

TOP TEN PRACTICAL TIPS FOR WRITING AN AP PSYCH ESSAY

1. Read the essay **twice**, and read it slowly and carefully.
2. Determine how many points the essay is worth (usually 8-12 points) and picture visually what the rubric is for the grader.
3. Write a brief outline on your essay booklet to this rubric.
4. Address all parts of the question (even if you have to guess) but be concise and technical (rather than creative).
5. Keep an eye on the clock (wear a watch if you don't normally)
6. Assume the grader is STUPID (explain each term or concept). The purpose of the test is to PROVE that you know something. Make it clear.
7. Make examples specific. For example, "Sally can only afford a crummy car and so she...." is specific, whereas, "imagine a girl with a problem and ..." is vague.
8. Don't just repeat words from the question without explaining them. For example, don't say "Rationalization is when you rationalize your reasons for doing something". This doesn't demonstrate that you know what rationalizing is.
9. Write neatly and in pen (no pencil – you can scratch out)
10. If time, reread your essay to make sure it says what you meant for it to say.