

Thematic Free Response Questions (FRQ)

Thematic FRQ Checklist

1. Understand the topic.
2. Outline/planning
 1. Establish the valid points you will address in response to the prompt.
 2. Address ALL PARTS OF THE QUESTION.
 3. Fill in at least three or four details that support each point.
 4. Develop topic sentences based on the points you have made. These will be the cornerstones of the body of your essay.
3. Based on your planning, determine your argument regarding the topic. This will be your thesis statement to open the essay.

Essay Structure

Opening paragraph

- Thesis statement
- Establish historical context

Body Paragraph

- State one of the points that supports your thesis
- Provide historical details to support each point

Body Paragraph

Body Paragraph

Conclusion

- Restate thesis
- Draw any further conclusions you can.

Thesis Statements

- 1-2 sentences in opening paragraph.
- Must be **substantial**.
 - Directly addresses all parts of the prompt.
 - States a position on all parts of the prompt.
 - Does not simply restate the prompt.
- Can you point at a couple of lines and confidently say “This is my thesis”?

Analyze!!!

- Try to avoid laundry-listing and carpet-bombing.
 - Sample topic from 2008 exam
 - “Analyze the impact of two cultural and/or technological developments on European education in the period 1450 to 1650.”

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- Humanism
- Printing Press
- Protestant Reformation
- Scientific Revolution
- Catholic Reformation and the Jesuits

- Do not simply define each trend. Explain how each had an impact on European education.
- See if there are any clear arguments or points you can make about the topic.
 - This development was particularly significant because...
 - Who/where did these trends have an impact?
 - Was one clearly the most significant?
 - What external forces may have affected these trends?
 - Is there a relationship between the two trends you chose?

Sample Thesis

“In the period of 1450 to 1650, there were many cultural/technological developments. These developments influenced many parts of society, especially European education. Two of the most impacting developments to European education were the printing press and humanism. The printing press made books more available which caused a chain reaction that positively influenced the education in Europe. Humanism broadened the perspectives of students and other members of society.”

Sample Thesis

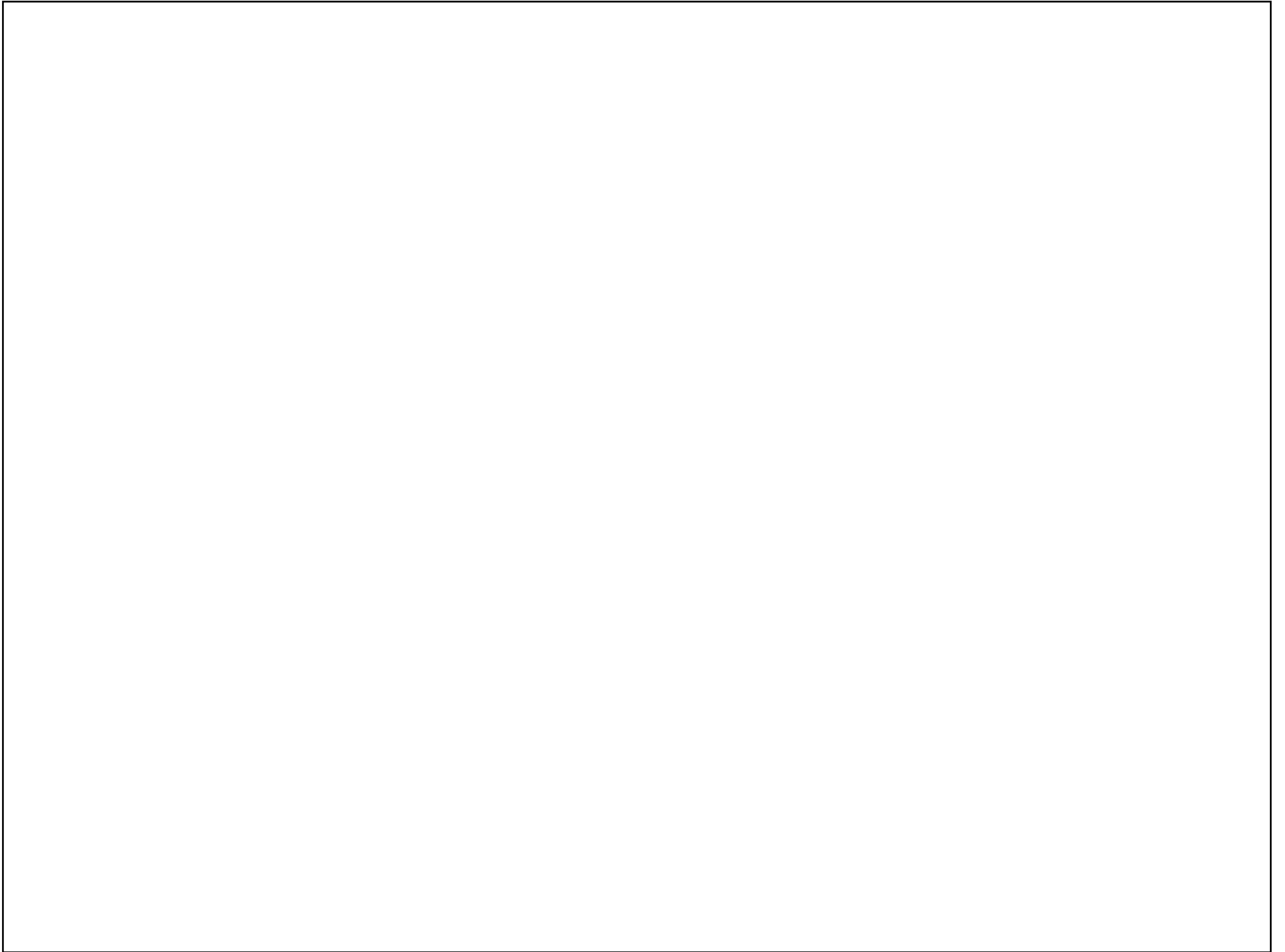
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“Between 1450 and 1650 education was stressed and means of being educated were improved. The most important development that had the biggest contribution was the invention of the printing press by Johann Guttenberg. The Renaissance and toleration of leaders of the time also contributed to the development of education.”

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From 2003 Exam

“To what extent and in what ways did women participate in the Renaissance?”

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- Analysis

- In what activities did women participate or not participate?
- What were the prevailing attitudes toward women and their role in the Renaissance?
- What are the cultural/historical/political/etc. forces that may have affected the extent and ways in which women participated?

Sample Thesis

“The Renaissance was an age of cultural efflorescence that began in Italy during the 14th century. It concentrated mainly on the study of Latin and Greek classics and it was an elitist movement confined almost exclusively to men. Indeed, it has been said that the idea of the sexual double standard originated in the Renaissance. The role of women changed dramatically during the Renaissance, as did contemporary opinions of women. Although there were some women who proved themselves and their intellectual, dramatic, and artistic talent during the Renaissance, the role of women during the Renaissance was, for the most part, confined to being simply ornamental displays of wealth.”

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