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In order to continue enjoying our site, we ask that you confirm your identity as a human. Thank you very much for your cooperation. This post has the best AP® Human Geography review guide for 2020's modified online AP® exams. In it, we go over summaries on the latest changes from the College Board, strategies to taking this year's online exams and hand-picked practice FRQs for you to study with. You have questions, we have answers. Here, we review frequently asked questions related to AP® Human Geography such as what is its format, how hard is it, and more. One of the biggest mistakes that AP® test-takers can make is overconfidence, and the place that you are most likely to be overconfident is on multiple choice questions. This issue is especially true for AP® Human Geography multiple-choice questions. AP® Human Geography can be a bit tricky, so it's important to make sure that you are ready for the entire test. Searching for an AP® Human Geography score calculator? You've come to the right place. Determine how you would score on the AP® Human Geography exam by using the Are you looking to ace the upcoming AP® Human Geography AP® exam, but still can't quite tell the main differences between nations, states, and nation-states? Not to worry, we at Albert.io are here to help. We have created a 1-month study guide that not only sharpens your knowledge of the subject-matter, but provides you with many of the test-taking skills and tips that are required for any successful AP® exam. Do you want to score a 4 or 5 on your AP® Human Geography exam? If the answer is "yes," you're probably wondering how you can prepare and study for the exam. You're also probably overwhelmed with all of the information, study guides, and tips out there. Luckily, this comprehensive list of AP® Human Geography tips, covering everything from multiple-choice study tips. If you are reading this article, then either you are researching whether AP® Human Geography is a class that interests you or are trying to figure out where to start studying for the course. Fortunately, we have prepared a simple plan for you to follow to better direct your efforts. AP® classes and their respective exams are not something to be taken lightly due to the sheer volume of material. If you're considering taking the AP® Human Geography exam in the spring, but haven't entirely decided, then this is the AP® Human Geography study guide for you! The AP® Human Geography exam is one of a wide selection of AP® classes that students take in high school. Not a whole lot of people know about the Balkan Peninsula because it existed so long before we were even born, but it's where the term 'Balkanization' actually came from. Basically, at the time, the area was known as the Ottoman Empire, and it occupied the area where we have current countries like Bulgaria, Albania and Serbia. Skip to main content Reddit and its partners use cookies and similar technologies to provide you with a better experience. By accepting all cookies, you agree to our use of cookies to deliver and maintain our services and site, improve the quality of Reddit, personalize Reddit content and advertising, and measure the effectiveness of advertising. By rejecting non-essential cookies, Reddit may still use certain cookies to ensure the proper functionality of our platform. For more information, please see our Cookie Notice and our Privacy Policy. Are you seeking answers to the most commonly asked questions about the 2025 AP® Human Geography exam? You're in the right place! Read below to find answers to all of these and more in this AP® Human Geography FAQ. Compared to a regular human geography course, the AP® Human Geography course is more difficult. This is because AP® courses are designed to teach students at a college level, so the exams are designed to test a higher level of content synthesis and critical thinking. Compared to other AP® exams, AP® Human Geography has a lower pass rate for reasons outlined in this section. For the 2024 AP® exam season, about half (56.1%) of the students who took the AP® Human Geography exam passed with a 3 or better. The mean score for the AP® HG exam was 2.83. The statistics included above are based on the number of students who take the AP® Human Geography exam each year. This exam averages approximately 220,000 test-takers yearly, which is in the average range for the AP® exam offerings. In 2024, there were a total of 262,253 AP® Human Geography test takers. To make the best use of your study time for the AP® Human Geography exam, it is important to understand how the units covered in the course content are weighted on the actual exam. Knowing the weight of each unit will allow you to focus your attention on the areas that carry a higher weight. The AP® Human Geography exam covers seven total units. Units 2-7 all carry the same weight at 12-17% of the exam. The first unit, Thinking Geographically, carries a lower weight at 8-10% of the exam. Since the AP® Human Geography exam has one of the lower passing rates among AP® exams, it would be helpful to know how many questions in each section you need to answer correctly in order to achieve a score of 3 or better. The AP® Human Geography score calculator (previewed below) from Albert reveals that you need to get 30 of the 60 multiple-choice questions right and be awarded a minimum of half of the possible points in the free-response section in order to pass the exam. Return to the Table of Contents The AP® Human Geography exam is absolutely worth taking for many students. In general, AP® courses are valuable for guiding students toward building college-level skills in high school. AP® Human Geography is especially valuable as it serves as many students' introduction to AP® courses. In addition to the study skills, AP® courses can be valuable because they show college admissions counselors that you take your academics seriously and that you don't shy away from academic rigor. According to College Board research, "students who receive a score of 3 or higher on AP® Exams typically experience greater academic success in college and have higher graduation rates than their non-AP® peers." One of the most useful things about taking AP® courses is the opportunity to gain college credit during high school. Going into college with pre-earned credits can translate into tuition savings and allow students to either graduate early or explore additional courses outside their major. This chart shows just a few of the hundreds of colleges that typically accept the AP® Human Geography exam for college credit, along with the number of credit hours they award for a passing grade and the potential tuition savings from using the AP® course for credit. School Minimum Score Required Number of Credits American University4 3 Rutgers University 4 3 University of Maryland4 3 University of Wisconsin – Madison 3 3 Ohio State University 3 3 MIT 5 9 UNC-Chapel Hill 3 3 Auburn University 4 3 Given that the average cost per credit hour ranges anywhere from $406 (for in-state residents at a public 4-year college) and up to $1,469 (for a private 4-year university) or greater, this can result in a savings of at least $1,218 to nearly $4,000. As you can see, the academic benefits combined with the financial benefits make taking the AP® Human Geography worth your time and effort. Check out Albert's AP® Human Geography practice questions The 2025 AP® Human Geography exam will be given as a Fully Digital exam. The 2025 AP® Human Geography exam will take place on: Tuesday, May 6, 2025, at 8am local time Curious about when other AP® exams are happening in 2025? View the complete 2025 AP® exam schedule here. Return to the Table of Contents According to the latest update from the College Board exam season timeline, students will receive their AP® scores in July 2025. Historically, the College Board typically releases AP® scores early in the month of July. You'll be able to access your AP® scores online with your College Board account username and password. Return to the Table of Contents The AP® Human Geography exam scoring follows this format: SectionQuestionsTime% of Exam Score1: Multiple Choice60 questions1 hour50%2: Free Response3 questions1 hour and 15 minutes50% The multiple-choice section of the AP® Human Geography exam includes a total of 60 questions that need to be answered within the one-hour time limit. As of the 2020 exam, this section has been revised to require more analysis of both qualitative and quantitative sources. The multiple-choice section groups questions in 5-8 sets. Each set will include 2-3 questions that relate to either a text or data-based source. At least one of the sets of questions will include a paired set of sources. The free-response portion of the exam consists of three questions. You will have one hour and 15 minutes to complete your answers to these questions. In past years, the points for each of the three questions could vary. Starting in 2020, each question will be worth 7 points. The first free-response question will require you to describe and apply a geographic scenario. The second question on the free-response portion asks you to describe and apply geographic data. This data will be supplied and will be either qualitative or quantitative in nature. The third and final question is a repeat of the second question's format, but will use two supplied sources. These sources may be quantitative, qualitative, or both. Quick tip: When using examples, be sure to be specific. Past responses have received lower points due to the use of generic examples. The examples you use should demonstrate a solid understanding of the content and be specific to that scenario. The content weighting for the AP® Human Geography exam is outlined below: UnitsExam WeightingUnit 1: Thinking Geographically8-10%Unit 2: Population and Migration Patterns and Processes12-17%Unit 3: Cultural Patterns and Processes12-17% Unit 4: Political Patterns and Processes12-17%Unit 5: Agricultural and Rural Land-Use Patterns and Processes12-17%Unit 6: Cities and Urban Land-Use Patterns and Processes12-17%Unit 7: Industrial and Economic Development Patterns and Processes12-17% Check out Albert's AP® Human Geography practice questions Should you fail the AP® Human Geography exam, stay calm and understand that this is something you can easily fix. The AP® Human Geography exam is given once every year in May. You can take the exam as often as you like in order to pass or in an attempt to get a higher score. You'll just need to pay the exam fee each time you retake the exam. Your high school GPA will likely not be impacted at all if you fail the AP® Human Geography exam. Most schools don't use your AP® exam scores as part of your overall course grades. Grades are based on a combination of coursework and class tests, so as long as you've scored well on those, your GPA will be fine. If you fail the AP® Human Geography exam, you will not receive college credit for the course. Most colleges will not award college credit for any score lower than a 3 (some schools require a 4 for college credit). If college credit is your goal and you failed or scored lower than a 3, you will need to retake the exam. Some students are concerned with how failing the AP® Human Geography exam will reflect on their college admissions process. As the student, you are in control of where your AP® scores are sent, so you can decide who sees these scores. If you do end up sending a low or failing score to a college, you can often have that score replaced with a higher score when you retake the exam.   Return to the Table of Contents Many students take AP® Human Geography in their freshman or sophomore year. This exam is typically considered by students to be a good introductory AP® exam. While some schools allow freshmen to take this course, others require that students take at least one other AP® history course prior to taking AP® Human Geography. The decision of when to take AP® Human Geography also depends on the total number of AP® courses you want to take throughout your high school career. If your goal is to take a large number of AP® courses, you may want to consider taking AP® Human Geography earlier. If you only plan on taking a select few AP® courses, you can wait until later to take this course. The benefit of waiting to take the AP® Human Geography course is that you will be more acclimated to the demands of juggling several difficult classes at one time and that you will be better suited to the level of writing required in AP® courses. Taking other AP® exams prior to taking AP® Human Geography will also give you more experience with the AP® exam format and the level of detail required for the writing portion of these exams. You should consult your parents, teachers, and guidance counselor to decide the best time for you to take the AP® Human Geography exam. The decision should be based on factors that are unique to you and to your academic goals. Return to the Table of Contents Past AP® Human Geography exams are on the College Board's AP® Central website. From that website, the College Board also provides links to practice tests for past exams. These practice tests allow you to become comfortable with the kinds of questions that have been included on past exams and to understand the types of answers that have achieved high scores in the past. Here are the most recent practice tests for the AP® Human Geography exam: The AP® Human Geography exam was redesigned for the 2019-2020 academic year based on a reorganization of the units covered. The practice questions above will still be useful but must be weighed against the most recent changes. The practice tests above only cover the free-response portion of the AP® ®Human Geography exam. If you would like more practice on the multiple-choice section of the exam, the AP® Human Geography Course and Exam Description provides a limited number of examples. There are only 15 multiple-choice questions in the guide, so this will not be a comprehensive reflection of the questions on the actual exam. It will, however, provide a useful peek into this portion of the exam. To get more practice on the multiple-choice portion of the AP® Human Geography exam, you can visit the Albert website to view hundreds of additional multiple-choice practice questions. These practice questions have been written to align with the units and learning objectives covered by the AP® Human Geography exam. You can find even more useful information for the AP® Human Geography exam on the AP® Central website. This information can be vital to achieving the highest score possible on the exam. Included on the AP® Central website are: The scoring guidelines provide information on how points are awarded for each short-answer question. The short answer questions are much more subjective to grade than the multiple choice questions. Using the scoring guidelines will give you valuable insight into the kinds of answers that have been given full or partial credit in the past. The Chief Reader Report is published each year, allowing you to gain in-depth insight into how the short answer and essay questions are graded. This report details what the exam graders are looking for in each question and the information that was present in highly successful responses. In addition, this report outlines where students' answers were found lacking. When reviewing the 2019 Chief Reader Report, you can see that on question 1 (in Set 2), many students misread the question. The Chief Reader also stated that students tended to give generic examples. Reading this report would help students to understand that they need to use specific examples and to completely read the question to ensure they understand it before answering. You can also find very useful information on the Scoring Report for the AP® Human Geography exam. The report will show you at a glance which questions were most often missed by past exam takers as well as which questions most students answered successfully. For example, question #3 on the 2019 exam (Set 1) had the lowest mean score of 1.70 points (out of a possible 6). To answer this question correctly, students needed to define "devolution" and relate it to several aspects of politics and life. The Chief Reader Report states that students who did not receive full points for this question did not have a clear understanding of the term devolution. They tended to define it as the opposite of evolution rather than the transfer of power from national to regional and local governments. Another useful tool not included above is the list of sample responses for the AP® Human Geography exam. For example, the sample response for question #1 (Set 1) provides sample responses for the question with a breakdown of the point awarded for topics covered. The set includes three sample responses, one that received full credit, one that received 5 out of 7 possible points, and one that scored 3 out of 7 possible points. If you're looking for powerful practice with AP® Human Geography FRQs, Albert has practice questions for each type of FRQ along with examples of responses that would earn full points. Albert even provides a detailed explanation of how the sample response earned each point in the rubric! While the short answer and essay questions do require more thought and planning, don't forget that 50% of the exam score comes from the multiple-choice section. Albert maintains thousands of multiple choice practice questions that coordinate with the AP® Human Geography units and standards. Along with the question and answer, Albert also includes a detailed explanation of each question to further your knowledge before taking this exam. To learn more about Albert, click here Since AP® Human Geography is considered to be a relatively entry-level AP® course, many students choose to take it as the first AP® course of their high school careers. If you are interested in social science, this could be a good AP® course choice for you. There is more detail about the course in the course overview. Even though AP® Human Geography is considered to be a good starter AP® course, it is not required to be successful in later AP® courses. If the course content is not a fit for your skills and interests, you are better off choosing an AP® course that does appeal to your interests. If your goal is to attend college eventually, you'll want to take at least a few AP® courses to increase your chances at acceptance, especially for the more selective colleges. Taking AP® Human Geography can be useful in opening the door to other AP® courses throughout your high school career. However, if your goal is to achieve all 5s on your AP® exams, you'll need to work hard when studying for the AP® Human Geography exam. This exam awards a surprisingly low number of 5s, likely due to the fact that it is the first AP® exam for many students and they are unaware of how to best prepare for the exam. In 2019, only 10.8% of those who took the exam scored a 5. In 2019, AP® Human Geography was the second-hardest AP® test — or, more accurately, the test that awarded the second-lowest percentage of 5s. The lowest percentage was for the AP® World History exam. Only 8.6% of students scored a 5 on that exam. Achieving a perfect score on the AP® Human Geography exam is difficult, but not impossible. However, you should base your AP® ®course choices on your academic interest and strengths rather than simply choosing those with the highest chance of a perfect score. You are in control of which courses you choose to take. You should consult your parents and your guidance counselor for input and assistance with this important decision. Return to the Table of Contents Students typically score lower on this exam than on other AP® exams. Because the AP® Human Geography exam is one of the more difficult to pass, it is important to be well prepared for this exam. Your score will depend on your level of preparedness for the exam as well as your aptitude for the subject. Year % of 5s % of 4s % of 3s % of 2s % of 1s Pass Rate % 202417.9%20.5%17.8%14.3%29.5%56.1%202316.0%20.0%18.4%14.0%31.6%54.4%202214.9%18.7%19.6%15.0%31.8%53.2%202114.4%19.7%18.3%15.1%32.4%52.5%202011.6%22.1%24.5%10.9%30.9%58.2%201910.8% 18.2%20.1%16.7%34.1%49.1%201813.0%19.8%21.5%17.0%28.6%54.4%201710.7%17.3%21.0%17.1%33.9%48.9% As you can see, about half the students fail the AP® Human Geography exam each year. This higher failure rate is likely due to the fact that this is the very first AP® exam many students take. For the 2024 exam season, the mean score for the AP® Human Geography exam was 2.83, derived from 262,253 test-takers. Return to the Table of Contents Albert has hundreds of AP® Human Geography practice questions, including multiple-choice, free response, and full-length practice tests to try out. In your AP Human Geography class, you'll learn about the dynamics of societies around the world in economic, social, political, and environmental contexts. This course focuses a lot on ideas and models, along with terminology that defines the ways in which we've chosen to inhabit and change our surroundings. This AP Human Geography study guide is designed to guide you through all the big concepts covered in the course, with an emphasis on cumulative preparation for the AP exam. How to Use This AP Human Geography Study Guide This guide will help you review for assessments in your AP Human Geography class by providing links to practice resources and tips on effective study strategies. I'll also give advice that's specific to preparing for the final AP exam. In the first section, I'll detail a step-by-step process you can follow to create and execute a customized study plan for the test. This process includes taking a diagnostic test, evaluating your weaknesses, studying the content areas you struggled with the most, and taking additional practice tests to check your progress. To follow up the study plan, I'll list a few key study tips to remember as you revisit the course content and take practice exams. I'll also give you notes for each topic area that you can use to study for in-class tests and review for the AP exam. Having all this information in one place will hopefully make studying for AP Human Geography much less stressful! 4-Step Study Plan for AP Human Geography In this section, I'll go through the steps of a basic study plan for the AP Human Geography exam. Most of the principles will also apply to your studying for tests throughout the class, but full practice tests are only important when directly preparing for the final exam. You can use shorter topic-specific quizzes to diagnose your weaknesses in different units of the Human Geography course earlier in the school year. For planning purposes, here's the estimated time required for each step below: Step 1: 2.5 hours Step 2: 1 hour Step 3: 2 hours Step 4: 2.5 hours It should take approximately eight hours to study for the AP Human Geography exam. Of course, you can always extend the time you spend reviewing content if you're rusty on a bunch of different topics or just want to be extra thorough. Step 1: Take and Score a Full Practice Test The first step is to take a full AP Human Geography practice test so you can get a better idea of your current score level. When you take the test, time it to the specifications of the real exam so you'll be able to tell if you have any issues with time management. Keep in mind that on the test, you only have an hour to answer 60 multiple-choice questions; this comes out to a minute per question. To be on the safe side, though, try to get your time down to around 45 seconds per question. The only way to get used to this pace is to take practice tests under realistic conditions. While there are no official practice tests available, we've collected some of the best unofficial ones in our guide. As you take the practice test, circle or make note of any questions for which you feel anything less than totally confident in your answer. Even if you end up getting these questions right, you should reexamine the content later in your review to increase your comfort level with the material. When you're done, score your test so you can see where you fall in the AP range. You can use this online calculator for a decent score estimation based on how many raw points you earned. Then, set a goal for improvement, and decide how many hours you'll need to put into your prep. If you have a couple of months, you should be able to put in 20+ hours of study time. This will be an appropriate amount of studying if you're hoping to improve by more than one AP point. If you only need to improve by one AP point or are just looking to raise your score within the same range, you might be able to wait until the month before the test to start the rest of the process. In total, you shouldn't need to study for more than 10-20 hours. Step 2: Go Through Your Mistakes If you decide to begin the rest of this process now, go through your mistakes on the Human Geography practice test and categorize them. This is how you'll decide which content and skill areas to focus on in your review. There's no point in studying concepts and terms you've already mastered. If you want to see real improvements, this is the most important stage of the study process. You can't fix your mistakes unless you know what they are first! Step 3: Study Appropriate Content After you finish analyzing your mistakes, start looking at notes that correspond to the areas where you had the most trouble on the test. Make sure you're fully absorbing the information as you read. In this case, flashcards might be useful because there are so many terms to remember for AP Human Geography. If you found the free-response questions especially challenging, practice a few more of those before you move on to the next step. You can also use some of the sites I'll link to later in this article to review specific topics with short multiple-choice quizzes. Step 4: Take a Second Full Practice Test When you feel that you've fully addressed all your mistakes on the first practice test, you can take a second test to see whether your scores have improved. Compare your new score to the goal you set in the first step, and decide whether you want to go through the study process again or are happy with your current score. If you're satisfied, you can take a break and just do a bit of light review up until the test. If you haven't improved, reevaluate how you conducted this process and make some changes to your strategy in the next round. Were you in an environment that was too distracting? Did you skim over your notes without really absorbing them? Are you just generally a bit rusty? These are the kinds of things that can cause your progress to stall. Clean off that rust with an acidic solution of facts. AP Human Geography: 3 Essential Study Tips Below are a few of the most valuable strategies to keep in mind as you go through your study plan to prepare for the AP Human Geography exam. These tips should also be helpful for your prep for smaller assessments throughout the school year in your AP class. #1: Know Your Regions To get full credit for most free-response questions, you'll have to provide specific examples to support your answers. This means being able to identify the characteristics of world regions in terms of their various cultures, demographics, and physical environments. You'll see a map of the major regions covered by AP Human Geography in the content section of this guide along with a list of seven units. You should be able to locate each region and identify the relationship it has with each of the seven topic areas. #2: Memorize Terminology While knowing your way around a map is important, much of AP Human Geography is about your knowledge of terminology. I highly recommend making flashcards or using online flashcards in your prep (I'll put a link to some of these in the upcoming content section!). Many multiple-choice questions are essentially just asking for definitions, and some free-response questions begin by asking you to define a term that the rest of the question addresses in more depth. Even if it's not this direct, knowing your way around the language of the field of human geography will make it far easier for you to understand questions without relying on shaky assumptions or inferences. #3: Pay Attention to Important Models and Theories Human Geography is mostly considered a humanities subject, but there are some scientific elements to it. These show up in the form of demographic models that are introduced throughout the course. It's important to know how to read models and understand what they represent. You should also know how they connect to major theories in human geography and what those theories say about the development of society. I'll give you a link to a comprehensive list of models and theories at the end of the next section. Skylar, how many times do I have to explain homophones to you? YOU'RE. NOT. HELPING. AP Human Geography Topics and Notes AP Human Geography covers seven major topic areas, or units. In this section, I'll list each of them followed by notes that cover relevant subtopics. You can use these notes in the content review stage of your final study process and throughout the year as you review for in-class tests. You might find these notes (from CourseNotes) difficult to get through because they're written in such a way that it's hard to pick out key concepts. There are a lot of long paragraphs with no bolding of important terms. If you find these notes borderline incomprehensible, you should try getting a review book that puts all the content in clearer terms. I think Cracking the AP Human Geography Exam is a good starting point. As a precursor to the notes, here's a map of all the world regions that are discussed throughout the course. You'll need to consider how these topics apply differently to varying locations around the globe: Unit 1: Thinking Geographically Geography and Human Geography Unit 2: Population and Migration Patterns and Processes Unit 3: Cultural Patterns and Processes Unit 4: Political Patterns and Processes Unit 5: Agriculture and Rural Land-Use Patterns and Processes Unit 6: Cities and Urban Land-Use Patterns and Processes Unit 7: Industrial and Economic Development Patterns and Processes Because terms are so important on this exam, I also recommend checking out this full list of all vocab covered by the course (provided by Quizlet) so you can review all the vocab you'll need to know in one place. In addition, take a look at this overview of the different human geography theories and models. When lots of humans get together to form an urban community, they can't help but color on everything. What an adorable species. Top Resources for Your AP Human Geography Review Below are some resources you can use to test your knowledge of AP Human Geography content and take practice tests and quizzes. Official Course and Exam Descriptions Although there are no official AP Human Geography practice tests available, the College Board has released plenty of sample practice questions you can use in your prep through its free Course and Exam Description (CED) PDFs. The current CED for 2020, which has been fully updated for the new test format, contains 15 multiple-choice questions and two free-response questions, as well as a scoring guide. There's also the 2015 Human Geography CED, which has 23 multiple-choice questions and six free-response questions you can practice with. Just be aware that this guide is not aligned with the new format of the AP exam. Official Free-Response Questions and Scoring Guides In addition to Course and Exam Descriptions, the College Board maintains a huge archive of free-response questions that have been asked on the AP Human Geography exam since 2001. We recommend using these after you've practiced with the sample FRQs in the 2020 Course and Exam Description (see above resource). Most of these FRQs also come with scoring guidelines and sample student responses so you can get a better sense of how to earn full points on them. AP Classroom AP Classroom is a creation by the College Board that allows AP teachers to keep track of their students' progress through a virtual classroom. Here, teachers can test students' skills by sending them AP Human Geography practice questions on a regular basis. Highly Rated Review Books AP Human Geography review books are useful resources that provide access to additional practice questions and tests. They often include diagnostic tests that will help you determine your weak areas accurately and with less legwork on your part. Especially in a subject like Human Geography that can be a little elusive, books will help you figure out exactly what you need to study and how you should study it. Some solid review books for this exam include the following: Sporcle Geography Quizzes As I mentioned in the tips section, it's important to know your world regions for AP Human Geography so you can back up your answers with specific examples. You don't need to be a complete expert on where every country is located, but these quizzes are both fun and educational, so I recommend checking them out (warning: super addictive!). Varsity Tutors Diagnostic Tests Famed test-prep company Varsity Tutors offers four diagnostic tests for AP Human Geography, each with 75 multiple-choice questions. (Be aware that the current test format only consists of 60 multiple-choice questions, so you can skip 15 of these in your practice.) The tests have automatic scoring, and each is given a preliminary difficulty level rating. There are also tons of mini-quizzes listed by concept if you want to practice topic-specific questions, as well as flashcards that will help you learn all the course terminology. Albert Practice Questions Albert offers quizzes on every AP Human Geography topic, with questions categorized by topic and unit. Quizzes here range in length from just three to as many as 62 questions, and the website keeps a running tally of how many questions you've answered correctly. You'll need to pay for an account to access most of the materials, however. Chapter Quizzes for Human Geography: Landscapes of Human Activities If you select a chapter of this book on the left-hand navigation bar, you can scroll down and click on a link for a multiple-choice quiz. These quizzes are helpful review materials, even if your class isn't using this particular textbook. Now, sit back and enjoy the fruits of your labor in the form of an A and/or 5. Recap: Using This AP Human Geography Study Guide This AP Human Geography study guide has covered a review plan for the AP test, tips for success in studying throughout the year, and a list of all the topics covered in the AP Human Geography curriculum and on the exam. The steps in a successful AP Human Geography study plan should look something like this: Step 1: Take and score a practice test Step 2: Go through your mistakes Step 3: Study appropriate content Step 4: Take a second practice test Again, you can go through this process multiple times if you don't get the results you want in the first round. Just pay close attention to whether or not you're improving. If not, make changes to amp up the effectiveness of your content review. Some study tips to keep in mind as you study for the AP Human Geography test and any in-class assessments include the following: Know your world regions Memorize terminology Pay attention to major geographic models and theories After you're clear on the fundamentals of how to study, you can use the notes and prep resources in the second half of this article to prepare for unit quizzes, midterms, and the final AP exam. What's Next? Thinking about self-studying for this AP course—or other AP courses? Find out more about whether AP self-study is right for you and which AP classes are the most manageable options. If you're still planning out your schedule for the future, check out our guide on which other history classes you should take after AP Human Geography. You might also be interested in these articles that discuss AP credit policies at colleges and which classes you should take in high school based on your college goals. These recommendations are based solely on our knowledge and experience. If you purchase an item through one of our links, PrepScholar may receive a commission. The AP® Human Geography exam is undeniably one of the most challenging AP® tests offered. Its volume of information alone could make for a difficult test, but all of this material coupled with the notoriously difficult AP® Human Geography FRQ questions must account for why only 10.8% of students scored a 5 and only 18.2% scored a 4 on the 2019 exam. However, despite the difficulty surrounding the AP® Human Geography exam, you can score a 5 with the right amount of hard work, preparation, study routines, and AP® Human Geography tips. Formulating a good study routine consisting of AP® Human Geography practice tests and AP® Human Geography study guides is the best way to solve the tough question of how to prepare for the exam. Below, we've compiled the ultimate list of AP® Human Geography tips, prep, and notes which will help you score a 5 on the exam and point you in the right direction to developing a solid study routine! Before you even start studying for the AP® Human Geography exam, it's helpful to know how the exam is structured so you can prepare a study routine around its organization. There are two sections on the exam, each counting for half of your score. Here is a table outlining the structure of the AP® HUG exam: Section Time # of QuestionsSection I (Multiple-Choice)60 minutes60Section II (Free-Response)75 minutes3 Knowing the structure of the exam will help focus your studying and noting the time limits you have on each section will help you know what to expect. For example, since you must answer 60 MCQs in 60 minutes, you have, on average, one minute per question. Since you have 75 minutes for 3 FRQ's, you have, on average, 25 minutes per essay. Use these numbers to time yourself during practice exams and FRQ practice. SectionTimeAverage Time Per QuestionSection I (Multiple-Choice)60 minutes1 minuteSection II (Free-Response)75 minutes25 minutes Taking comprehensive notes in class and reading your class's assigned textbook is helpful, but an outside review book like Barron's can give you a more holistic look at what the AP® Human Geography exam covers. These books, unlike, say, your class, will give you further insight into the exam by providing multiple-choice questions, strategic breakdowns, and FRQ samples. Use these AP® Human Geography review books as a way to boost the knowledge you receive in class, and work them into your daily study routine. For instance, when you're reviewing coursework from class, carve out at least 30 minutes to take 15-20 multiple choice questions from Barron's or to work out a practice essay. This will develop your test-taking skills and allow you to see how the AP® Human Geography exam works. First and foremost, don't go out and buy pre-written flashcards. The act of writing them out yourself actually helps you to retain the information you'll need to ace the exam. While you can write out physical flashcards, we recommend using online cards through Quizlet. The site not only allows you to make your own flashcards, but also offers different interfaces and study methods like true and false, multiple-choice, and more. Carve out at least 15-30 minutes per day to work through flashcards on a certain unit or vocabulary bank. Quizlet also allows you to star or highlight terms you struggle with so use that feature to organize words you need help with. Here's a great list of APHG vocabulary terms you should know. Aim to make flashcards on all of these words. Since the AP® Human Geography exam tests, well, your understanding of geography, you will need to have developed a strong understanding of the many geographical features and regions populating the course. When your class covers a new type of region like a formal, functional, or perceptual region, mark it and define it in a separate journal. Use this journal throughout the year to review and study because knowing the basic types of geographical regions is key to scoring high on the exam, and particularly, scoring high on the FRQ section. You should be able to locate and identify each region and then be able to expand on its relationship with other concepts. Check out our crash course on Types of Geographical Regions to get started! Sometimes studying alone can become tedious. You can start to lose focus, get distracted, and just can sometimes have a hard time motivating yourself to even start studying. That's why study groups are beneficial. Ask some of your AP® Human Geography classmates if they want to meet once or twice a week to go over the materials. If you'd prefer to meet virtually you can use Zoom or Google Hangouts, too. Conqr is an online platform specifically designed for group study, so it is also a good resource. Once you have found a group, create a weekly or bi-weekly schedule. Select a location to meet, and stick to the schedule. Prior to meeting, create a checklist of terms, concepts, regions, etc. to cover or use Conqr to do so. Be sure you stick to the list. Deviating from it can lead to unproductive study sessions and time-wasting. Whether you use Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest, Instagram, or all four, there are teachers and students who run social media accounts dedicated to AP® Human Geography. By following or liking these accounts, you will be incorporating APHG facts, study resources, videos, and graphics into your everyday life. So get out there and start following some accounts! Try following @APHumanGeog on Twitter, this AP® Human Geography board on Pinterest, and Thornton Academy's AP® Human Geography Facebook page. After you follow these accounts, create a page on your notes app of certain terms, phrases, ideas, or regions discussed by these pages that you think will benefit your learning. Maintaining this study routine will help build your AP® Human Geography foundation. If you're a visual learner, sometimes it can be hard to focus or understand concepts when you're reading a textbook. It can be nice to change up your study technique and get your nose out from behind your review books. Look up YouTube videos about certain topics in Human Geography. Use keywords like "crash course" or "review" when searching for videos. Mr. Sinn offers a handful of good review videos, and so does Advanced Placement itself. When watching, keep a set of notes out, and jot down certain explanations or topics that stick out to you. You could even keep a Google Doc running on one side of the screen and the video playing on the other. Additionally, we recommend that you read or watch the news on a regular basis. Since global politics is such an important part of AP® Human Geography, watching the news or reading the newspaper regularly is a habit you should form in the buildup to the exam. It's important to get your news from several different sources, so watch channels such as CNN, PBS, FOX news, MSNBC, read online publications such as the New York Times, and listen to NPR's "The World" regularly. Keep a journal of current events that strike a chord with you. Moreover, you could also listen to AP® Human Geography podcasts and keep a daily journal of what you hear. A quick Google search comes up with a wide variety of free AP® Human Geography podcasts, which cover certain topics. Listen to them while you're at the gym, before bed, on your bus ride to school, or whenever you have extra time. These may be a nice way to keep AP® Human Geography always on your mind. Many past FRQs and multiple-choice questions have been about specific geographic models and theories. You will not only need to know the definitions of these but also how they interact, apply to real-life situations, and their overall significance. Some basic models you'll need to know include the demographic transition model, the gravity model, Rostow's Stages of Growth, Concentric Circles, and the Hoyt Sector Model. When you come across terms like this, create a separate journal detailing them, or plug them into a separate set of Quizlet flashcards and study them individually because they are essentially the backbone of AP® Human Geography. It can be very easy to become stressed out when preparing for the exam, which is why positive affirmations, confidence, and trusting in your abilities are important when studying. The best way to achieve a positive mentality in the thick of AP® Human Geography is to clear your head using meditation apps like Headspace or Calm. After studying give yourself 15-30 minutes to detox and meditate. It will clear your head, and take away the stress that blocks you from memorizing or understanding concepts clearly. Overall, it will benefit your academic progress greatly. Return to the Table of Contents It's helpful to know that the multiple-choice questions on the AP® Human Geography exam follow a pattern and are not just randomly selected. Based on previous exam, the breakdown goes like this: Thinking Geographically, 8-10%Population and Migration Patterns and Processes, 12-17%Cultural Patterns and Processes, 12-17%Political Patterns and Processes, 12-17%Agriculture and Rural Land-Use Patterns and Processes, 12-17%Cities and Urban Land-Use Patterns and Processes, 12-17%Industrial and Economic Development Patterns and Processes, 12- 17% Notice how much of the exam content is distributed fairly evenly across the board. Therefore, it is imperative that you develop a strong understanding of the course as a whole. When you study, pay certain attention to units that trouble you most and study those harder. But the exam is pretty equal in terms of which units it tests you over, so it is best you have a solid understanding of the course at large. When you first look at a multiple-choice question, circle the commands (EXCEPT, NOT, ALL, BEST, etc.). Sometimes, questions can trip you up if you don't read them correctly. By circling the commands, you're making sure you don't misinterpret the question or confuse yourself. Similarly, underline keywords in the questions, such as words that relate to places, people, vocabulary words, etc. This will help keep you focused and maybe even help jog your memory. By picking apart the questions, you can get a better understanding of it and pin down exactly what it is asking. On the APHG exam, there is no guess-penalty. This means that you don't get docked for answering a question incorrectly. It goes without saying that even if you have no idea what the answer to a question is, just make an educated guess! The key here is an educated guess, which will give you a better chance of getting the correct answer than if you just circled an answer willy-nilly. One way to perfect you educated guessing skills is to use the process of elimination when working through the questions. If you come upon one or two that are clearly incorrect, draw a line or X through them. Then, with some of the obviously-incorrect answers out of the way, you can make a better guess. Taking practice exams is an extremely beneficial way to determine your strengths and weaknesses in the AP® Human Geography exam. You could go about this a few ways. One, you could try and carve out at least one day per month to give yourself time to take a practice exam. Set a reminder on your phone calendar equipped with an alert to remind you too. One test per month will help establish a solid test-taking foundation and adequately prepare you for the big one. Or, you could take only certain components of the exam either weekly or bi-weekly. On, say, Sunday you could take the multiple-choice component and then record and evaluate your results. On the following Sunday you could take the FRQ section of the exam, evaluate your writing, and continue alternating between MCQ and FRQ every week or every other week. Taking AP® Human Geography tests is an effective way to build a foundation in the course. Think about it this way: if you manage to answer all 75 multiple-choice questions, within the time-limit, and get most of them right, you can end up with the same score as if you answered only 60 questions and got all of them right. Using this logic, make sure you're not spending too long on any one question. Your goal is to answer every single question, which can be difficult in the 60-minute time limit. Don't get stuck choosing between two options. Rule out answers, look at your remaining options, and take an educated guess. The goal here is to be efficient, without sacrificing accuracy. To hone this strategy, keep a timer near you when taking a practice test and set it for one minute per question. After each minute beeps, move on to the next question. This will train you to start approaching the exam with pacing in mind. It's important that you familiarize yourself with the types of questions on the AP® Human Geography exam. There are several types of multiple-choice questions you will encounter, which are detailed in the following table: Understanding the different types of questions will help you approach the test with a more critical eye, and it will make the multiple-choice section much more manageable. The more you break up and categorize the AP® World Geography multiple-choice questions, the easier the exam will be. More than likely, there will be at least one multiple-choice question on the APHG exam that deals with a graphic of some sort. Questions with graphics can sometimes seem overwhelming since you have to look at both the visual element and the question and relate them. As long as you practice answering these types of questions, know how to interpret graphs and maps, and have a good understanding of the concept in question, you should do well on these types of questions. Take a look at our example: Based on the map above, which of the following statements is not accurate? There are higher percentages by country of Native Americans in the West than in the Midwest.There are more Indian reservations in the West than in the Mid-Atlantic. Native Americans are present in each of the 50 states. The lowest percentages of Native Americans by country are found in the Southwest. Alaska has the higher percentages of Native Americans by country than the Northeast. Reading textbooks and review books is not enough to actually learn the material. On the multiple-choice section, you absolutely have to know your stuff. Because of this, you need to actively, not passively, learn the material. As you're reading your text or review book, take meaningful notes. Try using a tried and true note-taking method like Cornell notes. See an example of these below. By using this system, you can develop a clear organizational method which will then allow you to take the best notes you possibly can. When taking notes, think about the overall significance of the piece of information you're recording. Think about the context, action, purpose, and effect behind the information in the note. Avoid simply scribbling down information for the sake of doing so. Keep your notes in a large binder, sorted by theme. You'll be thankful you did it when it comes time to review in the weeks before the exam. When you come across a particularly tough concept while learning the material, jot the theme/concept/vocab word down. Find a way to dumb it down so that a friend (who is not taking the course), or a family member, can understand it. By doing this, you can pinpoint which parts of the concept you're not understanding and find ways to explain them. You could even make a Jeopardy game of the terms and teach your friends and family members material through Jeopardy. By teaching others, you're making the information stick and learning a lot about your strengths and weaknesses. This can be a helpful trick to give you a better understanding of certain key terms and concepts. Pick an area that you're struggling with, or need to know more about, and create questions based on vocabulary words within that area. Have your friends or classmates write questions, too, so that you can take each other's tests. The act of writing out questions helps the information stick and the more practice tests you take (even if they're written by a classmate!) can only help. By reversing the roles of student and test-maker, you can put yourself in the shoes of those who build the tests and begin to think like them. However, don't write wishy-washy or too simple of questions. Avoid questions that merely gloss over topics and key phrases, and don't write questions that are too wordy, too complicated, or unanswerable. We recommend that you mimic the AP® Human Geography questions that you see on practice tests. Sometimes the AP® Human Geography multiple-choice questions can actually sort of answer themselves. By this we mean that some questions can actually be used to answer others. Say MCQ #20 asks a question which describes the nature of relocation diffusion, and then MCQ #42 asks you to define relocation diffusion. Use the information in #20 to your advantage when answering #43. These moments of overlap do occur on the exam, and they should be taken advantage of. Read the questions with a critical eye and remember when they give free information. Return to the Table of Contents Practice makes perfect. The single most important FRQ tip for the AP® Human Geography exam is to practice, practice, practice. The College Board website has valuable resources to help you do just that. There, you will find past free-response essay questions, scoring guidelines, and sample responses. Then, start practicing. Set a timer to 25 minutes per FRQ and begin practicing. After you finish, go back and reread your writing. Take note of your strengths and your weaknesses. Then, compare your essay to the sample responses and look through the scoring guidelines. Measure your essay against the rubric. Have your teacher or classmate objectively grade your practice essays for you. It's okay to start practicing without a time limit at first, but make sure you're writing essays under time limits, too. One of the biggest mistakes students made on the 2019 exam involved misreading the question and, therefore, providing incorrect or wishy-washy answers that ultimately missed the mark. For example, on a question involving urbanization and pollution, many student responses discussed the link between increased urbanization and increased pollution in too general of terms, and without referring to edge cities. Better responses noted how edge cities lead to more sprawling, less compact urban areas where there once was farmland or wilderness. These errors of generalization can be avoided by spending more time with the prompt! So, do not start writing immediately! Too often, students jump right into writing, without really understanding what the prompt is asking you. You need to carefully read and reread the question to make sure you know what's being asked. Spend a good 5 minutes planning out each essay, always referring back to the question to make sure you're staying on topic. Additionally, while reading the prompt, mark it up with your pen. Underline, circle, or highlight key verbs like "analyze," "explain," "demonstrate," and so on. This will help you break the prompt down into something much more manageable, and it will let you tackle the essay with more clarity. The first step to acing the FRQ is firmly understanding the prompt. To piggyback off of the previous tip: locating the verbs in FRQ questions can really help you understand which action you should take when forming your response. The following verbs and their explanations are common on AP® Human Geography FRQs Analyze: Using at least 2 sentences, find the relationship between two events or concepts. Explain this relationship and come to a conclusion using solid evidence, details, and specifics.Assess/Evaluate: Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of something using specific examples.Identify/Define: Using examples, craft a simple list (in narrative form) of factors or characteristics, or give well thought out definitions. Explain: Using specific details, discuss the logical connections or cause and effects of concepts, themes, or events.Discuss: Taking both points of view, debate about something using details. Use at least 3 sentences in your response. As you can see, no matter what the question asks you to do, always use specific details and supporting evidence. Before even taking the AP® Human Geography exam, you should have a solid understanding of at least the five basic themes of human geography: location, place, human-environment interaction, movement, and region. You should be able to use these themes as starting points to make complex, multi-faceted arguments, so we recommend you keep a list of them in a journal or review book as you take the course. Now, back to exam day: once you've read and reread the question and have a full understanding of the prompt, start to consider what geographic themes you can use in your response. You must remember that the exam is a Human Geography exam, which means you have to use geographic themes in your response, and they will make your essay much more academic, professional. We'll help you get started with the five basics: ThemeDefinitionLocationLocation can be absolute or relative. Absolute location provides a definite reference to locate a place. The reference can be latitude and longitude, a street address, or even the Township and Range system. Relative location describes a place with respect to its environment and its connection to other places. PlacePlace describes the human and physical characteristics of a location. Physical characteristics include a description such as the mountains, rivers, beaches, topography, and animal and plant life of a place. Human characteristics include the human-designed cultural features of a place, from land use and architecture to forms of livelihood and religion to food and folk ways to transportation and communication networks.Human-Environment InteractionThis theme considers how humans adapt to and modify the environment. Humans shape the landscape through their interaction with the land; this has both positive and negative effects on the environment.MovementHumans move, a lot! In addition, ideas, fads, goods, resources, and communication all travel distances. This theme studies movement and migration across the planet.RegionRegion divides the world into manageable units for geographic study. Regions have some sort of characteristic that unifies the area. Regions can be formal, functional, or vernacular. Formal regions are those that are designated by official boundaries, such as cities, states, counties, and countries. For the most part, they are clearly indicated and publicly known. Functional regions are defined by their connections. For example, the circulation area for a major city area is the functional region of that paper. Vernacular regions are perceived regions, such as "The South," "The Midwest," or the "Middle East;" they have no formal boundaries but are understood in our mental maps of the world. As tempting as it is to write everything you know about a given topic, this can hurt more than help. For the 2019 exam, students made the mistake of writing responses that referenced generic arguments and examples. One way to only answer the question and nothing more. If a question asks for two examples, do not give three in your response. The AP® Human Geography FRQ is not about adding flowery language and opinions (do not include "I think" or "in my opinion" in your response). You need to be succinct, while still making sure you're answering the question fully. Do not merely dump all the information you know out onto the page; strategically organize your thoughts into a cohesive argument. It can be sort of confusing to refer to FRQs as essays. In reality, AP® Human Geography FRQs are more like short-responses—sort of. While you don't need to write a huge, AP® English-type essay with a thesis, body, and conclusion, you still must offer a solid, thick response of at least 3-4 paragraphs. This also does not mean that you don't have to be analytical. Quite the opposite, really. With less room for discussion, you must make all of your points as detailed, specific, and effective as possible. One way to achieve this is by using specific, concrete examples and evidence in your argument to support your point. Avoid generalizations. AP-AP® is an acronym which can be used as a guiding principle to unpack the FRQ. It stands for this: A – Analyze the prompt P – Plan your essayA – Attack the essayP – Proofread First, analyze the prompt by marking it up, underlining key phrases, words, and action verbs. Then plan out your essay using an outline, brainstorming web, or essay map. After you plan, attack the essay—write it out. Then, finally, when you've finished your draft, read through it again and proofread. This step-by-step method, AP-AP, is a tried and tested approach to the FRQ. In addition to taking practice tests, one way to develop your writing skills is to read other students' FRQ essays. College Board offers a collection of samples from previous years that prove super useful to review. They're organized by strong scores, average scores, and low scores, so you will be able to see writing from all different levels. This will show you clear examples of what to do and what not to do. Additionally, College Board offers commentary from the readers which details strengths, weaknesses, possible improvements, and more. Reading others' responses is a great way to develop your own writing skills. Remember that AP® readers have to go through large volumes of FRQ responses. Make it easy for them to follow your answer by following a logical sequencing method. After you write your topic sentence, stop, and reread. Then, ask yourself what comes next? If your topic sentence makes an assertion about how rapid industrialization in New England has led to a crisis in maintaining public infrastructures, then follow your claim with the logical next step. This would likely be an elaboration of your claim, some evidence to back it up, or further clarification of your argument. Whatever it is, follow your topic sentence with a logical next-step. Moreover, be sure to label and number each part of your response in the margins of your answer booklet. Underline key terms and words you are defining. When using maps or charts in your response, use corresponding labels in your answer. Keep things organized. It's also extremely important to keep your handwriting neat and legible. If the AP® reader cannot read your response, you won't get the points, regardless of whether or not your answer is correct. If you really want, you can skip lines when writing your FRQ to break things up and keep you sequenced. This gives you space if you need to go back and add additional information. Since you're given a large block of 75 minutes to complete 3 essays, it is imperative that you manage your time effectively. When you work through sample FRQ's set a timer while you write. We recommend that you give yourself 5 minutes to prewrite and 20 minutes to write each essay. This model of time will squarely fit within the 75 minute time limit, and practicing within these constraints will adequately prepare you for the exam. On test day, make sure you bring a watch to monitor your time. Do not be tempted to spend more time on any one exam. It may be helpful to write the essays you're most comfortable with first because you might be able to write those faster, leaving more time for essays that are more difficult. Whatever you do, don't get caught up on one specific essay, squander your time, and neglect one of the essays. That's a sure sign of a low score. SPEED is an acronym integral to AP® Human Geography that can be used to organize your thoughts, ideas, and arguments. Here it is spelled out; S – SocialP – Political E – Environmental E – Economy/Economical D – Development The various progresses and processes of human geography can be largely lumped into one of these main categories. Use SPEED to break up your reading, organize your arguments, and make AP® Human Geography more manageable. Return to the Table of Contents By speaking up during class discussions and listening to what your classmates and teacher have to say, you are opening yourself up to higher level thinking and can integrate yourself with the material on a richer and more meaningful level. AP® Human Geography offers all kinds of nice ways to speak up, share your opinion, hear what others have to say, and critically engage with big questions. Thanks to Mr. Z. at Windermere Preparatory School for the tip! Read and reread all of your reading assignments, using both your textbook and a review book. Additionally, develop a daily reading schedule of material from sophisticated publications like The New York Times, The Economist, The New Yorker, etc. A daily reading schedule will keep your sharp and help you hone your reading. Venture out into current books about culture, economics, and politics. Examples of interesting books to read during the APHG course are: Thanks to Ms. Whitney W. from Lafayette High School for the tip and reading list! Each week, find a current event news story that relates to human geography. In your journal, summarize the news story (who, what, when, where, why, how, etc.). Then, ask yourself, "How does this connect to Human Geography?" Try to explain this by using appropriate vocabulary words. Next, think about your opinion on the story. Try to make a personal connection to the story, beyond just "I liked it." Overall, media journals give you a better insight into what is going on in the world and can give you a wealth of examples to use in your APHG essay responses. Thanks to Mrs. M. from Kellam High School for the tip! If you miss questions on a test or quiz, grab a sheet of notebook paper and write out the questions, the correct answer, and why it's correct. It may seem like overkill but, really, developing this pattern will help fully engage with the mistakes you make, and, thus, lead to correct answers. Also, this can help you understand why you got the question wrong and make sure you don't get it wrong again. Thanks to Ms. W. from South Effingham High School for the tip! If you can't put something in your own words, you essentially don't know what it means. When you come across difficult words in your reading, try and define them in your own words before simply copying the definition down from the glossary. Glossaries are, of course, helpful but they give you definitions without context or examples. This is not helpful for learning or understanding the word. Instead, use the text to learn the meaning of vocabulary words. Thanks to Ms. Leslie G. at Vandergrift High School for the tip! 6. The main event, of course, is to know the vocab By this I don't mean just memorizing terms, but using and relating those terms to the world. For each chapter, keep a journal of vocabulary words, the bolded words, big concepts, etc. so when it comes time for you to take the exam, you'll have a solid foundation. Also, a less obvious tip would be to listen to NPR (Public Radio) in particular a show called "The World". And a show that I continue to watch and learn from is Fareed Zakaria GPS on CNN on Sunday's mornings. Thanks for the tip from

Pam H. 1. Focus on content in your FRQ responses AP® readers do not deduct points for spelling or grammar errors that do not detract from the meaning of the writing. Feel free to cross things out if necessary. The overall attractiveness of your essays is not as important as what you're saying. Focus on content, not proper grammar and spelling. Integrate appropriate geographic terms whenever possible! But also: don't blow off grammar or spelling or punctuation, of course! Just don't spend ten minutes wondering if you've put a comma in the correct spot. Thanks to Sara D. at Stillwater Junior High School for the tip! For the FRQ, make sure you are answering the question in the format that the prompt lays out for you. For example, if the question has three parts labeled A, B, and C, write your response in the same format. If the question asks you to analyze something, then analyze it. If it asks you to assess something, then assess it, so on and so forth. Carefully read the prompt and do what it asks! Thanks to Mr. Robert C. from Pearland High School for the tip! By doing this, you will ensure that you at least answer every part of the FRQ. For example: From the 2018 FRQ. A. Explain TWO ways that gentrification may positively impact neighborhoods. B. Explain TWO ways that gentrification may negatively impact neighborhoods. The outline should be a T chart with A on one side and B on the other. From the 2018 FRQ. Identify TWO specific means by which new expressions in popular culture are diffused globally. Students should also do a T chart with an example of expression on one side and a description of how it is diffused on the other. Lastly, from the 2018 exam. For each of the following THREE categories, describe ONE obstacle that may prevent women working in agriculture from achieving greater equality and empowerment. EconomicCultural Political For this, students should create a four squared ESPN (economic, social, political, environmental) chart and jot down some economic, social, and political consequences and pick one from each category so they don't overlap, therefore losing points for double-dipping. Thanks for the tip from Justin H. Since AP® Human Geography is so "human"-oriented, talking about the finer points of the DTM— population growth, distribution, diffusion—could help you achieve a higher score. Be sure to work analysis of these into your essay. Thanks for the tip from Jonathan S. from Somerset College Preparatory School. Are you a teacher? Do you have an awesome tip? Let us know! Return to the Table of Contents The AP® Human Geography exam is not a walk in the park. The test's abundance of AP® Human Geography regions, themes, concepts, and vocabulary words make for a grueling, difficult test-taking experience. There's a reason so few students score a 5. Try and approach your preparation for the AP® Human Geography exam in three ways: Develop a regular, scheduled study routine filled with a good review book, flashcards, study groups, and monthly or bi-weekly practice exams. The key to acing this text, and really any test, is preparation. Know the specific types of questions asked on the MCQ section, and refer to our table above which lists and defines these types during your preparation. The key to answering the AP® Human Geography MCQs is understanding the various types of questions you will encounter. Remember AP-AP® as a general rule of thumb in tackling the AP® Human Geography FRQ. This is a simple way to stay organized and focused on the FRQ. Keep this review close, and use it as a guiding principle. Also, check out our entire unit on AP® Human Geography where we offer practice on free response, critical reading, MCQs, and more! You've got this! AP Human Geography (APHUG) is usually one of the first AP classes that freshmen can take in high school. It can be extremely difficult to figure out without much experience in difficult classes but sets you up for great success in future AP classes. In this blog, We will be discussing brief unit aspects of the class, FRQ's, MCQ's, AP score breakdown, skills you'll learn, and tips.UnitsAs described by the College Board…Unit 1: Thinking GeographicallySome aspects include:Investigation of types of mapsRegion definition Collection and use of Data Spatial relationships and patterns Unit 2: Population and Migration Patterns and ProcessesSome aspects include:Society and environment affected by population densityMigration causes and effectsPopulation growth theoriesDecline of population theoriesUnit 3: Cultural Patterns and ProcessesSome aspects include: Cultural practices spreading across the globeReligion spread across the globeHistorical forces affecting cultureModern forces affecting culture Unit 4: Political Patterns and ProcessesSome aspects include: Descriptions of political entitiesPolitical boundaries establishing the modern worldBreaking of statesGovernment forms Unit 5: Agriculture and Rural Land-Use Patterns and ProcessesSome aspects include: The Green Revolution Agricultural originsEnvironmental and societal effects of farmingFarming practices differed in geographic regionsUnit 6: Cities and Urban LandSome aspects included:City and suburb growthInvolvement of globalization with citiesUrban designInfrastructure of cities Unit 7: Industrial and Economic Development Patterns and Processes Some aspects include: Global economy and tradeEconomic sectorsWomen and economic developmentThe industrial RevolutionFRQ'SFRQ's stand for Free Response Questions. On the AP Exam, there will be 7 parts to each question, with 3 questions in total. 21 parts. This may sound threatening and unrealistic but with practice, you will realize that it is completely doable. To preface, the point of an FRQ is to show that you can have the same thought process as a geographer.These parts to the question often require one, two, or three sentences each depending on the task verb. There are three different types of task verbs in AP Human Geography.You must restate the question and answer. If there is a stimulus attached to identify, make sure to reference it.You must utilize a definition and provide characteristics. Often has two to three sentences.Ex: In the image, it is evident…You must use CER. Claim, evidence, and reasoning. For reasoning, you use evidence.See the AP score breakdown below for details.MCQ'SMCQ's stand for multiple choice questions. The best method to getting as many multiple choice questions done in an accurate manner is only spending a maximum minute on a question. Some may be more difficult than others so you could also spend additional time on a question but be warned that it means less time for another question. See the AP score breakdown below for details.AP Score BreakdownSection 1: Multiple Choice60 questionsTime limit: 1 hour50% of score ->Multiple choice percentage of score:Unit 1: 8-10%Unit 2:12-17%Unit 3: 12-17%Unit 4: 12-17%Unit 5: 12-17%Unit 6: 12-17%Unit 7: 12-17%Section 2: Free response3 questionsTime limit: 1 hour and 15 minutes50% of scoreSkills you will learn As AP Human Geography is an introductory AP course, you can expect to learn a couple of distinct skills that will help you in future AP classes and even later in life no matter what your career is!Learning geographic scales within regionsMaps are commonly found throughout the course's content so you will be familiar with the skill of reading maps on many different levels. This includes from city state to global levels. Engaging with visual stimuli In AP Human, you will learn how to analyze charts, graphs, pictures, infographics, and other aspects. This includes stimuli from all units like seeing cultures in a picture and making distinctions between those cultures.You will likely practice timed trials for FRQ's and MCQ's that you'll have to do within strict time constraints on the test. You'll learn to watch the clock and get your work done as efficiently as possible in the limited amount of time. AP Human Tips This is the first AP class I took as a freshman. Here is what I would advise to an AP human kid!Even if you do not have vocabulary tests, vocab is extremely useful during the AP exam. Even if you don't understand the question, by just knowing one definition you can have a context clue and it will help you figure out an answer. Not all teachers provide the vocabulary but there are many sets on the quizlet for you to study periodically. This tip is specific to FRQ's. Designate 10 to 15 minutes to make a brief plan for all your Free response questions. This will help you outline your ideas and know what parts you can answer with one hundred percent confidence and get your ideas down on paper before you forget.Take advantage of review videos2 resources for review videos I recommend are the ones on the official College Board website and Mr. Sinn on youtube. Each has their advantages.The College Board videos are well structured and go over all concepts that you will likely learn in class. They are great to binge watch at the end of a unit before the unit test and even the AP exam. They have visual aspects tied in, definitions, and even practices that are similar to what you will see on the AP examMr. Sinn's videos on Youtube are extremely fast paced! If you prefer to get information at a faster pace, his videos would be for you. They are also structured well and he has review videos for cumulative unit tests and a very long video for the entire AP exam.Some people dropped this class in the first week, second, or even halfway through the course. Even though it's tempting as you will undoubtedly struggle, the end result is so very worth it. AP Human will push you past your beliefs and teach you so much that you can't get out of an honors or regular class. Try your best to persevere and good luck! :)PS: AP Human memes are hilarious. Definitely take a look at them sometime.Works Cited"AP Human Geography – AP Students | College Board." Apstudents.collegeboard.org, apstudents.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-human-geography. Accessed 17 Mar. 2023. The correct Answer is (C). Urbanization and access to education, especially for women, are strongly linked to lower fertility rates. As women gain more autonomy and economic opportunities, they tend to delay childbirth and have fewer children overall. In contrast, high TFR is often tied to rural or agricultural societies with lower female education rates. Free-Response Questions (FRQs) The FRQs make up 50% of your exam score. You'll answer 3 free-response questions in 1 hour and 15 minutes, and each one requires you to write complete responses, often with multiple parts. These questions ask you to explain geographic ideas and apply them to specific cases, models, or data. Question 1: No stimulus Here's a real question from the 2024 AP Human Geography Free-Response Questions, Set 1, which focused on food availability, agricultural practices, and global trade: The availability of food in the context of a growing world population is influenced by many social, environmental, and economic factors. A. Define the concept of carrying capacity. B. Describe ONE way that humans have altered the environmental sustainability of agricultural lands. C. Explain how transportation technology has increased economies of scale in the agricultural sector of less developed countries. D. Explain a likely negative economic outcome of Green Revolution agricultural practices on rural communities. E. Explain ONE weakness of Malthusian theory in predicting the relationship between food production and population growth in contemporary society. F. Explain how surplus food production has changed the global market for local agricultural products. G. Explain the degree to which Green Revolution agricultural practices were effective in reducing hunger in less developed countries. (Response must indicate the degree [low, moderate, high] and provide an explanation.) Here's how to approach the question: Part A should define carrying capacity as the maximum number of people an area can support without harming the environment. Part B might describe how deforestation, overgrazing, or excessive fertilizer use can reduce long-term soil quality. In part C, strong answers will explain how better transportation systems allow goods to move faster and farther, making it cheaper to produce and distribute food on a large scale. For part D, a good explanation is that small farmers may be pushed out of business because they cannot afford expensive Green Revolution tools or chemicals. In part E, the weakness of Malthusian theory is that it didn't anticipate how new technology would boost food production. For part F, a strong answer would explain how countries with food surpluses can dominate global markets and undercut local producers elsewhere. Finally, part G should state that the Green Revolution had a moderate effect, helping reduce hunger in many places but not reaching every region due to limited infrastructure or investment. Question 2: One stimulus Another question from the 2024 FRQ Set 1 involved a map showing ethnic neighborhoods across Los Angeles County, California. The map displayed high- and medium-density clusters of Asian ethnic groups. Filipinos appeared in Carson, Cerritos, and Walnut. Korean populations were shown in Koreatown, Gardena, and Buena Park. Chinese communities appeared in Monterey Park, Alhambra, and Chinatown. The map used dark gray to show high density and light gray to show medium density. County boundaries were marked, and neighborhood names were clearly labeled. The map shows predominantly Asian ethnic neighborhoods in Los Angeles County, California. The names of the neighborhoods and the densities of the ethnic groups are identified on the map. A. Identify ONE neighborhood labeled on the map where two or more Asian ethnic groups reside. B. Describe the spatial pattern of Chinese ethnic neighborhoods labeled on the map. C. Explain ONE way immigrants may choose to assimilate into their new place of residence. D. Explain ONE way immigrants may preserve their ethnic traditions in their new place of residence. E. Describe ONE way that ethnic neighborhoods may contribute to a sense of place in large metropolitan areas such as Los Angeles. F. Explain how the process of redistricting may be used to decrease an ethnic community's political power. G. Explain how the process of redistricting may be used to increase an ethnic community's political power. Let's break down the question: For part A, Carson is a good example because it shows both Filipino and Korean communities. In part B, Chinese neighborhoods are clustered in the northeastern areas like Alhambra and Monterey Park. Part C should explain that assimilation might involve learning English, joining local organizations, or adapting to local customs. For part D, preserving traditions could mean speaking native languages, celebrating cultural holidays, or running ethnic businesses. In part E, a strong response would say that ethnic neighborhoods help immigrants feel more at home and create cultural landmarks within a larger city. Part F should explain that splitting a community between districts can reduce their voting strength. Part G should say that keeping the community in one district can increase their political representation. Question 3: Two stimuli This final question came from the 2024 AP Human Geography FRQ Set 2. The question included a diagram of the Demographic Transition Model showing five stages of population change. Alongside the diagram was a table with demographic data from 2019 for four countries: Japan, Germany, Portugal, and Croatia. The table included three variables for each country—birth rate per 1,000 people, death rate per 1,000 people, and the percent of the population over the age of 65. For example, Japan had a birth rate of 7.0, a death rate of 10.7, and 28% of its population over 65. Germany's numbers were 9.4, 11.3, and 22%, respectively. The demographic transition model can be used to theorize the changes in a country's total population over time. A. Select ONE country listed in the table and identify its stage in the demographic transition model. B. Define the concept of a pronatalist policy. C. Explain ONE factor that affects birth rates as countries move from stage 3 to stage 4 in the demographic transition model. D. Describe ONE likely economic effect when countries have negative population growth. E. Based on the data shown in the table, describe a policy that a government might develop in response to demographic change. F. Explain ONE reason why the life expectancy in urban areas may be higher than the life expectancy in the entire country. G. Using the data in the table, explain how, over time, low birth rates may impact the country's percent of population over age 65. Let's analyze this question step by step: For part A, Japan fits Stage 5 of the model. It has a very low birth rate, a slightly higher death rate, and a large elderly population. Part B should define a pronatalist policy as one that encourages people to have more children, often through financial or social incentives. In part C, birth rates fall because more women pursue education and careers, often delaying marriage and children. Part D should explain that negative population growth can lead to labor shortages and strain on pension systems. Part E might suggest tax breaks for families or programs to support working parents. For part F, a good answer would note that urban residents often live longer because they have better access to hospitals, clean water, and public services. Finally, part G should explain that low birth rates cause the population to age over time, leading to fewer workers and more retirees who rely on social support systems. More than just naming terms, the best responses explain how those concepts apply to real-world scenarios and answer every part of the prompt clearly. If you want to improve, review sample student responses from the College Board. Looking at how answers are scored can help you sharpen your explanations and make sure you're addressing all the key ideas. How to Study for the AP Human Geography Exam The AP Human Geography Exam is all about patterns, processes, and how humans interact with the world. To do well, you need to understand concepts like migration, urbanization, and land use, and then apply them to real-world scenarios. You'll need to actually understand what's going on and why it matters. Here's how to study smart: 1. Study the AP Human Geography Course and Exam Description (CED). The College Board's official AP Human Geography Course and Exam Description lays out everything you need to know. It breaks the course into seven major units like Population and Migration, Agriculture, and Cities and Urban Land Use. Each unit includes key concepts and sample learning objectives. Let's say you're reviewing Unit 3 on Cultural Patterns and Processes. You'll want to focus on topics like language diffusion, religious conflicts, and the difference between folk and pop culture. The CED also includes sample questions and identifies which skills (like spatial thinking or data analysis) are tested most. Use this as your main study roadmap. Match your review sessions to the concepts and skills listed in the CED, and you'll be targeting exactly what the exam covers. 2. Use AP Human Geography practice exams. Practice tests are your best friend. They show you how the College Board phrases questions and what kind of thinking you'll be asked to do. The more you practice, the more confident and familiar you'll be with the test style. After each one, take the time to: Spot your weak areas. If you struggled with political boundaries or urban models, go back and review those topics. Review your mistakes. Did you misunderstand a question about centripetal forces? Did you confuse site and situation? Figure out what went wrong. Get your pacing right. You'll have about a minute per multiple-choice question. For the free-response section, aim to write clear and complete responses in about 25 minutes each. Use past exams or high-quality third-party practice materials. Just make sure they reflect the current format and content. 3. Know your vocabulary (and how to apply it). Human Geo is vocab-heavy. You need to know terms like "relocation diffusion," "gentrification," "demographic transition," and "ecumene." But it's not enough to define them—you have to apply them. To practice: Make flashcards. Use physical cards or apps like Quizlet. Practice writing your own examples. For example, don't just memorize "agglomeration." Write a sentence about how tech companies cluster in Silicon Valley. Group similar terms. Group terms by theme, like "types of diffusion" or "development indicators." This helps you remember how they're connected. 4. Study maps, models, and spatial data. The AP Human Geography Exam will expect you to interpret maps, charts, and models like the Von Thünen Model or the Demographic Transition Model. These visuals are not just there to illustrate ideas. They are essential content you need to understand and apply. To improve: Practice with real maps. Use satellite images, population maps, and zoning maps. Try identifying patterns. Learn the classic models. Know what they show, when they apply, and their limitations. Can you sketch the Bid-Rent Curve from memory? What about Christaller's Central Place Theory? Use map-based questions. Practice interpreting choropleth maps or analyzing density patterns based on different data visualizations. 5. Write free-response answers often. FRQs make up half your score. The questions are straightforward, but they ask a lot. You'll need to define, explain, and compare. You have to hit every part of the prompt, and there's no fluff allowed. Here's how to prep: Write full answers under timed conditions. Don't just outline. Actually write the full response, especially for multi-part questions. Label your responses. Use (a), (b), (c), etc. so it's clear you're answering every part. Be direct. No need for fancy transitions. Go straight to your point and use specific examples. Use geographic terms correctly. You'll get points for accuracy, not for generalizations. Cite real places. If you're talking about urban models, don't just mention "a city"—name Atlanta or Lagos or Tokyo and explain why it fits. Use scoring guidelines from past exams to check your work. This will help you see what real graders are looking for and how your responses measure up. With the right strategy, you don't have to memorize everything. You just need to understand how to apply what you know. Focus on practicing with real examples, reviewing key concepts, and building your writing confidence. That's how you turn what you've studied into a strong AP Human Geography score. AP Human Geography Exam Test-Taking Tips A good study plan matters, but test-day strategy is just as important. Many students lose points not because they don't know the material, but because they miss a key term, ignore a map, or forget to fully answer every part of the FRQ. Here's how to avoid those mistakes and maximize your score: 1. Manage your time wisely. The AP Human Geography Exam takes 2 hours and 15 minutes. You'll have 1 hour to answer 60 multiple-choice questions, and 1 hour and 15 minutes for 3 free-response questions. This gives you about a minute per MCQ and 25 minutes per FRQ. Use your time carefully. For MCQs, don't get stuck on difficult questions. If you're unsure, make your best guess and move on. For FRQs, spend a couple of minutes planning, then focus on clearly answering each part of the prompt. Even a short but complete answer can earn points. 2. Read every part of the question. Many FRQs have multiple parts labeled (a), (b), (c), and so on. Each part usually asks something slightly different: define, explain, apply, or compare. You won't get credit for skipping sections, so answer every part fully and directly. To avoid missing points: Look for directive words like "explain," "identify," or "describe. Watch for examples that must be specific, like naming a region or model. Check if the question focuses on change over time or regional differences. 3. Use visual materials carefully. The AP Human Geography Exam often includes visuals like maps, graphs, models, or satellite images. They're part of the prompt and must be analyzed just like text. To handle visuals effectively: Always read the legend and labels. Check the scale, key, and any color shading or directional symbols. They tell you what the map or graph is really showing. Look for clear patterns. Ask yourself if the data is clustered, dispersed, or forming a specific trend across space. Match the visual to a concept. Think about what you're seeing and connect it to a geography topic like urban models, migration patterns, or population growth. Use what you see in your answer. Don't just mention the image. Explain how it supports your claim or helps answer the question. Great answers don't just describe the visual. They use it to back up real geographic ideas and show understanding. 4. Eliminate wrong answers on MCQs. You don't need to know the answer immediately. Start by removing obviously wrong options, then compare what's left. Other tips for MCQs: Be cautious with extreme language like "always" or "never." Think spatially. If a question asks about economic activity or political organization, visualize what that looks like on the ground. If a source is provided, such as a population pyramid or migration map, analyze it first. Don't skip straight to the answer choices. 5. Be clear and specific in your writing. FRQs are scored based on what you write, not what you imply. Keep your responses focused and use concrete examples. To improve your FRQ writing: Define terms in your own words. Don't just copy definitions from a textbook or memorize phrases. Show that you understand the meaning by explaining the concept in a way that fits the question. Use human geography models (like the Demographic Transition Model or Von Thünen Model) correctly and apply them to real-world contexts. It's not enough to mention the model. You need to explain how it works and give specific examples that show its relevance. Connect the model to patterns or trends you've studied. Give named examples when asked. Generic phrases like "a country in Asia" are too vague and won't earn full credit. Use specific, accurate examples like "Japan," "India," or "Brazil" to demonstrate your geographic knowledge and support your explanation. Practicing these habits will help you stay calm, focused, and efficient on test day. The more familiar you are with the question types and visuals, the more confident you'll feel when it counts. The AP Human Geography Exam is scheduled for Tuesday, May 6, 2025, at 8 AM local time. This is a morning paper-and-pencil exam, so get ready for an early start. Your school will give you the details for where to report and what to bring, but expect to be there at least 30 minutes before the exam begins. If you're taking other AP exams too, make sure you know each date and time. To find test dates for other AP exams and registration details, check out our comprehensive guide. AP Human Geography Exam score release date AP scores for 2025 will start rolling out on Monday, July 7, 2025. That's when students will be able to log in to the College Board website and view their individual scores, including the AP Human Geography Exam. Make sure your College Board login details are up-to-date and easy to access. If you're taking more than one AP exam, your scores will likely all be released at the same time. Additional files like Scholar Awards and student data reports will follow on July 14, but those are mostly for school staff. Is the AP Human Geography Exam Hard? AP Human Geography has a reputation for being one of the more approachable AP exams, especially for first-time test-takers, but the numbers tell a more complex story. If you're wondering how students performed in 2024, here's the score breakdown: Score Percentage of Students 5 17.9% 4 20.5% 3 17.8% 2 14.3% 1 29.5% Total Passing (3+) 56.1% Out of 262,253 students, just over half scored a 3 or higher, with a mean score of 2.83. That puts it on the lower end compared to other AP exams. Nearly 30% of test-takers received the lowest possible score, which shows that even "easier" APs require serious prep. To do well, you need to understand how to apply concepts like the Demographic Transition Model, urban and agricultural patterns, and theories of development to real-world case studies. Memorizing terms is not enough. You have to show how those ideas work in context. If you're aiming for a 4 or 5, focus on practicing FRQs, reviewing case studies, and using geographic models with clear explanations. Scoring high takes more than recognition. It takes interpretation and precision. If you want extra help, check out our AP tutorial services. We'll walk you through map skills, model analysis, and FRQ writing techniques so you can go into test day fully prepared. Frequently Asked Questions 1. How hard is the AP Human Geography Exam? The AP Human Geography Exam is moderately difficult. In 2024, 56.1% of students scored a 3 or higher, but only 17.9% earned a 5. That means passing is achievable for most students, but getting a top score takes more than just memorization. The test covers a wide range of human topics like population, migration, agriculture, urbanization, and industrial development. It places a strong emphasis on spatial thinking, real-world applications, and interpreting visual data such as maps and models. It's less writing-heavy than AP World History but still more conceptual than AP Environmental Science, which some students consider a content-heavy course. 2. How many hours should you study for the AP Human Geography Exam? That depends on your background, but most successful students spend around 70 to 90 hours preparing. If you're aiming for a 4 or 5, try to study 3 to 4 hours a week for a few months. Use that time not only to review terms but also to practice FRQs, work on map skills, and test yourself on real-world applications of key models. 3. Do you need to memorize everything for the AP Human Geography Exam? No. You'll need to remember important concepts and vocabulary, but the exam goes beyond recall. It asks you to apply geographic models and theories, analyze patterns, and explain how different processes play out across places and scales. Focus your review on the Course and Exam Description (CED), which outlines the key themes and essential knowledge. This helps you prioritize what matters and avoid cramming unnecessary details. 4. Is AP Human Geography worth taking? If you're curious about how people interact with places and how geography shapes culture, development, and globalization, AP Human Geography is a great pick. It's often one of the first AP courses students take, and it builds a strong foundation for AP Environmental Science, World History, and other social science subjects. Many schools recognize it for college credit, and it shows you're ready for college-level coursework that involves data analysis, critical thinking, and essay writing. 5. When do AP Human Geography scores come out? You'll be able to view your score on Monday, July 7, 2025, by logging into your College Board account. If you're sending your score to a college, be sure to submit your request before the June deadline so it arrives in time for fall admissions or credit evaluations. Takeaways Here are the key takeaways to keep in mind as you study for the AP Human Geography Exam: The AP Human Geography Exam covers seven major units including topics like migration, urban development, and agriculture. You'll need to understand not just the definitions, but the geographic processes behind them. Both sections of the AP Human Geography Exam carry equal weight, so you can't just rely on multiple-choice skills. Strong FRQ writing is key to getting a high score. Interpreting maps and models is essential on the AP Human Geography Exam. You'll be expected to apply tools like the Demographic Transition Model, the Von Thünen Model, and choropleth maps to real-world scenarios. A passing score is common, but top scores are harder to earn. In 2024, over 262,000 students took the AP Human Geography Exam, and only 17.9% earned a 5. Strategic preparation makes the difference. Need help preparing for the AP Human Geography Exam? A college admissions consultant can help you master tough topics, sharpen your FRQ responses, and gain the confidence you need to earn a top score. The following strategies for answering the free-response questions will help you on exam day.Plan your responses before you start writing.Don't start to write immediately; that can lead to a string of disconnected, poorly planned thoughts. Carefully analyze the question: think about what is being asked and identify the elements that must be addressed in the response. For example, some questions may require you to consider the similarities between people or events, and then to think of the ways they are different. Others may ask you to develop an argument with examples to support it. Be sure to answer exactly what is being asked in the question prompt!Integrate evidence into your response.After you have determined how to answer the question, consider what geographic themes you can incorporate into your response. If there is a map, chart, graph, or diagram with the question, study it carefully before beginning your answer. Think about the evidence you studied during the course that relates to the question and then decide how it fits into the analysis or explanation. Does it demonstrate a similarity or a difference? Does it argue for or against a point that is being addressed? Does it ask you to identify and explain a certain number of examples or reasons?Elaborate on the evidence.Don't just paraphrase or summarize your evidence. Clearly state your intent, then use additional information or analysis to elaborate on how these pieces of evidence are similar or different. If there is evidence that refutes a statement, explain why. Your answer should show that you understand the subtleties of the question. Carefully answer each part of the question. Be sure to use appropriate geographic terms, and refer to models or theories when appropriate.Practice!Answering free-response questions from previous AP Exams is a great way to practice: it allows you to compare your own responses with those that have already been evaluated and scored. Go to AP Central to review the free-response questions and scoring guidelines on the AP Human Geography Exam Questions page. Task VerbsPay close attention to the task verbs used in the free-response questions. Each one directs you to complete a specific type of response. Here are the task verbs you'll see on the exam:Compare: Provide a description or explanation of similarities and/or differences.Define: Provide a specific meaning for a word or concept.Describe: Provide the relevant characteristics of a specified topic.Explain: Provide information about how or why a relationship, process, pattern, position, or outcome occurs, using evidence and/or reasoning.Identify: Indicate or provide information about a specified topic, without elaboration or explanation. AP Human Geography is an investigation of how the human species has populated the earth and developed different cultures, political systems, and means of production. This is a subject that can be a little hard to pin down because it represents an intersection of lots of different information. How does the College Board test such a wide range of topics? Continue reading to gain a better understanding of the lay of the land (so to speak) on the AP Human Geography exam! How Is the AP Human Geography Exam Structured? The AP Human Geography test is two hours and 15 minutes long. It contains a multiple-choice section and a free-response section. The next AP Human Geography test will be held on Tuesday, May 6, 2025, at 8:00 AM. No points are deducted for wrong or blank answers on the exam. Here's a brief overview of the AP Human Geography test format: Section % of Score Time # of Questions 1. Multiple Choice 50% 1 hr 60 2. Free Response 50% 1 hr 15 mins 3 TOTAL 100% 2 hrs 15 mins 63 First is the multiple-choice section, which consists of 60 questions and lasts one hour. (Prior to the 2020 changes, this section had 75 questions.) This section accounts for half your total AP exam score. You must answer 60 questions in an hour, which means you will get about one minute per question. Every multiple-choice question has five answer choices (A-E), and there are two basic types: Individual questions Set-based questions (five to eight sets, each with two to three questions) On this section, you'll be expected to do the following: Consider maps and spatial data Show a strong understanding of how the world looks from a spatial perspective Interpret patterns and processes at different scales Understand different regions Characterize and analyze changing interactions among different places The free-response section comes second and is a little longer at an hour and 15 minutes. Here, you'll get three questions, each worth 7 raw points. Altogether, this section accounts for half your total AP Human Geography test score. You'll have approximately 25 minutes per question. Here's what you must do for each question, as described by the College Board: Describe, explain, apply geographic situation or scenario (no stimulus) Describe, explain, apply geographic data using data, image, or map (one quantitative or qualitative source) Describe, explain, apply geographic data using data, image, and/or map (two sources, qualitative and/or quantitative) AP Human Geography Topics: What Does It Cover? As a whole, the AP Human Geography course revolves around a thematic understanding of the human cultural landscape and patterns of global development. It deals with how human interactions and demographics are shaped by location and environment. Specifically, AP Human Geography covers the following seven units, which you must link together conceptually on the exam. These units are connected to subtopics (or "Enduring Understandings") that you are expected to master by the time you take the test. Before we go through these topics in detail, let's take a quick look at what percentage of the test (multiple-choice section only) each unit makes up: Unit (Topic Area) % of Questions Unit 1: Thinking Geographically 8-10% Unit 2: Population and Migration Patterns and Processes 12-17% Unit 3: Cultural Patterns and Processes 12-17% Unit 4: Political Patterns and Processes 12-17% Unit 5: Agriculture and Rural Land-Use Patterns and Processes 12-17% Unit 6: Cities and Urban Land-Use Patterns and Processes 12-17% Unit 7: Industrial and Economic Development Patterns and Processes 12-17% Source: AP Human Geography Course and Exam Description Unit 1: Thinking Geographically Geographers use maps and data to depict relationships of time, space, and scale Geographers analyze relationships among and between places to reveal important spatial patterns Geographers analyze complex issues and relationships with a distinctively spatial perspective Unit 2: Population and Migration Patterns and Processes Understanding where and how people live is essential to understanding global cultural, political, and economic patterns Changes in population are due to mortality, fertility, and migration, which are influenced by the interplay of environmental, economic, cultural, and political factors Changes in population have long- and short-term effects on a place's economy, culture, and politics Unit 3: Cultural Patterns and Processes Cultural practices vary across geographical locations because of physical geography and available resources The interaction of people contributes to the spread of cultural practices Cultural ideas, practices, and innovations change or disappear over time Unit 4: Political Patterns and Processes The political organization of space results from historical and current processes, events, and ideas Political boundaries and divisions of governance, between states and within them, reflect balances of power that have been negotiated or imposed Political, economic, cultural, or technological changes can challenge state sovereignty Unit 5: Agriculture and Rural Land-Use Patterns and Processes Availability of resources and cultural practices influence agricultural practices and land-use patterns Agriculture has changed over time because of cultural diffusion and advances in technology Agricultural production and consumption patterns vary in different locations, presenting different environmental, social, economic, and cultural opportunities and challenges Unit 6: Cities and Urban Land-Use Patterns and Processes The presence and growth of cities vary across geographical locations because of physical geography and resources The attitudes and values of a population, as well as the balance of power within that population, are reflected in the built landscape Urban areas face unique economic, political, cultural, and environmental challenges Unit 7: Industrial and Economic Development Patterns and Processes Industrialization, past and present, has facilitated improvements in standards of living, but it has also contributed to geographically uneven development Economic and social development happen at different times and rates in different places Environmental problems stemming from industrialization may be remedied through sustainable development strategies World Regions for AP Human Geography Here are maps of world regions you'll be examining across all the topic areas in the course. These maps are important because you need to know exactly where different cultural, political, and demographic developments have occurred. Understanding the relative locations of different regions can help you grasp their places in the grand scheme of the human geographic landscape. The first map is a broad survey of all the world regions, while the second has more specific labels: AP Human Geography Exam: Sample Questions In this section, we give you two examples of real AP Human Geography questions. For each, we go over how to find the correct answer and explain how points are awarded. Both questions below come from the AP Human Geography Course and Exam Description. Multiple-Choice Question Example To be able to answer this stand-alone AP Human Geography question, you'll need to know the definition of a "pull factor." In geography, a pull factor is any characteristic that attracts people to a particular place, organization, religion, etc. (Note that the opposite is a "push factor," which drives people away from something or somewhere.) Therefore, just by reading this question, you should know right away that the answer you are looking for is a good thing—that is, something that might appeal to people migrating from a less developed country. Choices A, B, C, and E are all negative characteristics that would likely drive people away from something. In other words, these are push factors, not pull factors. The only clear pull factor is answer choice D, since universal health care would likely appeal to those coming from countries with less developed or less reliable health care systems. Free-Response Question Example This sample AP Human Geography free-response question takes the form of question 3, meaning it comes with two stimuli (two visuals or pieces of data). Like all free-response questions, this one is worth a total of 7 points, one for each part of the question (A-G). To get full credit for this free-response question, you would need to give the following answers, per the official scoring guidelines. Every question part (A-G) has multiple possible answers of which you are required to give just one in your response. (A) Answer Options Delhi is classified as a megacity because it has a total population greater than 10 million. From 1991 to 2011, Delhi's total population grew to over 10 million. (B) Answer Options Many people move to Delhi from rural areas and smaller cities ... in search of employment opportunities. in the hopes of improving their income or quality of life. to join family members or friends already living in Delhi. to have better access to services, health care, or education. (C) Answer Options The city's center increases in the size, height, and/or number of large apartment buildings and condominiums that attract a growing population of middle-class workers in the country's capital. Infilling occurs where open space presents an economic opportunity for landowners to build small multi-family housing units, placing more people into existing city blocks. The government is increasing its provision of public housing in apartment blocks within the city, which provide larger buildings with multi-family housing units. (D) Answer Options A need for additional public transportation lines and/or added capacity on existing transit systems. A need for improved sanitation, water supply, waste disposal, or wastewater treatment facilities. A need for more housing, especially for lower-income residents. A need for improved communication or electric utility infrastructure. A need for additional public schools, colleges, universities, and/or libraries. (E) Answer Options Increased number of vehicles on the roadways results in visible air pollution, fog, smog, and/or airborne chemicals that lead to ... health problems. transportation accidents. diverting potential economic investment in the city. (F) Answer Options India is a less developed country which has limited government funding to pay for pollution abatement programs (such as alternative fuels) or large investments in public transit. India has a growing industrial sector which has limited environmental regulations such as controls on air pollution. Industrial air emissions contribute to the city's air pollution levels. India has a large rural population and urban poor population who are dependent on burning wood for home heating and cooking. The smoke increases the city's air pollution levels. During the dry season, farmers in northern India will burn the dead vegetation in their fields (following the harvest) to improve soil nutrients. The smoke can increase the city's air pollution levels. As India's economy grows, more people can afford to own cars or buy trucks for their businesses. The additional vehicle increases the total amount of air pollution. (G) Answer Options Transportation-oriented development of new housing, industrial and retailing areas. Or, laws requiring new developments be constructed with bus lanes, train lines, and stations. Vehicle restrictions, high-occupancy requirements, tolls, or congestion pricing to limit the number of vehicles on the roads. Smart-growth policies, slow-growth, or zoning policies that restrict the amount of land that can be developed or create a development boundary or greenbelt around the city. Alternative electrical energy and/or alternative fuel programs that are cleaner-burning or have zero emissions. New Urbanism or mixed land-use developments where workers live, shop, and work within walkable distances. How Is the AP Human Geography Exam Scored? You'll get 1 point for each multiple-choice question you answer correctly on the Human Geography exam. There are no point deductions for incorrect answers, so be sure to fill in every bubble! On the free-response questions, points are allotted for clearly and thoroughly answering each part of the question. Every free-response question is worth 7 points and has an equal bearing on your overall score. The multiple-choice and free-response sections are each worth 50% of your score. Your free-response score is scaled in accordance with this and added to your multiple-choice score to arrive at a scaled AP score that is then converted to a final score on the 1-5 AP scale. Below is the score distribution for students who took the 2024 AP Human Geography test: AP Score % of Test Takers Earning Score (2024) 5 17.9% 4 20.5% 3 17.8% 2 14.3% 1 29.5% As you can see from this chart, nearly one-third of test takers got the lowest possible AP score on this test. What's more, roughly 45% of students earned a 2 or lower, basically "failing" the exam. As a result, we can say that Human Geography is one of the hardest AP exams out there! 4 Essential Study Tips for the AP Human Geography Test Here are a few pointers to keep in mind as you start preparing for the AP Human Geography test. #1: Make Flashcards Much of the AP Human Geography exam deals with key terms covered by the course. Free-response questions require you to have a strong understanding of specific geography terms and their implications in order to earn full credit. The multiple-choice section also includes many questions that ask you to identify an example of a certain concept defined by a phrase unique to the field of human geography. Because your score is dependent on your knowledge of this field-specific terminology, you'll benefit from making a set of flashcards of all the terms you've learned in your class. Go over these words until you feel confident that you understand all the definitions well enough to think of real-world examples. You can even include a couple of examples on the back of each flashcard along with the definition! #2: Know Geographic Models (and Practice Reading Them) There are several geographic models that are important to understand if you hope to successfully interpret data in human geography. Make sure you're familiar with all of them and can read them easily. Sometimes, the test will present you with questions about identifying different types of models or ask you to comment on data sets. #3: Take Official Practice Exams There's no better form of practice than using official (or highly realistic unofficial) test questions, which is why you should take a practice Human Geography exam to start off your studying. This will not only allow you to predict your scores on the real test but will also help you make an informed decision about how much more you need to study in order to reach your goals. You might find that you have trouble on certain types of questions that you didn't expect to be a problem. A careful analysis of your mistakes on practice tests will ensure that you only revisit content that has the potential to trip you up on the exam (rather than trying to reread your entire textbook). #4: Review Regions (and Connect Them to Key Terms) One problem that some students have on this exam is citing incorrect geographic regions in their responses. It's very important to know the names of the different regions of the world and the economic, political, and cultural climates that have evolved over time. Be able to identify the various regions on the maps included in this article, and think about their individual statuses in connection with each of the main topics of the course. Keep a map of the world's regions in your metaphorical back pocket. Emphasis on metaphorical. Conclusion: How to Ace the AP Human Geography Exam The AP Human Geography exam is structured in a way similar to that of other AP tests. It's on the shorter side, coming in at just two hours and 15 minutes, but it has both multiple-choice and free-response sections, and its questions require a wide range of skills and content knowledge. The seven major topic areas (i.e., units) you'll encounter on the test are as follows: Thinking Geographically Population and Migration Patterns and Processes Cultural Patterns and Processes Political Patterns and Processes Agriculture and Rural Land-Use Patterns and Processes Cities and Urban Land-Use Patterns and Processes Industrial and Economic Development Patterns and Processes