



# Written Elaboration

## Answering Homework Questions

Available in the format below:



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## **Written Elaboration: Answering Questions**

I developed this handout after the educational supervisor at my high school, for whom I have tremendous respect, shared her insight with me: perhaps some of our students are not comprehensively answering their homework questions because they don't know what amount of content is sufficient, not because they're not able to be comprehensive. This handout includes a discussion on the importance of elaborating and a rating scale for different answers to the same question. Middle school and high school students learn to distinguish between extra words and extra meaning, and learn to more fully answer homework and test questions.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Written Elaboration

Your teachers want you to **elaborate** when you are answering homework questions. They want to make sure that you understand the material.

Your teachers want you to **elaborate** when you are writing essays. They want to hear your descriptions, listen to your arguments supporting your opinions, and understand your thoughts.

**Rate the elaboration** of the following responses on a scale from 1-10.

(10 is best)

**Note:** To elaborate does not mean to increase the number of words (the length of the response), but rather to increase the number of relevant ideas and the level of complexity of those ideas.

Given a Global History homework question: **Why did Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany become allies during World War II?**

**Responses:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Similar ideas.

\_\_\_\_\_ They had similar ideologies.

\_\_\_\_\_ Italy and Germany became allies during World War II because they had very similar ideologies.

\_\_\_\_\_ Italy and Germany became allies during the second World War which took place during the 1940's because although their ideologies went by different names ("Fascism" in Italy, "Nazism" in Germany, and "Militarism" in Japan), they were actually very similar.

\_\_\_\_\_ Italy and Germany became allies during World War II because their ideologies were very similar, and because they wanted to preserve their nations.

\_\_\_\_\_ Italy and Germany became allies during World War II for several reasons, including the similarity of their ideologies, their sense of nationalism and desire for power, and their view that the alliance could be a means of obtaining territory.

