

Errata for CliffsNotes AP Biology, 3rd Edition with CD-ROM
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Exam Grading

Changes have been highlighted below in yellow.

		<i>Percentage of Students</i>		
	<i>Exam Grade</i>	2007	2008	2009
Extremely well qualified	5	19.3	18.3	19.5
Well qualified	4	20.3	15.6	15.5
Qualified	3	21.2	16.1	15.8
Possibly qualified	2	23.2	15.2	15.1
No recommendation	1	15.9	34.6	34.0
Mean Score (1 to 5)		3.04	2.68	2.71

The multiple-choice section is designed with a balance of easy and difficult questions to produce a mean score of 50 out of 100 (on one recent test, the actual mean was 55 percent). Essay questions are also designed to obtain a 50 percent mean score, but scores vary significantly with individual questions and from year to year. On the **2009** exam, mean scores for an essay question ranged from **2.92** to **5.49** (out of a possible 10 points) for the 4 questions. Clearly, both sections of the exam are difficult. They are deliberately written that way so that the full range of students' ability can be measured. In spite of the exam difficulty, however, 61 percent of the students taking the exam in **2007** received a score of 3 or better. Therefore, the AP exam is difficult, but most (prepared) students do well.

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Hints for Taking the Multiple-Choice Section

Changes have been highlighted below in yellow.

1. Don't leave any answers blank. *There is no penalty for guessing.* You get one point for each correct answer. If you leave it blank or if you get it wrong, you get zero points. If you're not sure of the answer to a question, eliminate any answers you think are wrong and then select one of the remaining answers. If you can't eliminate any wrong answers, you still have a 20% probability (1 chance in 5) of choosing the correct answer by guessing. If you can eliminate one or more wrong answers, your probability of getting it right increases.

2. Don't let easy questions mislead you. The multiple-choice questions range from easy to difficult. On one exam, 92 percent of the candidates got the easiest question right, but only 23 percent got the hardest question right. Don't let the easy questions mislead you. If you come across what you think is an easy question, it probably is. Don't suspect that it's a trick question.

3. Budget your time. You have 80 minutes to answer 100 questions, 48 seconds per question. Read the question and consult any diagrams or graphs. Read all of the answers, crossing out any you think are wrong. Then choose or, if necessary, guess the answer and mark your answer sheet. Remember, no penalty for wrong answers! It's better to move on to the next question so that you will have the opportunity to try all the questions.

4. Save the last minute to mark all unanswered questions. Because the test is designed to obtain a mean score of 50 percent, some students may not have enough time to read all of the questions. Should this happen to you, be sure to mark answers for all of your remaining unanswered questions. Remember, no penalty for wrong answers!

5. Return to difficult questions only if you have time. If you return to a question you will need to read the question, read the answers, and consult the diagrams. This is a costly strategy because you already spent time doing that once. Only do this if you've already tried to answer all of the other 100 questions.

6. Carefully answer reverse multiple-choice questions. In a typical multiple-choice question, you need to select the choice that is true. On the AP exam, you will find many *reverse* multiple-choice questions where you need to select the *false* choice. These questions usually use the word "EXCEPT" in sentences such as "All of the following are true EXCEPT . . ." or "All of the following occur EXCEPT . . ." A reverse multiple-choice question is more difficult to answer than regular multiple-choice questions because it requires you to know four true pieces of information about a topic before you can eliminate the false choice. It is equivalent to correctly answering five true-false questions correctly to get one point; and if you get one of the five wrong, you get them all wrong. Reverse multiple-choice questions are also difficult because half way through the question you can forget that you're looking for the false choice. To avoid confusion, do the following: After reading the opening part of the question, *read each choice and mark a T or an F next to each one to identify whether it is true or false.* If you're able to mark a T or an F for each one, then the correct answer is the choice marked with an F. Sometimes you won't be sure about one or more choices, or sometimes you'll have two choices marked F. In these cases, you can concentrate on the uncertain choices until you can make a decision.

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Changes have been highlighted below in yellow.

Section I (Multiple-Choice Questions)

Number of questions you answered correctly:	_____	× 1	=	_____
Number of questions you answer wrong:	_____	× 0	=	0
Number of questions you left unanswered:	_____	× 0	=	0
TOTAL for Section I (0–100 points):			=	_____

Section II (Free-Response Questions)

Score for essay 1 (0–10 points):	_____
Score for essay 2 (0–10 points):	_____
Score for essay 3 (0–10 points):	_____
Score for essay 4 (0–10 points):	_____

Combined Score (Sections I + II)

Total for Section I (from above): _____ × 0.6 = _____
(60% of 100 points = 60 points maximum)

Total for Section II (from above): _____ × 1.0 = _____
(100% of 40 points = 40 points maximum)

Combined Score (add Sections I and II) _____
(0–100 points possible)

Probable AP Grade	
60–100	5
50–59	4
41–49	3
33–40	2
0–32	1