

Exam Overview

The AP Biology Exam assesses student understanding of the science practices and learning objectives outlined in the course framework. The exam is 3 hours long and includes 60 multiple-choice questions and 6 free-response questions. A four-function, scientific, or graphing calculator is allowed on both sections of the exam. The details of the exam, including exam weighting and timing, can be found below:

Section	Question Type	Number of Questions	Exam Weighting	Timing
I	Multiple-choice questions	60	50%	90 minutes
II	Free-response questions	6	50%	90 minutes
	Question 1: Interpreting and Evaluating Experimental Results (8–10 pts)			
	Question 2: Interpreting and Evaluating Experimental Results with Graphing (8–10 pts)			
	Question 3: Scientific Investigation (4 pts)			
	Question 4: Conceptual Analysis (4 pts)			
	Question 5: Analyze Model or Visual Representation (4 pts)			
	Question 6: Analyze Data (4 pts)			

The exam assesses content from each of four big ideas for the course:

1. Evolution
2. Energetics
3. Information Storage and Transmission
4. Systems Interactions

The exam also assesses each of the eight units of the course with the following exam weightings on the multiple-choice section of the AP Exam:

Unit	Exam Weighting
1: Chemistry of Life	8–11%
2: Cell Structure and Function	10–13%
3: Cellular Energetics	12–16%
4: Cell Communication and Cell Cycle	10–15%
5: Heredity	8–11%
6: Gene Expression and Regulation	12–16%
7: Natural Selection	13–20%
8: Ecology	10–15%

Section I: Multiple-Choice

The first section of the AP Biology Exam includes 60 multiple-choice questions appearing either as individual questions or in sets of typically four to five questions per set. All six AP Biology science practices are assessed in the multiple-choice section with the following exam weightings:

Science Practice	Exam Weighting
1: Concept Explanation	25–33%
2: Visual Representations	16–24%
3: Questions and Methods	8–14%
4: Representing and Describing Data	8–14%
5: Statistical Tests and Data Analysis	8–14%
6: Argumentation	20–26%

Section II: Free-Response

The second section of the AP Biology Exam includes two long questions, and four short-answer questions. Each of the four short-answer questions will focus on a different big idea and a different unit of instruction.

Free-response question 1: Interpreting and Evaluating Experimental Results is an 8 to 10-point question that presents students with an authentic scenario accompanied by data in a table and/or graph. This question assesses student ability to do the following in four question parts:

- Part A (1 to 2 points): Describe and explain biological concepts, processes, or models.
- Part B (3 to 4 points): Identify experimental design procedures.
- Part C (1 to 3 points): Analyze data.
- Part D (2 to 4 points): Make and justify predictions.

Free-response 2: Interpreting and Evaluating Experimental Results with Graphing is an 8 to 10-point question that presents students with an authentic scenario accompanied by data in a table. This question assesses students' ability to do the following in four question parts:

- Part A (1 to 2 points): Describe and explain biological concepts, processes, or models.
- Part B (4 points): Construct a graph, plot or chart and use confidence intervals or error bars.
- Part C (1 to 3 points): Analyze data.
- Part D (1 to 3 points): Make and justify predictions.

Free-response question 3: Scientific Investigation is a 4-point question that presents students with a description of a lab investigation scenario. This question assesses students' ability to do the following in four question parts:

- Part A (1 point): Describe biological concepts or processes.
- Part B (1 point): Identify experimental procedures.
- Part C (1 point): Predict results.
- Part D (1 point): Justify predictions.

Free-response question 4: Conceptual Analysis is a 4-point question that presents students with an authentic scenario describing a biological phenomenon with a disruption. This question assesses students' ability to do the following in four question parts:

- Part A (1 point): Describe biological concepts or processes.
- Part B (1 point): Explain biological concepts or processes.
- Part C (1 point): Predict the causes or effects of a change in a biological system.
- Part D (1 point): Justify predictions.

Free-response question 5: Analyze Model or Visual Representation is a 4-point question that presents students with a description of an authentic scenario accompanied by a visual model or representation. This question assesses students' ability to do the following in four question parts:

- Part A (1 point): Describe characteristics of a biological concept, process, or model represented visually.
- Part B (1 point): Explain relationships between different characteristics of a biological concept or process represented visually.
- Part C (1 point): Represent relationships within a biological model.
- Part D (1 point): Explain how a biological concept or process represented visually relates to a larger biological principle, concept, process, or theory.

Free-response question 6: Analyze Data is a 4-point question that presents students with data in a graph, table, or other visual representation. This question assesses students' ability to do the following in four question parts:

- Part A (1 point): Describe data.
- Part B (1 point): Describe data.
- Part C (1 point): Use data to evaluate a hypothesis or prediction.
- Part D (1 point): Explain how experimental results relate to biological principles, concepts, processes, or theories.