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U.S. History Skillbook

Practice and Application of Historical Thinking Skills for AP* U.S. History

Third Edition

by Michael Henry, Ph.D.

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Content/Skills Overview

This Skillbook is designed differently than traditional AP U.S. History test-prep books. Whereas those texts focus on drilling you with content, this text focuses on improving your historical thinking and writing skills. In an Advanced Placement or Honors history course, you must do more than simply memorize facts, read a document, and regurgitate information on objective tests. You must become adept at applying advanced historical thinking skills, analyzing documents, and writing strong argumentative essays. The exercises in this book are designed to do just that.

The structure of the 3rd Edition has been carefully aligned to the curriculum framework of the newly redesigned AP U.S. History course and exam, including the revisions released in the summer of 2015. As you progress through the chapters in this book, you will be introduced to the nine Historical Thinking Skills laid out by the College Board® for all AP history courses. Later chapters will build upon the skills introduced in earlier chapters toward the ultimate goal of writing full-length essay responses to Document-Based Question (DBQ) and Long Essay Question (LEQ) prompts.

The table provided below and on the next two pages is designed to give you an overview of how the content and skills are arranged throughout this text.

Unit	Chapter	Topic	Historical Thinking Skill
1	1	Separating Fact from Opinion	Evidence
	2	Identifying the Purpose of the Question	Argumentation
	3	Determining Status Quo vs. Change	C.C.O.T.
2	4	Creating Categories for Understanding	Causation
	5	Using H.I.P.P.O. to Interpret Documents	Evidence
	6	What the Prompt is Asking You to Do	Argumentation

Unit	Chapter	Topic	Historical Thinking Skill
3	7	Linking Cause and Effect	Causation
	8	Establishing the Credibility of Documents	Evidence
	9	Making Inferences to Expand Meaning	Evidence
	10	Establishing Periodization Characteristics	Periodization
	11	Historical Interpretation	Interpretation
4	12	Using Graphs and Maps Effectively	Evidence
	13	Establishing Point of View	Evidence
	14	Using Documents in an Essay	Argumentation
	15	Using Contrasting Documents	Synthesis, Argumentation
	16	Developing a Thesis	Argumentation
	17	Contextualization and Chart Analysis	Contextualization
5	18	Extending and Modifying a Thesis	Argumentation
	19	Cartoons and Contextualization	Argumentation, Contextualization
	20	Comparing and Contrasting Historical Positions	Comparison
	21	Using Documents and Charts in an Essay	Evidence, C.C.O.T., Contextualization

Unit	Chapter	Topic	Historical Thinking Skill
6	22	Recognizing Relevant Evidence	Evidence
	23	Using Facts to Support a Thesis	Argumentation, Evidence
	24	Using Documents and Cartoons in an Essay	Argumentation, Contextualization
7	25	Bias and Point of View	Argumentation
	26	Interpretation of Historiography	Interpretation
	27	Grouping Documents into Categories	C.C.O.T., Evidence, Argumentation
	28	Creating an Introductory Paragraph	Argumentation, Contextualization
	29	Writing a Concluding Paragraph	Argumentation, Synthesis
8	30	Prioritizing Facts in Planning an Essay	Evidence, Argumentation
	31	Sequencing Evidence in an Essay	Evidence, Argumentation
	32	Steps for Writing a DBQ Essay	ALL NINE
	33	Steps for Writing an LEQ Essay	ALL NINE
9	34	A Review of the Thinking Skills	ALL NINE
	35	Writing a DBQ Essay	ALL NINE
	36	Writing an LEQ Essay	ALL NINE
	37	Understanding the DBQ and LEQ Rubrics	ALL NINE

Chronological Periods Overview

The Units of this book have been aligned to the nine Historical Periods outlined by the College Board® in the new AP U.S. History course framework. This will allow you to sync up the thinking and writing exercises in this book with the content you are covering in class. Or, if you prefer to dive into the development of skills later in the year, the exercises will serve as a review of materials covered earlier in the course.

Unit	Chapters	Historical Period
1	1-3	Period 1: 1491–1607
2	4-6	Period 2: 1607–1754
3	7-11	Period 3: 1754–1800
4	12-17	Period 4: 1800–1848
5	18-21	Period 5: 1844–1877
6	22-24	Period 6: 1865–1898
7	25-29	Period 7: 1890–1945
8	30-33	Period 8: 1945–1980
9	34-37	Period 9: 1980–Present

Introduction

For a student, an AP course in United States History offers a daunting challenge: how to master an entire year's work in American history and demonstrate proficiency of that knowledge on an examination at the end of the course. This book is designed to make that task easier by providing a complement to your existing text book. While it is an addendum to your study of American history, the volume serves as more than a test preparation manual. The text will enhance your thinking and writing abilities in ways that you will find useful in other high school courses, in college, and beyond.

The main focus of the book is to develop your document analysis and writing proficiencies by providing activities in preparation for composing Document-Based Questions (DBQs) and Long Essay Questions (LEQs). The text is organized with the early chapters addressing basic skills, such as the focus of a prompt, and the later material becoming increasingly complex as you move deeper into the book. Thus, by the last unit, you will be ready to write full-length, high-scoring DBQ and LEQ essays.

The book is constructed around the nine Historical Thinking Skills that comprise the redesigned AP U.S. History curriculum. These skills form the organizational core of the text, and the various activities will help you analyze evidence, make comparisons, establish causation, construct effective arguments, deal with change over time, and work with periodization, interpretation, and synthesis. Collectively these activities define critical inquiry, which is a process that will serve you well in your AP classes and throughout your high school and college career.

The text breaks these nine thinking skills into their component parts. For example, when you work on analyzing evidence, you will study several facets of the skill, such as separating fact from opinion and prioritizing and sequencing facts within your essay. By developing these "habits of the mind," you will expand your abilities as a writer and thinker.

The book has several instructional applications. It can serve in your classroom as a companion to the textbook. With this arrangement, you can build thinking, writing, and analytical skills as you progress through the nine time periods that make up the redesigned curriculum. The book can also serve as a separate writing and skill tutorial, helping you to prepare on your own for writing responses to DBQ and LEQ prompts.

You may want to form study groups and work through the materials as the final exam or end-of-course exam approaches. For an individual student, the book is useful in reinforcing essay writing and primary source analytical skills. With its easy-to-use format, you will find it to be an effective tool when preparing essays and analyzing documents.

I hope that this book proves to be a valuable tool in your quest to master the AP U.S. History curriculum this year, culminating with a 5 on the exam in May. Good luck!

Additional Resources Available Online

http://www.sherpalearning.com/skillbook

Detailed Summaries of each of the nine Historical Periods

Discussion Questions

Glossary of Period Highlights and Key Terms

Blank Worksheet Templates:

- H.I.P.P.O. (Document Analysis)
- DBQ & LEQ Planners
- DBQ & LEQ Rubric Guides

Visual Source Exercises:

- Maps
- Charts & Graphs
- Political Cartoons
- Paintings & Illustrations
- Photographs

Sample Responses

Scan the QR Code to link directly to the companion website on your mobile device.

If you're using a desktop or laptop, simply point your browser to the URL shown above.

Unit 1

The Atlantic World

"Coronado sets out to the north"
— oil painting by Frederic Remington

Period 1: 1491–1607

Period Summary

The Atlantic World is a historical construct that defines how four landmasses that border the Atlantic Ocean—Africa, Europe, North America, and South America (including the Caribbean and Central America)—interacted and influenced each other from the 1420s until the middle of the 17th century. It serves as a means for examining European contact as well as exploration and settlement in Africa and in the Western Hemisphere. The rise of the Atlantic World created new global economies and social systems that expanded markets, redistributed wealth, and transformed cultures in the four regions.

All European countries had difficulty populating their colonies. Life was hard and dangerous. Europeans quickly enslaved the native peoples and Africans to solve their labor problems. Although France attempted to coexist with the Indians, England and Spain took the natives' land and destroyed their way of life. European expansion laid the foundation of the modern Atlantic World as it destroyed native peoples and cultures in its wake.

Ideas for Discussion

1. What factors prompted Portugal and Spain to expand in the 15th and 16th centuries?
2. Why did the Europeans have an interest in Africa in the late 15th century?
3. How was slavery a different institution in Africa, Europe, and the Western Hemisphere?
4. In what ways was Christopher Columbus a hero and a villain?
5. Who benefited most/least from the Columbian Exchange?
6. What role did religion play in shaping the Atlantic World?

Extend Your Understanding

For a complete review of Period 1: 1491–1607 and more Ideas for Discussion, scan the code or go to **www.sherpalearning.com/skillbook/review/unit-1**

Chapter
1

Separating Fact from Opinion

HISTORICAL THINKING SKILL:

- **Evidence**

The ability to sort and use evidence is the life blood of historical investigation. All generalizations, hypotheses, and arguments must be based on facts. It is essential that you have a clear realization of what *is* and *is not* sound factual evidence in history. Only with this fundamental understanding, can you make supportable inferences and draw reasoned conclusions about historical events and phenomena.

At its most basic level, this skill is about making a distinction between appropriate and inappropriate evidence. To begin making that distinction, you must first be able to distinguish between fact and opinion. Too often students depend on personal beliefs as their only support for a historical event. Many might mistakenly accept their own opinion as a self-evident truth that they consider to be both accurate and indisputable. As you develop a better understanding of the difference between fact and opinion, you'll train your mind to recognize alternative points of view and strengthen your ability to evaluate evidence.

By using factual information rather than opinions in an answer, you are adding specificity to your argument. **Specificity adds credibility**—it makes your response more convincing. A fact is something that is known with certainty. In other words, it really happened and can be proven or documented. Although the message it conveys may be subject to interpretation, the data or information itself can always be authenticated . By contrast, an opinion is something that someone *thinks* is true. It often reflects a point of view or bias held by a person, and it cannot be authenticated or

confirmed. Essentially, there is no proof to support the claim. Opinions are always debatable and may contain words that indicate a judgment is being made, such as *bad*, *good*, *great*, *beautiful*, *most*, *least*, and so on.

There are several sections in this book that deal with using relevant evidence as specific, provable information in your written responses. In this first lesson, you'll practice recognizing facts and opinions in a variety of arguments. Later, in Chapters 22, 23, 30, and 31, there will be further discussions about using facts rather than generalizations and opinions to effectively support written arguments.

Practicing the Skill

Directions: Look at the prompt below about the Atlantic World and determine which of the three answers that follow are factual and verifiable, and which are opinions or points of view.

> **Example Prompt:** *What role did religion play in shaping the Atlantic World?*

Answer 1 — Religion played an important role in the Atlantic World because native religions were superstitious rather than spiritual and had to be changed.

Answer 2 — Religion played an important role in the Atlantic World as priests and missionaries converted one million Indians to Catholicism.

Answer 3 — Religion played an important role in the Atlantic World when Pope Alexander VI gave his blessing to Spanish and Portuguese exploration and conquest.

Let's see how you did. Answer 1 is an opinion. Native American religions were spiritual in nature. Answer 2 is a fact. This statement can be verified. Answer 3 is an opinion. The pope's blessing had no effect on Dutch, French, or British exploration and conquest.

Applying the Skill

Directions: Study the exercise questions that follow. Determine which of the answers are factual and verifiable, and which of the answers are opinions or points of view. Explain your reasoning for labeling each answer as either fact or opinion.

Exercise Prompt 1: *Why were the Inca and Aztec unable to defend their civilization from conquest by the conquistadors?*

Answer 1 The Inca and the Aztec faced internal divisions that kept them from defeating the Spanish.

Answer 2 The Inca and the Aztec were unable to defend their way of life because the Spanish superior culture appealed to many of their subjects.

Answer 3 The Inca and the Aztec were outsmarted by the Spanish and manipulated into surrender.

Exercise Prompt 2: *Why did the Europeans have an interest in Africa in the late 15th century?*

Answer 1 Africans were backward people unable to defend their valuable natural resources.

Answer 2 Africans did not care about their fellow Africans and allowed them to be easily enslaved by the Europeans.

Answer 3 Africa was an attractive source of trade goods, including slave labor, which Europeans wanted.

Chapter
2

Identifying the Purpose of the Question

HISTORICAL THINKING SKILL:

- **Argumentation**

Advanced Placement classes are well known for the emphasis—and expectations—they place on writing. The skill that you need to demonstrate most in your various essay answers is that of historical argumentation. The first step to mastering this skill is to learn to identify the purpose of the question you've been asked to answer. If you begin by identifying the type of prompt, then you will be able to determine what you are required to do to answer the question successfully.

There are several types of essay prompts that you are likely to encounter on tests and quizzes for this course, and on the exam in May. Review the common types of essay prompts below, and closely examine the examples for each.

Change over Time:

Almost all essays have an element of change in them, but some will specifically ask you to account for change within a defined period of time, and to identify and explain the factors that brought about the transformation.

Example Prompt 1: *Between 1492 and 1540, how and why did Spain alter its colonial system of administration?*

Another type of change-over-time essay is one that asks you to account for both change and continuity stemming from or promoted by an event or series of events.

> **Example Prompt 2:** *Evaluate the extent to which economic developments in North and South America contributed to maintaining continuity, as well as fostering change, in European life from 1492–1600.*

Causation:

This type of prompt requires you to identify causes of events and to LINK them to historical outcomes. You must consider both short- and long-term cause-and-effect relationships with this type of prompt and make sure to organize the causes in terms of relative importance.

> **Example Prompt 3:** *How did the need for labor in the Western Hemisphere transform trade relations in the Atlantic World?*

Comparison:

These essays often involve an analysis of similarities and differences between events and topics. When you encounter this type of prompt, you should make sure you analyze both the pros and cons of the issues. Remember, when you draw contrasts between topics, you are also comparing them.

> **Example Prompt 4:** *Compare and contrast the Spanish and British motives for colonization from 1492–1607.*

Periodization:

These types of prompts ask you to analyze how a topic or event represents a turning point in history. Or—more broadly—how it defined a discrete block of historical development or a break with past events.

Example Prompt 5: *Evaluate the extent to which the Portuguese contact with Africa in the 1420s was a turning point in the history of both Europe and Africa.*

Interpretation:

These types of questions often ask you to evaluate historical events or processes. The prompt may reflect a specific point of view about a historical problem and then ask you to judge whether you wish to support, refute, or modify the statement. In many ways it is asking whether you agree, disagree, or a little of both.

Example Prompt 6: *"Some historians have viewed Spanish colonial motivations and behaviors exclusively through the lens of the 'Black Legend.'"*

Support, modify, or refute this statement by citing specific Spanish policies and actions from 1492–1607.

Applying the Skill

Directions: Develop a prompt for each of the following essay types, using the suggested subjects. Write your prompts in your notebook. When you have finished, discuss your work with the class.

1. An interpretation prompt about the role conquistadors played in developing the Atlantic World.
2. A comparison prompt about Spanish and English policies toward Native American peoples.
3. A causation prompt about the impact of slavery on the Atlantic World.
4. A change over time prompt about French internal politics and the desire for North American colonies.
5. A periodization prompt about Columbus's voyages to the Caribbean region in the late 15th and early 16th centuries.

Chapter
3

Determining Status Quo vs. Change

In the previous lesson concerning types of prompts likely to appear in the course curriculum and on the exam, you were introduced to the concept of addressing continuity and change over time. In this section, we'll examine this historical thinking skill in greater detail.

HISTORICAL THINKING SKILL:

- **Change Over Time**

The process of accounting for change over time often manifests itself in two ways:

1. One form of change over time asks you to consider how events or processes evolved in an era and to analyze the causes of the transformation. With this type of problem, you must look carefully at the dates that are to be examined. These dates should establish the historical significance of the period under investigation. They should not be randomly selected because they serve a purpose and often indicate the theme that should be addressed in your answer. In addition, you must always deal with the *entire period* and make certain that all aspects of the problem are considered. To deal with only *some* developments in a time-frame is an inadequate response.
2. A second iteration of change over time seems to say, "The more things change, the more they stay the same." In other words, this type of prompt will require you to explain how events or processes both reinforced the status quo and, yet still, contributed to new ideas, relationships, and developments. Your job, in answering this type of prompt, is to account for how events and processes

represented a conserving *and* a transformational element in a time period. You're not being asked to choose between continuity and change; you are required to address both. That means you will have to accept small amounts of either conservation or evolution in your response. Also, you may find that certain topics lend themselves to an imbalance between how much actually remained the same, versus how much changed.

Practicing the Skill

PART 1

Directions: Briefly explain how the following topics changed European society from 1440–1500.

Topic 1: *Geographic understandings of the world and the search for pathways to Asia*

Suggested Responses

Possible elements of change could include:

- Prince Henry's influence in developing geographic tools and shipbuilding that resulted in Portugal's exploration of Africa
- By mid-15th century, shippers and explorers clear that the world was round
- Portuguese trading posts established on coasts of Africa, India, and China
- Columbus's idea of opening new trade routes to Asia by sailing west across ocean; 1492, Columbus's voyage to Bahamas

Topic 2: *The influx of gold and silver from Western Hemisphere into Europe*

Suggested Responses

Possible elements of change could include:

- Spanish plundering of gold and silver vastly expanded amount of species in circulation
- Benefited only a few wealthy individuals
- Caused great inflation in Europe
- Lowered the standard of living for many
- Rising prices depressed wages by more than 50%

PART 2

Directions: Read the prompt and then complete the chart below by brainstorming evidence of continuity and change.

Example Prompt: *To what extent did the Protestant Reformation contribute to maintaining continuity as well as foster change in European societies from 1517–1607?*

Continuity	Change
• Most of Europe remained Catholic • Pope remained a powerful political figure • Europeans continued to struggle over religion • Catholic church remained a powerful political and economic force	• Rise of dissent over Catholicism • Anglican Church established in England • Rise of French Huguenots • Rise of Calvinism • Many new religions grew up (Lutherans)

Applying the Skill

PART 1

Directions: Briefly explain how the following topics changed the exploration of the Western Hemisphere from 1440–1607.

Topic 1: *The development of the African slave trade*

Topic 2: *The introduction of sugar and maize into people's diets*

PART 2

Directions: Read the prompt, and then complete the chart below in your notebook.

Example Prompt: *To what extent did Native American's encounters with Europeans contribute to maintaining continuity as well as foster change in Native American's daily lives from 1492–1607?*

Continuity	Change

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UPDATED FOR THE NEW EXAM!

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Practice and Application of Historical Thinking Skills for AP® U.S. History

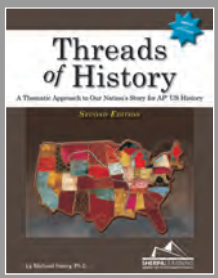
MICHAEL HENRY PH.D.

Now fully aligned to the redesigned course and exam, the 3rd Edition of *Skillbook* features 37 chapters of practice and application exercises that will provide students with a rock-solid foundation of the essential Historical Thinking Skills at the heart of the AP® U.S. History curriculum. Carefully sequenced essay skill exercises help students dissect a prompt, make a writing plan, develop a thesis, and use appropriate support for their written argument. Now with detailed answers and explanations for a complete independent study experience!

About the Author

Michael Henry, Ph.D., served as the Exam Leader at the AP® U.S. History exam reading in Louisville, Kentucky for 8 years, in addition to his many years as Reader and Table Leader. Dr. Henry taught AP® U.S. History for over 20 years in Prince George's County, Maryland, and has written four books, six teacher's guides, and 20 articles. He has given dozens of professional presentations and workshops across the country and has served as a consultant to the College Board. Currently, he is serving as an adjunct professor of history at Prince George's Community College and is a member of the Organization of American Historians. He lives in College Park, MD with his wife Ann and is a diehard fan of the Washington Nationals.

Also by Michael Henry for AP® U.S. History



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