

Whelan's Way to Wonderful Writing: Historical Essays
(with help from Etaoin Shrdlu and American River College)

Goal: A historical analysis interprets an aspect of history. It seeks to explain an event or a process through the theory developed by the historian. The theory need not be grand in design, but it should try to analyze (not retell) the information presented in documents.

Thesis Statement: The thesis is the most important sentence in any paper. It is a single sentence that tells you reader exactly what the paper is trying to say. If the thesis is not clear, the paper cannot possibly succeed. The thesis must take a firm position, and the remainder of the paper must support that position. Normally, the thesis comes at the end of your first paragraph. Some essays work well with a divided thesis. Each part of the divided thesis becomes a separate body paragraph or paragraphs.

Introduction: The overall structure of the introduction is a logical development arranged from the general to the specific. Do not present evidence in this section. Create a groundwork for your essay by starting with general sentences that relate to your subject -- statements with which all readers would agree. The latter part of this paragraph comes to a sharp focus with the thesis sentence (or sentences).

Body: The body paragraphs work together to prove the thesis. For dramatic effect they should be structured in a pattern from the least to the most important. The pattern for each paragraph is STATEMENT followed by PROOF followed by ANALYSIS. The statement is the topic sentence of the paragraph, which puts forth an idea in support of the thesis. Proof is material from the text offered as evidence of the statement. Direct quotation from documents are impressive, provided they focus directly on the statement and are not too long. Analysis is a detailed examination of how the proof actually supports the statement. Analysis is the most difficult part of historical essay writing-- and crucial to your success.

Conclusion: The first sentence of the conclusion sums up everything you have said in the paper. When you have summed up the content of the paper as briefly as possible in the first sentence or two, you should end your paragraph with a few, more general sentences commenting on why anyone should care about the topic. Simply stating the obvious will not work -- dazzle the reader with your insight.

D-B-Q Tips for AP World History.

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. DBQs are the easiest essays to write, because you do not need to know anything about the topic, and the rubric is the most clear-cut in terms of how to get the points.
2. The biggest problem with the DBQ is organizing all the information, therefore you should take at least the full 10-minute reading period to decide where you want to go with it.
3. As with all the world history essays, the thesis is the key, as a well-organized thesis pretty much allows the essay to write itself.
4. You should **MEMORIZE** the generic scoring rubric for every type of essay. If your teacher does not quiz you on them, then practice it yourself. **REALLY!** The readers are looking for ways to give you the points, if you know what the rubric is looking for you can make it easy for them to find.
5. Remember that you need to get all seven basic core points in order to be eligible for expanded core points. But really, do not worry about the expanded cores. Getting 6s & 7s on all three essays could easily get you a “5” if you do well on the multiple choice.

GENERIC DBQ SCORING RUBRIC

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Has acceptable thesis | 1 |
| 2. Understands basic meaning of the documents | 1 |
| 3. Supports thesis with appropriate evidence from all (or all but 1 of) the documents | 2 |
| 4. Analyzes point of view in at least two of the documents | 1 |
| 5. Analyzes documents by grouping them in two or three ways (depends on question) | 1 |
| 6. Identifies & explains need for one type of appropriate additional document/source | 1 |

PREPARATION PROCESS (based on the 2005 actual DBQ)

1. When you get the packet of documents, read the question. Look for the operative words that will tell you what your categories should be and underline them. For example “Analyze the ISSUES that Muslim Leaders in South Asia AND North Africa confronted in DEFINING their NATIONALISM.” What sort of issues would you expect? (Foreign interference, separation of church and state, conflict with other religions, etc.). Is there a difference between the two regions? (Hinduism in South Asia, tradition of independence, etc.) How does one define nationalism? (Is it just independence, is it ethnic, is it tied to religion).
2. Think about how you will likely categorize these topics. In this case secular versus religious visions of nationalism is likely. However, do not get too wedded to these ideas, as the documents should drive your decision, regardless of your outside knowledge (or lack thereof).
3. Look at each of bylines for the articles. Note things about the author (are they religious leaders, etc.), look at the location (and time) they come from, the type of source (editorial, letter, etc.) and who the audience would be. If ANY of these things clue you in as to what they are likely to say, for instance if it pertains to the split between India and Pakistan, write a note that identifies this as a bias.
4. Go back and read the first document. Write a one-sentence summary of what that document is saying. Two sentences at most.
5. Read the document again. Highlight or underline the key parts in the document that clue you in to what they are saying. This should not be more than 3-4 sentences or phrases.
6. Repeat steps 4-5 for each document.
7. Decide what the broad categories are that you want to use. Documents should be grouped into either two or three perspectives, using a T-chart or the like. For example, these documents lend themselves to a pro- or anti- European grouping. You could also have a neutral category. **DO NOT** try to be too sophisticated. The readers are not looking for you to convince them of something important, they just want to see that you can make sense of disparate sources of information. Simple is good, as long as it is logical. Also, think about what perspective is missing—a cleric, a non-Muslim living in the country, etc. Think about what **TYPES** of people you would like to hear from that might have a different perspective, **NOT** what they are going to say. These can also be selected to provide balance between the two categories, such as when if only one group has a document from a politician.

WRITING THE DBQ

1. Now you have all the basic information to start writing. Your thesis is critical, as it provides the framework for the entire document. As a reader, I want to know what you are going to be saying. If I cannot understand what you are trying to support, it will be hard for you to earn the two points for #3 on the rubric.
2. A thesis needs to do three things: 1) Address the question; 2) Take a position; and 3) Provide organizational categories. It will require an entire paragraph to do these things, but, if done well, it will get you as many as four of the seven core points.
 - a. Addressing the question: Your thesis should say "According to the documents provided"... and then make a general statement that addresses, but does not necessarily answer the question, for example "there were several issues that Muslim leaders confronted when defining their nationalism." Your next sentence should give more specifics. "One of the most critical issues was what sort of relationship they would have with their formal colonial masters in Europe.
 - b. Taking a position and providing organizational categories: Now go back to your groupings of the documents. You start by listing and generalizing about the documents in each of your groups. "Most of the documents, including the letter by Khan (doc #1), article by Azad (doc #3), speech by Zakaria (#5) and speech by Bella (#6) advocate working with the Europeans, at least to some extent. On the other hand, Lutfi as-Sayyid (doc #2) and book by Husayn (doc #4) push for rejection of European influence." Note: There are some weaknesses in the grouping, but it does not matter as long as you focus on the info in the documents that supports it.
 - c. The end of this thesis is also an excellent time to identify the other sources that you would like to see.
3. As a reader, at this point I have given you point #1, am pretty well prepared to give you point #2, have given you #5 and #6 if you chose to put it in there.
4. Based on the, you should now be expanding on the first category that you identified, those that look for positive relationships with Europe. Start with a restatement of what you said in the thesis, adding a BIT of sophistication to your analysis. "Most of the documents argued either for cooperation with Europe or at least adoption of some of Europe's advanced ideas."
5. Next, provide a brief blurb on each, including point-of-view when appropriate. This comes directly from your one-sentence summaries that you wrote during the reading period, but each should be supplemented by the key things you underlined. "Khan (doc #1) argues that the British education system should be adopted in order to help them advance, and that this can be done while keeping true to Muslim ideals. He cites Muhammad as saying "Muslims should seek knowledge even if they have to go to China..." However, it should be noted that that Khan is the founder of the Anglo-Oriental College, therefore he is likely biased in favor of many western ideas.
6. After doing this for each of the articles, tie them together with another blanket statement about how they all support cooperation with the west to varying degrees. All of this should be a single paragraph. This is where you can insert your request for additional sources. Make a statement such as "While these documents seem to argue for cooperation with Europe, it would be helpful to see a document written by a religious leader, as they might be more resistant to western influences".
7. The next paragraph should do the same thing for the other grouping.
8. Go back and read your essay as if you are grading it. Check to see that you have gotten each point in the basic core. If so, you are done. If not, for example if you forgot to include bias/point-of-view on two documents, or to identify an additional article, add another paragraph with that info, even if it seems awkward. There are no "style points" in AP, you either get the point or you do not. Likewise, there is no penalty for incorrect information, as long as the preponderance of your information is correct.

AP World History Comparative Essay Generic Rubric Overview

Basic Core <i>Historical skills and knowledge required to show competence.</i>	Expanded Core <i>Historical skills and knowledge required to show excellence.</i>
<p>1. Has acceptable thesis. 1 Point <i>(addresses comparison of the issues or themes specified)</i></p> <p>2. Addresses all parts of the of the question, though not necessarily evenly or thoroughly. 2 Points <i>(Addresses most parts of the question: for example, deals with differences but not similarities)</i> (1)</p> <p>3. Substantiates thesis with appropriate evidence. 2 Points <i>(Partially substantiates thesis with appropriate evidence.)</i> (1)</p> <p>4. Makes at least three relevant, direct comparisons between or among societies. 1 Point</p> <p>5. Analyzes at least three reasons for a similarity or difference identified in a direct comparison. 1 Point</p>	<p>Expands beyond basic core of 1-7 Points. The basic core of a score of 7 must be achieved before a student can earn expanded core points. 0-2 Points</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Has a clear, analytical, and comprehensive thesis ▪ Addresses all parts of the question (as relevant): comparisons, chronology, causation, connections, themes, interactions, content. ▪ Provides ample historical evidence to substantiate thesis. ▪ Relates comparisons to larger global context. ▪ Makes several direct comparisons consistently between or among societies. ▪ Consistently analyzes the causes and effects of relevant similarities and differences. <p style="font-size: small; margin-top: 10px;">d) WHIC - time and place "SHOW OFF THE" + 1) know your stuff - study - point out what you know of thesis/ time period</p>
Subtotal 7 Points	Subtotal 2 Points

TOTAL 9 Points

Comparative Essay Notes

1. The time allotted for the essay is 40 minutes, 5 minutes of which should be spent planning and/or outlining the answer.

Sample Comparative Essay

Unfree labor systems were widely used for agricultural production in the period 1450-1750.

Discuss the major similarities and differences between TWO of the following systems:

- Caribbean slavery
- North American slavery
- West African slavery
- Russian serfdom

① ACCT SOCAIA
② AP? a) v. low
• compare (contrast)



Comparative Structure for Essay

I Introduction

- Thesis
- Roadmap

II 1st Sentence for each body paragraph should be a comparative (a direct comparison sentence)
2nd sentence then explains/analysis the direct comparison in the first sentence

III Then subsequent sentences in the paragraph should provide at least 2 info statements/evidence in each paragraph.

IV

V Conclusion

Keep in Mind:

- * the thesis can only be counted as the thesis and not also as a direct comparison
- * use linking comparative words such as "whereas" to help set up direct comparisons
- * if in the comparative question there is a parenthetical qualifier such as (political, economic, cultural), it is not required that evidence is given for each. This parenthetical qualifier helps students think about what to write.

Thesis Statement Construction

A thesis statement must

- Fully address the question asked (not the one you'd prefer to answer)
- Take a position in answering the question asked
- Provide organization categories to support your position (these categories will be the subject of the topic sentences in the main body paragraphs)

Compare urban-based societies with pastoral/nomadic societies: political, social (class, labor, and gender), economic, religious, and cultural needs and organizational patterns.

b) *Notes*

a) Find the most important noun + verb + (100% test)

b) S W TEST

1. who

2. what

3. when

4. where

5. why

6. how

c) Create a thesis statement using options from highlighted area

d) Use the thesis statement to guide your thesis

e) Evidence

a) Give your thesis a supporting evidence

GENERIC CORE-SCORING GUIDE FOR AP WORLD HISTORY

CHANGE OVER TIME ESSAY

BASIC CORE

HISTORICAL SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED TO SHOW COMPETENCE

Has acceptable thesis.

Must state a continuity and a change

(Addresses the global issues and the time period(s) specified.)

Addresses all parts of the question, though not necessarily evenly or thoroughly. ---2 points

(Addresses most parts of the question: for example, deals with changes but not continuities) -----1 point

Substantiates thesis with appropriate historical evidence.-----2 points

(Partially substantiates thesis with appropriate historical evidence----1 point

Uses relevant world historical context effectively to explain change over time and/or continuity

Analyzes the process of change over time and / or continuity

**SUBTOTAL ----- 7
POINTS**

EXPANDED CORE

HISTORICAL SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED TO SHOW EXCELLENCE

Expands beyond basic core of 1-7 points. the basic core score of 7 must be achieved before a student can earn expanded core points. ----0-2 Points

EXAMPLES:

Has a clear, analytical and comprehensive thesis.

Analyzes all issues of the question (as relevant): global context, chronology, causation, change, continuity, effects, content.

Addresses all parts of the question evenly.

Provides ample historical evidence to substantiate thesis.

Provides links with relevant ideas, events, trends in an innovative way.

**SUBTOTAL -----2
POINTS**

TOTAL 9 POINTS

NOTE TO STUDENTS:

Most students merely tell what happened. They do not analyze or show cause.

(CCOT) Change and Continuity Over Time Essay

- First underline the important words in the question.
- Made a crude timeline for Change and apply the theme of the question to it. Use the review packets and book for more details depending on the topic or issues in the question. **Be sure to cover the entire time period.**
- Make a crude timeline for Continuities and apply the theme of the question to it.

1. Write a thesis that addresses both change and continuity within the time period. In the thesis, both change and continuity must be qualified. The thesis must be in the introduction or conclusion. It cannot be split. It cannot not just restate the question.

Example of an introduction and thesis:

In the period 600 to 1450, China's government changed from Chinese rule to the rule of the Mongols which influenced China politically, economically and socially, while China's unique identity and culture stayed the same.

CCOT Thesis –If you are confused write a thesis for the question using the formula below:

In the period _____ to _____,
_____ changed from
_____ to _____,
while _____ stayed the same.

2. Use facts to support your thesis.

3. Tell Why

- Analyze the changes over time and the continuities
- Analysis means asking and answering why the changes and continuities occurred.
- Analysis works best when it is integrated into the body paragraphs.
- Your essay should include the word because. "This is significant because... This changed over time because..."

4. Think big-Did you discuss the Global context of the changes and continuities?

Use your review packet and the section introductions in textbook.

Relates the changes and continuities to a larger global context

The global context point can be earned by effectively showing:

- Comparisons to other regions
- Connection to global processes
- Interaction among regions

A simple statement is all that is required to earn this point.

- *Mongol women like European women did not bind their feet as the Chinese women did.*
- *China was part of the Pax Mongolia.*
- *China, under Mongol rule, was involved in trade on the revived Silk Road.*