River Valley Civilizations Research Project

For this project you will compare either Mesopotamia or Egypt to one of the other great early river valley civilizations, either India or China. You will need to pick a specific topic to help focus your research. You can choose anything that interests you, but the following are a few suggestions:

- system of writing
- burial rites
- social structure
- religious beliefs
- legal codes
- diet
- role of women
- weaponry
- transportation
- art
- role of children
- great leaders
- style of government
- fashion
- inventions
- architecture
- economic activities
- popular legends/stories

You must also choose the format for your project: research paper or alternative project. It is recommended that those who plan to pursue post-secondary studies choose to write a formal research paper. Those who choose to do an alternative project must come up with a format that is suitable for their topic. The requirements for each type of project are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Paper</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Submit thesis on: ____________________________________________________________</td>
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<td>• You must consult at least 3 sources that meet the following criteria:</td>
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<tr>
<td>• 1 print source</td>
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<td>• 1 article from a library database</td>
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<td>• 1 reliable website</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Write a comparison essay of 500-750 words (approximately 2-3 pages). It must be properly formatted and include proper citations and a List of Works Cited.</td>
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<td>• Carefully edit and proofread your work.</td>
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<td>• Complete a self-evaluation and attach the rubric to the back of your essay when you hand it in.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Your paper is due at the beginning of class on: ________________________________</td>
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## RUBRIC FOR RESEARCH PAPER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fully Meets Expectations</th>
<th>Meets Expectations</th>
<th>Below Expectations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Historical Accuracy &amp; Content</strong></td>
<td>Extremely accurate, carefully selected facts support the argument well and make for an effective comparison of the two civilizations.</td>
<td>Majority of information is accurate, may include a few unrelated facts, but it is, generally, a clear comparison of the two civilizations.</td>
<td>Information is very inaccurate or insufficient facts weaken argument or many off-topic facts included. It is a weak or one-sided comparison of the 2 civilizations.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Formal Research Skills</strong></td>
<td>Properly formatted essay that includes a correctly formatted list of Works Cited and correctly formatted citations for majority of research referenced in the essay. Sources meet assignment requirements.</td>
<td>Minor errors in essay formatting. Includes a list of Works Cited with only minor formatting errors, attempts to correctly cite research within the essay, but there may be an insufficient number of citations. Sources meet assignment requirements.</td>
<td>Incorrect essay formatting. List of Works Cited is improperly formatted or not included; no attempt has been made to correctly cite sources within the essay. Sources don’t meet assignment requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Writing Quality</strong></td>
<td>Purposefully organized, clear and concise writing with few communication errors.</td>
<td>Generally organized writing that is easy to understand despite some communication errors.</td>
<td>Writing is disorganized and difficult to understand due to its many communication errors.</td>
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<td><strong>Teacher’s Comments</strong></td>
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Rubric for Formal Research Essay

A or B Paper – Fully Meets Expectations (73-100%)
- Properly formatted: required length, typed, double-spaced; includes page #s, name, teacher, course & date in correct locations
- Rubric with a self-evaluation is attached to the essay
- Title grabs reader’s attention and clearly expresses the topic of the essay
- Thesis is relevant to the topic and clearly stated
- Each body paragraph’s topic sentence provides effective, logical support of the thesis
- Essay is organized in a clear, purposeful and effective manner with a strong, central argument
- Smoothly incorporates accurate research material that effectively supports the argument
- Commentary demonstrates thorough, insightful analysis of research and solid understanding of the topic
- Skillful use of transitions help the reader move smoothly from one idea to the next
- Each paragraph’s concluding sentence is insightful, linking the paragraph’s content to the thesis and/or any subsequent paragraphs
- Essay’s concluding paragraph provides a meaningful and insightful resolution to the central argument without repetition
- Writing is clear, fluent and engaging with few technical flaws in communication
- Includes a correctly formatted list of Works Cited; uses suitable and reliable sources that meet the assignment criteria
- Correctly formatted MLA citations for majority of research referenced in the essay

C Paper – Meets Expectations (50-72%)
- Minor formatting errors: a little long or short, typed, double-spaced; includes page #s, name, teacher, course & date but not all in correct locations
- Rubric is attached to the essay, but self-evaluation is incomplete or missing
- Title clearly expresses the topic of the essay
- Thesis is relevant to the topic, but lacks clarity and/or originality
- Each body paragraph’s topic sentence supports the thesis
- Essay is organized in a purposeful manner with a central argument
- Research material is generally accurate and supports the argument, but writer did not “dig deep” enough into the topic
- Commentary demonstrates surface-level analysis of research and adequate understanding of the topic
- Limited use of transitions that may include formulaic or inappropriate choices
- Body paragraphs’ concluding sentences are weak and do not meaningfully connect ideas from the paragraph to the rest of the essay
- Essay’s concluding paragraph may be formulaic and/or repetitive
- Writing sufficiently fluent, but may not consistently engage the reader; technical flaws impede meaning in a few places
- Includes a list of Works Cited with only minor formatting errors; uses sources that meet the assignment criteria
- Correctly formatted MLA citations are included, but there are an insufficient number of citations

I Paper – Below Expectations (0-49%)
- Serious formatting errors: too long or short; may not be typed or double-spaced; may be missing page #s, name, teacher, course & date or they are not in correct locations
- Rubric and/or self-evaluation are missing
- Missing a title or the title is unclear or just a label (e.g. Essay)
- Thesis is not evident or it is insignificant and unclear
- Each body paragraph’s topic sentence does not clearly support the thesis or it is missing
- Essay lacks organization and/or a central argument
- Limited use of research material and/or material referenced is not clearly connected to the topic; research may be inaccurate
- Insufficient commentary shows limited understanding of research and topic; it may veer off-topic
- Little or no use of transitions
- Majority of body paragraphs are missing concluding sentences
- Essay’s concluding paragraph is short and formulaic and lacks meaning and relevance
- Writing is lifeless and robotic, failing to engage the reader; technical flaws in communication make the essay difficult to understand
- List of Works Cited is incorrectly formatted or not included; sources do not meet the assignment criteria
- No citations or they are insufficient and/or incorrectly formatted

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<th>Content</th>
<th>Formal Research Skills</th>
<th>Writing Quality</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/40</td>
<td>/30</td>
<td>/30</td>
<td>/100</td>
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