

Rewriting the Thematic Essay

Directions: In order to help you to improve your writing and your grade, I am allowing you to do a rewrite of your Revolutions essay. For those who scored lower than an 80, this is a requirement. Using the Major Common Issues and Abbreviations listed below, review your essay and my feedback, and use this information to rewrite your essay. I will not be regarding your essay from scratch. Rather, I will give you up to ten points back on your essay based on how well you address the feedback and improve your essay. You must submit your original essay with my feedback stapled to the back of your rewrite. See the rubric below for clarification. If you do not understand my comments or have other questions, email me directly at pcasey@maspethhighschool.org.

Essay Rewrite Rubric

10	8	6	4	2	0
Addressed all teacher feedback on essay. Dramatically improved essay in terms of addressing of the task, clarity, organization, use and explanation of key vocabulary, support, and mechanics.	Addressed almost all teacher feedback on essay. Significantly improved essay in terms of addressing of the task, clarity, organization, use and explanation of key vocabulary, support, and mechanics.	Addressed most teacher feedback on essay. Somewhat improved essay in terms of addressing of the task, clarity, organization, use and explanation of key vocabulary, support, and mechanics.	Addressed some teacher feedback on essay. Partially improved essay in terms of addressing of the task, clarity, organization, use and explanation of key vocabulary, support, and mechanics.	Did not address most teacher feedback on essay. Slightly improved essay in terms of addressing of the task, clarity, organization, use and explanation of key vocabulary, support, and mechanics.	Addressed almost none or none of the teacher feedback on essay. Improved essay negligibly if at all in terms of addressing of the task, clarity, organization, use and explanation of key vocabulary, support, and mechanics.

Major Common Issues

Where's the Beef?! Missing Key Information

Discussing causes and effects of an event DOES NOT mean you ignore the event itself. Historical Circumstances of the revolution means the issues, conditions, and events that led up to the Revolution INCLUDING the immediate causes and beginning of the revolution itself. If you stopped short with your first paragraph and never actually described the start of the revolution, you are missing the most important part! The same goes for the effects. If you skipped over all the EFFECTS that took place over the course of the revolution and only mentioned effects that took place AFTER the revolution was completely over, you are again missing key information. We all know just how important the BREAD can be, but it's not much of a sandwich without the MEAT!

Organization and Task

Another key issue was organization. In some cases, this was an issue with chronological order, with events that happened in an important sequence of cause and effect being discussed out of order and out of context. For instance, discussing the Congress of Vienna before discussing Napoleon. However, in other cases, it was an issue with key point and supporting details. When you provide details, it needs to be clear what they are supporting. For instance, when discussing the causes of the revolution, start with the major issues first before mentioning specific related examples. Most of all, be sure to make sure to clearly connect all points to the task of that paragraph.

Vocabulary

Key vocabulary must be utilized in your essays, and you must define the terms you use and put them into proper context. All of the following terms should be mentioned and defined in your essay. Since these two revolutions have plenty of overlap, those that are BOLDED should be mentioned for BOTH revolutions: **American Revolution**, **French Revolution**, **Haitian Revolution**, **Latin American Revolutions**, *First, Second, Third Estate*, *Louis XVI*, *Estates-General*, *National Assembly*, *Tennis Court Oath*, *Bastille*, **Declaration of the Rights of Man**, *Reign of Terror*, *Guillotine*, *Robespierre*, **Napoleon**, *Congress of Vienna*, *Saint Domingue*, *Toussaint L'Ouverture*, *Petit Blancs*, *Grand Blancs*, *Free People of Color*, *Slave Revolt*

Essay Feedback Abbreviations

- **TNA = Task Not Addressed.** This is a comment that applies to the body paragraph as a whole. It means that the required task for that paragraph, as outlined in the bullet points, was either partially or completely left unaddressed. In other words, you never actually explained the main thing you were supposed to explain. Make sure you fully address all aspects of the task.
- **OT = Off Task.** Similar to TNA but for a specific point in the paragraph, OT means you are not responding to the task outlined in the bullet points. You are writing about something other than what this paragraph is supposed to be about. Check your bullet points and get back on track!
- **IR = Irrelevant.** Similar to OT, but usually for smaller cases where you have just inserted an idea that does not belong because it does not connect to the overall goal of the paragraph. Any details you provide should be supporting details, not just random facts.
- **IA = Inaccurate.** You have your facts wrong. What you said is not correct.
- **WP = Wrong Paragraph.** What you are discussing belongs in this essay, but you are addressing the task for a different paragraph, so move this to the correct paragraph.
- **How? Why? = How? Why?** Pretty straightforward. You made a statement or claim but you never explained it further, particularly how or why it is the case.
- **C/E = Cause and Effect.** Very similar to “How? Why?” but used in more general cases to mean that you need to explain how one thing leads to another rather than just listing events in the order they happen. You may also see this written next to two connected events, meaning you have to explain the connection.
- **+ = Say More.** You brought up something good, but you moved on without discussing it fully. Go further, explain in more depth, or finish the thought.
- **SD = Supporting Details.** You may have made a good point, but you need to back it up with more relevant examples and details. Make sure they actually support your point!
- **UC = Unclear.** You are being too vague, or you are not explaining things fully, or for some other reason your meaning is not coming across. Write with the reader in mind, and make sure they understand you.
- **? = What?** I am confused. Either what you wrote does not make sense, or I can't figure out what you are trying to say, or I just don't know what is going on.
- **WC = Word Choice.** You used a word, or you used wording, that needs to be changed. It may be inappropriate, unprofessional in tone, unclear, or inaccurate. You need to reword this.
- **V = Vocabulary.** A more specific version of WC above, this means that you should have used a vocabulary term that we learned in class to describe something.
- **D = Define.** You mentioned a good vocabulary term, but you need to explain what it means to the reader.
- **O = Order/Organization.** Your information may be all fine, but it seems to be out of order or in some way unorganized. Reread this part and fix the order to be clearer and more organized.
- **R = Repetition.** You just said that, and now you're saying it again.
- **DAQ = Don't Ask Questions.** Posing a question can be an interesting attention grabber, but it does not belong in your History paper. Find more professional phrasing for the same idea.
- **SP = Spelling.** You spelled something wrong.
- **M = Mechanics.** Any problems other than spelling, including grammatical, punctuation, and capitalization errors, use of contractions, or use of inappropriate symbols such as parentheses, slashes, bold, underline, italics, or in the case of thematic essays, quotation marks.
- **TTT = Theme, Topic, Task.** Used only for the introduction and conclusion, a reminder to make sure you are addressing in some way all three necessary aspects of the thematic essay introduction and conclusion. You may not be missing all of them, but you are at least missing one of them.
- **US = Unsupported.** You are making a claim that you never support. Used often in the introduction and conclusion when something that was never addressed in the body paragraphs is presented as a key point of the essay.
- **✓ = Good!** You explained something very well, brought up a great example, or I just really liked what you wrote here!
- **X = Not Good.** If something has an X through it, it means there must be something wrong with it.
- **UPT = Unprofessional Tone.** The way you are writing, or some of the words or expressions you are using, are not appropriate for a historical essay. Use more professional and mature language and style.
- **MKI = Missing Key Information.** You may be addressing the task somewhat, but there are major points or examples that you are leaving out of your essay that should be there.
- **CTT = Connect to Task.** You may be including very important and relevant examples, but you have to show why they are important and relevant in terms of the task. Make sure the reader understands how the information you are presenting relates to the bullet point you are addressing in the paragraph.
- **WAYQ = Why Are You Quoting?** This is a Regents-style essay. There should be no quoting in this essay except for DBQ documents. You can get information from outside sources but you need to write entirely in your own words.
- **DCI = Document Cited Improperly.** You cited from the provided documents, but made some mistake in format.