

US History paper  
20% of final grade 100 points  
Time constraints 1975-2000

Task: Answer a historical research question of your choice between 1975-2000.  
Your topic must directly address one of the seven historical themes:

- 5/14 Historical Research Question due by the end of class (5 points)
- 5/19 5 sources for Bibliography found by the end of class (10 points)
- 5/22 outline due at the end of class (15 points)
- 5/26 Draft Due for Peer Review
- 5/28 Final Paper due at the end of class (70 points)

Requirements:

- High Quality work
- Use of class time effectively. I will warn you once per class period. After that you will lose 1% point each time I have to redirect
- MLA Format: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>
- 5 paragraphs and 750 words. **If you do not meet the minimum requirement your grade is 0%. I will not read it.**
- Bibliography with at least 5 sources
- 8 parenthetical citations with at least two per the first four paragraphs
- 1 map, chart, graph, image, that supports your thesis

Where can I find good research?

- Your Textbook
- Google Scholar
- Anything with .gov or .edu
- .org or .com is NOT acceptable unless I approve it
- <https://www.gilderlehrman.org/>
- <http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/>
- <http://www.archives.gov/>
- <http://learning.blogs.nytimes.com/category/american-history/?r=0>
- <http://www.pbs.org/>
- <http://collections.si.edu/search/>
- Major Newspapers: New York Times, Wall Street Journal, NPR

## Guidelines for Forming Historical Questions

Many students make the mistake of thinking that history is nothing more than memorizing names, dates, facts and events. Though knowing this material is helpful, the best historians are those that ask good historical questions, that uncover the central issues and motives that shaped events, ideas, and peoples' actions. An analytic approach looks at causes and effects rather than just narrative. *How* and *Why* become the focus rather than *Who*, *What*, *Where*, and *When*.

- Bad Questions: *Who were the Maya? When did the Maya collapse?*
- Better Question: *Why did the Maya civilization collapse?*

Good historical questions should do the following:

- Address causes or effects
- Be open-ended (not having a yes or no answer)
- Be argumentative (can be legitimately answered in multiple ways)
- Be specific

Here are a few examples of solid open-ended questions that have multiple possible answers:

- *What impacts did the Tokugawa Shogunate's policy of isolation have upon Japan during the 1600s and 1700s?*
- *How was Napoleon Bonaparte able to gain power in France?*
- *What impacts did westward expansion have upon the southern United States during the first half of the 1800s?*

Always remember that your entire paper is an elaborate answer to your question, so it is very important that you form a question you can live with!

# GENERAL 5-PARAGRAPH ESSAY OUTLINE

## I. Introduction

- a. Attention-getter (anecdotes, facts, statistics, rhetorical questions, description, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- b. Background information (narrow down central idea) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- c. Thesis statement (a claim/assertion that includes a developmental plan outlining your intended argument; list your three main points) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## II. Body Paragraph #1

- a. Topic Sentence (major assertion/point) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- b. Supporting details (quotes, description, paraphrasing, explanation, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## III. Body Paragraph #2

- a. Topic Sentence (major assertion/point) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- b. Supporting details (quotes, description, paraphrasing, explanation, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## IV. Body Paragraph #3

- a. Topic Sentence (major assertion/point) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- b. Supporting details (quotes, description, paraphrasing, explanation, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## V. Conclusion

- a. Restate thesis (rephrase main idea) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- b. Closing thoughts (So what? summary of main points, call to action, quotation, question, reference back to introduction, future) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_