**How to write about Change and Continuity Over Time (CCOT)**

**(Borrowed from a Mr. Hart, AP Teacher at B.H.S) Thank you sir!**

Questions like this ask you to analyze what has changed and/or remained the same during a certain time period (often one era, sometimes more than one), in a certain region(s) while focusing on a particular theme(s):

Consider events in history.  Is there a pattern in these events?  Patterns are not simply a set path for events to take, but rather a process involved.  In a CCOT essay you need to identify the patterns (or big picture) for a theme during a specific time period, but also use the events (small picture) as evidence to support your claim as to what the pattern is.  To do this well it is important to be familiar with periodization (the key dividing points among and within eras), and context (the Big Picture: the situation at these points in time).

For a CCOT, you are required to consider the history of certain themes – how have those areas changed or remained the same throughout time?  Has there been a smooth progression?  [Rarely the case] Have there been any interruptions or reversals/roll backs? What has remained the same despite these changes?  [This is harder to do and most often refers to obvious and often unremarkable events]  After identifying the patterns, you need to determine why these changes or continuities have occurred.

How to approach CCOT Questions

1. **Recognize Topic:**Correctly recognize the general topic/theme.  Consider all that could be included under that topic category and look for references across the topic areas (African-Americans/Labor Rights/Native Americans/Women’s Rights).
2. **Identify Correct time period**: read the question very carefully – do not stray out of the parameters given.
3. **Determine Significance of Dates:**Determine the *significance* given of the dates, both the start date and the end date.  Be sure to consider events all the way until the end date and all the way from the beginning date but not beyond either. E.g. the era 1917-1945 is clearly indicating the defining period of Civil Rights between both World Wars and US involvement therein. *N.B. It is ok to draw upon events before and after to help give structure to your essay but do not write more than the briefest of references.*
4. **Identify Changes:**Compare periods of time, namely conditions at the beginning of the given time period, with those at the end and determine what is different (changes). As with any comparison, the description of just one of those (i.e. the situation at the end of the given time period) is not enough, you need to identify from what it changed to have done a complete comparison.   Make sure you give concrete examples of how they changed.
5. **Identify Continuities:**Establish what remained the same during the time period or the continuities (so the similarities of the comparison), not just what changed (the differences). Again, give concrete examples of how they remained the same.
6. **Identify Key Steps in Process:**Consider the process that took place during this time. That is – were there any major developments that are relevant that occurred **between** the beginning date (the baseline) and the end date (the end point)? Sometimes, when the time period specified in the question is between eras, the era dates are good mid-way point(s) to consider. More often than not though, the time period specified is within one era and finding a relevant mid-point(s) of events that would have had an impact on the topic is a bit harder.
7. **Analyze the Changes and Continuities (including reasons for them):**Analyze the processes identified. The pace of change, the manner of change/continuity, comparative changes/continuity, and results or effects of the changes/continuities. Make sure you also analyze why did things change or remain the same?

Tips for responding to CCOT questions:

·      Your thesis **must** include your argument (what changed, what remained the same, and why did it happen this way), the geographic focus of the question (the places identified), and the time frame specified in the question (the dates).

·      When asked to discuss or even analyze changes or transformations, do not describe them as positive or negative, but rather describe specifics about the actual continuity or change/transformation.

·      Be sure to provide evidence to support your description of the continuity and changes/transformations, which should be different than your actual description of them.

·      Be sure to focus on analyzing the continuities and changes over time, rather than just listing events in the order they occurred or narrating what happened in the “story line.”

**Terms to use for changes:**previously, before, until that time, up to that time, formerly, from that point forward, over time, as things evolved, in the [fill in the blank] century, or then comes the period of time when [such and such happened].  
You can also use the terms radical or completely to describe a change, but be careful as you will need to address a similarity and usage of these terms might make that harder or even impossible.

**Terms to use for continuities:** throughout this period, continued to, persistent, lasting, enduring, ongoing, constant, sustained, or maintained.  
Also, permanent, undying, unrelenting or undeviating, but be careful with these terms as they can corner you into an argument you might not be able to defend.

**Terms to use to indicate analysis:** ‘because’, ‘as a result,’ ‘therefore’, ‘due to’, ‘as a consequence of’.

For example, the following is not analysis: “The Roman Empire grew very large and hard to defend. The emperor divided it into two parts. Barbarian invaders won.”

This is analysis: “The Roman Empire grew so large that the emperor divided it into two parts. Because it was hard to defend, barbarian invaders won.”