

AP Exams – Command Words

What each command word asks you to do · 命令词: 每个词要求你做什么

Identify 指出

name it. One word or one phrase. No sentence needed, no justification.

Describe 描述

give the relevant characteristics of something. A feature, not a cause. Usually one sentence.

Explain 解释

give the reason or mechanism, showing HOW or WHY. The rubric point sits on the causal link, so the sentence must contain one: because, which causes, leading to.

Calculate 计算

produce a number from given quantities. Show the substitution – most rubrics award the setup separately from the answer.

Justify 论证

give evidence and reasoning that supports a claim or conclusion. Naming the evidence is not enough; say why it supports the claim.

Support a claim 支持论点

state the claim, then the evidence, then the reasoning that connects them. All three are usually separate points.

Compare 比较

state a similarity or difference explicitly, in one sentence covering both cases.

Predict 预测

state what will happen, with the reasoning that gets you there – a bare prediction rarely earns the point.

Derive 推导

start from a principle or a given equation and work symbolically to the result. Every algebraic step is potentially credited.

Draw / Sketch 作图

a labelled diagram or graph. Axes labelled, shape correct, asymptotes and intercepts where they belong.

Evaluate 评估

judge, using criteria you name. A judgement with no criterion is an opinion, and opinions are not scored.

The command word tells you how much to write. Answering a different command word is the fastest way to lose marks you had earned. 命令词决定答题的方式与长度。