**Civics and Economics Writing Suggestions for C&E Study Guides**

Here is how you answer the question:

1. Underline the verbs in the question that tell you what to do.
2. **Tailor your answer** to what is called for in the verbs

List: State, or briefly identify. This can usually in a sentence or two.

Identify: Same as “list”, but needs to include who, what, where, when… Again this can usually be done in a sentence or two.

Define: Tell the meaning of… Could be done in one sentence, but would be better if answered with two. The second sentence would be an example.

Discuss: Write about, consider, or examine… Could be done in one sentence, but would be better if answered with two. The second sentence would be an example.

Describe: Give an account of… This shows some understanding. This cannot be done in one simple sentence. An account gives the impression of a story, with details and examples. This will need to be answered with a minimum of two or three sentences.

Example – Describe two limits that the United States Supreme Court has placed on congressional redistricting.

Evaluate: Make a judgment, appraisal, or give an opinion of. In this verb, you would need to take a stance or a position. This would take several sentences, as you must take the position and then give reasons, with examples, as to why that position is taken.

Support: Provide reasons that back up an argument. Again, cannot be done without examples or details and will need multiple sentences to receive full credit.

Explain: Make clear or plain, tell why/how, give reasons or causes for… This cannot be done in less than 2 sentences. This is where you must be sure to **complete the circle** and **avoid minimalism**. Each explain question will have at least two parts following the explain verb. You should write one sentence minimum for each part and then write one sentence minimum connected the two together. This is what is meant by completing the circle.

1. Write in **complete sentences**.
2. **Skip lines** between each part of the question to make your answers easier for the reader to grade.
3. Use **vocabulary words** that pertain specifically to this class, wherever possible. For example: In an attempt to keep control of the Senate, the Republican state legislature used gerrymandering, drawing odd shaped districts to encourage the election of specific people or groups of people.
4. If the question calls for you to do something such as “Explain three reasons for…” or “Discuss two reason why…” the **number your responses** to make your answer easier for the reader to grade. Example: The first reason… then the second reason…
5. Unless the actual question asked you for a judgment, you do **NOT** need to
   * Do not give your opinion. The reader is not concerned with what you think, but only what you know and can prove.
   * Write a thesis. Most questions include the thesis in the prompt. Put your time and effort into answering the question. If this helps you get started, you may reword the prompt as your thesis. This will help you prepare for the US History Exam and better prepare for English classes, as you will be writing thesis statements in each of those classes.