Theme: Turning Points

Turning points are major events in history that have led to lasting change.

Task: Identify two major turning points in global history and for each:
- Describe the historical circumstances surrounding the turning point
- Explain how each turning point changed the course of history

You may use any example from your study of global history. Some suggestions you might wish to consider include the Neolithic Revolution, the Crusades, the Renaissance, the Encounter, the French Revolution, the Russian Revolution of 1917, World War I, creation of the modern state of Israel, Nelson Mandela elected president of South Africa, and the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Scoring Notes:

1. Turning points should be major occurrences that changed the course of history. A turning point need not center on a specific event, but may refer to a major change such as the development of block printing or nuclear energy.
2. Turning points in United States history should not be used as the focus of the discussion, although an event such as the Cold War discussed from other perspectives may be used.
3. For the Russian Revolution of 1917, either or both revolutions can be discussed.
4. An individual may not be used as the turning point; the response must identify the actions or events associated with the individual that constitute a turning point, e.g., the election of Nelson Mandela may be discussed as it relates to the end of apartheid, but a simple biography of Nelson Mandela is not an appropriate choice of a turning point.
5. The description of the historical circumstances may include the time period, the historical context, and/or the contemporary issues, individuals, and events from which the turning point arises, e.g., the Protestant Reformation led by Martin Luther and John Calvin emerges from the Renaissance because the Renaissance encouraged questioning of the Catholic Church and refocused the attention of individuals on the value of human ability to reason.
Score of 5:
- Thoroughly develops all aspects of the task evenly and in depth by identifying two major turning points in global history, describing the historical circumstances surrounding each turning point, and explaining how each turning point changed the course of history.
- Is more analytical than descriptive (analyzes, evaluates, and/or creates information), e.g., an explanation of the creation of Israel might include the role of Zionism in the subsequent Arab-Israeli Wars and their results or the changing role of the Palestinians and the West Bank issues and an explanation of the French Revolution might include the role of Louis XIV and the policies of Louis XVI that led to calling a meeting of the Estates General and the Third Estates’ protests about voting and unfair taxes or the role of the Reign of Terror in the rise of Napoleon and the influence of the French Revolution on other countries.
- Richly supports the theme with many relevant facts, examples, and details, e.g., for the Renaissance, details might include: humanism, vernacular, patrons of the arts, Florence, Italian Renaissance, da Vinci, Michelangelo, individualism, scientific realism; or for the election of Nelson Mandela details might include: Mandela’s arrest, the system of apartheid, treatment of South Africans prior to Mandela’s election, global condemnation, economic sanctions, involvement of F. W. deKlerk, free elections, changes within Africa as a result of the elections.
- Demonstrates a logical and clear plan of organization; includes an introduction and a conclusion that are beyond a restatement of the theme.

Score of 4:
- Develops all aspects of the task but may do so unevenly by discussing all aspects of the task for one turning point more thoroughly than for the other turning point or discussing one aspect of the task for both turning points more thoroughly than the other aspect of the task.
- Is both descriptive and analytical (applies, analyzes, evaluates, and/or creates information), e.g., the explanation may imply rather than clearly state how a turning point changed the course of history.
- Supports the theme with relevant facts, examples, and details.
- Demonstrates a logical and clear plan of organization; includes an introduction and a conclusion that are beyond a restatement of the theme.

Score of 3:
- Develops all aspects of the task with little depth or develops most aspects of the task in some depth.
- Is more descriptive than analytical (may apply, analyze, and/or evaluate information).
- Includes some relevant facts, examples, and details; may include some minor inaccuracies.
- Demonstrates a satisfactory plan of organization; includes an introduction and a conclusion that may be a restatement of the theme.

Some Examples of Developing Most Aspects of the Task at Level 3

Holistic Scoring Reminder: These examples apply only to the evaluation of Bullet 1.
A response meeting the criteria below does not, by itself, make it a level 3 response.

1. Develops all aspects of the task for one major turning point, applying Level 5 criteria.
2. Describes the historical circumstances surrounding two major turning points; explains how one of the major turning points changed the course of history.
3. Describes the historical circumstances surrounding one major turning point; explains how that turning point changed the course of history; explains how a second turning point changed the course of history.
Score of 2:
- Minimally develops all aspects of the task or develops some aspects of the task in some depth
- Is primarily descriptive; may include faulty, weak, or isolated application or analysis
- Includes few relevant facts, examples, and details; may include some inaccuracies
- Demonstrates a general plan of organization; may lack focus; may contain digressions; may not clearly identify which aspect of the task is being addressed; may lack an introduction and/or a conclusion

**Some Examples of Developing Some Aspects of the Task at Level 2**

Holistic Scoring Reminder: These examples apply only to the evaluation of Bullet 1. A response meeting the criteria below does not, by itself, make it a level 2 response.

| 1. | Develops all aspects of the task for one major turning point |
| 2. | Describes the historical circumstances surrounding two major turning points |
| 3. | Explains how two major turning points changed the course of history |
| 4. | Describes the historical circumstances surrounding one major turning point; explains how a second major turning point changed the course of history |

Score of 1:
- Minimally develops some aspects of the task
- Is descriptive; may lack understanding, application, or analysis
- Includes few relevant facts, examples, or details; may include inaccuracies
- May demonstrate a weakness in organization; may lack focus; may contain digressions; may not clearly identify which aspect of the task is being addressed; may lack an introduction and/or a conclusion

Score of 0:
Fails to develop the task or may only refer to the theme in a general way; OR includes no relevant facts, examples, or details; OR copies only the theme, task, or suggestions from the test booklet; OR is illegible; OR is a blank paper