Modern European History

Exploration Essay Guidelines

**Introduction**

So far in this research project you have been tasked with researching basic information about a specific explorer and presenting this information in poster form. Your second assignment was to expand on this basic information to create a rough outline for an essay that answers the following question:

*What are the three most important contributions this explorer made to the Age of Exploration?*

**Thesis Statement and Introduction**

The most important part of an essay is the thesis statement. As we discussed in our last class, a thesis statement directly answers the essay question and is found somewhere in the introduction of the essay. Usually one sentence, the thesis is the compass that guides the reader (and writer) through the roadmap that is the essay; all points always return to (and support) the basic thesis statement.

The introductory paragraph contains the thesis as well as the major arguments set out in the thesis, listing and explaining the main points of the essay without going into too much detail. It presents your thesis to the reader as well as giving them a general idea about the evidence that will be used to support each of your arguments. A thoroughly developed thesis exists only within the context of the arguments described in the introductory paragraph.

**Outline**

The outline itself is a larger road map for the entire essay. It breaks down the thesis statement into its major arguments and includes the basic supporting evidence for each of these arguments. Thorough essays have at least two pieces of specific evidence to fully and completely support each argument. This evidence needs to be specific, such as an event, piece of legislation, action, movement, etc. An essay outline would look something like this:

Basic thesis statement: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Argument #1: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 Evidence #1: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 Evidence #2: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Argument #2: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 Evidence #1: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 Evidence #2: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Argument #3: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 Evidence #1: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 Evidence #2: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Writing A Research Paper**

A research paper asks students to read and analyze historical records, assimilate and synthesize information from several sources, and then write an essay using this information. It gives you the chance to showcase your ability to assess the value of a variety of documents and the emphasis is on analysis and synthesis, not historical narrative; you will not just list all the information you’ve learned about your subject, you will use the information you’ve learned to support your answer to the essay question.

**Points to remember when writing an essay:**

> ALWAYS write an outline before writing the essay

> create a thesis statement that restates the question and has all of your arguments in order of least to most important - **underline your thesis** in your essay

> argument paragraphs must include at least two pieces of evidence (can be more) that accurately support the argument

> quotes must be less than two lines in length and must be cited, using in-text citations whenever possible

> do not use first person (I, we, us)

> do not use definitives (always, never) unless you are 100% certain they are true