

My Favorite Civilization

Final Project: Compare, Evaluate, and Defend Your Choice

Project Goal: Choose three civilizations we studied or discussed this year. Compare them carefully, then argue which one is your favorite and why. Your answer should show historical knowledge, thoughtful judgment, and clear evidence.

Project Overview

For this final project, you will become a historian, judge, and storyteller. You will select three civilizations from our eighth grade Ancient Civilizations course and explain why one of them stands above the others in your view. This is not only a “which one do I like?” project. You must compare civilizations using evidence: geography, government, culture, military, religion, writing, technology, art, architecture, law, trade, and important people.

Civilizations You May Choose From

- Mesopotamia / Sumer / Babylon / Assyria
- Ancient Egypt
- Ancient Israel / Hebrews
- Ancient India
- Ancient China
- Minoans
- Ancient Greece
- Hellenistic kingdoms
- Ancient Rome / Roman Republic / Roman Empire
- Byzantine Empire
- Any other civilization we studied or discussed, with teacher approval

Required Project Parts

1. Choose three civilizations: Pick three civilizations we studied or discussed this year. One will be your favorite; the other two will be used for comparison.

2. Explain your favorite civilization: Clearly state which civilization is your favorite and give several strong reasons. Avoid simply saying it was “cool” or “interesting.” Explain what makes it impressive, important, or meaningful.

3. Compare all three civilizations: Discuss similarities and differences among the three civilizations. Your comparison should include at least four categories, such as geography, government, religion, military, economy, social structure, writing, technology, law, architecture, art, philosophy, or education.

4. Include notable figures: Discuss several important persons from each civilization. Explain what each person did and why that person matters.

5. Include notable achievements: Discuss at least three achievements from each civilization. These may include inventions, buildings, laws, literature, art, military victories, scientific discoveries, religious ideas, or political institutions.

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6. Explain geography: Explain how geography shaped each civilization. Consider rivers, seas, mountains, deserts, climate, farmland, trade routes, isolation, invasion, or expansion.

7. Use evidence: Use specific facts from class notes, textbook readings, handouts, or approved research. Strong projects use names, places, dates or time periods, examples, and accurate vocabulary.

8. Conclude with judgment: End by explaining why your chosen civilization is your favorite after comparing it with the others. A strong conclusion admits what the other civilizations did well while still defending your choice.

Project Format Options

Choose one format unless your teacher gives other instructions. No matter which format you choose, your project must answer the same historical questions and meet the same rubric standards.

| Format | Minimum Expectations |
|--------------|---|
| Slides | 1 - 15 slides, including title slide and works cited slide. Slides should be visual but not overloaded with text. Must include organized sections, visuals, labels, and written explanations. |
| Presentation | Do not look at slides or notes all the time. You should show me that you have understood and learned the information from memory and be able to answer questions. |

Suggested Structure

- 1. Introduction:** Name the three civilizations. State which one is your favorite. Give a preview of your main reasons.
- 2. Civilization #1: Your Favorite:** Explain its geography, achievements, important figures, and why it stands out.
- 3. Civilization #2: Comparison:** Explain its strengths and weaknesses compared to your favorite.
- 4. Civilization #3: Comparison:** Explain its strengths and weaknesses compared to your favorite.
- 5. Final Judgment:** Defend your final choice. Explain what your favorite civilization contributed to history and why it matters.

Research and Evidence Rules

- You may use your textbook, class notes, teacher handouts, approved websites, and library resources.
- You must include a simple Works Cited or Sources section with at least three sources.
- Do not copy and paste. Put information into your own words.
- Images must be school-appropriate and should have captions or labels.
- Historical claims should be accurate. When unsure, check before including it.

Student Checklist Before Turning It In

| Done? | Requirement |
|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I compared three civilizations. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I clearly named my favorite civilization. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I explained geography for all three civilizations. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I included notable figures for each civilization. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I included at least three achievements for each civilization. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I used specific evidence, not just general opinions. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I explained why the other two civilizations are impressive but not my favorite. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I included sources / works cited. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I checked spelling, grammar, capitalization, and neatness. |

Name: _____ Period: _____ Due Date: _____

Rubric: My Favorite Civilization Final Project

Total: 100 points. Advanced work should compare, explain, evaluate, and defend a judgment using historical evidence.

| Category | Pts | Excellent | Good | Developing | Needs Work |
|---|-----|--|---|---|--|
| Historical Accuracy and Knowledge | 20 | Accurate, specific, and shows strong understanding of all three civilizations; uses correct names, terms, places, and periods. | Mostly accurate with good knowledge; minor errors do not weaken the project. | Some accurate information, but explanations are general or several facts are unclear. | Many errors, vague claims, or missing knowledge. |
| Comparison of Three Civilizations | 15 | Thoughtfully compares all three civilizations across several categories and explains why the differences matter. | Compares all three civilizations clearly, though some categories could be more developed. | Mentions all three civilizations but comparison is uneven or mostly separate summaries. | Does not meaningfully compare three civilizations. |
| Defense of Favorite Civilization | 15 | Clear, persuasive, well-supported argument for the favorite civilization while acknowledging strengths of the others. | Clear argument with some evidence and explanation. | States a favorite but gives mostly basic or opinion-based reasons. | Favorite is unclear or not defended with evidence. |
| Geography and Environment | 10 | Explains how geography shaped each civilization's development, strengths, limits, trade, defense, or culture. | Discusses geography for each civilization with some explanation. | Mentions geography, but explanation is limited or missing for one civilization. | Geography is mostly absent or inaccurate. |
| Notable Figures | 10 | Includes important figures from each civilization and clearly explains their significance. | Includes figures from each civilization with mostly clear explanations. | Includes some figures, but significance is thin or one civilization is missing. | Figures are missing, inaccurate, or unexplained. |
| Achievements and Contributions | 10 | Explains multiple achievements from each civilization and why they mattered historically. | Identifies achievements from each civilization with some explanation. | Lists achievements but gives little explanation or misses one civilization. | Achievements are mostly missing or inaccurate. |
| Organization and Clarity | 10 | Easy to follow, well structured, and uses clear transitions and headings/sections. | Mostly organized and understandable. | Organization is uneven; reader sometimes has difficulty following the argument. | Disorganized or difficult to understand. |
| Presentation, Creativity, and Effort | 5 | Polished, neat, visually effective, and shows care and originality. | Neat and complete with solid effort. | Some effort shown, but presentation is plain, rushed, or incomplete in places. | Careless, incomplete, or difficult to read/view. |
| Sources and Academic Honesty | 5 | Uses at least three appropriate sources, includes a Works Cited/Sources section, and uses own words. | Uses sources and mostly follows expectations. | Sources are weak, incomplete, or not clearly listed. | No sources listed or evidence of copying without credit. |

Teacher Notes / Optional Scoring Comments: Strengths: _____ Areas for improvement: _____ Final score: _____ / 100

Name: _____ Period: _____ Due Date: _____