

Task Verbs Used in Free-Response Questions

The following task verbs are commonly used in the free-response questions:

Calculate: Perform mathematical steps to arrive at a final answer, including algebraic expressions, properly substituted numbers, and correct labeling of units. Showing work is required.

Describe: Provide the relevant characteristics of a specified topic.

Explain: Provide information about how or why a relationship, process, pattern, position, situation, or outcome occurs, using evidence and/or reasoning to support or qualify a claim. Explain “how” typically requires analyzing the relationship, process, pattern, position, situation, or outcome; whereas, explain “why” typically requires analysis of motivations or reasons for the relationship, process, pattern, position, situation, or outcome. Also phrased as “give one reason.”

Identify: Indicate or provide information about a specified topic, without elaboration or explanation.

Justify: Provide evidence to support, qualify, or defend a claim and/or provide reasoning to explain how that evidence supports or qualifies the claim.

Make a claim: Make an assertion that is based on evidence or knowledge.

Propose a solution: Provide a proposed solution to a problem based on evidence or knowledge.