

AP<sup>®</sup> Language and Composition**Real-Life Connections to AP<sup>®</sup> Free Response Questions**

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**Overview:** To reinforce essential AP Free Response skills (argumentation, rhetorical analysis, synthesis) by having students connect question types and strategies to things they already know—such as pop culture, current events, personal experience, or other academic content.

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Identify the core expectations of AP FRQs (Q1–Q3).
- Apply those expectations to nontraditional texts or real-life topics.
- Practice creating thesis statements, evidence connections, and analytical explanations.
- Reflect on their own strengths and strategies for each type of FRQ.

**Before the Lesson**

- Choose or Prepare FRQ Prompts
- Print or upload the student brainstorming worksheet or Google Doc (with thesis/evidence/analysis prompts)
- Print or upload copies of the sample FRQ prompts
- Optional: Create a quick slide deck or whiteboard notes summarizing the structure and purpose of each FRQ and showcase key verbs and scoring expectations
- Create one sample response or strong thesis for each FRQ to model expectations (this can also be pulled from the Collegeboard website)
- Optional: Prepare a “real world topics” list for students who need inspiration (e.g., Stranger Things, Black Panther, Barbie movie, climate change, college admissions, sports scandals)
- Optional: Print rubrics or create a “FRQ checklist” students can use during the activity
- Optional: Set up rotating stations or create numbered table groups if doing a station-based version
- Printed or digital copies of one sample prompt for each AP FRQ
- Student brainstorming worksheet or Google Doc
- Slide deck for mini-lessons (optional)

**Materials Needed**

- Printed or digital copies of one sample prompt for each AP FRQ
- Student brainstorming worksheet or Google Doc
- Slide deck for mini-lessons (optional)
- Timer for station rotation or group activities

**1. Warm-Up: Which FRQ Are You? (5-7 minutes)**

- Students reflect in writing: "Which of the three FRQ questions do you feel strongest in? Which one challenges you most?" "If each FRQ were a character, genre, or pop culture reference, what would they be?"
- Facilitate a brief share-out and discussion.

**2. Quick Mini-Review of Each FRQ Type (10 minutes)**

- Assign or let students choose one FRQ type.
- Students choose a topic they know well from:
  - Pop culture (TV shows, movies, music)
  - History or current events
  - Personal experience or passions
  - Literature/media they love
- Using the selected FRQ style, students:
  - Rewrite the prompt using their topic
  - e.g., "Argue whether The Hunger Games supports or challenges the idea that rebellion is a moral obligation."
  - Plan a mini-response using a template:
    - Thesis
    - Main idea/reason
    - Evidence (real or imagined)
    - Brief analysis
- Share in small groups or as a class

**3. Reflect & Strategize (10 minutes)**

- Students answer: Which FRQ do I understand best now? What clicked when I connected it to something I know? What's one strategy I'll use next time I write a real one?

**Optional Variations**

- Station Rotation: Students move through 3 stations, each with a different FRQ and topic.
- Gallery Walk: Students display their rewritten prompts and mini-responses.
- Timed Writing Challenge: Turn one of their practice prompts into a 15-minute paragraph-writing challenge.

## Student Template (Mini Response Planning)

Section	Notes Example (FRQ 3, The Open Argument Question)
Prompt Topic	Should people be punished for breaking unjust laws?
Personal Connection	Civil Rights Movement, <i>The Hunger Games</i>
Thesis	People are morally obligated to break unjust laws to create change
Reason 1	Unjust laws maintain harmful power structures
Evidence	Katniss defies the Capitol to spark rebellion
Analysis	Shows how individual resistance can awaken collective action