

Chapter 15

Essays

Drills

ESSAYS

As you know, the essay section of the AP World History Exam includes three types of essays: one document based questions (DBQ), one change-over-time essay, and one comparative essay. In this chapter you will find a wide assortment of practice essay prompts. When you tackle these during your test preparation, try to mimic real testing conditions as best you can—give yourself the same time limit that you’ll have on test day, sit in a desk and write out everything by hand, and use the essay tips that we shared in Chapter 2.

In Chapter 16 you’ll find an assortment of detailed explanations and scoring rubrics. For the first 14 essay prompts, we have written detailed brainstorms for you. Topics to remember, important historical eras, battles, issues, and people. For the next batch of essay prompts, we have focused on how to get the best score that you can by sharing point-by-point scoring rubrics. Between our detailed content overview and scoring rubrics, you’ll be ready to rock when you see these essays on exam day.

Batch 1

1. Compare Islam’s effects on Northern Africa and the Indian Subcontinent during the period 600–1450. Be sure to address both similarities and differences.
2. For the period from 1500 to 1860, describe the continuities and changes in trading patterns of North America with Europe OR within the Indian Ocean basin.
3. Analyze the changes and continuities in race relations in South America OR the Caribbean region between the 1750s and the 1950s. Be sure to include evidence from specific countries within that region.
4. Compare ONE of the following sets of conquests, being sure to discuss both similarities and differences: Alexander the Great’s conquest of the Eurasian landmass (336–323 B.C.E.) with Genghis Khan’s (1206–1227 C.E.) OR Napoleon Bonaparte’s conquest of Europe (1803–1815 C.E.) with Adolf Hitler’s (1936–1945 C.E.).

5. Discuss how technological innovations since 1750 affected the lives of women in ONE of the following nations. Be sure to include continuities as well as changes.

Japan
India
Brazil
England

6. Analyze major changes and continuities in the social and political lives of people that came with the adoption of communist government in the twentieth century in ONE of the following countries.

Vietnam
Hungary
Venezuela

7. Within the period from 1580 to 1860, compare the development of the British Empire (e.g., political, social, and economic processes) with that of ONE of the following.

The Ottoman Empire
The Mughal Empire

8. Compare the effects of the Columbian Exchange on the North American continent to its effects on ONE of the following from the sixteenth through the nineteenth centuries C.E. Be sure to discuss both similarities and differences.

Europe
Africa

9. Compare and contrast the aims and results of the revolutionary process in TWO of the following countries, beginning with the dates specified.

Haiti 1791
Italy 1848
Japan 1866

10. Describe and explain the political, social, and cultural continuities and changes in the Roman Empire in the period 27 B.C.E. to 476 C.E.

11. Discuss the effects of Silk Road trading routes on economic and cultural exchange among the regions connected by these routes from the period 200 B.C.E. to 1450 C.E. Be sure to address both continuities and changes, and cite evidence from specific regions or kingdoms.

12. Compare the development of early Chinese civilization (2500–250 B.C.E.) with the development of civilizations in the area known as the Fertile Crescent (4000–1000 B.C.E.). Be sure to cite evidence from specific societies, addressing both similarities and differences.

13. Compare the status of women in TWO of the following ancient societies (2500 B.C.E. to 600 C.E.), examining similarities and differences in women's status, as well as the cultural forces that affected it.

China

India

Greece

Rome

14. In the period 500 B.C.E. to 1000 C.E., India's religious landscape experienced many changes. Discuss both the changes and the continuities in Hinduism's relationship with Buddhism and Islam during this time.

Batch 2

1. Analyze similarities and differences in political and economic effects Mongol rule had on TWO of the following regions:

China
The Middle East
Russia
Europe

2. Analyze the changes and constants in trade on the Indian Ocean between 650 B.C.E. and 1750 C.E.

3. Compare and contrast the philosophies and spread of Islam with the conquest and spread of ONE of the following faiths until 1492 C.E.

Christianity
Buddhism

4. Describe and explain continuities and changes in the status of women in ONE of the regions from 600 B.C.E. to 1450 C.E.

Europe

Arabia

India

5. Compare and contrast the philosophical and religious developments in TWO of the following regions from 1450 to 1750.

Western Europe

Russia

China and Japan

6. Compare and contrast the economic and social impacts of trade with the New World from 1450 to 1750 on TWO of the following regions.

Europe

Africa

Asia

7. Analyze the development and impact of the continuities and changes to technology from 1450 to 1914.

8. Describe and explain continuities and changes to governments in TWO of the following regions from 650 C.E. to 1750 C.E.

Europe

Asia

Russia

Africa

9. Compare and contrast the social and political impacts of the Industrial Revolution on TWO of the following regions.

Europe

Asia

Africa

10. Compare and contrast the philosophies and actions leading from ethnocentrism in Europe from 1750 to 1914.

11. Describe and explain continuities and changes to social class structures before and after the introduction of the industrial work model in the eighteenth century.

12. Analyze the continuities and changes of European Imperialism from 1800 to the present.

13. Compare and contrast the reasons for the rise of extremist governments and their governance policies in the twentieth century in TWO of the following countries.

Germany
Italy
China
Russia

14. Compare and contrast the reasons and impacts of nuclear weapons development in TWO of the following countries

The United States
The USSR
Israel
Iran
North Korea

15. Analyze major continuities and changes to the impact of global institutions and governance from the eighteenth century to the present.

16. Analyze the social and political changes and continuities in ONE of the following countries or regions in the recent past

The USSR (1917 to present)
Iran (1979 to present)
China (1911 to present)
Africa (1950s to present)

DOCUMENT BASED QUESTION (DBQ)

1. Using the documents below, analyze the roles and perceptions of women in the Chinese and Vietnamese revolutions of the twentieth century. Identify an additional type of document and explain how it would help your analysis of women's roles or images in these nations.

Historical Background: In the turn of the twentieth century, nationalist movements swept the non-Western world. In Asia in general, and China and Vietnam specifically, a rising tide of Communism gained popularity.

Document 1

Excerpt from: *Nationalism*, by Sir Rabindranath Tagore, 1918.

Source: He Zhen, wife of the anti-Manchu leader Liu Shipei. From *Sources of Chinese Tradition: From 1600 Through the Twentieth Century*, compiled by Wm. Theodore de Bary and Richard Lufrano, 2nd ed., vol. 2 (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 389–392. © 2000 Columbia University Press.

...those of us who are women suffer untold bitterness and untold wrongs in order to get hold of this rice bowl. My fellow women: do not hate men! Hate that you do not have food to eat. Why don't you have any food? It is because you don't have any money to buy food. Why don't you have any money? It is because the rich have stolen our property...

There is now a kind of person who says that if women only had a profession, they would not fear starvation. Middle-class families, for example, are sending their daughters to school. ... Then if they get married they can become teachers. They won't need to rely on men in order to survive. Likewise, families that are very poor are sending their daughters and daughters-in-law to work in factories. ... However, as I see it schools too are owned and operated by certain people, and if you teach in a school, then you are depending on those people in order to eat. Factories too are built by investors, and if you work in a factory, you are depending on its owners in order to eat.

...

I have a good idea that will exempt you from relying on others while still finding food naturally. How? By practicing communism. Think of all the things in the world. They were either produced by nature or by individual labor. Why can rich people buy them but poor people cannot? It is because the world trades with money. ... If every single woman understands that nothing is more evil than money, and they all unite together to cooperate with men to utterly overthrow the rich and powerful and then abolish money, then absolutely nothing will be allowed for individuals to own privately.

Document 2

Source: Sharon L. Sievers. "Women in China, Japan, and Korea."

The following quotations are taken from Vietnamese and Chinese revolutionary writings and interviews with women involved in revolutionary movements in each country. They express the women's goals, their struggle to be taken seriously in the uncharacteristic political roles they had assumed, and some of the many ways women found self-respect and redress for their grievances as a result of the changes wrought by the spread of the new social order.

"Women must first of all be masters of themselves. They must strive to become skilled workers ... and, at the same time, they must strictly observe family planning. Another major question is the responsibility of husbands to help their wives look after children and other housework."

"We intellectuals had had little contact with the peasants and when we first walked through the village in our Chinese gowns or skirts the people would just stare at us and talk behind our backs. When the village head beat gongs to call out the women to the meeting we were holding for them, only men and old women came, but no young ones. Later we found out that the landlords and rich peasants had spread slanders among the masses saying 'They are a pack of wild women. Their words are not for young brides to hear'."

"Brave wives and daughters-in-law, untrammelled by the presence of their menfolk, could voice their own bitterness encourage their poor sisters to do likewise, and thus eventually bring to the village-wide gatherings the strength of "half of China" as the more enlightened women, very much in earnest, like to call themselves. By "speaking pains to recall pains," the women found that they had as many if not more grievances than the men, and that given a chance to speak in public, they were as good at it as their fathers and husbands."

"In Chingtsun the work team found a woman whose husband thought her ugly and wanted to divorce her. She was very depressed until she learned that under the Draft Law [of the Communist party] she could have her own share of land. Then she cheered up immediately. "If he divorces me, never mind," she said. "I'll get my share and the children will get theirs. We can live a good life without him."

Document 3

Source: Florence Ayscough, *Chinese Women: Yesterday and Today*, 1938.

TRADITIONAL WOMEN

"To be unassuming, to yield; to be respectful, to revere, to think first of other people afterwards of herself, if she performs a kind of action, to make no mention thereof, if she commits a find, to make no denial; to endure reproach, treasure reproof, to behave with veneration and right fear; such demeanor is described as exemplify humility and adaptability....

To lie down to sleep when it is late, to be at work, early, from dawn till dark not to shirk puffing forth strength, to bend the mind to domestic affairs, nor to evade such, be they troublesome or easy, to accomplish that which must be done, to be orderly, to systematize the way of conduct; such behavior is said to be absorption in diligent too.... .

To be sedate in manner, of upright purpose, to serve her lord her husband; to keep herself pure, composed, not being given to misplaced jest or laughter; free from pollution, reverently to arrange the wine and food to be placed before tablets of progenitors, ancestors, the oblations of dead forefathers....

Nothing equals in importance the imperative duty of obedience! If the mother-in-law say, 'It is not so' and it be so, assuredly, it is right to obey her order. If the mother-in-law say, 'It is so' even if it be not so, nevertheless, act in accordance with the command. Do not think of opposing, or of discussing what is, what is not; do not struggle to divide the crooked from the straight. This is what is called the imperative duty of obedience. The ancient book Nu Hsien-Patterns for Woman-states: "A wife is like the shadow from high sunlight, the echo following sound."

MODERN WOMEN

'... You'd better think it over and choose some other job. Driving tractors is no work for a slip of a girl like you.'

The man in charge of registration for the tractor-drivers' training class had clearly made up his mind that I was unsuitable. I felt angry because it seemed unjust that he should try and turn me down without even a trial.

'Let me take the entrance examination anyway,' I said. 'If I fail, I shall have nothing more to say.'

I passed the examination. In the six years that followed I achieved my ambition of becoming a tractor driver, worked for a while as instructor to a women's tractor-drivers team, and became the vice-director of the Shuangchiao State Farm near Peking. That is still my work today."

Document 4

Source: *Ling long* women's magazine, published in Shanghai from 1931 to 1937.



Caption: "From these few pictures you can see female sentiment. There is absolutely no way men can express this. These so-called good friends are inseparable. The unfortunate thing is that after marriage they suddenly become cold and indifferent."

Document 5

Source: Nguyen Quang Thieu, "The Examples," in *The Women Carry the River Water: Poems*, 1997.

My village widows—the examples—without shoes or sandals, they avoid roads that lead them to moonlight. Their breasts are tired and almost deaf, and could not hear love calling from the village men. And only the house mice eating rice in the casket can wake them. And they lie still, fearing their wooden coffin will be eaten hollow by termites.

And when I have nobody to count, my village widows come back from the grass. They walk moonlit lanes. Their hair spills over moonlight. Their breasts reach for the sexual fire just kindled. After footsteps, after doors opening, I hear the strange song. The song penetrates the skulls of lunatics who cannot sleep, and who stand looking up at the moon.

And the lunatics open the doors and go out. They go with the song—further and further, to the place where there are no examples.

Document 6

Source: Phan Boi Chau, Vietnamese nationalism leader, "The New Vietnam," 1907

With regard to education, that of the military and women is the most important...

Women will become good mothers, loving wives, knowledgeable in literature and poetry, well trained in commerce; they are also expert educators of our children and efficient assistants to our soldiers. A good mother will have nice children; she will be a virtuous wife to a perfect husband. Moreover in politics women will possess many rights. Only with education will one know how to neglect one's private interests in order to take care of the public good, so as to make one's country accumulate its riches and increase its strength. A country that has no patriotic women is bound to be subjugated by another country... In all matters related to finance, in industrial schools... in trading outlets, in banks... it is best to employ well-educated women. They will strive to serve the country as much as men. Their pride and dignity will be equal to men's... Every woman in the country should of course endeavor to become a good mother, a virtuous wife, but also a talented woman... Women shall not be inferior to men. That's the aim of women's education.

Document 7

Source: Communist political pamphlet, 1930

Oh, unhappy patriots, let us struggle alongside our men. Let us destroy the French capitalists, the mandarins, in order to establish a social government that will give us freedom, equality, and happiness... Let us work and act energetically in order to achieve the Revolution, to obtain equality, between men and women.

Document 8

Source: Statement by Le Duan, Vietnamese communist party politicial, speech at the Vietnamese Women's Fourth Congress, 1974.

The Viet Nam Fatherland owes its heroic sons and daughters to the contributions of heroic, undaunted, faithful and responsible mothers. For many centuries, the Vietnamese mothers have handed down to us the mettle of the Trung Sisters and Lady Trieu, the tradition of industrious labour and love of country and of home. We can rightly be proud of our Vietnamese mothers.