Know the 2027 examination

Complete APUSH Exam Structure

The standard exam has 55 MCQs in 55 minutes, three required SAQs in 40 minutes, then a DBQ and LEQ in a shared 100-minute section. The recommended writing allocation is 60 minutes for DBQ, including reading, and 40 for LEQ.

Percentage Weight of Each Exam Section

The component weights are 40% MCQ, 20% SAQ, 25% DBQ and 15% LEQ. These are weights, not universal score boundaries. Keep raw maxima distinct: 55 MCQs, nine SAQ points, seven DBQ points and six LEQ points.

What Changed on the APUSH Exam in 2027?

For May 2027, all three SAQs include sources and are required; a single required broad LEQ replaces the previous menu of prompts. DBQ coverage is 1754–1980. Course content, MCQs and scoring rubrics remain unchanged under the published update.

Official APUSH Exam Date — May 7, 2027

The regular APUSH examination is Friday, May 7, 2027, Session 1. Confirm your ordered place and testing school. The public subject schedule does not independently establish your personal registration or reporting time.

APUSH Exam Start Time and Session 1

Session 1 clock time varies by location in 2027. For Dubai/UAE, the published UTC+04:00 table gives 11 a.m. local time. Obtain school arrival instructions rather than importing the 8 a.m. convention used in many U.S. locations.

What to Bring to the APUSH Exam

Bring the charged approved device and charger if required, account credentials, permitted pens/pencils and any required ID. Use the school's checklist for approved accommodations and equipment. Know the route and arrival time so technical preparation does not become a late check-in.

My next action: _____
Evidence or error to revisit: _____

Connect the nine periods

Complete List of Nine Historical Periods

The periods are 1491–1607, 1607–1754, 1754–1800, 1800–1848, 1844–1877, 1865–1898, 1890–1945, 1945–1980 and 1980–present. Overlaps help connect transformations such as expansion, Reconstruction and industrialization instead of suggesting clean historical breaks.

How Historical Periodization Works

Periodization selects boundaries to illuminate change. A war, policy or election can be a useful turning point without transforming every group immediately. Explain why a boundary matters and identify continuities that complicate a simple before-and-after story.

The Eight APUSH Course Themes

The eight themes are national identity; work, exchange and technology; geography/environment; migration/settlement; politics/power; America in the world; regional/cultural identity; and social structures. Use them as analytical lenses, not eight isolated factual lists.

Three Historical Reasoning Processes

The reasoning processes are comparison, causation and continuity/change. Comparison needs meaningful criteria; causation needs a connection beyond sequence; continuity/change requires a defined period and evidence on both sides of a proposed turning point.

How the Nine Units Are Weighted

Units 1 and 9 each have published 4–6% ranges, Unit 2 has 6–8%, and Units 3–8 each have 10–17%. These are independent ranges for examination weighting, not exact percentages to sum into a fixed paper or a guarantee for an individual question.

Connections Between Historical Periods

Trace themes across periods: federal authority from ratification to Reconstruction and the New Deal, or migration from settlement to industrial cities and postwar suburbs. Explain the changed circumstances rather than claiming the same cause operated unchanged in every era.

My next action: _____

Evidence or error to revisit: _____

Read sources in their situation

What Are Primary Sources?

A primary source originates in the historical period or experience being studied, such as a letter, law, photograph or speech. Its status does not make it impartial or complete. Ask what perspective it records and what evidence it cannot supply.

What Are Secondary Sources?

A secondary source interprets earlier evidence, usually from a later standpoint. A historian's argument can synthesize many primary records. Evaluate its claim and support rather than rejecting it solely because its author did not witness the event.

Identifying Historical Context

Context explains the circumstances making the source meaningful. A wartime speech can be shaped by mobilization and dissent; an amendment by a struggle over rights. State the connection rather than attaching a generic event from the same century.

Identifying Author's Point of View

Point of view concerns the author's position and perspective. Explain how a role, experience or interest shapes the argument. “The author is biased” is incomplete unless you show what that changes about the source's content or evidentiary use.

Understanding Source Reliability and Limitations

Reliability is question-specific. A propaganda poster may be poor evidence of actual public unanimity but excellent evidence of an official appeal. Corroborate claims and distinguish what the source shows from what you want it to prove.

Analyzing Graphs and Statistical Sources

Check population, units, dates and denominator. A rising total may reflect population growth rather than a rising rate. A graph can establish a pattern while leaving causes uncertain; identify what additional evidence the causal claim requires.

My next action: _____

Evidence or error to revisit: _____

Answer every SAQ part

2027 SAQ Format and Updates

For 2027, all three SAQs include sources and are required. The source types are secondary text, primary text and non-text. Do not follow old instructions telling you to choose between a third and fourth source-free question.

How SAQ Historical Period Coverage Works

The 2027 SAQs cover developments from 1491–2001, each focusing on a different historical period. This is not a promise of three particular units. Prepare flexible source interpretation across the whole stated span.

Understanding the Three-Part SAQ Structure

Each question contains three independently scored parts, usually labeled a, b and c. Match evidence to each task rather than writing one undifferentiated paragraph. A correct response in one part does not automatically answer another.

Writing Concise Historical Responses

Use complete, concise sentences and avoid an essay introduction. State the answer, supply the needed example and explain the connection. Brevity should remove repetition, not the reasoning required to earn the point.

ACE Method: Answer, Cite, Explain

ACE—answer, cite evidence, explain—is a useful study reminder, not an official compulsory formula. Citation here means historical support, not necessarily a formal bibliography. Adapt the structure to the task and keep the reasoning explicit.

How to Earn All Three SAQ Points

Earn each point by correctly fulfilling that part's historical demand. There is no bonus for an essay-style thesis. Check that each example is accurate, in range and explained to the extent required by the verb.

My next action: _____

Evidence or error to revisit: _____

Use documents to support an argument

Developing a Defensible Thesis Statement

A defensible thesis answers the prompt and establishes a line of reasoning. It can qualify the extent or importance of change. “There were many changes and continuities” is too vague unless the response identifies the relationship it will defend.

Using Document Evidence

Current document-evidence criteria distinguish using at least three documents to address the topic from supporting an argument with at least four. More documents are not automatically better if they are misread or only listed. Explain how each contributes.

Sourcing: Point of View, Purpose, Audience and Historical Situation

For at least two documents, explain how or why point of view, purpose, audience or historical situation matters to the argument. Identifying an author or date alone is insufficient. Choose the sourcing feature that actually changes the evidence's interpretation.

Using Historical Evidence Beyond the Documents

Use at least one specific relevant historical example beyond the packet and explain its argumentative role. The example must be distinct from evidence used for contextualization. A name dropped without development is not an automatic outside-evidence point.

Demonstrating Complex Understanding

Complexity can come from a developed qualification, relationships among causes or meaningful comparison and evidence use. The current rubric permits several routes. It requires more than a phrase announcing complexity or a superficial both-sides sentence.

Understanding the Seven-Point DBQ Rubric

The seven points are thesis one, context one, evidence up to three and analysis/reasoning up to two. Document counts are thresholds within particular criteria, not guaranteed totals. Use the current task-specific decision rules when reviewing a response.

My next action: _____

Evidence or error to revisit: _____

Choose and explain LEQ evidence

One Required Broad LEQ Prompt

Answer the single broad question on the actual form. You can focus on appropriate developments within its scope instead of narrating the entire span. The breadth increases the opportunity to use known evidence, not permission to answer an unrelated question.

Developing a Defensible Thesis

Write a historically defensible claim answering the question and establishing a line of reasoning. Avoid a prompt restatement or an unsupported absolute. The thesis should specify the causal, comparative or change relationship the essay will support.

Establishing Historical Context

Describe broader relevant developments in enough detail to orient the specific argument. Context need not be the most distant fact you remember. Explain how the setting makes the thesis understandable rather than adding an isolated date.

Using at Least Two Relevant Historical Examples

The task expects at least two specific relevant pieces of evidence. To earn stronger evidence credit, use them to support the argument, not merely list them. The quality of the explanation matters alongside the number of examples.

Developing Argumentation and Analysis

Connect evidence with comparison, causation or continuity/change reasoning. Explain how the example changes the reader's judgment of the thesis. A paragraph that ends immediately after naming a law usually leaves its argumentative role incomplete.

Seven-Day APUSH Crash Course

Day 1 diagnose; day 2 review Units 1–3 connections; day 3 Units 4–6; day 4 Units 7–9; day 5 practise required SAQs; day 6 plan and review DBQ/LEQ reasoning; day 7 consolidate errors and logistics. Adapt to your demonstrated gaps.

My next action: _____

Evidence or error to revisit: _____