

Use specifics from the “stimulus” in formulating your response to the FRQ. It’s there for a reason—so use it! Take some time to analyze what the item shows you and how it relates to the FRQ. Feel free to draw on it and mark it up! You don’t get points for marking up the question. AP readers only grade the written content in the response booklets.

E. Commonly Asked Questions

Here are some commonly asked questions about the FRQ section:

- **Can I include a diagram or sketch in my FRQ?**

Yes, you can include a diagram or sketch in your FRQ. However, it is highly recommended that you do not include this as the only piece in your response. If you choose to use a diagram or sketch, link it to your overall response and be sure to describe what it means and how it relates to your response. A diagram shows AP readers that you know what you’re talking about, but it is not a sufficient answer on its own.

- **What if I have no idea how to respond to the question?**

This could happen and the most important thing for you to do is to not panic. More than likely, you can offer some geographic analysis of the issue, even if you are truly stumped. Start writing something related to the course and an issue you think might be tied to the FRQ.

For example, in a past administration of the exam, some students were stumped by an FRQ calling for an analysis of the distribution of chicken farming in the U.S. Several stumped students started writing about agricultural changes in the U.S., the movement towards agribusiness, and the decline of family-owned farms in the U.S. They were successful because they offered somewhat of a related idea.

Do *not* leave an FRQ blank. Many well-prepared students find that one of the FRQs is their “challenge FRQ,” meaning the one that really gave them a run for their money. If you don’t know the answer right away, go with your gut

and keep it simple. Don't panic and try to make it sound complicated to cover your tracks. Be simple, direct, and stay in your comfort range and you'll probably be pleasantly surprised with your score.

Note that if you write material that is graphic or can potentially be taken as disturbing or threatening, AP will likely respond and contact your school. Pictures of guns and violence are taken seriously and could lead to real consequences. Know that you will be responsible for what you say and the consequences could be immediate.

- **How long should my FRQ response be?**

There is no right or wrong length for an FRQ response. Long, unfocused responses can confuse and distract the AP reader. If your response fully answers the FRQ, then it is the right length. Be sure you do not spend too much time on one FRQ and lose time to address the remaining FRQs adequately.

- **Will I have enough time to write my answers?**

The AP test is designed not to push you on time constraints, so students generally have just enough time to write their responses. Remember, though, that it is your responsibility to keep an eye on the time and your progress.

- **Do I have to know names of geographers?**

Yes, you should know the names of geographers associated with the major geographic models they invented or major concepts they are credited with studying. On a past exam, students were asked about the "Burgess model," which confused students who did not know that Burgess was the name of the geographer who invented the concentric zone model.

- **How much do I need to know about the world map?**

You need to know the major regions of the world and some key issues going on in these regions. As you review for the exam, note specific examples or concepts tied to particular regions in the world, such as demographic trends or places where religions started or diffused. A recent exam question

asked students to look at a map of Europe and a map of the Middle East and name examples of states, nations, and nation-states.

You might want to find an online world map review game to practice identifying countries and regions in the world. There are many great, free map practice sites on the Internet. As you practice with them, think about the human patterns and issues associated with the different regions and countries you are identifying.

You also need to remember that Africa, Europe, and Asia are continents, *not* countries! Also, for purposes of this exam, do not refer to the United States just as "America." Always refer to it as the "United States," though you certainly can state that it is in North America, if necessary.



Be sure to check out the official AP Human Geography webpage on the College Board's website. There you'll find released FRQs, scoring rubrics, and sample student responses for every year that the AP Human Geography exam has been administered. Many students who are successful on the AP exam use these critical resources as practice questions and to see how the FRQs are scored. You should practice these questions under timed conditions to prepare yourself for the actual exam.