

1. **A picture is worth a thousand words** only if they ask for it. Draw a picture or diagram only if it is specifically asked for in the question.
2. **Answer the question that you were asked** ...not just any question to which you happen to know the answer. Sometimes, in an effort to fill space, students will launch into a dissertation that is not relevant to the question that was asked. Don't waste valuable time writing about all the things you know on another topic that is not related to the question.
3. **Be careful about creativity** Shy away from using examples or solutions that are specific to your local region or are uniquely your own ideas. Remember, answers on the rubric for the free-response section must be able to be applied to every single student across the country and around the world that takes the exam. Therefore you should use only commonly known examples or solutions. Avoid fabricating information as well. It is a waste of time and will not earn points.
4. **Be concise** Do not tell your reader everything you know on the topic. Make sure you are only answering what they ask for so you do not waste valuable time that could be used on other essays.
5. **Be time-conscious** You only have approximately 22 minutes per essay. If your work on the essays you feel most comfortable with first, you can increase the amount of time you have for the ones you don't know as well. Do not get bogged down working on "one hard one".
6. **Collect your thoughts** Read each question carefully, thinking about the verb types being used. Take a few minutes to organize your answer in your mind before you begin.
7. **Do not restate the question** in your answer- it is a waste of time. You also do not need to have any introduction or conclusion parts to your essay. Remember- you cannot win over your reader. He or she is simply looking for correct statements that demonstrate knowledge of the concept.
8. **Do not use cliché's** for answers (for example, "there is no away in pollution" or "not in my backyard"). Instead, you should scientifically explain your answer to get the points.
9. **Do not write long lists as your answer!** If the question says "Identify TWO" then identify only two items. The graders are instructed to grade only the first two items even if a student writes a longer list. Thus, if two items are requested, and a student lists six items of which the first two are incorrect, no points will be given even if the last four of the six items are correct.
10. **Don't go green** For your free-response portion of the exam, you will be given a green booklet with the questions in it and a pink answer booklet. Make sure all of your calculations, scratch work, and answers are written in your pink answer booklet- especially any mathematical calculations.
11. **Follow through with your thoughts or examples.** by defining or explaining key terms you use. Many students fail to get points because they didn't finish their thoughts. An easy way to accomplish this is to define any key terms you use in the essay and provide examples to illustrate what you mean.
12. **Label your answers** So there is no doubt where your answer is. All questions have very specific parts such as a,b,c, or i,ii, or iii. This will also help ensure that your have finished answering the question and can move on or come back if needed.
13. **Math-based free response questions** When asked to do calculations, show your work. You normally need to show your work and label units to receive credit on math questions. Also, if you have no idea how to do the calculations portion of the free response, keep reading! A math based free-response question almost always contains a part of the question you could answer without the calculations being done. Make sure all of your work and answers are in your pink answer booklet!
14. **Neatness counts** Messy or illegible writing is very difficult to grade. You do not want to make it hard on your AP reader to award you points on your essay. It is always best if they can easily find and read your answers for each essay question. If they cannot decipher your handwriting, then awarding points is more difficult.
15. **Practice your math!** Every AP Environmental Science student should be comfortable working with metric prefixes, decimals, percentages, fractions, algebra, exponents, and scientific notations.
16. **Read the question carefully** You may be prompted to describe an environmental problem in one part of a question, an economic problem in another, and an environmental benefit in a third. Underline or circle the key terms "environmental" and "economic" and be certain to provide an appropriate response. Note: a good rule of thumb is to read "environmental" as "ecological" and to write about how the topic being addressed in the question in the question affects the abundance, diversity, or distribution of life.

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17. **Read the verbs in the question carefully** Note any verbs such identify, describe, explain and discuss. Make sure once your are done answering that you actually answered all the parts to the question.
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18. **Strike out and save time** If you make a mistake don't waste valuable time and lose your momentum on a question by attempting to erase or obliterate your work: cross or strike out your original answer with a single line or an "X" and keep moving forward.
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19. **Write in prose** Always answer in complete sentences. Make sure you are writing clearly and large enough for your reader to read your answer easily. Outline forms or bulleted lists are not acceptable and will not be graded.
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