



Lesson Two: Specificity, Detail, & Short Answer Questions

the AP European History Test As you are probably aware, the goal of taking AP European History class is to prepare yourself for the AP European History test in May so you can earn college credit. In order to best prepare you, your teacher will give you assessments (quizzes, tests, and essays) that are like the AP test throughout the year.

The AP European History course and test were significantly revised for the 2015-2016 school year. You may already be familiar with the format of the AP World History test, but **the new AP US History and AP European History tests are somewhat different from the AP World History test that you took in 2016.** They have different kinds of questions and essays. So throughout the year, just remember: APUSH is different. (By 2017, all three of the tests will have the same format.)

Here is a short breakdown of all of the parts of the AP European History test:

Question Type	Number of Questions	Timing	Percentage of Total Exam Score
Multiple-choice questions	55	55 minutes	40 %
Short-answer questions	4	50 minutes	20 %
Document-based essay question	1	55 minutes	25 %
Long essay question	1 (chosen from a pair)	35 minutes	15 %

Specificity and Detail In whatever kind of historical writing you are doing, you will need to present an argument (thesis) and prove it with evidence. The more specific and detailed your evidence is, the more convincing your thesis will be.

Let's imagine your mom is going to the grocery store, and she asks you if you want anything, and you want some junk food.

Extremely vague you: Mom, can you be sure to get some snacks at the store, please?

Analysis: That's not very specific. Your mom might bring back dehydrated kumquats and ostrich jerky.





Slightly-more-specific you: Mother dear, could you please get me something sweet and crunchy while you're at the store?

Analysis: This is better... but your mom could still interpret your request differently than you intended. Apple slices are sweet and crunchy, and they're pretty good with peanut butter... but you wanted

JUNK food.

Awesomely detailed you: Female Parent, I would really like to have some of those Nacho Cheese Doritos that come in red 20-ounce bag with a black triangle on it, and a also a ten-pack of Strawberry Crème Twinkies that come in the pink box with the picture of Twinkie the Kid on it, please. Remember I don't like the Taco-flavored Doritos in the orange vintage-style bag or the plain Twinkies in the blue box with Minions on it. Thanks, Ma!



Analysis: Very nice. Your mom may not want to get those snacks for you, because PRESERVATIVES, but at least you made your request clear by using the **names of items** and by **clearly describing them**. Also you said please and thank you, which moms like. (Sorry, just a little shameless politeness promotion on behalf of moms everywhere.)

Now let's look at some historical statements at different levels of specificity.

Vague statement: Back then, England and France didn't get along.

Analysis: I HAVE SO MANY QUESTIONS. When? Why did England and France not get along? What was an example of how they didn't get along? Who was ruling both countries at the time?

Slightly-less-vague statement: In the 1300s, the English and the French got in a war.

Analysis: Better... but was it for the entire 1300s? What caused the war? Who started it? How long did it last? How was it fought? How was it resolved? Why was this war important?

Specific, detailed statement: The Hundred Years' War began in 1337 when the English king, Edward III, invaded France based on his claim to the French throne. The war continued intermittently for 116 years (due to competing claims to continental territory) and finally ended in 1453. As a result, the English lost all its territory on the continent (except for Calais), and nationalism rose in both countries. Additionally, military developments that occurred during the war, such as the use of cannons, rendered feudal warfare obsolete.

Activity 2A: Specificity and Detail *Re-write each of the following vague statements to include lots of specificity and detail. Remember to name names and describe! Use your textbook for reference if necessary. Write the new, more specific statements on your own paper.*



1. During the Renaissance there was a rebirth.
2. Back then, Italy was kind of a political mess.
3. Machiavelli said it was OK to be inhumane.
4. Many authors admired the Greeks and Romans.

Intro to Short-answer Questions

Short-answer questions will likely appear on some of your quizzes in class this year, so we'll cover them first. Lesson Three will address multiple-choice questions, and Lessons Four through Ten will address the essays.

The short-answer question section will have four short-answer question sets, and you will have a total of 45 minutes to answer all four.

Activity 2B: Characteristics of Short Answer Question Sets & Responses *Read over the example sets of short-answer questions and the sample responses on the next three pages. Discuss the following with a partner, and record your responses on your own paper.*



1. What do all three question sets have in common?
2. What are the three types of question sets?
3. Make a T- chart on your paper that looks like the one below. Determine what the good sample responses have in common and how they differ from the poor sample responses, and fill in the chart.

Characteristics of Good Responses	Characteristics of Poor Responses

Sample Short-Answer Question Sets & Responses

Sample Question Set 1: Answer a, b, and c.

- Name and describe one characteristic of Renaissance visual art.
- Give an example of and briefly describe an artist and work of art that displays one of the characteristics of Renaissance visual art.
- Give an example of a way Renaissance visual art was used to promote personal, political, or religious goals.

Sample Responses to Question Set 1:



Renaissance art was very realistic, like for example Leonardo's art, which helped him to earn money.



- One characteristic of Renaissance art was the use of linear perspective. This technique employed principles of geometry to render objects that were supposed to be further away in the painting as smaller and at an angle to objects in the foreground, using a vanishing point in the center of the artwork. Artists who used this technique were able to achieve a more realistic depiction of distance and depth in their works.*
- Raphael's painting *the School of Athens* features a convocation of Greek philosophers in a building featuring columns, arches, and Classical statuary. The artist's use of linear perspective is shown in the depiction of the architectural features using a vanishing point, diminishing size of objects in the background, and angling of objects from foreground to background.*
- The 16th-century Pope Julius II commissioned numerous works of art in pursuit of his goal of building a new, Christian version of Rome to compete with the grandeur of the classical city. While some of these artworks, such as Michelangelo's painting of the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, had religious themes, the main purpose of his patronage was to bring him personal fame.*

Sample Question Set 2. Using the map below, answer a, b, and c.

Western Christianity in Europe, circa 1550



- Briefly explain one specific historical development that contributed to the emergence of the patterns depicted on the map during the 16th century.
- Briefly explain an additional specific historical development that contributed to the emergence of the patterns depicted on the map during the 16th century.
- Briefly explain one way in which the Roman Catholic Church reacted to these historical developments.



- indulgences
- pluralism
- Catholic Reformation



- In 1517, Pope Leo X authorized the sale of indulgences in order to raise money to rebuild St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. These were certificates that purported to shorten an individual's time spent atoning for sins in Purgatory. A German monk, Martin Luther, viewed this practice as being the equivalent of being able to buy salvation, and protested with his document, the 95 Theses, which led to the split in the Christian Church known as the Protestant Reformation.
- In the late Middle Ages, the Catholic clergy was characterized by several forms of corruption. Corrupt practices included pluralism and absenteeism—the holding of more than one church office at once and the subsequent failure to actually live in or be present in the diocese over which the church officer presided, and simony—the purchase of church offices. Pope Alexander VI, who openly acknowledged his four illegitimate children (even though clerics were supposed to be celibate), and Pope Julius II, 'the Warrior Pope,' were also representative of the generally unChristian behavior often associated with the pre-Reformation Catholic Church.
- The Catholic Church reacted to the Protestant Reformation with the Council of Trent, an ecumenical council held from 1545-1563. The council made many decrees that repudiated Luther's teachings, including declaring certain aspects of Protestantism to be heresy, re-affirming all seven sacraments, and certifying the Latin Vulgate Bible as the officially recognized version to be used in Catholic rites.

Sample Question Set 3. Using the excerpts below, answer a, b, and c.

“... it is quite apparent [that the German peasants who are rebelling] practice mere devil’s work... indulging in nothing but robbery, murder, and bloodshed... I would instruct those in authority how to conduct themselves in this matter.... First they have sworn to their true and gracious rulers to be submissive and obedient, in accord with God’s command... (Rom. xiii. 1), "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers." But since they have deliberately and sacrilegiously abandoned their obedience, and in addition have dared to oppose their lords, they have thereby forfeited body and soul... wherefore St. Paul judges them, saying (Rom. xiii. 2.), "And they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation." The peasants will incur this sentence, sooner or later; for God wills that fidelity and allegiance shall be sacredly kept.

—[Martin Luther](#), 1525

“It has hitherto been the custom for the lords to treat us as their serfs, which is pitiable since Christ has redeemed and bought us all by the shedding of his precious blood, the shepherd just as the highest, no one excepted. Therefore it is demonstrated by Scripture that we are free and wish to be free... we ought to live according to [God’s] commandment, which does not show and teach us not to obey authority, but rather that we should humble ourselves before everyone, not just authority, so that in this way we will gladly obey our elected and appointed rulers (whom God has ordained over us) in all reasonable and Christian matters. We have no doubt that, as true and genuine Christians, you will gladly release us from serfdom, or else show us from the Gospel that we are serfs. “

—[Twelve Articles of the Swabian Peasants](#), 1525

- Briefly explain Martin Luther’s point of view.
- Briefly explain the point of view demonstrated by the Twelve Articles.
- Provide and explain one piece of evidence from the early modern period that supports ONE of the points of view expressed in the excerpts.

Sample Responses to Question Set 3:



The first response is anti-peasant, and the second response is pro-peasant, and the peasants were just confused about some stuff Martin Luther had said.



- Luther clearly believed that the peasants were wrong to revolt, as he felt they should be punished with both physical AND spiritual death for having rebelled. Luther characteristically defended his argument with scripture, reflecting his teaching that the Bible is the only source of religious truth.
- The Twelve Articles represents the viewpoint of the peasants, listing their grievances, such as their status on the lower rungs of the social hierarchy as serfs and their required obedience to their social 'betters,' and providing justification for their revolt. Their argument also reflects Luther’s teachings, using scriptural assertions as evidence and applying Luther’s references to a 'priesthood of all believers' to their status in society.
- The massacre at Frankenhausen, an event that occurred near the end of Peasants' War, illustrates Luther’s point of view that the peasants should be punished by death. When a badly-outnumbered peasant army met the Swabian League army in Frankenhausen in May of 1525, they asked for a ceasefire and retreated to their wagons to confer on whether to fight or negotiate. The Swabian League army broke the truce, massacring about 6000 fleeing peasants, and torturing and executing one of the peasants' leaders, Thomas Muntzer.

Characteristics of Short-Answer Question Sets

- ❑ There are four question sets, each of which has three parts (a, b, and c).
- ❑ Two of the question sets will be straightforward questions with no documents or pictures.
- ❑ One question set will have to do with an image of some sort.
- ❑ One question set will have one or two short excerpts, which usually display differing points of view.

Requirements for Answering Short Answer Questions

- ❑ **Write in complete sentences.** Bulleted lists or hastily-scribbled sentence fragments won't earn credit.
- ❑ **Label each part of the question (a, b, and c).**
- ❑ **Write 1-3 sentences for each part of each question (a, b, and c).** You have 45 minutes total, which is about 11 minutes per question set, which gives you time for a thorough response.
- ❑ **Be specific and detailed.** Name names and describe thoroughly!

Activity 2C: Short-Answer Practice Write *specific, thorough, detailed* responses to the following question sets on your own paper. Reference the sample responses on pages 13-15 if needed.

1. Answer parts a, b, and c.
 - a. Briefly describe one similarity between the ideas of the Italian humanists and Christian / Northern humanists of the Renaissance.
 - b. Briefly describe one difference between the ideas of the Italian humanists and Christian / Northern humanists of the Renaissance.
 - c. Give an example of a specific individual who represented either the Italian or Christian / Northern humanist movements and briefly describe how his ideas contributed to the intellectual movement.
2. Answer parts a, b, and c.
 - a. Give an example of and briefly describe a specific event that was part of the 16th-century French wars of religion that represented a conflict between the monarch and the nobility.
 - b. Give an example of and briefly describe a specific example of the failure of a Hapsburg ruler to restore Catholic unity to Europe during the 16th century.
 - c. Give an example of and briefly describe a specific example of an instance during which a 16th-century state allowed religious pluralism in order to maintain domestic peace.

