

AP US History Essay Rubrics

Document Based Question (DBQ) Essay Rubric

Free Response Essay Rubric

Document Based Question Rubric

Characteristic	Score 8-9 87 or above	Score 5-7 77 or above	Score 2-4 67 or above	Score 0-1 66 or below
Thesis	Clear, well developed thesis	Contains a clear thesis with limited development	Lacks a thesis, or thesis may be confused or underdeveloped	No thesis
Understanding of the Question	Understands complexity of the question; deals with all parts of the question in depth	Limited or lack of understanding of complexity; may deal with one part of the question in some depth, or in a more general way	Ignores complexity; may deal with one part of the question, or all elements of the question in a superficial way	May simply paraphrase or restate the question
Analysis	Provides effective analysis of the question; some imbalance permissible	Limited analysis, mostly describes	Weak or inappropriate analysis	No analysis
Documentary Evidence	Effectively uses a substantial number of documents. Documents supplement analysis and are balanced with outside information	Effectively uses some of documents; may only restate information found in documents	Poor use of documents with only brief citation or paraphrase; not enough documents used to support analysis	Almost no use of or inappropriate attempts to use documents
Supportive Information	Supports thesis with substantial, relevant information. Outside information is balanced with use of documents in the analysis of the question	Supports thesis with some factual information	Lacks supporting information, or information given is minimal	Incompetent, inappropriate responses
Grammar and Structure	May contain insignificant errors	May contain minor errors that do not detract from overall essay	May contain major errors	Contains many major or minor errors
Organization and Writing Style	Well organized and well written	Clearly organized and written, but not exceptional	Weak organization and writing	Disorganized and poorly written

Free-Response Essay Rubric

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