Strategies for Answering Free-Response Questions

1. Identify your task. (Ex: list, identify, distinct, describe, explain, evaluate, analyze, assess, compare, pattern). Answer what is asked, but do so in sentence and paragraph form.

2. Underline the key concepts, models, or processes relating to your task, so you can be sure to include them in the outline and answer. For example, if asked to compare population models, be sure to include the necessary models.

3. Make an outline/planning list; spend around 3- 5 minutes on preparation
     a. *Identify each task*/ point to support the thesis
     b. If multiple tasks are necessary, identify each section on your outline/planning list
     c. Each section should include *supporting claims, arguments, and examples for each task.*
This does not have to be a formal outline. It could just be a bullet point list of things to include.

4. Writing
   a. Underline key points, ideas phrases
   b. Use proper writing techniques. (Complete sentences are required , NO TXT MESSAGING)
   c. Use as many examples as you can. If it asks for 2 examples, list and describe 4. Be complete with your responses.
   d. Integrate different units (Religion, Language, Development, Culture)

6. Be familiar w/ various urban and agricultural land use patterns (Von Thunen, Central Place Theory, urban land use models) and be able to describe them in writing.

7. Use spatial analysis terms such as concentration, densities, clustered, dispersed, frequency, distribution, etc.

8. Be specific with your descriptions.
      a. Use cardinal directions (North, South, East, West)
      b. Use regions (Rust Belt, South Asia, Silicon Valley, NW Europe, etc.)

9. Always include examples!!!!! Write the best example first, and then any others you may have.

Things to avoid

1. Do not use statements that cannot be proven and / or do not pertain to the question. Describing an event does not explain the significance of the event. Your reader can only go by what you say / write, not what you <u>meant</u> to say / write.

2. Writing something on paper does not make it true. If you make a general statement, you must back it up with examples or supporting evidence to validate your argument / point.

3. Avoid giving your opinion. You can point out the strengths and weaknesses of a theory, process, or model, but you need to remain unbiased.

4. Never use "good", "bad", "a lot", and "nice" in answers. **This is a college level class, use college level language.** Use a synonym finder or thesaurus.

5. AP readers do NOT like/accept use of 1st and 2nd person personal pronouns in discussion answers. Using them would be injurious to your score. ONLY USE 3RD PERSON PERSONAL PRONOUNS!!
        EX: He, she, it, him, her, it, his, hers, its