

Answer the Essay & Short Answer Exam Question Well

Part 2: Analyze & Analysis Questions

FACULTY PROMPTS & PATTERNS OF RESPONSE

Most essay questions contain an Action Word that you can use to help you organize your response to that question. In general, there are six of these Action Words:

Define / Definition of	Analyze / Analysis of	Cause & Effect
Compare / Contrast	Process Analysis / Describe / List	Supported Opinion (Defend/Refute)

2. ANALYZE / ANALYSIS OF QUESTIONS

Answering analyze/ analysis questions:

1. The analyze/analysis question asks you to break something down into its component parts and, in some instances, relating those parts to other parts or systems within the whole.
2. Identify the component parts in an outline.
3. Identify the relationship between the parts, if asked.
4. Summarize how the component parts make up the whole.

Strategies to use in answering analyze/analysis questions:

1. If asked, sketch the relationship between the parts as a way of helping you write your answer without forgetting a component.
2. As you write your essay, take advantage of transitional phrases which will help you make the links between the component parts. Examples of these transitional phrases are:

first	second	third	in addition
moreover	contributing to	while alike	another
besides	likewise	furthermore	

Illustrations of analyze/analysis answers:

↳ Typical analyze/analysis questions would look like these:

1. Analyze the five major types of hormones that regulate plant growth and development.
2. Discuss the three approaches psychologists have taken to understand human perception.

↳ Answers to these questions could look like these:

1. The five major types of hormones that regulate plant growth and development are: Auxins, Cytokinins, Gibberellins, Absciscic Acid, and Ethylene.

First, Auxins stimulate stem . . . and are found in . . . as well as . . .

Second, Cytokinins affect . . . and are found in roots and transported to other parts.

Third, Gibberellins promote seed germination, . . . and are found in young leaves. . .

Fourth, Abscisc Acid inhibit growth, . . . and are found in leaves, stems, . . . and

Fifth, Ethylene promotes fruit ripening, . . .

Each hormone has multiple effects, depending on its site of action, its concentration, and developmental stage of the plant. Generally, no single hormone acts alone. Instead, it is usually the behavior of several plant hormones and their relative concentrations that controls the growth and development of a plant.

2. Psychologists have taken three main approaches in their efforts to understand human perception.

First, is the computational approach. These psychologists try to determine the computations that a machine would have to perform to solve perceptual problems in an effort to help explain how complex computations within the human nervous system might turn raw sensory stimulation into a representation of the world.

The computational approach owes much to two earlier approaches: The constructive approach which . . . and the ecological approach which . . .

↳ Avoid answers that look like these:

1. There are five hormones that sort-of work together to promote plant growth. *(This answer has insufficient information for your professor to judge how much you know and understand about this question.)*
2. There are a couple of approaches (constructive and ecological) that have led to the computational approach. All three do things differently in experiments with human and animal perception. *(This answer is both imprecise and has insufficient information for your professor to judge how much you know and understand about this question.)*