

A Guide to Answering Change and Continuity over Time (CCOT) Essays

1. General ideas about CCOTs

- Read the question – ALL PARTS OF THE QUESTION
- If you don't have a thesis, you can't get the "substantiates thesis" points

2. Preparation:

- Think of periodization – why these start and end dates? – and whether there is any periodization *within* the requested dates
- Create timelines with beginning and end dates – make sure timeline is horizontal ✓
 - One timeline of what changed
 - One timeline of what didn't change
- Generalize (group) your changes and continuities into a few ideas. Each will become the topic sentences for a separate paragraph

3. Thesis

- Need to have a thesis in both introduction and conclusion, and it has to be re-worded
- Can be simple, but must address both dates
- Must answer the question, not just re-word it
- Must address change AND continuity
- Doesn't need evidence

4. Baseline – Beginning Date

- Can be pretty minimal – you don't get any points for explaining the baseline time period – it just provides "context" for change or continuity

5. Evidence

- Provide as many specifics as possible
- "Rule of 3" - Explain a reason for at least two changes and one continuity

CHANGE:

- Make it clear: "One change was..." "A social transformation was..."
- Use phrases "As a result of," "because"
- Don't do "beginning, middle, end" – just throw in lots of changes and get sequence right
- Be specific

CONTINUITY

- Use phrases "stayed the same," "continued," "was continuous throughout the period," "continued through the first half of this period"
- Use phrases "As a result of," "because"
- Be specific
- Continuity can be for a long subsection within the entire period ONLY IF DESPERATE, or as a second continuity – must identify the period of time

ANALYSIS / REASONS

- Try to explain the “because” of the “because” – for example: “Indian Ocean trade changed **because** the Europeans had better ships **because** of the sturdy construction needed for voyages in the Atlantic Ocean.”

6. World Historical Context

- How events affected another part of the world
- How it compared with another part of the world
- An event elsewhere in the world that affected the region
- Should be addressed within BOTH change AND continuity sections

7. Paragraphs / Writing

1. Introduction

- a. Problem/Background/Significance – get in all dates and locations, etc.
- b. Changes (and why)
- c. Continuities (and why)
- d. World Context

2. Changes Paragraphs

- a. Topic Sentence says what the change was
- b. Evidence is provided about the change
- c. Reason for the change (if possible)

3. Continuities Paragraph(s)

- a. Topic Sentence says what the continuity was
- b. Evidence is provided about the continuity was
- c. Reason for the continuity (if possible)

4. World Historical Context (if not already mentioned in other paragraphs)

- a. In your conclusion, try to make a global connection by bringing the theme forward to "today" either by explaining how the theme would undergo further changes as we see it forward, or how it would stay the same.
- b. This shows impact - why do we care?

POINTS OF EMPHASIS:

Use topic sentences and clear transition sentences. Make sure each section of your essay does not just focus on a “snapshot in time”. It should be an idea that helps explain your thesis. You then provide the evidence to back it up.

Remember it is important to show CHANGE and CONTINUITY. Demonstrate what have been the turning points or where things have stayed the same. History is not usually black and white so don't paint it too simple.

You are showing trends. Often the change over time essays will be based on the themes of the course and they are looking to see that you understand these thematic trends. Where possible provide the historical context/ linkages necessary to show you understand the larger picture without getting off the track.