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| **Verbs** | **Definition, Example Prompt, and Abbreviated Sample Answer** | **Helpful Hints for Success** |
| **Describe** | Provide the relevant characteristics of a specified topic. | 3-4 DETAILED sentences with specifics.  Look for implied commands/words you need to demonstrate that you understand.  Scale matters: State, region, global… stick to the scale in Q |
| **Prompt:** “Describe the changing demographic structure of Japan since 1990.”  **Answer:** *“The demographic structure of Japan has changed as the birth rate has decreased and life expectancy has increased since 1990. This has resulted in a more topheavy pop pyramid with many elderly people and relatively few children. As a result, working age...”* |
| **Explain** | Provide information about how or why a relationship, process, pattern, position, or outcome occurs, using evidence and/or reasoning. | Paragraph  Use *“because”* and “*for example”*  DBQ skills: CL, EV, R  Qs are often looking for you to explain cause/effect relationship  Look for “the degree to which” & answer accordingly |
| ***Prompt:*** Explain why deforestation has been increasing in tropical regions.  ***Answer:*** *“Deforestation is occurring in tropical regions because commercial farmers in the region need more land as consumer demand increases and there is widespread use of unsustainable farming practices such as slash-and-burn agriculture. (then back up claim with evidence and reasoning)*  ***Alternative prompt:*** *“Explain the degree to which…”*  *If you get this, they’re looking for you to establish the level to which something is relevant, applicable, true... Your answer should be something like “This model holds true in these circumstances or places or scales (insert further explanation) but does not hold true in these (and here’s why, and here’s an example).”* |
| **Compare** | Provide a **description** or **explanation** of similarities and/or differences.  Notice that you have to describe or explain the differences and/or similarities. | Paragraph  Useful words: both, whereas  Never say A is \_\_\_ and B is not. You must elaborate on both A and B. |
| ***Prompt****:* Compare the theories of environmental determinism and possibilism.  ***Answer:***Both are philosophies that focus on human-environmental interaction and aim to explain the degree to which humans are shaped by their environment. Whereas environmental determinism asserts that developmental and cultural differences are attributable to differences in physical landscape, possibilism... |

**Other advice:**

* Avoid using the words *always* and *never* (instead, use often and seldom)
* Do not use stereotypes in your FRQ answers (ex: Africa is super poor. All Africans are poor and no one even goes to school).
* Answer the question in front of you, not what you want to answer. In other words, dissect the question carefully and make sure your answer is addressing exactly what the question asks for, including implied commands. This is so important!
* Questions aren’t constructed to trick you. Assume that whatever is being asked follows what is typical. Only address exceptions if you KNOW FOR SURE it is an exception.

The following adjectives are commonly used as descriptors for certain things that you must explain, etc.

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| **Descriptor** | **Definition and Interpretation** | **Example** |
| **Social** | Relating to human society or its organization.  How is this trend/event/change affecting the ways in which people interact and relate to one another? Often relates to Culture unit. | “Explain one social consequence of suburbanization.” |
| **Political** | Relating to the government, public affairs, or electoral system of a territory (state, province, city, municipality, etc.)  How is this trend/event/change affecting the ways in which civic affairs are being carried out within or between sovereign territories? | “Describe how political reforms have promoted democracy in Sub-Saharan Africa since the 1960s.” |
| **Economic** | That which pertains to financial (monetary) value. Resource allocation and jobs are often the focus.  How is this trend/event/change affecting the ways in which financial value is produced, earned, shared, or exchanged?  Often relates to Trade, Industry, or Development Units. | “Explain two economic changes resulting from supranationalism in Europe.” |
| **Environmental** | That which describes the natural world and the impact of human activity on its condition (or vice versa).  How is this trend/event/change affecting nature? How is nature affecting this trend/event/change?  Often relates to issues of sustainability (SDGs) or landscape modification | “Identify and explain one environmental consequence of green energy technology.”  “Identify and explain one environmental consequence of climate change on human settlement patterns.” |
| **Demographic** | Relating to the structure of human populations.  How is this trend/event/change reflected in population increase, decrease, movement, etc.?  Often relates to our Population & Migration units: CBR, CDR, TFR, Pyramids... | “Explain the demographic changes that developing countries have been experiencing in recent decades.” |
| **Spatial** | Describing the relationship or geographic features within a space or between multiple locations.  How does the distribution or pattern of a feature change across this region or between place A and place B?  Often relates to Unit 1. Useful words: distance/direction, clustering, dispersal, elevation, shape, pattern, node, agglomerated, zones, adjacent | “Explain the spatial arrangement of dairy farms in the northeastern United States.”  “Compare the spatial distribution of Starbucks and Dunkin Donuts in New Jersey.” |