**AP Human Geography Writing Guidance/FRQs Mr. Stepek**

One of the problems faced by younger students is how to write efficiently and clearly. For each unit you will have a written FRQ (free response question) exam with which the ability to express your ideas clearly will be assessed.

Here are some “stylistic” pointers on how to achieve clear and concise writing in AP Human Geography.

* Incorporate the question prompts in your response. (What is your name?....My name is Mr. Stepek)
* Make sure to write in complete sentences (incomplete sentence/one-word answers will have points taken away)
* Identify your pronouns until it is clear what you are referring to.
* If you are comparing and/or contrasting two concepts NEVER revert to using pronouns continue to identify what you are writing about by its proper name.
* Make sure to answer all parts of the prompt and to incorporate all parts of the prompt in your writing.

Let’s look at some examples to clarify!

**EXPLAIN the difference between relocation and expansion diffusion.**

**WRONG:**

One increases the amount of people following or using an idea or cultural trait while the other merely transfers the practice of the idea form one place to another. (What is one? What is the other?)

With relocation diffusion the practice of cultural trait or the movement of an idea moves with migration and does not increase the number of overall followers, while with expansion diffusion the idea or trait spreads but the person doesn’t necessarily have to move. This is different from expansion diffusion in that the overall number of people following the idea/trait increases. (This is much better but still does not fulfill the prompt because with prompts higher than IDENTIFY like COMPARE, DESCRIBE or EXPLAIN examples or evidence should be given. Therefore, this response would receive the point for an IDENTIFY prompt but not for the higher-level prompts)

**CORRECT**

With relocation diffusion the practice of cultural trait or the movement of an idea moves with migration and does not increase the number of overall followers, while with expansion diffusion the idea or trait spreads but the person doesn’t necessarily have to move. This is different from expansion diffusion in that the overall number of people following the idea/trait increases. An example would be the difference in diffusion patterns of Christianity between North “Anglo” America and Latin America. In Anglo-America the practice of Protestant Christianity was primarily due to relocation diffusion as British settlers who arrived in North America brought their religion with them. In Latin America, relocation diffusion of Catholicism also happened with Spanish/Portuguese settlers but it was increased by Catholic missionaries who converted large numbers of indigenous people. The spread of Catholicism through missionaries would represent expansion diffusion as it increased the number of adherents to Catholicism rather than just relocating the practice.

**FRQ writing tips**

In an effort to streamline and standardize their grading process the College Board has broken up previously complex prompts into more simplified, concrete task verbs. You must fulfill the requirements of the prompt to score the points. They are:

* **Identify:** Indicate or provide information about a specified topic, without elaboration or explanation.
  + **Example:** IDENTIFY two traits used in constructing the formal cultural region of Latin America?
    - Two traits used in constructing the formal cultural region of Latin America are the practice of Catholicism as the predominant faith and the use of Latin-based Romance languages such as Spanish or Portuguese.
* **Define:** Provide a specific meaning for a word or a concept.
  + **Example:** Define a formal or uniform region.
    - A formal or uniform region is one that is described using a common or homogeneous characteristic. (If time allows include a quick example but according to their guidance that should not be required for a DEFINE prompt.)
* **Compare:** Provide a description or explanation of similarities and/or differences with examples. Make sure you **cite evidence from the stimulus or provide examples from BOTH SIDES of the comparison**.
  + **Example:** Compare two types of expansion diffusion.
    - Two types of expansion diffusion are hierarchical and contagious. In hierarchical diffusion, the factor spreads through nodes of influence who are connected to one another while passing over unconnected people in between. An example of hierarchical diffusion are fashion trends which start diffusing at exclusive runway shows and between style setters before reaching the general public. With contagious diffusion a factor spreads in all directions without regard to interconnectedness. An example of contagious diffusion could be the popularity of a certain fashion after it is worn on the red carpet by a style setter or advertised in a magazine or on the internet. By that point, everybody can be exposed equally making the diffusion contagious. Contagious diffusion is more rapid and widespread while hierarchical diffusion is more limited because contagious diffusion flows to everybody but hierarchical flows only to targeted recipients.
* **Describe:** Provide the relevant characteristics of a specified topic with an example.
  + **Example:** Describe expansion diffusion.
    - Expansion diffusion is when a factor spreads by gaining new users/followers etc. It is snowballing effect where new adherents are gained. Subcategories of expansion diffusion include contagious, hierarchical and stimulus diffusion. For example, when religious missionaries convert new followers to their faith this is an example of expansion diffusion because it leads to new adherents.
* **Explain:** Provide information about how or why a relationship, process, pattern, position, or outcome occurs, using evidence and/or reasoning.
  + **Example:** Explain hierarchical diffusion.
    - In hierarchical diffusion, the factor spreads through nodes of influence who are connected to one another while passing over unconnected people in between. An example of this would be hip hop music which began with DJs at African American clubs in the Bronx borough of New York City. Rather than diffuse contagiously (without regard to connection) in all directions into the New York City suburbs which are next to the Bronx, hip hop diffused to Brooklyn because DJs there were connected to the innovators in the Bronx. Furthermore, hip hop continued to hierarchically diffuse to other nodes of authority or connectedness in the African American club scene to cities such as Atlanta and Oakland, CA. Eventually, hip hop began to diffuse to unconnected listeners outside the African American community, by that time its diffusion would be considered contagious and no longer hierarchical.
* **“Describe the extent to which”:**  This is new prompt introduced recently by the College Board. It is basically an explain that is asking you to **make a judgement** regarding the impact of something.
  + **Describe the extent to which** expansion diffusion affected the culture of North America.
    - **Expansion diffusion had a larger impact than relocation diffusion in shaping the culture of North America.** This is evidenced by the predominance of the English language spoken in both the U.S. and Canada. Although, British settlers brought this language with them and their offspring continued to speak it representing a form of relocation diffusion, tens of millions of other non-English speaking immigrants learned the language after arriving in North America. This represents expansion diffusion. In addition, most of the immigrants through the process of assimilation came to accept English cultural and legal traditions such as resistance to government control, personal freedom and respect for property that are foundational to the American system. **The acceptance of English cultural and legal traditions through the process of assimilation shows that expansion diffusion had a bigger impact on North American culture than relocation diffusion.**

**Follow these guidelines on FRQs** (more appropriate for in-class writing by hand during second semester):

* Place your name and period number in the upper righthand corner.
* Write in pen
* Label which part of the prompt you are answering, don’t make the reader search for your answers. They probably won’t.
* Write in complete sentences, including the prompt and identifying pronouns (see above).
* Be aware of what you are being required to do (see above). Don’t waste time explaining an IDENTIFY prompt, don’t only identify if they are asking you to EXPLAIN. It is about time management.
* You will have 25 minutes per FRQ question. Each will be multi-parted with different prompt levels. It is important to hit the requirements of the prompt. It is a binary grading decision, you either fulfilled the prompt or you did not. There is no partial credit.
* Confused? Watch this video.https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3duYryt\_PLM or https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jax8gSVyDMw