

Grading Papers One at a Time

Optimally, you will have time to thoroughly grade papers. To do so, follow the *Take a Stand!*™ grading rubrics. Below is the grading scale, a short description of the meaning of the scale, and the five categories for all grading rubrics found in this book. This grading scale is based on the four-point scale used by the California Department of Education. To locate this on the web, go to www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs/elateacherguide.asp and choose the link *Appendices*. This site offers an abundance of information on grading essays. Refer to this site for specific grading explanations and essay examples.

Grading Scale

- | | |
|---|-----------------------|
| 4 | Exceeds Standards |
| 3 | Meets Standards |
| 2 | Approaching Standards |
| 1 | Below Standards |
| 0 | Nonexistent |

The Score

Its Meaning

- | | |
|---|---|
| 4 | A score of 4 means that the student successfully responded to the prompt in every category. In the thesis statement, supporting evidence, evidence explained, conclusion, and prewriting activities, the necessary elements were included. Moreover, the student with a score of 4 wrote the essay with a convincing voice and used exceptional vocabulary and writing style. |
| 3 | A score of 3 means that the student successfully responded to the prompt in every category. In the thesis statement, supporting evidence, evidence explained, conclusion, and prewriting activities, the necessary elements were included. However, the student's writing might not be extremely convincing, or might have a few grammatical and spelling errors. |
| 2 | A score of 2 means that the student inadequately addressed the prompt or failed to write well in every category. In addition, a student may earn a 2 if grammatical and spelling errors make the essay difficult to read. |
| 1 | A score of 1 is given when the student is either completely off topic or when it is apparent that no effort has been given. |

Grading Categories

- I. **Thesis Statement:** Does it persuasively answer the question?
The **thesis statement** is the main idea or argument of the entire essay. It is the writer's main judgment regarding the essay question, and it should contain words used in the prompt. A thesis statement is not a fact. Instead, it is the writer's judgment of the facts. Because of this, a thesis has to be something with which not everyone will agree. Every thesis will provide pieces of evidence in order to provide the reader with a general outline of the essay.

- II. **Evidence Used:** Are two or more relevant pieces of evidence used? **Supporting evidence** refers to everything used to support the thesis that can be verified. It is important for the writer to show that the judgment is based on factual pieces of evidence, and not on opinion. Names, dates, and events are used to support the thesis statement. Here are examples of supporting evidence:
1. Diaries and journals
 2. Government documents such as birth certificates or the Declaration of Independence
 3. Songs and stories
 4. Coins, medals, jewelry
 5. Artistic works such as pictures and paintings
 6. Tools and pottery
 7. Genealogies or business records
 8. Weapons
 9. Burial remains
 10. Literature and customs
- III. **Evidence Explained:** Is the evidence explained correctly and persuasively? **Judgment** in social studies means a person's evaluation of facts. For example, consider the following two sentences. The French Revolution began in 1789. This year was very important for France. The fact in these sentences is that the French Revolution began in 1789. The judgment is that this year was important for France. Judgment is different from opinion because judgment is based on fact whereas opinion is not. Good judgment is very persuasive but bad judgment is not.
- IV. **Conclusion:** Does the evidence strengthen the topic sentences? The **conclusion** ties the evidence presented in the essay back to the thesis statement. It is the writer's last chance to present how the evidence supports the thesis statement. In a one-paragraph essay, the conclusion can be one sentence, but it may be more. In the conclusion, the student should not introduce new pieces of supporting evidence but rather should provide mainly analysis.
- V. **Prewriting Activities:** Are all prewriting activities included and attached to the final? For this category, the teacher is grading primarily the effort of the student.
- VI. **The Unwritten Category:** Do grammatical or spelling errors detract from the reader's understanding? Total possible points to be deducted here is up to teacher discretion. I recommend that for the first few assignments grading in this category be lenient. Our main goal is to promote critical thinking, speaking, and writing. If the spelling and grammar errors do not keep the reader from understanding the content, the grader should tread lightly on deducting for these mistakes.

Multi-Page Essay Grading Rubric

Grading Scale	
4	Exceeds Standards
3	Meets Standards
2	Approaching Standards
1	Below Standards
0	Nonexistent

I.	Organization/Structure of the Essay	Yes/No	
A.	Thesis:	Does the thesis take a firm position on the essay topic?	_____
B.	Topic Sentences:	Do topic sentences strongly support the thesis?	_____
C.	Conclusion:	Does the conclusion persuasively affirm the thesis?	_____
		Score:	_____
II	Evidence: Part I — Accuracy and Adequacy of Evidence		
A.	Accuracy:	Is all evidence accurate (true)?	_____
B.	Adequacy:	Is enough evidence used?	_____
		Score:	_____
III	Evidence: Part II — Validity and Persuasiveness of Evidence		
B.	Validity:	Do explanations of evidence make sense?	_____
A.	Persuasiveness:	Do explanations of evidence support main ideas?	_____
		Score:	_____
IV	Language Mechanics		
A.	Punctuation:	Does the essay use correct punctuation?	_____
B.	Grammar:	Does the essay use correct grammar (sentence structure)?	_____
C.	Spelling:	Is spelling correct?	_____
		Score:	_____
V	Writing Process		
A.	Prewriting:	Are all prewriting activities complete?	_____
B.	Effort:	Is great effort shown in these activities?	_____
		Score:	_____
		Total Score:	_____ X 5 = Grade: _____

2. The Age of Revolution

For most of the medieval ages (c. A.D. 476–1500), Europeans did not question the divine right of kings and queens. Europeans believed that God personally chose their leaders, and therefore following the rulers was both a political and a religious act. In some lands the king exercised absolute power, that is, power without limits.

From the 1600s through the mid 1800s, however, revolution swept through many of the great countries of Europe and its large colonies. Kings were violently deposed from power, in some cases losing their heads in public executions. The era of divine right was forever broken, and the age of revolution heralded new ideologies.

In your essay, answer the question "What was the key factor in destroying the idea of the divine right of kings?" Explain what ended the power of the great absolute monarchs and brought in a radically different kind of state.

As you write your essay, you should be familiar with the following ideas and terms:

nationalism absolute monarch limited monarchy

Enlightenment self-government English Bill of Rights

Magna Carta Declaration of Independence

This essay has six assignments:

Assignment	Due Date	Due Date
1. Prewriting Tasks	_____	4. Rough Draft
2. Thesis Statement	_____	5. Final
3. Outline	_____	6. Works Cited

Prewriting Activities for Essay #2

A. Important Documents on the Rights of the Individual

Research the following documents and provide a short summary for each. Then answer the questions at the bottom of the page.

The Magna Carta (1215): This document forced King John I to give up power to the English noblemen. The king had to request tax money from nobles in order to wage war, instead of demanding money. Noblemen also gained property and civil rights.

The English Bill of Rights (1689): All English citizens obtained political rights due to this document.

The American Declaration of Independence (1776): The United States of American declared itself an independent country from Great Britain and declared that all men are created equal and that the government's job is to protect life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

The French Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen (1789): This document declared that all citizens were equal under the law and rejected privileges for the nobility.

The American Bill of Rights (1791): This document guaranteed American citizens freedoms from their state and federal governments.

Questions

1. Did these documents grant more power to the king (or government) or less? Each of these documents takes power away from the king or grants the citizens more rights.

2. Which of the documents guarantees the most individual freedom from government? Each student may have a different answer. Let students explain their answers.

B. The Enlightenment

Research these philosophers of the Enlightenment and write down their main ideas involving the ideas of good government.

Political Philosophers
John Locke: Englishman John Locke lived from 1632–1704. Locke wrote in the “Two Treatises of Government” that all men have natural rights and that the government’s main job is to protect these rights. Natural rights meant the right to life, liberty, and private property.
Thomas Hobbes: Englishman Thomas Hobbes lived from 1588–1679. Hobbes wrote that man gives up some of his rights to an authority so that he may live in a peaceful society. Man enters into a social contract with a government to ensure his own safety and protection.
Charles Louis-Montesquieu: Frenchman Montesquieu lived from 1689–1755. Among other works, he is most famous for his writings on separation of powers. He wrote that it is necessary to place the varied powers of government into the hands of a number of men so that not all powers would reside in one man, or in one group.
Jean-Jacque Rousseau: Franco-Swiss Rousseau lived from 1712–1778. Rousseau believed that man lived as a noble savage until he was constrained by government. Rousseau wrote that a small group of citizens should determine the general will, what was best for others. Citizens should be forced to follow this general will.

Economics and the Enlightenment

Research the following economic term and its most known proponent.

Laissez faire: This is a French term which refers to an economic policy where the government leaves business alone. Today, *free market* is more often used.

Adam Smith: Scottish Smith lived from 1723–1790 and wrote “Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations.” He remains the most well-known proponent of free trade and perhaps the father of economics.

Questions

1. Did the philosophers of the Enlightenment want a stronger king? Most Enlightenment philosophers did not want a stronger king.
2. Do you think that most kings were in favor of or against philosophers of the Enlightenment? Why or why not?

C. Nationalism

1. What is nationalism? Nationalism is the idea that the most important aspect of a human is his nationality, that each nation deserves a state, and that all other loyalties a person may have are secondary to the allegiance he holds to his nation.
2. When did the idea of nationalism become a major factor in European politics? Most historians think that the idea of nationalism became a major factor in European politics at the time of the French Revolution (1789) and Napoleon's reign.
3. How did Napoleon Bonaparte spread ideas of nationalism in Europe? When Napoleonic France conquered much of Europe, he spread nationalistic ideas. Also, people fighting Napoleon were inspired by nationalistic ideas.
4. Did the idea of nationalism support having empires controlled by a king from a different nationality? No. The ideology of nationalism supported a king ruling his own nation.
5. In England, under King Henry VIII, what did the British king do to the Roman Catholic Church? King Henry VIII started
6. In the German speaking lands, during the life of Martin Luther, describe what was happening in Europe. German nobility were deciding to side with either the Catholics or the Lutherans. Religious wars broke out among Catholics and Lutherans.
7. Did the Protestant Reformation support the idea of divine right, or weaken it? The Protestant Reformation weakened the idea of divine right. Lutheran German princes fought against the Holy Roman Emperor, who was crowned and legitimated by the Roman Catholic Church.
8. Did the idea of nationalism make emperors of multinational empires stronger, or weaker? Why? The idea of nationalism made emperors of multinational empires weaker. One idea of nationalism is that each nation deserves its own country. For the multinational empires, this meant that individual nations within the empire would want to break away and start their own country.

D. Class Discussion

When you share ideas with other students, your ideas may be reinforced, rejected, or slightly changed. Listening to your classmates' ideas will help you form your own judgment.

Each student must interview at least three classmates who do not sit next to one another. The answers to the following questions must be written down on a piece of paper.

1. What is your name?
2. What was the key factor in destroying the idea of the divine right of Kings?
3. How did you find your answers?

Reflection

After you have written down all your classmates' responses, think about them and ask yourself the following questions. Write down your answers under your classmates' responses.

1. What do I think of my classmates' answers?
2. Which answer to question #2 above was the best?
3. Have I changed the way I think?
4. How have I changed the way I think?

You should now have a chance to present your ideas in a class discussion. If somebody says something with which you disagree, speak up! In your discussion, you may find out they are actually right and you are wrong. All possible viewpoints should be stated and defended out loud. Test your ideas in class.