

Mastering the Essay

**Advanced Writing
& Historical Thinking Skills**



AP^{*} World History Edition

by Tony Maccarella

REVISED EDITION

Includes the Summer 2017 Course Revisions

Sherpa Learning is dedicated to helping high-achieving learners gain access to high-quality, skills-based instruction that is created, reviewed, and tested by teachers. To learn more about Sherpa Learning and our vision, or to learn about some of our upcoming projects, please visit us at **www.sherpalearning.com**.

Publisher/Editor: David Nazarian

Copy-Editor/Permissions: Christine DeFranco

Cartographer: Sal Esposito

Cover Image: View of Mt Fuji from Chureito Pagoda,
© Ryusakimaou/Dreamstime.com

This edition has been revised to reflect changes that were made to the course and exam by the College Board® in the Summer of 2017.

* AP is a registered trademark of the College Board, which was not involved in the production of, and does not endorse, this product.

ISBN 978-0-9905471-6-7

Copyright © 2017, 2018

Sherpa Learning, LLC.

West Milford, New Jersey

www.sherpalearning.com



All rights reserved. No part of this book may be kept in an information storage or retrieval system, transmitted or reproduced in any form or by any means without prior written permission of the Publisher.

Printed in the United States of America.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	viii
-------------------	------

How to Use this Book.....	x
---------------------------	---

Part 1: Before You Begin

The Key to the AP Exam.....	3
Understanding the Process.....	4
Introduction to the Rubrics.....	6
The AP World History LEQ Rubric.....	7
The AP World History DBQ Rubric.....	9
Sample Essays for Evaluation.....	11
Sample Essay Scores and Rationale.....	15

Part 2: The MTE Process

The Writing Process—An Overview	19
--	----

Step 1: Analyzing the Question	23
TASKS: What to Do.....	24
[Sample Exercise: The Black Death in China and Europe]	
TERMS: What to Discuss.....	26

Step 2 (LEQ): Organizing the Evidence	27
Brainstorming and Organizing Evidence.....	29
Guided Practice: Brainstorming and Organizing Evidence.....	31
[Sample Exercise: Mongol Conquest of Western Asia]	
Outlining an Argument.....	33

Step 2 (DBQ): Analyzing the Documents	35
Document Analysis—Getting Started.....	36
[Sample Exercise: Chinese Communists & the Kuomintang]	

Table of Contents

The 3-Step Document Analysis Process.....	39
Guided Practice: Using the 3-Step Process to Analyze Documents for the DBQ.....	40
[Sample Exercise: Christendom and the Fall of Constantinople]	
DBQ Categories of Evidence.....	45
Step 3: Constructing the Thesis.....	47
The Art of the Thesis.....	48
Guided Practice: Thesis Recognition.....	50
[Sample Exercise: Geography of Ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia]	
Analytical Thesis Development.....	52
[Sample Exercise: Globalization in the 20th & 21st Centuries]	
Guided Practice: Analytical Thesis Development.....	55
[Sample Exercise: Ottoman Expansion into Europe]	
Step 4: Writing the Opening Paragraph.....	58
Planning a Strong Opening.....	59
Guided Practice: Presenting the Argument.....	60
[Sample Exercise: Geography of Ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia]	
Step 5: Writing the Body.....	63
Introduction to the Body Paragraph.....	64
Guided Practice: Analyzing Evidence for the Long Essay Question (LEQ).....	65
[Sample Exercise: Women in China during the Tang Dynasty]	
In-Body Document Analysis and Citation for the DBQ.....	67
Guided Practice: Analyzing Evidence for the DBQ.....	69
[Sample Exercise: Mongols & the Silk Road]	
A Note about Historical Complexity.....	78
Transitions for Improved Analysis.....	80
[Sample Exercise: Nationalism in Germany and Vietnam]	
Guided Practice: Analytical Transitions.....	82
[Sample Exercise: Mongols & the Silk Road]	

Mastering the Essay

A Word about Synthesis: Extending the Argument within the Body Paragraphs.....	83
---	----

Step 6: Sticking the Landing: The Closing Paragraph.....	85
---	----

Lasting Impressions.....	86
--------------------------	----

[**Sample Exercise:** The Tactics of Ho Chi Minh]

Guided Practice: Effective Closing Paragraphs.....	89
--	----

[**Sample Exercise:** Venice in the 15th & 16th Centuries]

Preparing for the Exam

Beating the Clock.....	94
------------------------	----

Choosing an LEQ.....	95
----------------------	----

Part 3: The Other Question Types

The New AP Multiple-Choice	99
---	----

The New Format.....	100
---------------------	-----

Analyzing the Document.....	102
-----------------------------	-----

Analyzing the Answer Choices.....	103
-----------------------------------	-----

Short-Answer Questions	105
-------------------------------------	-----

The Hybrid Question.....	105
--------------------------	-----

Analyzing the Document.....	108
-----------------------------	-----

Appendix

Key Terms.....	115
----------------	-----

A Letter to Teachers.....	121
---------------------------	-----

Author's Acknowledgements.....	123
--------------------------------	-----

About the Author.....	125
-----------------------	-----

Also by Tony Maccarella.....	126
------------------------------	-----



Introduction

If you are like most AP World History students, you are concerned that you may not know enough facts to score well on the Multiple-Choice section of the exam, and you are probably not-just-a-little intimidated by the prospect of a brand new AP exam format that includes Short-Answer Questions and two thesis essays, one of which is the always-mysterious Document-Based Question (DBQ). You have, no doubt, heard that these essays are all hand-scored by unknown people in unknown places, each certain to apply his or her own standards of quality to the task. Since you have no way of controlling who scores your essays, or which standards they apply, you are relying on the Multiple-Choice Questions to carry your score. You're not about to take chances and just hope you and the mystery reader are on the same page. As a result, you are probably somewhat dismayed by the lack of review terms and multiple-choice practice questions in this book, and are wondering where you can buy a "real" AP prep book.

Fear not! *Mastering the Essay* is better than AP prep books because this book focuses on the often-neglected part of the exam—the part that *will* make or break your score—the essays. If the previous paragraph describes you, then the first thing you must learn is that most of your preconceptions about the essay section of the AP exam are absolutely false. The AP readers who score your essays are high school teachers and college professors—people not often known for their mysterious origins. Even less mysterious are the standards by which the essays are assessed. The College Board® (the organization that writes the AP exam) has created very clear guidelines for assessment, and the test-makers spend many hours training each reader to apply these standards accurately and consistently. In fact, your essay will almost certainly receive the same score regardless of which of the AP readers assess it.

I am one of those AP readers, and I have written this book to help

you, the AP World History student, learn the standards by which your essays will be scored. By learning what's needed for a top score, you will be better prepared to incorporate these things into your essays. Even the very-scary DBQ is scored according to these standards. Developing the necessary skills to succeed on the AP essays will not be an overnight task, but if you follow the step-by-step process detailed in the pages that follow, before you know it, you will be writing essays that regularly score at the top end of the AP World History rubrics.

As an added bonus to using *Mastering the Essay* instead of some run-of-the-mill AP prep book, the skills needed for writing great AP World History essays are the exact skills needed for writing great college-level history essays. Rather than wasting months preparing for a single day in May, spending time developing better writing skills with *MTE* is an investment in college success. So put the prep books back on the shelf—*Mastering the Essay* is the only “prep” you need to achieve the highest score on the AP World History exam and to write college-level thesis essays.

I have designed each unit to explain one particular part of the writing process. To assist in developing your skills, each instructional section is accompanied by a set of practice exercises in the Exercise Workbook. I set out to make this book useful to students in any AP World History class, no matter which specific topic is being studied. Each exercise set is divided into chronological practice questions that mirror the new AP Course Outline provided by the College Board®. These general chronological divisions should permit you the greatest chance of practicing your skills within the context of the particular period of history being studied in your class.

So let's get started. Part 1 begins by demystifying the AP essay rubrics and outlining the writing process. In Part 2, we break down each step and provide dozens of practice exercises so you can master the process. Finally, we introduce the new Multiple-Choice Question format and tackle the new Short-Answer Question type. Read and practice the steps, read your textbook, take good notes in class, and by May, you will be prepared to achieve the highest score on the AP World History exam. Good luck and write on!

Tony Maccarella

How to Use this Book

Guided Practice

Mastering the Essay contains Guided Practice exercises to help you understand the six steps of the *MTE* writing process found in Part 2 of this book.

Each Guided Practice activity connects to a set of exercises in the Exercise Workbook.

Chronological Periods

Because most World History teachers deliver their courses chronologically, each set of exercises in the Workbook contains skills-based items organized into chronological eras. This organization will help you to apply the information you are learning in school to each of the writing-skills exercises.

Choices

New skills will be introduced in each chapter, while skills learned in earlier chapters are continually reinforced. You may choose to practice each step of the writing process using the exercises most appropriate to the historical content your class is covering at that moment. Or you may choose to complete all the exercises in the workbook and develop good writing habits, while reviewing *all* aspects of world history. The choice is yours.

Additional Resources

Visit the companion website for additional resources and valuable updates!

www.sherpalearning.com/mte

Part 2

The MTE Process



Analyzing the Question

When I was younger, I lived with my grandparents for a few years. I was in my first years teaching—young, single, and broke. Nanny and Pop-Pop (that’s what I’d always called them, for as long as I can remember) were in their eighties—grey-haired, slower, and quite a bit shorter than they had been in their youth. I needed a cheap place to sleep and they needed a little help taking care of their three-story home. It was the perfect arrangement! I enjoyed regular home-cooked meals and clean laundry, and they had someone to do repairs, lift heavy things, and reach the little glasses on the top shelf of the cupboard.

I have many fond memories of my time with Nanny and Pop-Pop, and not-just-a-few of those memories form the basis for some of my best party bits. One incident that makes me laugh whenever I think of it involves sitting at the kitchen table with Pop while Nanny was preparing some delicious meal at the sink. This scene repeated itself three times a day, every day. Neither of my grandparents had particularly good hearing by the time I had moved in with them, so their conversations were often a bit like Abbot and Costello’s “Who’s on First” routine. Nanny would stand at the sink with her back to the kitchen while Pop and I were seated at the little kitchen table at the other end of the room—completely out of her sight. He might say to me, “Tony, if you have some time today, I need to go shopping.” (I became Pop’s chauffer after he’d given up his driver’s license.) Nanny, unable to see—or hear—either one of us, but certain that Pop was saying something disparaging about her, would interject, “Now, Angelo! Tell the truth! I asked you to move those boxes last week. You said you were busy, so I moved them myself.” Pop would

Step 1 Analyzing the Question

roll his eyes at me, having heard only some of her complaint, and say, “Ruth! You can’t hear a damn thing I say, can you? I don’t care if you already did some shopping, the Acme has a sale on Tide and I don’t want to miss it!” Nanny’s retort was quick and equally disjointed, “Sure you can go for a ride, but do you have to go now? Tony’s busy! Why don’t you wait until later?” By this time, Pop was already standing at the door wearing his light canvas jacket and plaid newsboy cap, and running out of patience for what he considered to be Nanny’s irrational nagging. “I can’t wait! The sale is only today! Why can’t you just mind your own business over there and give me a minute of peace!”

Although their banter was always entertaining and the memory of it still makes me chuckle, in terms of communication, it was quite ineffective. Neither one of my grandparents really understood what the other was saying (because they couldn’t hear each other).

Unfortunately, my grandparents’ arguments are a little like the AP exam—only not as tall. The quality of your AP essays depends largely on your clear understanding of the question. The College Board® cites misreading the question as one of the most common mistakes among AP students. Before you can develop an excellent answer, you have to be certain that you understand exactly what you’ve been asked to do—you must learn to analyze the tasks and terms.

TASKS: What to Do

We define TASKS as those parts of the question that tell you WHAT TO DO. The task will ask you to apply what you know about a particular period of history in a specific way. Take a look at the essay prompt below.

Example Question: *Compare and contrast the impact of the Black Death on China and Europe.*

What is this prompt telling you to do? For this question, the tasks are “identify” and “analyze.” Most AP World History essay questions identify the task with a specific verb:

Assess the extent to which cultural unity led to the expansion of ancient Eurasian states.

Discuss the arguments in favor of global cooperation to advance medical science in the 21st century.

Analyze the impact of the Industrial Revolution of the 20th century on the lower classes of China.

Some questions may require that you complete more than one task, but in every case, the question will pose your tasks explicitly.

Compare and *contrast* the influence of nationalism on Italian and German unification.

Describe and *analyze* the components of the Catholic Reformation in Spain.

Study the verbs in the sample questions above and make certain that you understand their meanings. Then, see if you can define or paraphrase each question.

assess—to understand the impact or importance of

discuss—to elaborate or explain

analyze—to explain the meaning or importance of something for something else

compare and *contrast*—to relate in terms of how one thing is like or not like another

describe—to elaborate or clarify in terms of greater detail

Make certain that you clearly understand what each one of these tasks requires you to do. Later in this book, you will learn how to respond to questions that use a slightly different format.

TERMS: What to Discuss

The TERMS of the question determine the scope of your answer. In other words, the terms are defined as those parts of the question that specify WHAT TO DISCUSS. Each question introduces a body of material that collectively forms the general subject of the essay. The terms are the words used to focus the subject of the question. These terms should elicit a body of knowledge from you that will serve as evidence later on. As you probe the terms, you should be able to start to formulate categories of evidence that will help you to develop your thesis and outline your argument.

Take a look at the example question prompt again.

Example Question: *Compare and contrast the impact of the Black Death on China and Europe.*

What are the specific topics you are asked to address in this prompt? In this question, the terms are “impact,” “Black Death,” “China,” and “Europe.”

Taking the Next Step

Once you’ve analyzed the question and you understand the tasks and terms, then it’s time to call upon your knowledge of history to brainstorm and organize the evidence you will need to thoroughly address the terms of the question. The way you organize your evidence will determine your categories of evidence and the foundation of your thesis. The thesis is the most important sentence in your entire essay, so anything that contributes to the quality of that sentence is something with which you must be concerned. But don’t be afraid! Just turn the page and let’s get to work.

Step 4

Writing the Opening Paragraph

For years, I've delivered a consistently harsh and loud message to my AP History students. Whenever they would begin an essay with mounds of fluffy narrative that English teachers might call setting, I would cut them off at the knees with a sharp, "Answer the stinkin' question!" For 16 years the AP World History FRQ and DBQ rubrics rewarded clarity and directness—no points for setting. Students often get lost in their own text when they try to set the stage for an answer that even they don't fully understand yet, so banning setting altogether usually resulted in better—and higher scoring—essays. But now, some things have changed.

The newest AP World History LEQ and DBQ essay rubrics now reward setting—if you do it well. It is still a terrible idea to begin your essay with a page of directionless fluff that you hope will end in an acceptable thesis. A well-planned, purposeful setting that establishes the historical context of your argument, however, followed by a clear and direct answer to the question prompt, will definitely boost your score. More specifically, a thoughtful statement of setting at the start of your essay might be the best way to earn the point for Contextualization.

The Contextualization point is earned by explaining the broader context within which your argument is best understood. Sometimes this context is a series of events or an historical era, but it may also be an historical theme or process. In any case, situating your argument within its broader context is now a great idea when writing AP essays. And the best place to contextualize your argument is probably within the opening paragraph in the form of a well-structured setting.

So feel free to indulge your English teacher on the new AP World History essays, and create a few sentences that set the stage for your argument. Then... answer the stinkin' question!

Planning a Strong Opening

As with so many other components of good essays, there is really no absolutely correct way to develop your opening paragraph. Since clarity and directness are rewarded on both AP essay rubrics, we will develop a process that leads to a clear and direct opening paragraph.

For the sake of directness, don't spend *too much* space on setting in your essays. Although establishing the historical context for your answer is a great writing technique, too often students get lost in the setting and don't get to their thesis until page two. Instead, develop two to four sentences that can explain the historical "environment" within which your argument makes the most sense. Then write your thesis, and continue with your opening paragraph.

In the thesis, you addressed the tasks and terms of the question by stating explicitly WHAT you believe to be the answer to the question. You also outlined your three categories of evidence, which tell the reader HOW you intend to answer the question. If the thesis contains the answer to the question and all three categories of evidence, what are you going to write in the other sentences of the first paragraph? First, it should be noted that style and paragraph form are not assessed on the AP World History essay rubrics. So, if you write only the thesis in the opening paragraph, you will not be penalized. However, your essay will be well served if you develop your opening paragraph to state WHY your categories matter to your thesis—the same question you began to answer in your analytical thesis. One way to address this point is to write separate sentences for each category of evidence, answering briefly in each case, "Why does this matter to my thesis?"

Step 4 Writing the Opening Paragraph

Guided Practice: Presenting the Argument

Directions: For this set of exercises, you will practice all the skills covered so far in this book:

Step 1: Identify the tasks and terms

Step 2: Brainstorm specific evidence

Step 3: Develop a thesis and categories of evidence, and then outline your argument

Next, using the strategies outlined in the section above, write an opening paragraph for each thesis statement. The example below asks you to write an opening paragraph for the sample thesis shown, and is followed by a model solution to help you better understand the goal of this exercise.

Exercise Question: *Compare and contrast the impact of geography on the political, economic, and belief systems of ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia.*

Sample Thesis: Although both economies were rooted in the agriculture of fertile river valleys, the predictability of the Nile, coupled with Egypt's natural boundaries, promoted stable governments and a deeply rooted belief system, while the irregularity of the Tigris and Euphrates, as well as a lack of natural boundaries, helped to produce unstable governments and changing belief systems.

Explanation

Sample Opening Paragraph: The nomadic peoples of the eastern Mediterranean survived for millennia in lands dominated by hot desert climates. They became adept at hunting and gathering in some of the most inhospitable regions of the world, and their ultimate success relied largely on taking advantage of relatively small fertile areas along the few rivers they encountered. It was the development of agriculture along these river valleys that resulted in two of the most prosperous centers of civilization in the world—Egypt and Mesopotamia. River valleys, like those in Egypt and Mesopotamia, were ideal locations for ancient farming communities to grow into long-lasting civilizations, because river flooding provided a constant source of fertile farmland in an otherwise harsh environment. Both civilizations benefitted to some degree from fertile farmland, but the precise location of each river valley and the particular nature of each river led to distinctions in terms of the political and economic stability of each particular civilization. Although both economies were rooted in the agriculture of fertile river valleys, the predictability of the Nile, coupled with Egypt’s natural boundaries, promoted stable governments and a deeply rooted belief system, while the irregularity of the Tigris and Euphrates, as well as a lack of natural boundaries, helped to produce unstable governments and changing belief systems in Mesopotamia.

The opening begins with a brief description of life in the lands of the eastern Mediterranean, describing the harsh climate and desert conditions endured by the nomadic peoples of western Asia and northern Africa. These few sentences set your reader up for the contrast of the more settled lifestyles of the river valley peoples. In the thesis—located at the end of the paragraph—we tell the reader that both Egypt and Mesopotamia benefitted from their locations in river valleys, but that the nature of those valleys influenced the specific outcomes. We also say HOW the essay will illustrate this point—through a comparison of fertile farmlands, predictability of floods, and natural boundaries. The sentences preceding the thesis explain briefly WHY our three categories of evidence help to distinguish between the civilizations of ancient Egypt and those of ancient Mesopotamia. Some restatement of each of these sentences

Step 4 Writing the Opening Paragraph

could be used as topic sentences for our body paragraphs, but we'll save that discussion for Step 5.

Taking the Next Step

Having completed your opening paragraph, you will have clearly told your reader **WHAT** you think is the answer to the question and **HOW** you will present the details of your argument. Once you've created this sturdy skeleton of an argument, now it's time to put some meat on the bones. In the next section, you will learn the best way to introduce specific evidence in the body of your essay, and how to best use that evidence in support of your thesis.

A Letter to Teachers

THE PURPOSE OF THIS BOOK is to help you teach advanced historical thinking and writing skills to your AP World History students. I hope that its design facilitates that purpose and, in the process, makes your job a bit easier.

As a history teacher, you are responsible for teaching centuries of content as well as an ever-growing list of skills—among them writing. The balance between content and skill-development has always been challenging for teachers in our discipline, especially for Advanced Placement teachers, and the newest AP World exam format has made our job even more complicated. We know that our students cannot face the new AP exam in May without a thorough understanding of historical concepts, nor can they succeed on the exam without practicing skills of analysis and written expression. This book was originally written to provide you with a resource for helping your students to hone their writing skills within the context of the AP World course content, and that mission is even more urgent since the College Board® has redesigned the exam.

Mastering the Essay guides students through a process for developing consistently strong thesis essays—the kind of writing necessary for the AP LEQ and DBQ, as well as most college-level essays. The process is simple and straightforward, and each unit of this book focuses on a key step in that process. The exercises accompanying each step are arranged chronologically within the Exercise Workbook so that you can quickly and easily address any step of the process at any point throughout the year.

Beyond this book, Sherpa Learning is providing *Mastering the Essay* users with a variety of additional online resources, offering flexibility to pick and choose content and to continually access new resources. Online you will find sample essays, scoring guidelines for each exercise, instructional resources for use in and out of the classroom, writing skills lessons that can be easily adapted to fit any historical unit, and an online forum for you to collaborate with other AP World teachers. Additionally, since Sherpa Learning believes educational publishing is a dynamic process, new resources are constantly

being added, therefore users have access to a constant influx of new materials.

I hope that *Mastering the Essay* will become an integral part of your AP World History instructional plans, and that you and your students benefit from the skill lessons and practice exercises in this book. It has always been my goal to create a resource that works within today's classroom. If you should have comments or suggestions that might help to further this goal, please contact me directly at Tony@MasteringTheEssay.com.

Tony Maccarella
January 2018

About the Author

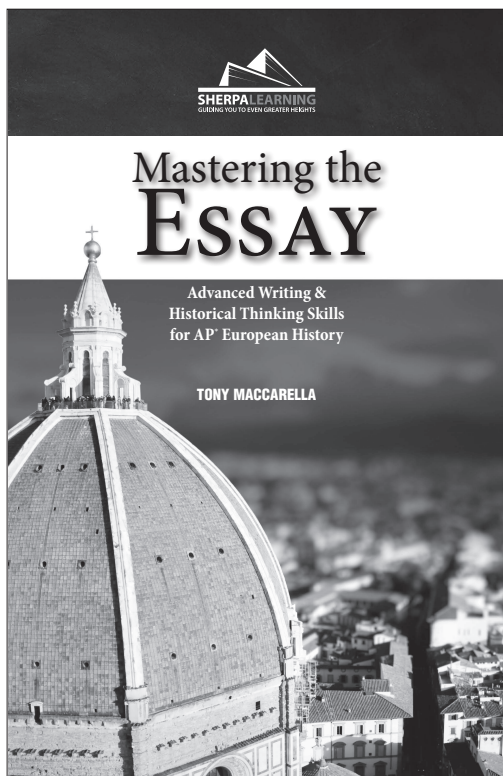
TONY MACCARELLA, or as students past and present call him, “Mr. Mac,” has been teaching social studies since 1982, and is currently teaching AP World History and AP Macroeconomics at Saddle River Day School, in Saddle River, NJ.

Prior to this, he taught AP European History at Parsippany Hills High School, in Parsippany, NJ for over 10 years. Additionally, Mr. Mac has taught AP U.S. History, Comparative Governments, Anthropology, Psychology, Microeconomics, and Military History.

Since 2002, Tony has served as a Reader and Table Leader for the AP European History exam for ETS. He is responsible for scoring AP European History exam questions, supervising other readers, and assisting with the clarification of scoring standards. You may also run into Tony at one of the many guest lecturer appearances he makes at social studies conference across the Northeast.

Tony is an avid traveler. He has bicycled across the United States, motorcycled to Sturgis and back, studied in China, and traveled throughout Italy with his wife, family, and students from seven different European History classes.

Also by Tony Maccarella



Mastering the Essay

AP® European History Edition

**Advanced Writing and Historical Thinking Skills
for AP European History**

Instructional Handbook:

isbn 978-0-9905471-3-6

Exercise Workbook:

isbn 978-0-9905471-4-3

Handbook & Workbook Combo:

isbn 978-0-9905471-5-0

www.sherpalearning.com