

Historical Thinking Skills – AP Euro/World – M. Rivas (West Broward High)

Use this when you speak, listen, read and write History.

1. Periodization - Dividing history into eras, knowing the main characteristics of the era, identifying turning points and being able to compare one era to another. How one defines historical periods depends on what one considers most significant in society – economic, social, religious or cultural life.

- What specific dates or years are chosen to begin and end the period? Why were these dates chosen?
- What are the common characteristics of a time period identified by historians (e.g., “the Renaissance” or “the second Industrial Revolution”)?
- Why did a source define a specific date as the beginning of a period but another source starts the period with another date?
- How would choosing a different beginning/end change the story of what happened?

It may sound like this:

“The (state the name of the period or the century or whatever is part of the prompt) is known for... (describe the main features of the era).”

“The year.... is used as a marker for the beginning of because...”

“While some historians use... as the end of the... others prefer to use...” This difference is due to the fact that while the former focuses on the (political, social, economic, cultural) shift of..., the latter places a greater emphasis on as a turning point in this (region or era).”

Where in your DBQ/LEQ? Introduction and body paragraphs

2. Patterns of Continuity and Change

- What has changed within a specific time period and why?
- What has remained the same within a specific time period and why?
- How are continuity and changes represented in different types of sources like graphs, charts, political cartoons and texts? What might be the reasons behind different depictions of continuity or change?
- Analyze (explain how or why) and evaluate historical patterns of continuity and change over time
- Connect patterns of continuity and change over time to larger historical processes or themes

It may sound like this:

“One change that occurred between (year 1 of question) and (year 2 of question) was that.... due to....”

“Even though changes such as... and ... occurred between (year 1) and (year 2), remained the same in that...”

Where in your DBQ/LEQ? Introduction, body and conclusion paragraphs

3. Causation – Being able to identify multiple causes and effects of events. Being able to distinguish between long and short-term factors leading to an event.

- What were the reasons for this event? What factors contributed to a specific pattern or trend? What prompted this person/group to act/react this way?
- What resulted from this event, pattern or action? What were the short-term effects? What were the long-term effects?
- What cause seemed to be the most significant? Why? What effect seemed to be the most significant? Why?
- How do the assessments of historians concerning causation differ from those who actually experienced the event, pattern, or action (point of view)?

It may sound like this:

“This was a result of....” “led to...” “was a consequence of...” “Due to” “This event was significant in that...” “This document would lead to....” “The impact was...”

Where in your DBQ/LEQ? Introduction, body and conclusion paragraphs

4. Comparison – Being able to describe, compare and evaluate multiple events within one society or between different societies, or different geographical regions or different eras.

- How is one even similar/different than another event from the same time?
- Why did a similarity or difference develop between two events?
- How is one era similar or different from another era?
- Why did an event or development affect different groups in different ways?
- How does a viewpoint from a primary or secondary source compare with another when discussing the same event? What may account for those differences or similarities between them?

It may sound like this:

Example 1: “...(identify the two things you’re comparing) differed/were similar in that... (explain why or how).”

Example 2: “Although both eras were similar in that.... they differed in that during the earlier era..., while in the later period”

Example 3: “Even though they were similar because... the latter... while the former....”

Where in your DBQ/LEQ? Introduction, body and conclusion paragraphs

5. Contextualization – Being able to interpret the historical events within the cultural, political, economic and intellectual environment within which they occurred.

- What was happening politically, socially, culturally and or economically at the time the event occurred or the document was written or created that might have an influence?
- What was happening at the specific place where an event occurred? In the state as a whole? In the local area? Region? World (global context)?
- How does a specific event relate to larger processes? How do larger processes shape a specific event? In other words how does an event happening in a village in Germany in the 16th century relate to events happening in Europe during the 16th century?
- How does the context in which a source is read or viewed inform how it is understood?
- Explain and evaluate ways in which specific historical trends, events or processes connect to broader regional, national or global processes occurring at the same time.
- Explain and evaluate ways in which a trend, event or process connects to other, similar historical phenomena across time and place

It may sound like this:

“This took place within the context of the (identify the era) when (describe this period) and it explains why (offer analysis).”

Where in your DBQ/LEQ? Introduction and body paragraphs

6. Historical Argumentation – Being able to analyze the argument of primary and secondary sources as well as formulate your own historical argument that may include one or more of the following skills: periodization, continuity, change, causation or contextualization.

- Analyze commonly accepted historical arguments and explain how an argument has been constructed from historical evidence.
- Construct convincing interpretations through analysis of disparate, relevant historical evidence.
- Evaluate and synthesize conflicting historical evidence to construct persuasive historical arguments.

It may sound like this:

Use WADE to begin your thesis statement. It’ll allow you to include an argument and counter-argument in one sentence. “While..., Although... Despite... Even though....”

Where in your DBQ/LEQ? Introduction AND body paragraphs.

7. **Analyzing Sources** – Being able to go beyond merely summarizing what the source says in your own words.

SOAPSTone:

- **Subject** - What is the subject of the document? What point is it trying to make? What does the document not say? What are the limitations of the document? What does it not tell me? What might have limited the knowledge of the author? What other kinds of sources might fill in the content gaps? What other documents might offer alternative views or might help better understand this view?
- **Occasion** (contextualization) – When and where was the source produced? What events were going on at this time and how might they have affected the author’s viewpoint and/or message? How does the context affect the reliability of a source?
- **Audience** – What audience was the source created for? Who is meant to hear or read this? How might the audience have influenced the speaker in changing his/her message by exaggerating or downplaying something? Why?
- **Purpose** – Why did the author create the source (document or speech)? What was the motive behind the words? How does its purpose affect its reliability or usefulness as an accurate source? In other words, do you think the author may have manipulated the truth in order to accomplish a specific goal?
- **Speaker** – Who is the speaker and is he/she qualified to speak or write on the subject of the document? Does he/she represent a specific class, gender, nationality, religion, etc. and does any of this information about them help explain their point of view on what they are writing or speaking about?
- **Tone** – What is the emotion behind the words? Are there strongly worded passages, loaded words or exclamation marks? Why?

See POV Ideas Handout

Where in your DBQ? Body paragraphs only

8. **Interpretation** – Being able to analyze both primary and secondary sources understanding that there are diverse interpretations of historical events.

- What is the main idea, or argument, of the excerpt written by each historian? What is the author’s claim, thesis?
- What is one piece of information from this time period that supports the argument of the historian? What is a piece of evidence that undermines the argument of the historian?
- Why might a different historian make a different argument concerning the same event or development?

It may sound like this:

“The historian’s main claim is that...”

“An example of an event that supports the author’s claim is...”

“The author’s claim of (identify main argument)... is valid and supported by... (identify the event).”

“One event that undermines the claim of the author is...”

Where in your DBQ/LEQ? Body paragraphs only

9. **Synthesis** –

- Being able to create persuasive arguments by applying all of the eight historical skills listed above.
- Being able to bring together disparate, relevant and sometimes contradictory evidence from primary and secondary sources by explaining why those discrepancies exist?
- Being able to apply knowledge of one historical era to explain and provide insights to other historical eras, contexts or circumstances.

It may sound like this:

“This was a departure from the previous era of (identify the era) when (describe the era). The difference between the two is that (comparison).”

“This event is significant because it will lead to.... (identify another event) during the (identify the era) in (identify the state or region).” Use your periodization, change over time and causation skills to explain a chain of cause and effect events that tie the topic of your prompt with a future event you have identified and described.” Make sure you make the connection of how the change happened from the previous era or how the change will occur in a future era. Make sure you stay within the topic of the prompt.

Where in your DBQ/LEQ? Conclusion paragraph.