GUIDE TO WRITING A FREE RESPONSE QUESTION

The purpose of the FRQ (Free Response Question) is to test your knowledge of European History and your analytical skills. You will have two groups of three essays to choose one from each group and write an essay in approximately 35 minutes each.

The following is your guide to writing a successful FRQ.

1. Read all three questions in each group before deciding which to choose.
2. Read the question carefully.
3. Make sure you understand what you are to do (compare, contrast, analyze, identify).
4. Identify all the areas to cover (social, political, and economic).
5. Write an **explicit** thesis that covers all parts of the question and maps the body paragraphs of the essay.

For Example:

**Question: Describe the three major problems in the Balkans from 1945 to 1989.**

**9/8 Point Thesis**: The problems of the Balkans can be best described by examining the social diversity, the political development and destruction of Yugoslavia, and lack of economic resources.

**7/6 Point Thesis**: The major problems of the Balkans from 1945-1989 were social, political, and economic.

**5/4 Point Thesis**: The major problems of the Balkans from 1945-1989 were

social and economic. (only answers part of the question)

1. In order to save time, the thesis can be your introduction. There are no score points for a complex introduction.
2. Use the thesis to map out your bodies. The order of the bodies of the complex thesis above would be social diversity, the political development and destruction of Yugoslavia, and lack of economic resources.
3. The first sentence/sentences should define your terms.
4. The next sentences should be your evidence.
5. The final sentence/sentences should show the tie of your evidence to the bodies specific part of the thesis.
6. A conclusion may not be necessary, but if time allows a summation of major points might help grader.

**Note: At the 2007 AP European Reading the concept of Explicit Thesis was added to the Rubric, it is imperative that you not just restate the thesis, but model your thesis as above with direct answers to all parts of the question.**

9 Point Free Response Question Rubric

**Score Nine**

Explicit thesis

Balanced

Extensive coverage

Strong support/evidence

Analytical

Minor errors

**Score Eight**

Explicit thesis

Not as balanced

**Score Seven**

Explicit thesis answers question

Uneven coverage

Descriptive

Lacks order

Some factual errors

**Score Six**

Explicit thesis answers question

Not much support

Not complex

**Score Five**

Explicit thesis answers only part of question

Balanced

Good order

Strong support

Analytical

Some factual errors

**Score Four**

Explicit thesis answers only part of question

Unbalanced

No support

Many errors

**Score Three**

Implicit thesis

**Score Two**

No thesis

No organization

Extensive errors

**Score One**

Wrong question

**Note: Explicit thesis controls score points so be sure that your thesis answers all parts of the question. An explicit thesis would not just repeat the prompt, but would name specific items.**