World History

Rosenstein

**First Semester Final Exam**

***Alternative Assessment***

Targets:

* **I can craft a persuasive historical argument that is supported with clear facts and evidence.**
* **I can comparatively analyze patterns of history using geography as a focal point for discussion.**

Purpose: The purpose of the alternative assessment is to provide you an opportunity to demonstrate what you have learned throughout this semester through a written composition. This alternative assessment also serves as the start of your journey to becoming a stronger writer, crafting pieces driven by stronger arguments and historical thinking skills.

**Directions:** Throughout the next week, you will begin preparing for the alternative assessment by creating an outline/organizer for **the following question:**

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| **TO WHAT DEGREE WAS geography essential for ancient civilizations and kingdoms to grow and for classical and early modern civilizations to thrive?** |

Your outline **must** follow a specific format, and it must be typed. See the attached guidelines for a successful outline.

**Preparing for the alternative assessment:**

**Step 1: Draft your outline at home**

* You will bring your final, ***printed*** outline to class on **Thursday, June 25.**

**Step 2: Peer Feedback**

* You will find a new peer/Mr. Rosenstein in class and ask them to give you feedback on your ideas, while paying attention to the following questions:
  + Is there a central argument?
  + Are there enough claims to support the argument? Each claim should be its own paragraph
  + Is there enough supporting evidence to support the claims
  + Have I cited any outside information?
  + Does my organization make sense?

**Step 3: Bring your final outline to class to write your essay.**

* Bring your outline to class on **Thursday, 6/25/2015**. Print your outline.
* Bring your iPad charged. You will be typing your essay.
* Essays will be 12-point font, double-spaced, contain your argument in **boldface** font.

**Step 4: Submit your FINAL ESSAY into your WEEK 3 SHARED FOLDER by 12:50 p.m. on Thursday, 6/25/2015. You will have 50 minutes to write your essay.**

* Late essays will receive a full letter grade deduction for each day late and will be graded from there.
* Your final essay is worth **100 points.**
* This counts as 30% of your final exam grade.

**Evaluation of Alternative Assessment**

**Alternative Assessment Requirements:**

* Typed outline that follows the format provided by the model.
* A clear historical argument must be presented, not a restatement of the question.
* Your essay must be organized.
* Your essay **must** use relevant information from course material this semester. You can refer to any source you wish. You will not be able to research outside sources when you compose your essay in class.
* Your typed essay should be **no less** than two (2) pages.
* Your essay **must** be free of grammar, punctuation and spelling errors. I am a stickler for this on formal assignments!

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|  | **Exemplary (20)** | **Meets (16)** | **Developing (12)** | **Beginning (8)** |
| **Thesis Statement/Claims/ Clear topic sentences –**  **20 Points** | Distinguished argument that responds completely to the question. | The argument adequately addresses the question. | The argument is minimal or weak and needs to be more specific. | Statement missing or there is not an argument being made. |

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|  | **Exemplary (40)** | **Meets (32)** | **Developing (28)** | **Beginning (24)** |
| **Supporting Evidence/Analysis/**  **Counterclaims**  **40 Points** | Excellent use of relevant information and facts, which is complemented by analysis to strengthen the argument. | The use of facts complemented by adequate analysis maintain and/or strengthen the argument. | The use of facts complemented by some analysis helps the argument. | The use of facts is minimal coupled with a lack of analysis weakens the argument. |

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|  | **Exemplary (30)** | **Meets (24)** | **Developing (20)** | **Beginning (16)** |
| **Organization (Essay is organized in the correct format from start to finish)**  **30 Points** | There is strong organization of the entire essay, the direction of the essay is clearly identified. | There is good organization, at most points it is evident where the direction of the essay is headed. | There is some organization, but at points it is not clear where the direction of the essay is headed. | There is minimal or no organization in the response to the question. |

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|  | **Exemplary (10)** | **Meets (8)** | **Developing (6)** | **Beginning (4)** |
| **Conventions -**  **10 Points** | Work demonstrates careful attention to specific details; minimal errors are not distracting | Minimal errors, all other conventions are followed; errors are minor and are not distracting | Some errors that do not follow guidelines; **may be revised at discretion of student** | Numerous errors that do not follow guidelines, **must be revised and edited to receive a grade** |

**Essay Outline Sample [Template]**

**I: Introduction (1 paragraph)**

* Get the reader's attention by asking a leading question;
* Relay something enticing about the subject in a manner that commands attention.
* Start with a related quote, alluring description, or narration.
* **State your thesis**, the causes and effects to be discussed
  + **See next page for how to generate a thesis!**
* Main points that will develop your argument.

**II: Body**

* Your Point, Assertion – Should be in the form of a topic sentence.
* Explanation
* Supporting evidence (examples, facts, statistics, quoted authorities, details, reasons, examples)
* **ANALYSIS – WHY DOES THIS MATTER – WHY SHOULD WE CARE?**
* Transition

**Repeat this step** for each of your body paragraphs! Each claim you make should have its own body paragraph!

**III: Address opposing viewpoints  - set up a response to how someone might challenge what you have to say.** Be able to continuously strengthen your argument! Intertwine into body paragraphs. Incorporate these as if a reader was challenging what you were saying.

**IV: Conclusion**

* Explain why your points matter
* Reemphasize your central argument in a fresh way that shows how you have achieved that purpose.
* **Appeal** to your reader.
* Make a memorable final statement! Leave me thinking!

**How to Generate a Thesis Statement**

Your thesis statement needs to answer the question that you have been asked. A good thesis statement will usually include the following four attributes:

* take on a subject upon which reasonable people could disagree
* deal with a subject that can be adequately treated given the nature of the assignment
* express one main idea
* assert your conclusions about a subject

Let’s see how to generate a thesis statement for a debate, or even just papers in general!

Brainstorm the topic.  
Let’s say that your class focuses upon the debate over which city-state is the better city-state and the most capable of representing all of Greece.

When you are asked the questions, “Who should represent Greece in the conflict against the Persians? Which city-state, Sparta or Athens, is the best representative of Greek life?” and assigned a city-state, your initial answer is obviously going to be something like this:

**Sparta.**

This fragment isn’t a thesis statement. Instead, it simply indicates a general subject. Furthermore, your reader, teammates, or opposition don’t know what you want to say about which city-state being better.

Narrow the topic.  
Your readings about the topic, however, have led you to the conclusion that the military is stronger than almost any other city-state. You change your thesis to look like this:

**Sparta has a better military.**

This fragment announces your subject, but also focuses on your stance. Furthermore, it raises a subject upon which reasonable people could disagree or agree; Athens has a better military! You should note this fragment is not a thesis statement because your reader doesn’t know your conclusions on the topic.

Take a position on the topic.  
After reflecting on the topic a little while longer, you decide that what you really want to say about this topic is that the military of Sparta is far superior to any other city-state.

You revise your thesis statement to look like this:

**Sparta is the best city-state to lead Greece against Persia because they are a completely militaristic city-state.**

**This statement asserts your position, but your argument, “they are a completely militaristic city-state”, still is a little vague.**

Use specific language.  
You decide to explain what you mean about them being a militaristic state.

**Spartans begin their military lives training at age seven and live in the barracks until they are 30.**

This statement is specific, but it isn’t a thesis. It merely reports a fact instead of making an assertion.

Make an assertion based on clearly stated support.  
You finally revise your thesis statement one more time to look like this:

**Because of their devotion to the military, their life-long training, and leadership skills, Sparta is a far better Greek city-state than Athens to lead the Greeks against the invading Persians.**

Notice how the thesis answers the question, “Which city-state is the best to represent Greece against the Persian invaders?”

When you started thinking about the debate, you may have had a very specific response to the question in mind, but as you became more involved in the topic, your ideas became more specific. Your thesis changed to reflect your new insights.

## How to Tell a Strong Thesis Statement from a Weak One

#### 1. A strong thesis statement takes some sort of stand.

#### 2. A strong thesis statement justifies discussion.

#### 3. A strong thesis statement expresses one main idea.

#### 4. A strong thesis statement is specific.