



FRQS EXPLAINED AP PSYCHOLOGY

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AP Psych – Skills

Skill Category 1

Concept Understanding **1**

Define, explain, and apply concepts, behavior, theories, and perspectives.

Skill Category 2

Data Analysis **2**

Analyze and interpret quantitative data.

Skill Category 3

Scientific Investigation **3**

Analyze psychological research studies.

SKILLS

- 1.A** Define and/or apply concepts.
- 1.B** Explain behavior in authentic context.
- 1.C** Apply theories and perspectives in authentic contexts.

Section II: Free-Response Question

- Question 1: Concept Application assesses students' ability to explain behavior and apply theories and perspectives in authentic contexts. Skill Category 1 is assessed.
- Question 2: Research Design assesses students' ability to analyze psychological research studies, including analyzing and interpreting quantitative data. All three skill categories are assessed, with an emphasis on Skill Category 3.

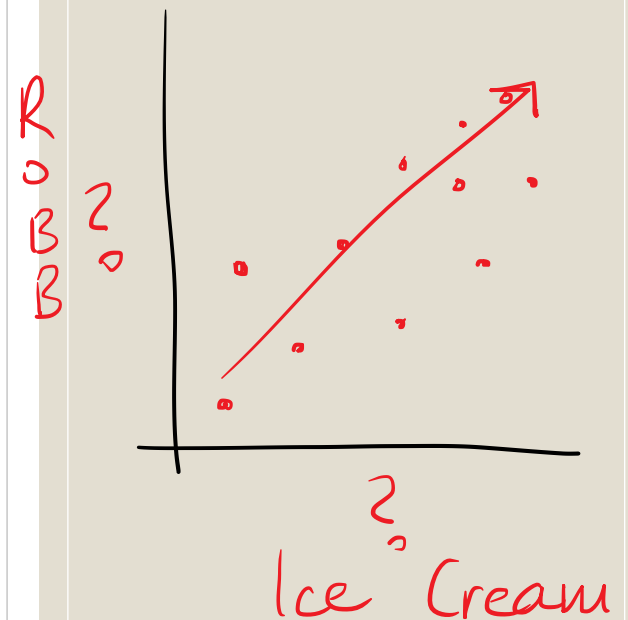
rare **Construct/Draw:** Create a graph that illustrates or explains relationships or phenomena. Labels may or may not be required.

- **Define:** Provide a specific meaning for a word or concept. *operational definition*
- **Describe:** Provide the relevant characteristics of a specified topic. *DV & IV 1/1*
- **Draw a conclusion:** Use available information to formulate an accurate statement that demonstrates understanding based on evidence. Sometimes phrased as, "What is the most appropriate conclusion?" *experiment*
- **Identify/State:** Indicate or provide information about a specified topic, without elaboration or explanation. *DV/IV*
- **Explain:** Provide information about how or why a relationship, process, pattern, position, situation, or outcome occurs, using evidence and/or reasoning to support or qualify a claim. Explain "how" typically requires analyzing the relationship, process, pattern, position, situation, or outcome; whereas, explain "why" typically requires analysis of motivations or reasons for the relationship, process, pattern, position, situation, or outcome.

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Task Verbs Used in the FRQs

The following task verbs are commonly used in the free-response questions.



General Considerations from CollegeBoard for Self-Grading 1

- Answers must be cogent enough for the student's meaning to come through. Spelling and grammatical mistakes do not reduce a student's score, but spelling must be close enough so that the reader is convinced of the word.
- A student can earn points only if the student clearly conveys what part of the question is being answered. It is possible to infer the part of the question being answered if it is consistent with the order of the question.

General Considerations from CollegeBoard for Self-Grading 2

- The response must apply the concept to the prompt; **a definition alone will not earn the point.**
- Within a bulleted question part, a student will not be penalized for misinformation unless it directly contradicts correct information that would otherwise have earned a point. For example, if a response applies a concept in two contradictory ways (such as identifying both the measured variables as the independent variable), the point is not earned.

- Describe an overarching framework
- Be specific in both of your references to and discussion of psychological principles or problems
- Cite evidence and examples to illustrate your explanations
- Clearly state intent of your evidence (to support or contrast a claim)
- State your points clearly and directly.
- One must write **covering all the terms** given in a question. Skipping even one term affects the score.

What CB expects from you?

According to the College Board's published materials on the AP Psychology free-response questions, you are expected to do the following:

First thing to do: Process the prompt

- Circle the vocabulary words.
- Put a square around any verbs (in the prompt for the subject as well as what it wants you to do).
- Double Underline important people to the prompt.
- Underline the essential aspects of the question.
- Define the words on the prompt sheet FIRST (that will get your brain focused) before attempting to tackle the entire prompt.

Review your content

- Write an introductory sentence that is **NOT** a repeat of the questions. It's just helpful if you translate it for yourself.
- Use psychology terms and proper names of theories, theorists, etc.
- Define all terms **in your words**
- Support everything with an example of a study, preferably from your course work (not an example from your own personal life)
- Clearly state the purpose of the example or study (support or contrast)
- **Be clear, concise, and direct - no fluff**

Styling your answer

- Do not write in the 5-paragraph essay format nor an introductory paragraph.
- Questions are either in A, B, C format or bulleted.
- For every segmented part of the question, you will write a paragraph on it. 5 bullets in the question = 5 paragraphs in your answer.
- Paragraphs can include 2-3 sentences, just as long as you answer the question.

Part A

Mr. Shands hypothesizes that his students would perform better on tests if he gave them an incentive to do so. To test this, he told his morning class that if the class average on the next test was above an 85, he would buy them all donuts. Mr. Shands did not tell anything to his afternoon class and recorded both classes scores on their next test. The morning class scores were 85, 76, 89, 97, and 92 while the afternoon class scores were 100, 78, 88, 89, and 45.

- Identify the **measure of central tendency** that needs to be calculated to determine the standard deviation (1)
- Explain the **ethical flaw** that is explicitly presented in the study (1)
- Explain how the study could be modified to an experiment (1)

Sample FRQ: Research Design

Mr. Shands and Reagan's
Experiments (Unit 1)

Part B

Reagan is wondering if the color of litter affects the likelihood that a person will pick it up and throw it away. To test this, she placed different colored soda cans near trashcans and records people who walk by to see if they will throw them away. She makes sure to account for confounding variables such as by not counting people who she is certain didn't see the soda cans due to distractions. At the end of each day, she makes sure to throw away all the cans that weren't thrown away by others. She publishes the results and video clips to her public psychology portfolio.

The results ended up as the following (% of people who threw the can away / colour of can): 41% Red, 28% Blue, 74% Green

- Identify the research method used by Reagan (1)
- Identify the ethical flaw that is explicitly presented in the situation (1)
- Suppose Reagan was told that the human eye is most sensitive to light in the 555-nanometer range (yellowish green) under normal lighting conditions. Explain why Reagan would agree or disagree with this statement (1)

Sample FRQ: Research Design

Mr. Shands and Reagan's
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