Compare and Contrast Essay
Skill to be mastered: The ability to identify and discuss similarities and differences between societies, regions and/or time periods in an analytical way.
Understand what you need to do for a Compare and Contrast Essay

• Provide a thesis and support that thesis with accurate historical evidence
• Address all parts of the question
• Make direct comparisons (specifically, indicate what was different and what was similar)
• Analyze the reasons for the similarities and differences
Step 1: Understand the Question

- Underline or highlight the key parts of the question
- the task verbs (compare, analyze, etc.)
- the categories of analysis (For example, what are you being asked to compare or analyze: Political systems? Religious beliefs? Economic systems? Etc.)
- the time period
- the choices of regions (if applicable)
Step 2: Compose a Thesis

- It needs to address all parts of the question.
Step 3: Develop your essay in the next 2-3 paragraphs

- One paragraph should consider similarities
- It should include an explanation or reason for each similarity
- Those explanations are best which are based on historical facts or trends and are not merely speculative in nature
- Another paragraph should consider differences
- It should also include explanations for these differences
- You can provide a short conclusion/restatement of your thesis statement in the final paragraph
Closing remarks

- Make sure you have at least TWO similarities between the countries, regions, time periods or civilizations
- Make sure you identify at least TWO differences
- Try to explain why these similarities or differences exist
- Try to link the comparisons to a larger global context