

Continuity and Change Over Time

Example Long Essay Question

Example Question: Using specific examples, analyze the extent to which the conquest by Alexander of Macedon and rule by his Seleucid successors represented continuity or change in the development of the earlier and later Persian empires.

Key Features of Good Responses: In a good response, a student will support his or her thesis with specific examples that clearly and consistently analyze the role of the Macedonian periods of rule in the Persian realms. A strong essay will not only describe specific examples of the role of Alexander and the Seleucid empire, but will also analyze and explain them. A strong response will demonstrate knowledge of the relevant chronology and a detailed understanding of the events and circumstances of the period.

In addressing the role of Alexander and the Seleucids as a source of continuity, students may address the continued use of the Satrapies by Alexander and the Seleucids for administration of the empire, or Alexander's claim to be the successor of the earlier emperors rather than a new form of rule. Additionally, students may address the persistence of social classes, such as the preeminence of government officials above substantial free and slave classes.

Alternately, students may address the changes inherent in Persian culture as a result of the Macedonian conquest as Persian and Greek influences combined to usher in the Hellenistic era; or the further development of Persia as a go-between in the trade between eastern and western civilizations.

Long Essay Rubric: Maximum 6 Points

A. THESIS/CLAIM: 0-1 point

1 point: Responds to the prompt with a historically defensible thesis/claim that establishes a line of reasoning. The thesis must consist of one or more sentences located in one place, either in the introduction or the conclusion.

B. CONTEXTUALIZATION: 0-1 point

1 point: Describes a broader historical context relevant to the prompt.

- Scoring Note: *The Contextualization point requires an explanation of the connections to a different historical period, situation, era, or geographical area, and is not awarded for merely a phrase or reference.*

C. EVIDENCE: 0-2 points

1 point: Provides specific examples of evidence relevant to the topic of the prompt.

2 Points: Supports an argument in response to the prompt using specific and relevant examples of evidence.

- Scoring Note: *To fully and effectively substantiate the stated thesis or a relevant argument, responses must include a broad range of evidence that, through analysis and explanation, justifies the stated thesis or a relevant argument.*

D. ANALYSIS AND REASONING: 0- 2 points

1 point: Uses historical reasoning to frame or structure an argument that addresses the prompt.

2 points: Demonstrates a complex understanding of the historical development that is the focus of the prompt, using evidence to corroborate, qualify, or modify an argument that addresses the question.

- Scoring Note: *The Analysis and Reasoning points require a response that demonstrates the use of historical reasoning and complex understanding as part of the argument, not merely a phrase or reference.*