAQ (A, B, C) should have a specific, proper noun. This supports what you're trying to say and gives you credibility. The more specific you are, the better.

ACE the Question

A-Answer the question (this is the assertion or claim).

C—Cite *specific* factual evidence

E—Explain how the evidence proves the assertion!

SAQ Practice #1: Answer the following SAQ prompt on one side of your paper.

The Egyptian and Mesopotamian civilizations in the first wave civilizations originated at roughly similar periods in world history, but they evolved in distinctly unique ways for difference.

- a) Identify and explain a reason for ONE difference in the Egyptian and Mesopotamian political systems.
- b) Identify and explain a reason for ONE similarity in the Egyptian and Mesopotamian political systems.
- c) Identify and explain a reason for ONE difference or similarity in Egyptian and Mesopotamian culture.

Scoring Guide:

0-3 points

- One point for identifying and explaining how and why Egyptian and Mesopotamian civilizations were different politically in the period of the first wave civilizations.
- One point for identifying and explaining how and why Egyptian and Mesopotamian civilizations were similar politically in the period of the first wave civilizations.
- One point for identifying and explaining how and why Egyptian and Mesopotamian cultures were different **or** similar in the period of the first wave civilizations.

SAQ Practice #2: Answer the following SAQ prompt on the other side of your paper.

The Neolithic Revolution has been seen by many historians as the biggest cause of the early advent of civilizations.

- a) Identify and explain ONE argument that supports the assertion above.
- b) Identify and explain ONE argument that refutes the assertion above.
- c) Explain which is more useful, (a) or (b), in evaluating the assertion above.

Scoring Guide:

0-3 points

- One point for identifying and explaining one argument that supports the Neolithic Revolution being the biggest cause of the early advent of civilizations. .
- One point for identifying and explaining one argument that refutes (disproves) the idea that the Neolithic Revolution was the biggest cause of the early advent of civilizations.
- One point for explaining which argument, (a) or (b), is more useful in evaluating the assertion that the Neolithic Revolution was the biggest cause of the early advent of civilizations.