

Exam Information

The AP Biology Exam consists of two sections: multiple choice and free response. Both sections include questions that assess students' understanding of the big ideas, enduring understandings, and essential knowledge and the ways in which this understanding can be applied through the science practices. These may include questions on the following:

- the use of modeling to explain biological principles;
- the use of mathematical processes to explain concepts;
- the making of predictions and the justification of phenomena;
- the implementation of experimental design; and
- the manipulation and interpretation of data.

The exam is 3 hours long and includes both a 90-minute multiple-choice section and a 90-minute free-response section that begins with a mandatory 10-minute reading period. The multiple-choice section accounts for half of the student's exam grade, and the free-response section accounts for the other half.

Section I, Part A, consists of 63 multiple-choice questions that represent the knowledge and science practices outlined in the *AP Biology Curriculum Framework* that students should understand and be able to apply. Part B includes 6 grid-in questions that require the integration of science and mathematical skills. For the grid-in responses, students will need to calculate the correct answer for each question and enter it in a grid in the grid-in section on their answer sheet, as shown below.

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student's total score on the multiple-choice section is based on the number of questions answered correctly. Points are not deducted for incorrect answers or unanswered questions.

Each sample multiple-choice and free-response question is followed by a box that shows the question's alignment with the essential knowledge statements, science practices, and learning objectives provided in the *AP Biology Curriculum Framework*. An answer key to the multiple-choice questions can be found on page 163. The scoring guidelines for the free-response questions can be found on page 169.

Time Management

Students need to learn to budget their time to allow them to complete all parts of the exam. Time left is announced by proctors, but students are not forced to move to the next question. They may not budget enough time to complete the grid-in questions in Section I and all of the free-response questions in Section II. Students often benefit from taking a practice exam under timed conditions prior to the actual administration.

How the Curriculum Framework Is Assessed

The following guidelines are presented to show teachers how the curriculum framework beginning on page 5 is assessed on the exam:

- All big ideas, enduring understandings, and essential knowledge components are required and therefore must be taught in the AP Biology course. The learning objectives should be used to guide teaching and learning.
- The exam will assess the application of the science practices.
- Questions on the AP Biology Exam will require a combination of specific knowledge from the concept outline as well as its application through the science practices.
- In order to answer multiple-choice questions correctly, students will not be required to recall specific illustrative examples. However, an illustrative example may appear on the exam provided that the question includes sufficient information to enable students to answer the question.

- For the free-response questions, students will be expected to provide appropriate scientific evidence and reasoning to support their responses. Students can draw upon the illustrative examples or any other appropriate, relevant examples in order to assist in answering the questions.
- For those more quantitative questions throughout the AP Biology Exam, students will be allowed to use basic four-function calculators (with square root).
- As the emphasis of quantitative questions is on the application of quantitative skills and mathematical reasoning, students will not be required to recall specific formulas. A formula list (see Appendix B) will be provided within the exam materials.