

TIPS for SUCCESS from Mrs. Bailey



1. Emphasize CONCEPTS, not detail.
2. Do not read your textbook just to get it done! COMPREHENSION is the key to success in AP biology! Use the Raven Biology (Aris) support website at:
<http://highered.mcgraw-hill.com/classware/selfstudy.do?isbn=0072965819&fromChooseACourse=true>
3. *AP Cliff Notes Review Guide* is the best out there.
4. You will have 90 minutes to answer 63 Multiple-Choice questions and 6 Grid-in Questions. Write your answers immediately on the bubble sheet. Do **NOT** pre-circle on the actual test then bubble at once at the end. You may run out of time!!!
5. Free Response Questions:
 - a. Each Free Response is read by a DIFFERENT person; you cannot “refer back to answer 1 in answer 3”
 - b. Make sure the answer is on the right page or they won’t even grade it. Write CLEARLY and NEATLY! You must use blue or black **INK**. Underline key words.
 - c. There is **NO need** for an Introduction or Conclusion! Do NOT fuss over Grammar or Spelling (“SPELL” phonetically if unsure). There are **NO POINTS** for a “polished essay”. Just show them what you know! No need to “shoot the bull” about how wonderful nature is ... You only have 90 minutes to do all Free Response Questions!
 - d. READ each question carefully and SEVERAL times. Write ONLY on the question. Do not get off-track!

Use the 3 E’s! **Explain – Elaborate – Examples** DEFINE ALL key terms!!! It’s OK to define a term in (---). Even if it doesn’t say “Explain” always do (time allowing) → elaboration points.

If it says provide 2 examples. Only give 2! They will NOT read the 3rd. If you think of a better example after already writing 2, YOU MUST neatly cross out the 1st one and write it.
 - e. To gain elaboration points fully explain one of your 2 examples. Use key vocabulary if you can. If you cannot remember a specific term, explain the concept or structure.
 - f. Do not be surprised by an “imaginary organism”. If you do not recognize the organism, you can still do well answering the question.
 - g. Answer ALL sections of a question and clearly label Parts (a), (b), and (c). **Skip a couple of lines in between Part A, Part B, Part C**. You do not have to do the parts in order!!!! Just clearly label.
 - h. **DO NOT** use slang! (ex) b/c Lots of foreign (non-native speakers) professors grading!!

- i. Unless the question says specifically to draw a picture, **DO NOT USE** pictures. Not a good investment of time. If you must draw a diagram, you will get **NO POINTS**, unless it is fully explained within the text of your essay. You CANNOT just label or say, “Refer to Figure ...”
- j. **GRAPH TIPS:** You must include a title, labeled axes, units, and a line (**DO NOT GO PAST THE LAST POINT!**) or you are given no credit! If there is no room for a title, find a place for it!

INTERPOLATION - within the bounds of data.

EXTRAPOLATION - outside the bounds of data.

6. Sometimes questions are from labs! Do not be tricked by a TWIST on a lab! RATE is a key concept in all labs! If you must design an experiment:
 - a - STATE a HYPOTHESIS by using an “*If ... Then ...*” statement.
 - b - Design a REASONABLE experiment. NO outdoors! LARGE population sample! Detailed experimental design: Say 10 degrees Celsius, not “cold”. Say pH of 4, not acid. METRIC units.
 - c - You must point out the INDEPENDENT and DEPENDENT variables. Only 1 of each!
 - d - Identify your CONTROL GROUP
 - e - Discuss your CONSTANTS
 - f - Organize your data: Data Table and/or Graph.
 - g - Form a conclusion and refer back to your hypothesis.
 - h - You must mention VERIFICATION!
7. There is almost always a STRUCTURE-FUNCTION question! Enzymes come up almost every year in an essay.
8. Do not panic or get angry if you think you are unfamiliar with an essay question. Be CALM and THINK. You know SOMETHING. Write what you know. NEVER leave a Free Response blank! Remember there is NO penalty for a wrong guess in an essay. Just do not CONTRADICT yourself.

If you cannot think of a specific example, write anything reasonable & explain. You may get credit!
9. Some students actually try to get the Foreign AP test. It is NOT the same test.

Remember:

“This is an introductory level college freshman course. I will open the door. You must walk in.”