

WRITING—THESIS AND CONTEXTUALIZATION PART 1

Preparation

- [Download the WHP LEQ Rubric](#)

Purpose

As we continue the progression on writing, you'll look at how to construct a thesis that answers a long essay question (LEQ) prompt and how to contextualize in your essays. These skills are necessary to ensure you have a solid grasp on these essential elements of good writing. You'll analyze a student essay to identify these aspects of the writing, which will help improve your historical writing skills and help you prepare for the AP® World History: Modern exam.

Process

In this activity, you will take a close look at the Thesis and Contextualization rows of the WHP LEQ Writing Rubric and analyze the first two paragraphs of a student essay using the criteria included in the rubric. (**Note:** these rows are identical on the DBQ and LEQ rubrics.)

It's time for another writing activity! As you did in the first activity in the writing progression, you'll examine a student-written essay. But this time, instead of reviewing using the whole rubric, you will be looking at how well the writer constructed their thesis and incorporated contextualization as defined in the WHP LEQ Writing Rubric. The essay is in response to the Unit 1 LEQ (*Develop an argument that evaluates the similarities and differences in the ways societies were organized in different parts of the world from c. 1200 to 1450 CE*); therefore, you should be familiar with the prompt and potential responses.

Before you start your analysis, review the Thesis and Contextualization rows of the WHP LEQ Writing Rubric. Once you've reviewed these criteria, your teacher might put you into small groups or pairs to complete the Writing – Thesis and Contextualization Part 1 worksheet.

First, find and circle the major claim/thesis in the essay. Next, review the second paragraph and underline any areas of the essay where the student provided contextualization. As a wrap up, suggest some ways you could improve contextualization in this paragraph.

WRITING—THESIS AND CONTEXTUALIZATION PART 1

Name:

Date:

Directions: Review the essay and circle the thesis/major claim in the paper. Then, look for contextualization and underline the relevant text.

LEQ Prompt: *Develop an argument that evaluates the similarities and differences in the ways societies were organized in different parts of the world from c. 1200 to 1450 CE.*

While there was yet to be a singular world system by 1450 as the Americas, sub-Saharan Africa, and Afro-Eurasia remained largely isolated from one another, the period leading up to 1450 was still one of increased connections and important innovations. The difference between multiple “world-systems” and a singular “world system” is crucial in our understanding of this period as societies were still incredibly diverse yet were becoming increasingly connected. When it comes to the period from 1200 to 1450 CE, societies across the world organized in vastly different ways due to the role of religion and local histories in these communities; however, large scale similarities still existed in the more fractured, decentralized political organizations that formed alongside expansions of regional trade and early urbanization.

The duality of growing trade networks and religious communities with small-scale political and societal organization occurred within a larger context of declining empires and increasing connections. The mid 1200s saw the fall of the Abbasid empire in Afro-Eurasia and the Song Dynasty in East Asia, paralleled by the increasing spread of Islam. While American empires like the Inca and Aztec emerged during this time, this region remained staggeringly diverse as people continued to practice local traditions and many lived outside the bounds of these empires. At the same time as the fall of empires in Afro-Eurasia, cities began to grow as centers of commerce and innovation and religions and trade networks continued to spread and connect people more than ever before. While events like the Black Death certainly slowed trade and exchange for periods of time, networks recovered and started to connect more people over larger areas.