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| **Analyze** | **Explain how AND why something occurred by examining the component parts (social, political, economic) and their relationship with one another.****Any question that uses “how” and/or “why” is an analysis question even if the word “analyze” is not in the prompt.** | **“Analyze the major technological changes that took place in America from 1870 to 1900 and describe what significant social ramifications they had.”** |
| **Assess the validity**  | How true is the statement? Pay attention to positive, negative, and disputable aspects, citing the judgment of known authorities and your own. You must take a stance here—how true is the statement and why? | **“Assess the validity of the following statement: ‘Thomas Jefferson’s political philosophy can best be described as revolutionary.’”** |
| **Evaluate** | Which factor was most important? You usually need to rank several events or factors and specify which is most and which is least significant. |  |
| **To what extent** | This prompt frequently requires you to specify a cause and effect relationship and then state which causes were more important. Or, indicate the criteria on which you base your judgment and cite specific instance of how it applies in this case. | **(See prompt below)** |
| **Discuss or Consider** | These are frequently used in free response prompts. They should be written as analysis essays. Examine key points and possible interpretations, giving reasons for and against the case. Draw a final conclusion. | **“Discuss the extent to which nineteenth-century Transcendentalism was or was not a conservative cultural and intellectual movement.”** |
| **Compare/****Contrast** | Identify the characteristics or qualities of two or more things, comparing what they have in common (compare) and differences (contrast). | **“Compare the religious revival of the First Great Awakening to that of the Second.”****“Contrast the Federalist and Antifederalist arguments for or against the ratification of the new Federal Constitution.”** |
| **Explain** | **Tell how things work or how they came to be, including descriptions or analysis. This must have DETAIL to give it meaning.** | **“Explain how economic, political, and religious factors promoted European explorations from 1450 to 1525.”** |

**Commonly used task words/verbs in writing prompts and how to approach them**