

TOP TEN PRACTICAL TIPS FOR WRITING AN AP PSYCH ESSAY

- Read the essay two times, and read it slowly and carefully.
- What specifically is the essay asking for in the question?
- Determine how many points the essay is worth (most are worth about 10 pts.)
- Picture visually what the rubric is for the grader.
- Write a brief outline on your essay booklet to this rubric.
- Write a thorough but concise essay.
- Keep an eye on the clock. (Wear a watch if you don't normally)
- Write in a technical (rather than a creative) style to address each point.
- Assume the grader is *STUPID* (explain each term or concept)
- Write neatly and in pen (not pencil)

Writing Free-Response Questions

No introduction or conclusion. Do not rewrite the question.

Answering the question in order helps but is not necessary.

Spelling and grammar do not matter

Application, application, application – they want to see examples. A definition can support a weak example but a definition by itself does not score.

You are writing in ink, so crossing out is ok (take several pens)

Write legibly! If we can't read it, it does not score.

Do not use the “root” word in your definition or example (repression is when you repress memories)

Underline the term

Only abbreviate after establishing the abbreviations [independent variable (i.v.)]

There will be items you don't know (getting 3 or 4 out of 7 terms might still be a 5 exam)

For teachers: what's on this year's free response question likely won't show up again for awhile, except for statistics and research design.