

Outlining the Thematic Essay:  
**A Collaborative Project by**  
**Barbara Ammirato**  
**Elizabeth Napp**

Theme: Religion

There are a variety of belief systems practiced throughout the world today. Many of these beliefs have developed massive followings, and as a result, have had a considerable amount of influence on culture in the areas where they are practiced.

Task:

Choose *two* belief systems from your study of global history, and for *each* one:

- Identify the nation or region where it was founded.
- Describe two basic teachings of the belief system.
- Discuss how the belief system has influenced the culture of the areas in which it is currently practiced.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Belief System:</u></b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Hinduism: Founded by the Aryan Invaders of India</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Two Beliefs:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>The Caste System:</b> Hindus believe in a fixed social class system known as the caste system. A Hindu is born into his caste and must remain in his caste a lifetime.</li> <li>● <b>Dharma:</b> Hindus believe that each caste has its own rules or dharma. It is a Hindu's dharma to marry in his caste.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Influence on Culture:</u></b></p> <p>By believing in caste and dharma, Hindu society restricts interaction among caste members. Caste members must marry in their castes. Caste members frequently eat food only prepared by fellow caste members. People who belong to no caste are called untouchables. In the past, untouchables were discriminated against. Though this discrimination is illegal today, untouchables still face poor treatment.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Islam: Founded by Muhammad in Mecca, Arabia</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Two Beliefs:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Monotheism:</b> Muhammad preached a belief in one God or monotheism.</li> <li>● <b>Muslims or the followers of Islam</b> must pray five times a day facing the holy city of Mecca.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Influence on Culture:</u></b></p> <p>The religion of Islam united the Muslims with its beliefs in one God, prayer, pilgrimage to Mecca, the Arabic language, and Koran (the holy book of Islam).</p>

		<b>Muslims cannot drink alcohol or eat pork.</b>
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Theme: Global Problems

Throughout history, geographic features can positively or negatively affect the development of a nation or region.

Task:

Select one geographic feature from your study of global history:

- Explain how this geographic feature has had an effect on the historical development of two nations or regions.

<u>Geographic Feature:</u>	<u>Nile River Valley:</u>	<u>Tigris and Euphrates River Valley:</u>
<b>River Valley</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● The annual flooding of the Nile River led to fertile soil and irrigation.</li><li>● Fertile soil and irrigation allowed for agricultural surplus.</li><li>● As a result of surplus, the Egyptians developed one of humanity's earliest civilizations.</li><li>● The Egyptians developed hieroglyphics, pyramids, and geometry.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● The violent flooding of the rivers led to a belief that the gods were demanding and angry.</li><li>● However, the flooding rivers led to fertile soil and irrigation.</li><li>● The Sumerians developed cuneiform.</li><li>● The Sumerians developed an early civilization.</li></ul>

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Theme: Geography

Geographic factors have influenced historical developments and historical events of nations and regions.

Task:

Choose two nations and/or regions and for each:

- Identify and describe two geographic factors in each nation and/or region
- Explain how each factor has influenced the historical development or a specific historical event in each nation and/or region

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Nation and Geographic Factors:</u>  <b>India:</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Monsoons</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Himalayas</u></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Description of Two Geographic Factors:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Monsoons are winds that bring rains.</li> <li>● The Himalayas are mountains with passes.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>How the Factors Have Influenced the Nation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Monsoons provide water for farming.</li> <li>● The passes allowed cultural diffusion to occur.</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Nation and Geographic Factors:</u>  <b>Japan:</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Archipelago</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Lack of Natural Resources</u></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Description of Two Geographic Factors:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Japan is a series of islands or an archipelago.</li> <li>● Japan has few natural resources and lacks arable land or good farmland.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>How the Factors Have Influenced the Nation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The islands allowed the Japanese to engage in fishing.</li> <li>● The Japanese must import natural resources to make manufactured goods.</li> </ul>

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Theme: Geography and Society

At various times in global history, human activity has altered or changed the land people live on and their surrounding environment. These changes in physical geography have affected society.

Task:

Select TWO changes that a society or two different societies have made to their land or surrounding and for each change:

- Identify the society in which the change took place
- Describe how the physical environment was changed by human activity
- Discuss how the change in the physical environment affected society

<u>The Incas:</u>	<u>Changes to the Physical Environment:</u>	<u>How the changes affected the society:</u>
<p>The Incas developed a powerful empire on the Andes mountains of South America. They were able to accomplish this because they changed the physical environment to meet their imperial needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <u>Terrace Farming:</u> The Incas used terrace farming to transform mountainous land into farmland.</li> <li>● <u>Roads:</u> The Incas built roads on the mountains to connect their vast empire.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Terrace farming led to agricultural surplus. This allowed the Incas to maintain a large population.</li> <li>● By connecting their vast empire, the Incas controlled the diverse conquered subjects.</li> </ul>

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Theme: Change – Turning Points

Political, economic, and social conditions have often led to turning points that have changed the course of history for nations and peoples.

Task:

Identify two turning points from your study of global history and for each:

- Describe the causes and key events that led to the turning point
- Explain how each turning point changed the course of history for nations and peoples

<u>Turning Points:</u>	<u>Causes:</u>	<u>How Each Turning Point Changed the Course of History:</u>
<u><b>The Neolithic Revolution</b></u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The flooding of rivers led to fertile soil.</li> <li>● Rivers also provided water for irrigation.</li> <li>● People learned to domesticate plants and animals.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The development of agriculture allowed people to settle.</li> <li>● Successful agriculture led to agricultural surpluses.</li> <li>● Surpluses allowed to perform different jobs or specialization.</li> <li>● Agricultural surplus led to the rise of cities.</li> </ul>
<u><b>The Fall of Rome</b></u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Barbarian invasions weakened the empire.</li> <li>● High taxes, inflation, unemployment and corrupt leaders weakened the empire.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The central government of the Roman Empire was replaced by hundreds of small kingdoms.</li> <li>● This led to the development of feudalism.</li> </ul>

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Theme: Science and Technology

Science and technology have played a critical role in altering the course of human history.

Task:

- Identify two scientific or technological advances that had a major impact on global history.
- Explain the relationship between the scientific or technological advance and a specific historic event or period in history.
- Analyze how these advances changed the course of history

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Scientific or Technological Advance:</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>The Development of Agriculture</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>The Relationship between the Advance and History:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● During the Neolithic Revolution, some people learned to domesticate plants. This allowed people to farm.</li> <li>● Farming led to a settled lifestyle.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>How the Advance Changed the Course of History:</u></p> <p>The development of agriculture led to the rise of civilization. By farming, people settled in one location. Successful agriculture led to food surpluses. This allowed specialization to occur. People could perform different jobs. Writing, cities, and governments were characteristics of civilizations.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>The Printing Press</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The printing press was invented by Johann Gutenberg during the Renaissance.</li> <li>● It allowed books to be manufactured faster and cheaper.</li> </ul>	<p>Gutenberg’s printing press led to books being printed faster and cheaper. This led to the spread of knowledge. By lowering the price of books and increasing the supply of books, more people could afford books. People had access to a</p>

		<b>wide variety of opinions and ideas.</b>
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