

Tip #2

Note the same verbs in MC questions

Find the Task Verbs in MCQs!

For example, the verbs appear in question stems like this:

Examples:

In the 1760's, the Industrial Revolution began in England. **Identify** the factors that led to the Industrial Revolution.

- A. Excellent access to minerals and geologic deposits
- B. Excellent access to external markets and large amounts of raw steel
- C. **Excellent access to cheap raw materials, capital and large amounts of coal**
- D. Excellent access to cheap labor and a command economy
- E. Excellent access to other industrial powers to create an agglomeration effect

Economies of agglomeration are **defined** as

- A. the economic development of country that is achieved by creating a forward capital.
- B. **related industries that cluster together for benefits, such as cheaper supplies and larger markets.**
- C. businesses that require multiple suppliers for their parts so that their production will remain constant.
- D. large companies or corporations that consist of diverse divisions.
- E. industries that produce "sticky" or "tacky" items, such as glue, honey or chewing gum.

Which of the following best **describes** a scenario where Von Thunen's model would be most applicable today at the same scale he originally intended?

- A. Describing the integration of ConAgra to include products from all over the world
- B. Describing the location of grain farming around Atlanta
- C. Determining the location of truck farming in the United States
- D. **Determining the location of a dairy farm outside a city in Honduras**
- E. Determining the best location for livestock ranching around Boston, Massachusetts

Exam Section I: 60 MCQs (60 minutes)

Each MCQ has...

- A stem (with or without a stimulus), which is the question itself.
- Four distractors, which are answer choices that are not correct. Some distractors can be marginally or somewhat correct but are NOT the best answer.
- A key, or the BEST answer.

Expect 6-8 MCQ sets. A set is a group of 2-3 MCQs that are linked together by a common topic, theme, or stimulus.

Helpful Hints in MCQ Stems

Read the question carefully! In addition to seeing the familiar verbs, the stem of the question itself might provide assistance in answering the question.

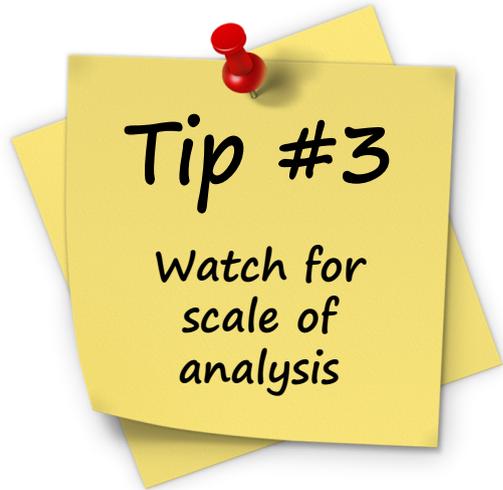
Sometimes, regardless of what the question is asking, you can find clues to what you might already know, for example: a country's climate, main exports, or agricultural practices.

Part of a stem might be: Sugarcane is a global commodity that is demanded for several industries and products. Brazil produces over 725,000 TMT (thousand metric tons) of sugarcane each year.

How does the stem help? It tells you that...

- Brazil is a major producer of sugarcane. **You did not need to know that.**
- Sugarcane is grown in **subtropical** and **equatorial** climates
- Sugarcane is grown mainly by **plantation agriculture**
- Sugarcane is a **luxury crop** with **colonial** roots

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The Four Scales

The local, national, regional, and global scales each have benefits and drawbacks depending on whether you want the data to be very specific or broader. You must understand how each of these benefits and drawbacks influence how the data are interpreted.

- Local scale analysis can demonstrate specificity and more detail, but you lose the overall regional or national perspective.
- The national perspective loses the individual detail on a map but provides a wider range of analysis.
- The regional scale loses even more detail but provides the context of adding more countries to the analysis.
- The global scale provides the largest range of land in the perspective but loses the individual detail of specific locations.

Look for Clues

It is imperative that you be able to correctly identify the scale of analysis on multiple-choice questions and FRQs on the Exam. One common mistake often made on the Exam is giving examples at the wrong scale, which does not warrant any points. Even though the example might be correct, it is marked as incorrect if it uses the wrong scale of analysis. You can find clues in the question that will help you determine the correct scale of analysis. Something as simple as the title of the map, chart, or graph can indicate the scale. For example, a title of “Brazil” tells the us that it is a national scale, whereas a title of “South America” indicates that it is a regional scale. Practice this skill of determining the scale by reading the titles of various maps.

A Word about Changing Scale in FRQs

- You must be able to **recognize and respond** to a change of scale within a question.
- It is **likely** you will **not** be prompted to change scales in the question(s).
- Multiple-choice questions will often provide the scale involved with the question, but FRQs generally require you to **infer** the scale included.

Regions Can Be Tricky

Recognize that regional scale maps can be used both above and below the national scale. The term region could refer to a continent, such as Europe, or it can refer to a smaller area, such as “the South” in the U.S. Make sure that you understand how the context of a “region” can change depending on the scale of the map.

Things to Remember

- “scale of analysis” = “scale of aggregation” = “level of aggregation”
- Consider how the data/map/image/table has been summarized for you to interpret
- Because of the level of aggregation, what answers can you determine? (think of the “limitation” and “the degree to which...” skills)
- Because of the level of aggregation, what information is missing? What can you NOT determine without more information?
- Always identify the scale of analysis and make sure your response is written in that context.



Important Tips by Unit

- **Unit 1** Sometimes words can sound similar. Read carefully. Be sure not to confuse formal region and functional region. A formal region is a geographical area inhabited by people who have one or more common traits, such as a language, religion, or system of livelihood. A functional region is a geographic area that has been organized to function politically, socially, culturally, or economically on its own.

- **Unit 2** A common mistake made on the exam is to compare two theories by arguing for one side over another, never showing why the other side is weaker. When asked to “compare,” such as comparing the opposing viewpoints on Malthusian ideas, be sure to address *both* sides.
- **Unit 3** Understand centripetal and centrifugal forces in a variety of contexts. Remember that cultural features (language, religion, ethnicity, etc.) are not just on one side or the other. Focus on the processes that create the geographic context. Avoid words like all or none in sentences when describing concepts such as centripetal and centrifugal forces.
- **Unit 4** Be sure not to confuse colonialism and the direct rule of other peoples and their territories with neocolonialism, the indirect rule of less powerful countries by more-powerful countries through economic and political strategies.
- **Unit 5** Remember the distinguishing factors between the First, Second, and Third/Green Agricultural Revolutions.

- **Unit 6** A common mistake is to assume that the local or national government shapes all of a city’s infrastructure or spatial patterns. Don’t give too much power to the government and ignore the impact of developers, corporations, and private citizens.
- **Unit 7** Place matters. Don’t assume women’s issues in rural areas of less-developed countries are the same as women’s issues in suburban parts of the United States. Focus on the geographic and economic context first to better answer the gendered component of the issue.

About Models

Recognize that models are oversimplified versions of reality. Models are not intended to be maps but rather are meant to provide context for why things are the way they are. The von Thünen model in particular provides agricultural context in relation to economic value of the farm and the crops being grown.

Remember to think about the **WHY OF WHERE!**
Don’t forget about Geographic **Models and Theories!**
Answer in the order that works **BEST** for you!
OUTLINING is your friend!



Image analysis!
Which term doesn’t fit?
Don’t be perfect...just gather points
Outline to organize thoughts

Final Tips to Prepare

- **Read** the question *carefully* and *outline* your response before you write.
- **Remember the Verbs.** If asked to describe a process using an example, do not make the mistake of defining the process. The definition may be perfect, but no point will be given if the question asked you to describe.
- **Be specific.** Avoid using words like always, lots, bunches, and other non-specific words.
- **Avoid stereotypes.** Provide actual geographic answers.
- **Always write in sentence form.** Never use bullets or provide diagrams in place of written answers.

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