

## Historical Thinking Skills

There are several broad historical thinking skills that are assessed in the AP Exam.

Reasoning Process 1	Reasoning Process 2	Reasoning Process 3
<i>Comparison</i>	<i>Causation</i>	<i>Continuity and Change</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>1.i: Describe similarities and/or differences between different historical developments or processes.</li><li>1.ii: Explain relevant similarities and/or differences between specific historical developments and processes.</li><li>1.iii: Explain the relative historical significance of similarities and/or differences between different historical developments or processes.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>2.i: Describe causes and/or effects of a specific historical development or process.</li><li>2.ii: Explain the relationship between causes and effects of a specific historical development or process.</li><li>2.iii: Explain the difference between primary and secondary causes and between short- and long-term effects.</li><li>2.iv: Explain how a relevant context influenced a specific historical development or process.</li><li>2.v: Explain the relative historical significance of different causes and/or effects.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>3.i: Describe patterns of continuity and/or change over time.</li><li>3.ii: Explain patterns of continuity and/or change over time.</li><li>3.iii: Explain the relative historical significance of specific historical developments in relation to a larger pattern of continuity and/or change.</li></ul>

**Historical Argumentation:** Historical thinking involves the ability to define and frame a question about the past and to address that question by constructing an argument. A plausible and persuasive argument requires a clear, comprehensive and analytical thesis, supported by relevant historical evidence—not simply evidence that supports a preferred or preconceived position. Additionally, argumentation involves the capacity to describe, analyze and evaluate the arguments of others in light of available evidence.

**Translation:** You need to be able to create solid arguments that are supported by evidence.

**Use of Relevant Historical Evidence:** Historical thinking involves the ability to identify, describe and evaluate evidence about the past from diverse sources (including written documents, works of art, archaeological artifacts, oral traditions and other primary sources), with respect to content, authorship, purpose, format and audience. It involves the capacity to extract useful information, make supportable inferences and draw appropriate conclusions from historical evidence while also understanding such evidence in its context, recognizing its limitations and assessing the points of view that it reflects. It also involves the ability to describe, analyze, evaluate and create diverse interpretations of the past — as revealed through primary and secondary historical sources — through analysis of evidence, reasoning, contexts, points of view and frames of reference.

**Translation:** You need to be able to analyze both primary and secondary sources and use them to draw and support conclusions. You should also be able to explain how and why these sources differ in terms of information, point of view, and reliability.

**Contextualization:** Historical thinking involves the ability to connect historical developments to specific circumstances in time and place, and to broader regional, national or global processes.

**Translation:** You need to be able to explain how an event/idea fits into a given time period. You should also be able to explain how different aspects of a time period influence events and ideas, and be able to explain which were the most significant.

**Causation:** Historical thinking involves the ability to identify, analyze and evaluate multiple cause-and-effect relationships in a historical context, distinguishing between the long-term and proximate.

**Translation:** You need to be able to explain cause and effect relationships, both short and long term. You need to be able to explain the relationships between causes and effects, the differences between primary and secondary causation, and assess the relative influence of both causes and effects.

**Continuity and Change Over Time:** Historical thinking involves the ability to recognize, analyze and evaluate the dynamics of historical continuity and change over periods of time of varying lengths, as well as relating these patterns to larger historical processes or themes.

**Translation:** You need to be able to explain not only how and how much a given subject has evolved over time, but why both changes and continuities take place. You also need to be able to explain which of those continuities and changes are most important and why.

**Comparison:** Historical thinking involves the ability to describe, compare and evaluate multiple historical developments within one society, one or more developments across or between different societies, and in various chronological and geographical contexts. It also involves the ability to identify, compare and evaluate multiple perspectives on a given historical experience.

**Translation:** You need to be able to explain how similar/how different historical subjects are. You need to be able to explain why those similarities and differences exist, and which are the most important in defining the subject.