

Using Historical Reasoning Process to Develop Effective Historical Arguments: COMPARISON

Reasoning Process Skill #1

Students should be able to:

- Describe similarities and/or differences between different historical developments or processes.
- Explain relevant similarities and/or differences between specific historical developments and processes.
- Explain the relative historical significance of those similarities and/or differences between different historical developments or processes.

Underlying Questions

- How is one development like/unlike another development from the same time/a different time? Why?
- Why did an event or development affect different groups in different ways? So what?
- How does a viewpoint (from a historical actor or historian) compare with another when discussing the same event or historical development?

Why are the questions significant for analysis?

- To make sense of specific events or developments, historians often put them in a comparative context in order to see a larger picture.
- Comparison also helps in understanding the complexity of historical change, since different groups in society often have different experiences of the same event or same development.
- Comparison is a skill used on a daily basis by historians, who must always take into account differences among sources, both primary and secondary.