

2007 Annotated Compare & Contrast Rubric: Spanish, Ottoman, & Russian Empire Building Processes

Note to teachers:

This Annotated Rubric is specifically designed for the College Board's AP World History course, but could also be helpful in any world history survey course. The best source of information about how to teach essay skills is the [AP World History Course Description](#), (a.k.a. the "Acorn" Book), published every 2 years by the College Board. It can be downloaded for no cost at http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/apc/public/courses/teachers_corner/4484.html

Another great source of learning how to teach good writing skills is by being an Essay Reader. You'll have direct, first-hand experience reading essays, and get an unforgettable amount of insight into the most common writing techniques, both effective and otherwise. You'll also enjoy meeting other dedicated, talented, and resourceful World History teachers from around the world who will encourage and challenge you in a myriad of ways.

Most of the comments & insights in this Annotated Rubric were heavily influenced by discussions on the AP World History Electronic Discussion Group (EDG). This is a great way to ask questions of 1,800+ world history professionals. You can register for the EDG at <http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/apc/public/homepage/4137.html>

This Annotated DBQ Rubric is by no means intended as a "turn-key" solution to improving your students' writing. If you want the *real* training as to how to teach a good AP World History course, go to an AP Workshop (usually 1 day) or a 5-day Summer Institute. For a list of current Workshops and Institutes, see <http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/apc/public/homepage/7173.html>

How to use this Annotated Rubric

The overall goals for this document are to help students improve their writing and to reinforce the "Habits of Mind" discussed in the Acorn book. In my high school, I am fortunate to have excellent an English department that teaches students the importance of clear thesis statements and the mechanics of good writing. My job is made far easier in

that "all" I have to do is to show the students how to apply what they've already learned in their English classes to AP World History.

I've tried to show 3 levels of answers to each Rubric category: 1) an unacceptable response that fails to meet the criteria; 2) an acceptable response; and 3) an excellent response that demonstrates mastery of the required skill. Only you know your students' writing strengths and weaknesses. The danger here is that some students may see the excellent examples and give up, thinking, "I can't possibly do that." Encourage them to take it one step at a time, to improve incrementally towards mastery, and eventually they WILL master the skill. Keep in mind that there are five different categories on the Generic Rubric, with seven possible points. The national median score, at the *end* of the academic year, was approximately 3.09 points.¹ A student who scores "only" two points on their first attempt should be heartily encouraged, and should not despair that they'll never achieve all seven points on the generic rubric.

Even though this question was from the 2007 test, I've used the Generic Rubric from the current Acorn book to illustrate the grading criteria. Given that this is the direction the World History Test Development Committee is moving, I think it's only appropriate to use the current standards, even though the actual rubric at the time was (very) slightly different.

I hope this teaching tool helps your students to write and think better, and helps you enjoy grading their writing more.

Bill Strickland

East Grand Rapids HS

East Grand Rapids, MI

bstrickl@egrps.org

http://moodle.egrps.org/mod/resource/view.php?id=1855&subdir=/Annotated_Rubrics

¹ http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/apc/members/exam/exam_questions/2090.html

Question: Within the period from 1450 to 1800, compare the process (e.g. political, social, economic) of empire building in the Spanish Empire with the empire-building processes in ONE of the following: the Ottoman Empire OR the Russian Empire.		
Point #	Generic Description <i>Explanation/Commentary</i>	Examples and Commentary
1 Thesis	<p>Has acceptable thesis. (1 pt)</p> <p>(Addresses comparison of the issues or themes specified.)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The thesis must correctly address BOTH a similarity and a difference in empire building process in Spanish and Ottoman or Russian Empires</i> <i>Be accurate for 1450-1800, but actual dates are NOT mandatory.</i> <i>May be in multiple sentences, but cannot be split into separate paragraphs</i> <i>Must be located in either the introductory paragraph or the conclusion.</i> <i>Cannot simply repeat the question</i> <i>Cannot count for credit (“double dip”) with any other category</i> 	<p>Unacceptable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Spanish and Russian empires had similarities and differences in their imperial processes. <i>This statement merely parrots the question, and is too vague to count for anything.</i> The Russian and Spanish empires had a lot of differences in the way they came about and had very few similarities. <i>Acknowledges both similarities and differences, but is too vague (“a lot” and “very few”) in relating to the process of empire building.</i>² In the Spanish Empire during the 16th century they had a very good economy because of all their silver. The Ottomans also had a good economy because of their big empire they had many trade routes and contact with many other Empires. <i>Addresses both countries, the empire-building process (implied in trade routes), & similarities, but no differences are included.</i> <p>Minimally Acceptable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Russian Empire and the Spanish Empire were politically and socially different but economically both needed to expand to get the materials they needed. <i>Both empires are included. Statement is relevant to the process of empire building, and both the similarity and difference are (minimally) qualified/categorized. While this thesis was accepted at the reading, it is hardly the ‘target’ that students and teachers should aim for.</i> Though both Spain and the Ottoman Empire began to develop economically, political, and socially, their underlying strategies for this process differed greatly. <i>Minimally acceptable thesis qualifies similarities & differences in empire building process.</i>³ <p>Acceptable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> While both the Spanish and Ottomans used military force to expand their empires, the Spanish relied much more heavily on religion to consolidate and centralize their control over newly conquered areas. <p>Excellent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>A thesis that has a clear, analytical, and comprehensive thesis.</i>

² I have a rule in my classroom, “Any thesis that contains the words ‘very,’ ‘many,’ ‘things,’ ‘lots,’ ‘stuff,’ or ‘ways’ is automatically vetoed.” Possibly the hardest skill to learn is the ability to form a sophisticated, complex thesis. One strategy I’ve learned (from Geri McCarthy of Barrington, RI) is to require students to begin their thesis with either “While”, “Although”, or “Despite/In spite of.” These words strongly encourage students to formulate a mature thesis that helps structure the rest of their essay. Once students can consistently write a competent thesis sentence, then I concentrate on having them develop an essay preview/outline of later paragraphs. The result should be a thesis paragraph that is several sentences long (the paragraph should NOT just be a single sentence).

³ The thesis must make clear what the similarity is, and what the difference is. Thus “both Spain and Russia had political and economic similarities and differences” was not acceptable, but “Spain and Russia had political similarities and economic differences” was accepted. The general rule was algebra-like: “(A and B) were (similar and different)” = No Thesis. “(A was similar) but (B was different)” = Thesis.

2 2007 Annotated Compare & Contrast Rubric: Spanish, Ottoman, and Russian Empire Building Processes

Point #	Generic Description <i>Explanation/Commentary</i>	Examples and <i>Commentary</i>
<p>2 Parts of the Question</p>	<p>Addresses all parts of the question, though not necessarily evenly or thoroughly. (2 pts) <i>Essay must address:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BOTH a similarity AND a difference <u>in empire building</u>⁴ <p>(Addresses most parts of the question: for example, deals with differences but not similarities.) (1 pt) <i>Essay must address:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EITHER a similarity OR a difference <u>in empire building</u> 	<p>Unacceptable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One way that the Ottoman and Spanish empires are similar is in the role of women, the women were subordinate. They had to do house labor and take care of children. <i>While vaguely accurate, this statement is not related to the process of empire building.</i> • Both Spain and Russia had monarchies. <i>While this IS a similarity, it is NOT tied to the empire building process. If the rest of the paragraph expanded on how the monarchies helped Spain or Russia conquer, consolidate, or centralize their control, then this sentence might yet qualify, but not as it is by itself. Pay attention to the verb. “-ing” verbs (e.g. conquering, controlling) tend to incorporate process. Static verbs (had, were) tended not to relate to the process of empire building.</i> <p>Acceptable (<i>text related to empire building process is underlined</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spanish empire-building was focused in the Americas. Conquistadors <u>conquered</u> native peoples and forced them into subservience. The Spanish designated territorial boundaries, thus <u>forming new countries</u>, and appointed themselves rulers over them. While in power they started huge plantations and mines from which a majority of the profits either went into their own pockets or back home to Spain. ... <i>[later paragraph]</i> Russian empire-building occurred primarily within the Eurasian landmass. The Russians <u>brought political unity</u> to Siberia and <u>introduced them to the Russian Orthodox faith</u>. In order to achieve such rapid expansion the Russians <u>placed a majority of the population through the country into serfdom</u>.

⁴ “Empire building process” included “colonizing, conquering, consolidating, centralizing, or strengthening” verbs as well.

Point #	Generic Description <i>Explanation/Commentary</i>	Examples and <i>Commentary</i>
3 Evidence Support	<p>Substantiates thesis with appropriate historical evidence. (2 pts)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides at least <u>4</u> examples of specific evidence that supports empire building, with at least 1 example from <u>each</u> empire. <p>(Partially substantiates these with appropriate historical evidence. (1 pt)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides at least <u>3</u> examples of specific evidence that supports empire building, with at least 1 example from <u>each</u> empire. <hr/> <p><i>Note: Evidence CAN appear in the same sentences that are counting towards “Addresses Parts of the Question” OR “Direct Comparisons.”</i></p> <p><i>The minimum requirement for how many pieces of evidence is determined by the reader/teacher, NOT the student.⁵</i></p>	<p>Unacceptable The Russian tsar was on a path to try and catch Russia up to the rest of industrialized Europe and one of the things he did was have all the people build houses in and move to St. Petersburg so that the capital would look like any western European one. He tried to build factories and put people to work in them. Which drained the economy because with all those people building houses, living in the city and working in factories there weren’t very many left to grow food. Spain was industrialized but had had a smooth transition and still had people growing enough food for everyone. <i>This is an example of a rambling paragraph filled with vague and/or false statements, none of which are relevant to the process of empire building.</i></p> <p>Acceptable (<i>text related to historical evidence is underlined</i>) Spanish empire-building was focused in the Americas. <u>Conquistadors conquered native peoples and forced them into subservience.</u> The Spanish designated <u>territorial boundaries</u>, thus forming new countries, and appointed themselves rulers over them. While in power they started huge <u>plantations</u> and <u>mines</u> from which a majority of the <u>profits</u> either went into their own pockets or back home to Spain. ...</p> <p>Russian empire-building occurred primarily within the Eurasian landmass. The Russians brought political unity to <u>Siberia</u> and introduced them to the <u>Russian Orthodox faith</u>. In order to achieve such rapid expansion the Russians placed a majority of the population through the country into <u>serfdom</u>.</p> <p>Excellent <i>Provides ample historical evidence to substantiate the thesis.</i></p>

⁵ This illustrates an important teaching point. This rubric is designed to spell out the bare minimum that students must do to get a point when the national exam is graded. In the classroom, teachers should aim higher. Ideally, students should do every part of this rubric to every question or document they ever read. That is part of the teacher’s responsibility in training students in the historian’s craft. So how many should teachers demand in the classroom as ‘enough’? College Board Consultant Bard Keeler’s advice is the “Rule of 3.” No matter what the category, give three examples: 3 pieces of evidence for each country; 3 similarities & 3 differences; 3 Changes & 3 Continuities; (for COT essays); 3 POV’s; 3 Groups; (for DBQ essays) etc. This “Rule of 3” not only helps students earn full credit for Evidence, but also requires students to Address all Parts of the Question (Point #2).

Examples of Relevant Evidence & Information

Often students feel that teachers are unreasonable demanding “too many” specific examples by name. Below is a list of POSSIBLE historical evidence examples students could use. It is NOT exhaustively complete. Obviously, no student could possibly include ALL of these examples. The point is that there’s more than enough evidence available.

Reminder: all evidence must relate to the process of empire building.

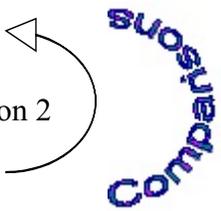
Acceptable Evidence		
Spain	Ottoman	Russia
Marriage of Ferdinand & Isabella Vigorous military and religious agenda expulsion of Jews & Muslims close link between church and state Reconquista & Inquisition Standing armies exploration & colonization conquistadors, Cortes, Pizarro, etc Columbian Exchange (must be in context of empire building) coercive labor systems (encomienda, repartimento, hacienda, mita, etc.) silver mining (& other precious metals) in Mexico & Peru	Janissaries Devshirme Suleyman the Magnificent Constantinople (1453) Indian Ocean Trade Gunpowder Empire Siege of Vienna Mehmed the Conqueror 1500-1600 military technology “Tulip Period” (economic expansion) Selim I defeats shah at Chaldiran	Removal of Mongol yoke (~1500 C.E.) Ivan III (the Great) Initial westward expansion (1480s) Ivan IV (the Terrible) Expansion into Siberia (1500s) Peter I (the Great) Westernization (in regard to expanding power), “window on the West,” St. Petersburg Catherine the Great (Alaska, partition of Poland), Pugachev’s Rebellion Cossacks campaigns against the Ottomans Fur trade w/ N. America
Unacceptable Evidence		
Spanish Armada (defeat didn’t help build empire)	Janissary revolt Young Turks World War I	Tanzimat Reforms Mestafa Kemal sale of Alaska to U.S. Russian Revolution (Marx, Lenin, Trotsky, Stalin, etc.) World War I

Point #	Generic Description <i>Explanation/Commentary</i>	Examples and Commentary																				
<p>4 Direct Comparisons</p>	<p>Makes at least 1 relevant, direct comparison between or among societies. (1 pt)</p> <p><i>Comparisons must be:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct (explicit) • Relevant to the empire building process. • True (plausibly historically accurate) <p><i>Comparisons cannot be:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indirect (Parallel construction) • Vague or false • “Double Dip” with Thesis (but can for #5 Analysis) <p><i>Common comparison “Cue” Words</i></p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>also</td> <td>as well</td> </tr> <tr> <td>both</td> <td>shared</td> </tr> <tr> <td>in addition</td> <td>like</td> </tr> <tr> <td>similarly</td> <td>too</td> </tr> </table> <p><i>Common contrast “Cue” Words</i></p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>however</td> <td>on the other hand</td> </tr> <tr> <td>conversely</td> <td>differently</td> </tr> <tr> <td>disagree</td> <td>in contrast</td> </tr> <tr> <td>either</td> <td>in opposition to</td> </tr> <tr> <td>unlike</td> <td>in contrast to</td> </tr> <tr> <td>while</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	also	as well	both	shared	in addition	like	similarly	too	however	on the other hand	conversely	differently	disagree	in contrast	either	in opposition to	unlike	in contrast to	while		<p>Unacceptable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spain also had many more advanced technologies than Russia, because they were closer to where the technologies had been invented and had the resources to support them. <i>Too vague. There needs to be more specificity re: the “technologies.”</i> • Spain conquered lands overseas. Russia conquered territories in Asia. <i>This is an example of parallel construction. The comparison is implied (‘This happened here. That happened there.’) without any direct linkage between ‘this’ and ‘that,’ ‘here’ and ‘there.’ A small change can make this comparison direct/explicit. Instead of a period between these two sentences, substitute a comma, and add “while.”</i> • Both Spain and Russia had monarchies. <i>While this IS a direct comparison, it is NOT tied to the empire building process. If the rest of the paragraph expanded on how the monarchies helped Spain or Russia conquer, consolidate, or centralize their control, then this sentence might yet qualify, but not as it is by itself. Pay attention to the verb. “-ing” verbs (e.g. conquering, controlling) tend to incorporate process.</i> <p>Acceptable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unlike the Spanish, the Ottoman Empire was a land-based empire that dominated the Middle East right up to Eastern Europe. <i>Cue word = “unlike”</i> • The Spanish however, were looking more to expand their borders by acquiring colonies in part of Africa and the Americas. <i>Cue word “however” links this statement to the previous sentences (not printed here) describing Russia’s imperial motives & methods.</i> • Now Russia and Spain alike could trade by sea. <i>Cue word = “alike”</i> • Spanish expansionism occurred across the globe and had deep implications for the indigenous peoples subjected to foreign rule and the Europeans back home while the Russian expansion was confined to the Eurasian landmass. <i>Cue word = “while,” which in this context signals a contrast, not a temporal placement.</i> <p>Excellent <i>Makes several direct comparisons consistently between countries, and/or relates comparisons to the larger global context.</i></p>
also	as well																					
both	shared																					
in addition	like																					
similarly	too																					
however	on the other hand																					
conversely	differently																					
disagree	in contrast																					
either	in opposition to																					
unlike	in contrast to																					
while																						

Point #	Generic Description <i>Explanation/Commentary</i>	Examples and <i>Commentary</i>								
5 Analysis	<p>Analyzes at least one reason for a similarity or difference identified in a direct comparison.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Can be an expansion of Rubric Category #2 (Addresses Parts of the Question) or #4 (Comparison)</i> • <i>Note: Analysis had to be relevant to the empire(s), but did NOT have to be related to the <u>empire building process</u>.</i> <p><i>The most common mistakes students made were:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Not attempting any analysis at all</i> 2. <i>Analyzing the cause-effect of one country only (analysis had to be <u>comparative</u>)</i> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Common Analysis "Cue" Words</i></p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;"><i>because</i></td> <td style="width: 50%;"><i>led to</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>caused by</i></td> <td><i>due to</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>affected</i></td> <td><i>impacted</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>came from</i></td> <td><i>in order to</i></td> </tr> </table>	<i>because</i>	<i>led to</i>	<i>caused by</i>	<i>due to</i>	<i>affected</i>	<i>impacted</i>	<i>came from</i>	<i>in order to</i>	<p>Unacceptable <i>Virtually any narrative that can be summarized as 'This happened. That happened,' without breaking down the <u>reasons behind</u> the events is NOT analysis.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Northern Eurasia has very poor farmland and so the farther south Russia expanded, the more crops Russia could make available. While analytical, this statement does not compare Russia to Spain.</i> • <i>In the late 1400s, King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain issued state-sponsored exploration. This allowed Christopher Columbus to discover the Americas. While this statement IS analytical ("allowed ...") the analysis is not comparative of <u>two</u> empires.</i> • <i>Spain also had many more advanced technologies than Russia, because they were closer to where the technologies had been invented and had the resources to support them. While the Analysis cue word "because" is promising, there needs to be more specificity re: "the technologies."</i> <p>Acceptable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>It was easier for the Spanish to expand rather than the Russians, because the Russians had to fight other nations but the Spanish just had to fight the native people, who at first didn't fight but were instead decimated by disease. This sentence earns both Comparison and Analysis: Comparison Cue words "easier" and "rather than"; Analysis cue word = "because"</i> • <i>Both Spain and Russia subjected "lesser" peoples to virtual slavery in order to produce mass profits for the wealthy. Comparison cue word = "both"; Analysis Cue words = "in order to."</i> • <i>Russia needed careful diplomacy and established treaties and pacts to craftily add land to its empire, as opposed to Spain's method of forceful takeover. Comparison = "as opposed to ..." Analysis implied in the cause-effect relationship in "to craftily add ..."</i> <p>Excellent <i>Consistently analyzes causes and effects of relevant similarities and differences.</i></p>
<i>because</i>	<i>led to</i>									
<i>caused by</i>	<i>due to</i>									
<i>affected</i>	<i>impacted</i>									
<i>came from</i>	<i>in order to</i>									

General Notes

Most students have been writing Compare and Contrast essays for several years, but often don't understand how to structure/organize their essay. Ellen Bell, an AP World History Consultant from Houston, TX has analyzed the overall structure of common Compare and Contrast essays. Her notes below can help virtually every aspect of students' writing.

Compare & Contrast Essay Organizational Structures		
Geographic "Lump"	Similarities and Differences	Categorical "Split"
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thesis • Body paragraph 1—region 1 Political Economic Social⁶ • Body paragraph 2—region 2 Political Economic Social  <p>Note: When writing body paragraph 2 you MUST make comparisons and contrasts back to information in body paragraph 1.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thesis • Body paragraph 1—similarities between regions Political Economic Social • Body paragraph 2—differences between regions Political Economic Social <p>Note: There may not be similarities and differences in all three categories.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thesis <u>Paragraph</u> (chooses 3 categories: e.g. political, economic, and social) • Body paragraph 1 <u>Political</u> (similarities AND differences between BOTH regions) • Body paragraph 2 <u>Economic</u> (similarities AND differences between BOTH regions) • Body paragraph 3 <u>Social</u> (similarities AND differences in BOTH regions)
<p><i>This is the most common (and usually least effective) structure students use. While it CAN work effectively, all too often students forget or fail to make <u>direct</u> comparisons between the regions. (Most comparisons are implied, at best.) Frequently, students are so eager to begin writing they fail to adequately develop their thesis. Also, there's nothing in the overall structure that inherently encourages analysis.</i></p>	<p><i>Students are more likely to initially feel comfortable listing similarities and differences, so this structure might be less intimidating than the Categorical Split.</i></p> <p><i>Good analysis though is more likely to come <u>if/when</u> students proceed to the next level of categorization (political, economic, social, etc).</i></p>	<p><i>Effective pre-writing is vitally important. The Categorical Split structure requires students to spend considerable time planning their thesis and organization. Because the thesis contains categories, it is usually more sophisticated and often automatically helps structure later paragraphs. It may even be good enough for "extra credit" (Expanded Core). Students are more likely to include <u>analysis</u> and numerous direct comparisons. In short, there's nothing like a strong thesis to help everything else.</i></p>

⁶ The "political, economic, and social" categories are illustrative only. Obviously, if the question called for religious, cultural, and technological evidence then those categories would apply.