

Points are lost to essays that narrate instead of argue, and to rubric rows nobody attempted because they were not known to be separate. Contextualisation, sourcing and complexity each carry their own point. 世界史失分多因“叙事而非论证”，并遗漏独立评分项。

The essay rubric

Writing a thesis that restates the prompt. It must make a defensible claim AND establish a line of reasoning the essay then follows.

Folding contextualisation into the thesis as a clause. It is its own point and needs sentences describing the broader situation before or after the period.

Narrating chronologically instead of arguing. Accurate sequence is not an argument.

Leaving complexity unattempted. It is earned by qualifying the claim, weighing multiple causes, or explaining continuity alongside change – never by adding more facts.

Using evidence from outside the prompt's date range, which cannot count.

Answering only half a continuity-and-change prompt by describing change alone.

The document-based question

Walking through the documents one at a time. Group them by the argument they support and cite them inside your own sentences.

Calling identification 'sourcing'. Sourcing needs purpose, audience, point of view or historical situation AND how it affects what the document evidences.

Offering outside evidence that is vague, or that a document already mentions. It must be specific and new.

Citing six documents without explaining how any supports the argument – the second evidence point is for the reasoning, not the count.

The short-answer question

Writing a thesis or an introduction. Label the parts and answer directly in one or two sentences each.

Reusing the same evidence across parts when the prompt asks for a different development, region or group.

Describing where the verb was EXPLAIN. An explanation needs a causal connective and a consequence.

Content that is routinely muddled

Treating 1450 as the start of global trade. Indian Ocean, trans-Saharan and Silk Road networks were centuries old; the change after 1450 is their integration with the Atlantic, not their creation.

Describing European maritime empires as immediately dominant in Asia. Portugal controlled chokepoints and taxed trade; it did not displace Asian producers or rulers before the eighteenth century.

Confusing the Columbian Exchange's biological effects with its economic ones. The demographic collapse came from disease, not from conquest or labour demands.

Calling every unfree labour system slavery. Encomienda, mit'a, serfdom, indentured servitude and chattel slavery differ in inheritance, ownership and duration, and questions turn on the difference.

Dating industrialisation as a single British event. The prompt period usually requires Japan, Russia or Egypt as well.

Treating decolonisation as uniformly negotiated or uniformly violent. Both paths occurred, often in the same empire.

Using 'the West' as an actor. Name the state – the mechanisms differ between Britain, France and the United States.

Argument habits

Asserting causation from sequence. Name the mechanism by which one development produced the other.

Treating a model or a label – feudalism, absolutism, modernisation – as an explanation rather than as something itself needing evidence.

Generalising about a whole continent or century where the prompt names a region or a decade.