

AP US History Multiple Choice Questions Strategies & Tips

1. **Be Careful**—Always make sure you are answering the right question. Mark the answer sheet clearly but not so darkly that it cannot be erased. Do not leave any stray marks on the answer sheet.
2. **Read the question first** and **ALWAYS MAKE SURE YOU KNOW WHAT THE QUESTION IS ASKING**
3. **Pace yourself** by breaking down the test into sections of time. Each question is worth the same number of points: one. Don't spend too long on any single question. Either guess or mark it for later consideration.
 - a. 1 min per multiple choice
4. **Use the process of elimination**
 - a. Eliminate choices, until you are down to 2 options
 - b. If no choice immediately strikes you as correct, you can:
 - i. Eliminate those that are obviously wrong
 - ii. Eliminate those choices that are too narrow or too broad
 - iii. Eliminate illogical choices
 - a. Eliminate answers that are synonymous (identical)
 - b. Eliminate answers that cancel each other out
5. **Question Grouping**- Small groups of questions will refer to topics in chronological order
6. **EXCEPT questions**—after you read the question, reread the question WITHOUT the word “EXCEPT” and eliminate all choices that complete the statement correctly
 - a. Look for the contradiction
7. **Breakdown questions** into key phrases and concepts to avoid being confused
8. **No Trivial Pursuit**- Develop and keep in mind general trends of American history—APUSH multiple choice questions will not contradict that historical context
9. **Grouping**- If four answers are similar or can be grouped together, consider choosing the remaining answer. However, avoid answers that are ridiculous or do not seem to make sense.
10. **Look for Opposites**—If two answers are opposites, one of them is often correct.
11. **NOT ALL true statements are correct answers**—try to avoid misleading choices
12. **Extreme Language**--Avoid choices with extreme language—“always,” “all,” “never,” etc
13. **All of the Above**--If you can tell two responses are correct than the “all of the above” choice is most likely the correct response
14. **Common Sense**--If a choice contradicts common sense, be careful this choice will usually be incorrect—common sense applies to APUSH
15. **Length Doesn't Matter**--Don't be misled by the length or appearance of a question or of answer choices. There is no correlation between length or appearance and the difficulty of the questions.
16. **Trust Your Instincts**—When choosing between answers pay attention to what your hunch or first guess is. Don't try to outsmart or overanalyze a question. It may be your “right brain” at work. This is particularly important for students with a tendency to change their correct answers to incorrect answers.

