

THESIS FORMATS FOR AP WORLD HISTORY ESSAY

General requirements:

1. A thesis should clearly address the prompt and not something else (should be on-topic)
2. A thesis should create clear categories (be analytical).
3. A thesis should address all aspects of the prompt (by comprehensive).

Comparative Theses:

A comparative thesis has two parts: similarities and differences. But you must clearly distinguish between similarities and differences. You cannot lump the two together like this:

Rome and Han China were similar and different in use of religion and infrastructure.

Because the thesis does not say what is similar and what is different.

So a better thesis would read:

Rome and Han China were similar in use of religion to control citizens and the construction of water-control technologies. They differed in which religion they used and the focus of water technologies.

An extra point thesis would look like this:

Rome and Han China were similar in use of religion to control citizens, construction of water control technologies, and use of a bureaucracy. They differed in which beliefs they used for control, the emphasis of water control, and the form of bureaucracy.

Note how three categories of comparison are addressed in both the similarities and differences. The differences mirror the similarities.

CCOT Thesis:

A CCOT thesis also has two parts: the changes and continuities. Just as you cannot lump together similarities and differences in a comparative essay, you cannot lump together continuities and changes. You must clearly distinguish changes versus continuities. An examples of this is:

From 1450-1750 changes as a result of the Atlantic system included new racial constructions and the use of slaves in plantations. The importance of precious metals, however, did not change.

An extra point thesis should identify more than one continuity (in addition to more than one change). You can do this by adding a second continuity:

“From 1450-1750 changes as a result of the Atlantic system included new racial constructions and the use of slaves in plantations. The importance of precious metals and patriarchy remained the same”

GENERALLY, students tend to be too vague in their thesis, or they don't seem to be directly addressing the question.

Make sure you use some of the language of the prompt and that your similarities and differences (or continuities & changes) are fairly specific without being evidence.