GRADING CRITERIA

The paper is worth 10% of your final yearlong grade in history. It will receive a letter grade that reflects the quality of the final paper, and will consider the quality and effort put into the "stages" leading up to the final paper (i.e. research question, source cards, note cards, thesis, outline, and rough draft).

Below are specific criteria for evaluating the final paper.

<u>The A/A- paper…</u>

Thesis: Easily identifiable, plausible, original, insightful, and clearly stated in the opening of the paper.

Structure: Very clear and logically follows from the thesis. Excellent transitions from point to point. Major and minor ideas are developed fully. Paragraphs support very clear and inter-related topic sentences.

Use of evidence: Evidence, including primary source material and quotes, used to support every point. Evidence is well integrated into the paper and accurately supports the argument.

Analysis: Paper is mostly analytical built around a thoughtful original thesis. Author clearly relates evidence to all of the sub-topics which in turn, support the main thesis. Analysis shows critical thinking.

Logic and argumentation: All the ideas in the paper flow logically because the argument is clearly stated and sound. The paper "makes sense" throughout, and the paragraphs constantly refer back to and support the thesis. Counter-arguments are addressed and disproved.

Mechanics: Virtually no errors. Grammar, spelling, punctuation, and citations are almost perfect. The paper is enjoyable to read.

The B+/B paper…

Thesis: Apparent but may be slightly unclear, lacking in insight or a strong angle.

Structure: Generally clear though the theme of the paper may wander at points. There may be a few unclear transitions or a few paragraphs without strong topic sentences.

Use of evidence: Examples are used to support most points. Some evidence or terms may be weak, undefined or inaccurate. Overall, evidence is well integrated into the paragraphs.

Analysis: Evidence presented in each paragraph relates to the topic sentence of that paragraph. Transitions could be clearer. Paper, though, is clearly more analytical than descriptive.

Logic and argumentation: The argument of the paper is clear and follows logically from a clearly stated thesis. There is some evidence that counter-arguments have been addressed. Originality of the author's thought is clear.

Mechanics: Sentence structure, grammar, and spelling are of a very good quality. Citations are used well. Paper shows very clear evidence of proofreading. Few, if any, corrections needed by the reader.

The C+/B- paper...

Thesis: May be unclear since it contains vague and undefined terms. May appear to be straightforward or does not suggest a strong point to prove.

Structure: Generally unclear because topics often wander or jump around. Few or weak transitions. Many paragraphs without clear topic sentences.

Use of evidence: Some examples are used to support some of the main points. Generalizations and points often lack supporting evidence or are unexplained. Evidence or quotes are poorly selected or poorly used, or are inaccurate.

Analysis: Evidence or quotes often appear without any analysis relating them to the topic sentences or thesis, or there is a weak topic sentence to support. The evidence is not connected to the overall argument.

Logic and argumentation: Paper may be somewhat vague due to the weak thesis. Counter-arguments or other connections to aspects of the topic are not addressed.

Mechanics: There are some minor problems with sentence structure, grammar, and spelling. There may be a few run-on sentences or fragments but the paper shows evidence of having been revised.

The C/C- paper...

Thesis: Difficult to identify or may be just a restatement of an obvious point.

Structure: Unclear focus because the thesis is weak or nonexistent. Transitions are confusing and unclear. The logic of the paper is often hard to follow because there are few topic sentences.

Use of evidence: Very few or weak examples. The paper has many broad generalizations, and doesn't clarify these vague ideas. Specific evidence or quotes are not integrated into paragraphs but rather are "plopped into" a paragraph or are missing altogether.

Analysis: Very little analysis or a very weak attempt to relate evidence to main argument. Paper is mostly descriptive.

Logic and argumentation: Ideas do not flow at all because there is no argument to support and there is a lack of topic sentences. Focus of the paper is unclear. Paragraphs are simply strung one after another. Paper is mostly a descriptive presentation of the topic.

Mechanics: Major and frequent problems in sentence structure, grammar, and paragraphing. Frequent major errors in citation style, punctuation, and spelling. There are many run-on sentences and fragments.

The D+ and below paper...

Shows minimal effort and is missing an overall argument. It is very difficult to understand due to major problems with mechanics such as spelling, tense agreement, and sentence structure. The structure of the paper is often illogical with poorly formed paragraphs that lack topic sentences and transitions. There is very little evidence of analysis. This type of paper has no identifiable thesis, or one that is simplistic. There is little, if any, evidence that an effort has been made to proofread the paper; it reads like a first draft.