

Thematic Essay Writing Strategy

Tip: When choosing two (2) topics try to pick topics in which you can analyze with similarities and differences.

Intro Paragraph

1. Define your theme/historical context – Write a definition or explain the theme.
2. Rewrite your theme in your own words. Use the **Word Replacement Strategy** if needed.
3. List and Introduce your topics using the format:

Format: # of how many topics + theme + topics chosen

Examples: *One country who used imperialism was Great Britain.*

Two belief systems are Hinduism and Buddhism.

Two leaders are Stalin and Hitler.

Remember:
Writing for an Exam is not like writing a paper or a situation where you can have a draft and revise multiple times. Exam writing is formulaic and has to be completed in

1st Body Paragraph – (First Topic)

1. Introduce your first topic using the following format.

Format: “One” + Theme + Topic

Examples: *One belief system is Confucianism.*

One leader is Stalin.

Britain was one country who used imperialism

2. Use the task bullets to create your sentences. You should do this in an orderly fashion. Start you sentences in a sequence order such as; first, *secondly*, *furthermore or*, *thirdly*. Last sentence should begin with; *finally*, *or lastly*.
3. Whenever possible give a reason for each sentence such as; *because*, *since*, *based upon*, *as an example*, *such as*, *an effect of this*, *had an effect upon*.

Example: *First*, Confucianism was the means by which to keep order out of chaos in Chinese society because China was not unified and waring with each section. *Secondly*, the belief system allowed for respect of the ruler as well as in the family unit based upon the five relationships mentioned by Confucius in his book the Analects. *Finally*, Chinese people, for the most part, still live by Confucian rules and an effect of this is their willingness to submit to Communist rule and a totalitarian government today.

2nd Body Paragraph (Topic #2 – If required)

Follow same format as 1st Body Paragraph for your 2nd Body Paragraph

Analyzing Paragraph (1 Topic)

When analyzing one topic you will not be able to use compare and contrast. You should choose *cause and effect* /or/ *success or failure* /or/ *progress or decline*, or a combination of any of these with *positive* and *negative long term* or *short term*.

Example:

The French Revolution had many causes and effects. One cause was that the Third Estate paid all of the taxes which caused them to be disillusioned with the absolute monarchy of Louis XVI. The effect of this was that the common people of France had food shortages and not enough money to pay for simple items in their diet such as bread. Once the people became hungry and/or starving they rioted in Paris and elsewhere. This caused the riots to grow larger and larger with no response to correct the situation from Louis XVI. The result of this situation caused the Third Estate to form their own government which in turn would eventually force the King to give up some power. This would lead to all out revolution and with the Reign of Terror the loss of the King and Queen's heads by the guillotine or the "National Razor" as it was called. The success of the French Revolution was positive in the long term since France is a republic today. The failure of the monarchy to react to the problems of the people at the time would be a catalyst (reason) for future revolutions in England and Russia. The English Revolution called the Glorious Revolution which occurred without any violence was successful, while the Russian Revolution was violent and ushered in the era of communism which lasted until 1991 at the end of the Cold War.

Analyzing Paragraph (2 Topics)

One sure way of analyzing your topics is by comparing and contrasting. As a rule, you can use the similarities and differences. First, do a comparison, and then a contrast.

For Similarities use words such as; *both, mutually, together, similarly, equally*.

For Differences use words such as; *dissimilarly, divergently, unlike, differences such as, whereas*.

Example:

Both Hinduism and Buddhism believe in reincarnation. Equally, worshipers are using their present life to affect their afterlife. Similarly, both originate in India. The differences are that Hindu's practice the caste system in which there is no social mobility in your lifetime. Furthermore, they have different ways of reaching one with the gods for example in Hinduism a person needs to have good karma and dharma while in Buddhism you reach enlightenment by following the four noble truths with the eightfold path to end suffering.

Conclusion:

1. Reintroduce your topic(s)
2. Give one of your best pieces of evidence from each topic
3. Relate the topic to the world today

Example:

Today, we still have violations of human rights even though one of the United Nations goals is to prevent it from occurring.