

*APUSH points are lost to essays that narrate instead of argue, and to rubric rows left unattempted because the candidate did not know they were separate. Contextualisation, sourcing and complexity are each their own point.* 美国史失分多因“叙事而非论证”，且遗漏独立评分项。

## The essay rubric

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Writing a thesis that restates the prompt. It must make a defensible claim AND establish a line of reasoning.

Merging contextualisation into the thesis paragraph as a clause. It is a separate point and needs its own sentences describing the broader situation.

Narrating events in order instead of arguing. A chronology is not an argument, however accurate.

Leaving complexity unattempted. It is earned by qualifying the argument, analysing multiple causes, or explaining both continuity and change – not by adding more evidence.

Ignoring the date range in the prompt. Evidence outside it cannot earn the evidence point.

## The document-based question

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Summarising documents one by one. Group them by the argument they support, and cite them within your own sentences.

Sourcing by naming the author. Sourcing requires purpose, audience, point of view or situation AND how that affects the evidence.

Providing ‘evidence beyond the documents’ that is vague or already mentioned in a document. It must be specific and new.

Using six documents but never explaining how any supports the argument – the second evidence point needs the reasoning, not the count.

## The short-answer question

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Writing an introduction or a thesis. The SAQ needs neither; label the parts (a), (b), (c) and answer directly.

Reusing the same evidence across parts when the prompt asks for a different development, group or region.

Describing where the verb was EXPLAIN. An explanation needs a causal connective and a consequence.

Giving three examples where one is asked for. A wrong one alongside a right one can cost the point.

## Content that is routinely muddled

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Confusing the Articles of Confederation with the Constitution when describing federal weakness.

Treating Reconstruction as ending in 1865. It ran to 1877, and its collapse is usually the point of the question.

Describing Progressivism and the New Deal as the same impulse. One sought regulation through expertise, the other relief and structural security.

Dating the Cold War's containment policy to the 1950s. It was articulated in 1946-47, before the Korean War.