

# SAQ PRACTICE - INTRODUCTION

## Purpose

In this activity, you will begin learning about the short-answer questions (SAQ) that are assessments included on the AP® World History: Modern exam. The short-answer questions, along with the other free-response questions on the AP exam, will, according to the College Board, “assess students’ ability to identify and explain historical developments and processes.” The specific goal of this activity is for you to become more confident in responding to SAQ prompts. Understanding what you are supposed to do based on the prompts is an important first step to helping you succeed on this type of assessment.

## Process

In this activity, you will begin to unpack what the SAQ prompts are asking on the AP exam. Specifically, you will unpack what they mean when they use the task verbs **describe**, **identify**, or **explain**. Then you will practice translating SAQ prompts into your own words, and you will wrap up by matching some SAQ questions to their correct responses.

Not sure what an SAQ is? That’s OK—the first thing you’ll do is discuss that with your class. Here’s how the College Board describes SAQs: “Short-answer questions assess students’ ability to analyze patterns and connections between and among historical developments and processes using historical reasoning (e.g., comparison, causation, continuity and change).” Some SAQs include primary sources, and each SAQ really consists of three subquestions, all focused on the same topic. The image on the right is an example of what an SAQ with a source looks like.

Now that you have a better understanding of what a short answer question is, it’s time to start really understanding what those SAQs are asking! This may sound silly, but it can be a lot harder than it sounds. Thankfully, the exam structures all its SAQ questions in a similar way by asking you to either **describe**, **identify**, or **explain** a historical event or process.

### 2017 AP® WORLD HISTORY FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS

Use the image below to answer all parts of the question that follows.

DETAIL IMAGE FROM A SCROLL PAINTED DURING THE SONG DYNASTY, CIRCA 1100 C.E.



The Granger Collection, New York

The image shows (on left) Guo Ziyi, a Chinese general of the Tang dynasty, meeting with Uighur nomads on the frontier of China.

1. a) Identify and explain ONE way in which the interaction depicted in the image represents a continuity in Chinese imperial history.
- b) Identify and explain ANOTHER way in which the interaction depicted in the image represents a continuity in Chinese imperial history.
- c) Identify and explain ONE way in which the interaction between imperial China and Central Asian nomads changed after 1100 C.E.

Sample SAQ from the 2017 released AP® World History Exam.

# SAQ PRACTICE - INTRODUCTION

Now, think about what the words **describe**, **identify**, or **explain** mean and share your ideas with the class. Your teacher will then share how the College Board defines these words. (Note: The College Board also refers to these words as “task verbs,” so if you see that language, this is what they’re talking about.) Once you’ve discussed these definitions with your class, take out the SAQ Practice—Introduction worksheet and work through it in small groups.

1. First, write the definition of the verbs **describe**, **identify**, and **explain** into your own words, while keeping the same meaning as the College Board definitions. Be prepared to share your definitions with the class.
2. Second, rewrite some prompts into your own words while keeping the same meaning of the SAQ task verbs **describe**, **identify**, or **explain**.
3. Finally, practice your new understanding of the meaning of the task verbs **describe**, **identify**, or **explain** by matching SAQ prompts with responses on the worksheet.

Once you’re done, reflect upon what aspects of the verbs **describe**, **identify**, or **explain** you found most challenging and be prepared to discuss this with your class. Be sure to keep your notes so you can review if your SAQ responses in later activities don’t get full scores.

# SAQ PRACTICE - INTRODUCTION

Name:

Date:

**Directions:** Follow each of the steps below.

## Step 1

Define ***describe*** in an SAQ prompt using the College Board definition as your starting point. The College Board definition for *describe* is, "Provide a description or explanation of similarities and differences."

Define ***identify*** in an SAQ prompt using the College Board definition as your starting point. The College Board definition for *identify* is, "Indicate or provide information about a specified topic, without elaboration or explanation."

Define ***explain*** in an SAQ prompt using the College Board definition as your starting point. The College Board definition for *explain* is, "Provide information about how or why a relationship, process, pattern, position, situation, or outcome occurs, using evidence and/or reasoning."

## Step 2

Rewrite the following SAQ prompts into your own words, making sure that you rewrite the task verbs *identify*, *describe*, or *explain* using the College Board definition as your starting point.

# SAQ PRACTICE - INTRODUCTION

Name:

Date:

## Prompt 1

A) Identify ONE cause of the rise of Islamic states up to c. 1200.

B) Describe ONE effect of Islam on ONE society in Africa and ONE society in Asia up to c. 1200.

C) Explain ONE effect of an intellectual innovation in Dar al-Islam up to c. 1200.

## Prompt 2

A) Identify ONE technological change that facilitated trade in the Indian Ocean in the period 1200 to 1450.

B) Explain ONE way that trade in the Indian Ocean in the period 1200 to 1450 led to political change.

C) Explain ONE way that trade in the Indian Ocean in the period 1200 to 1450 led to cultural change.

Step 3

Match each SAQ prompt on the left with the correct response to that verb prompt on the right. You can draw lines between boxes or cut them out to match them up!

SAQ prompt	SAQ response
1a) Identify ONE cause of the rise of Islamic states up to c. 1200.	One way that trade in the Indian Ocean in the period 1200 to 1450 led to cultural change was the development of the Swahili language, which mixed the Bantu languages of East Africans who came to the coast to trade with the Arabic spoken by Muslim merchants.
1b) Describe ONE effect of Islam on ONE society in Africa and ONE society in Asia up to c. 1200.	By 1200 CE, one effect of Islam on sub-Saharan Africa was the spread of the Islamic written language of Arabic, which enabled rulers in these societies to keep written records of their lineages and record oral traditions told by griots. One effect of Islam on Southeast Asia was the adoption of the faith, which facilitated trade as more merchants converted and traded using common customs and laws.

## SAQ PRACTICE - INTRODUCTION

Name:

Date:

SAQ prompt	SAQ response
1c) Explain ONE effect of an intellectual innovation in Dar al-Islam up to c. 1200.	One way that trade in the Indian Ocean in the period 1200 to 1450 led to political change was in the rise of Swahili states in East Africa, which can be linked to the increase in the number of Muslim merchants traveling to and from East Africa and their support of Muslim rulers of the Swahili states.
2a) Identify ONE way that technological changes facilitated trade in the Indian Ocean in the period 1200 to 1450.	One cause of the spread of Islam up to 1200 CE was the wide range of travel destinations by Muslim merchants and missionaries who were active in speaking about Islam along trade routes in Central Asia, Trans-Saharan, the Indian Ocean, and across North Africa to the Iberian Peninsula.
2b) Describe ONE way that trade in the Indian Ocean in the period 1200 to 1450 led to political change.	One effect of an intellectual innovation in Dar al-Islam up to 1200 CE was the expansion of mathematical knowledge through the use of new mathematical concepts such as algebra and trigonometry. Muslim mathematicians invented trigonometry to determine the location of Mecca, the direction to which Muslims pray, from all of the places to which Muslims migrated in Afro-Eurasia.
2c) Explain ONE way that trade in the Indian Ocean in the period 1200 to 1450 led to cultural change.	One way the use of the Chinese compass facilitated trade in the Indian Ocean in the period 1200 to 1450 was that it helped make travel safer since the use of the compass and knowledge of the monsoon wind patterns led to fewer ships going off course and bringing the cargo to incorrect ports.