Chapter 1

The Rise of Civilization

Determining Relevance

During the process of researching a subject, a writer may encounter information that is interesting but of little use to his or her project. To ensure that readers clearly understand the point an author is trying to make, a good writer should avoid using information that is irrelevant—that is, information that does not directly relate to the subject matter. To make an effective argument, an author should use only relevant information—that which directly relates to the subject matter.

Imagine that you are preparing to write an article about the farming practices of early civilizations. Place an R next to each relevant fact and an I next to each statement that would not be useful in writing your article. Justify your answers.

1. In Mesopotamia, the Tigris and the Euphrates supplied the water that was crucial to farming.
   Explanation: ________________________________

2. Egypt had a food surplus that was traded for many other goods.
   Explanation: ________________________________

3. The Sumerian religion was polytheistic.
   Explanation: ________________________________

4. The most important buildings were ziggurats.
   Explanation: ________________________________

5. The Indus River provided water and silt, which were vital to Harappan agriculture.
   Explanation: ________________________________

6. The most important crop in Mesoamerica was maize.
   Explanation: ________________________________
The Persian and Greek World

Creating an Outline

An outline is an effective organizational tool that summarizes the main points you wish to communicate in an essay or a paper. There are four steps involved in preparing a useful outline. First, determine how you want to organize your essay by summarizing the main points you will cover. Your main topic should be identified in your introductory paragraph. This will engage your readers and prepare them for the information that will follow. The body of your essay will contain information that supports your main ideas, and the conclusion summarizes the main points of your paper. Organizing the body of your essay is the second step to preparing a useful outline. Using Roman numerals, identify the headings of each of the topics which will form the individual paragraphs of your paper. Third, list the supporting details, indicating your subtopics with numbers and letters. Be careful not to use subtopics unless you have at least two in each category. Finally, use your outline as a framework around which you can write your paper.

Suppose you are going to write a paper about the development of philosophy in ancient Greece. Organize the following topics into an outline, using the skeleton provided for you.

Developments in Greek Philosophy

Sought explanations of how the world had developed
Pythagoras believed universe was made up of numerical relationships
Developed atomic theory, which held that universe was made up of basic units of matter
Insisted that the universe was controlled by natural processes
Combined the theories of Pythagoras and Parmenides

I. Origins
   A. People sought to understand nature of the universe, or cosmos
   B. ____________________________
      1. Refused to accept that the universe was manipulated by the gods
      2. ____________________________

II. Mathematics
   A. ____________________________
   B. Parmenides applied mathematical rules to philosophy, established formal logic

III. Contributions of Democritus
   A. ____________________________
   B. ____________________________

WORLD HISTORY: CONTINUITY AND CHANGE
CHAPTER 3 • WRITING PROJECT
The Growth of Asian Civilizations

Determining Relevance

During the process of researching a subject, a writer may encounter evidence that is interesting but of little use to his or her project. To ensure that readers clearly understand the point an author is trying to make, a good writer should avoid any information that is irrelevant—that is, information that does not directly relate to the subject matter of the essay. To make an effective argument, an author should use only relevant information—that which directly relates to the subject matter.

Imagine that you are writing an essay describing the religious culture of Hinduism. Place an R next to each relevant fact and an I next to each statement which would not be useful to support your essay. Justify your answer.

1. When people die their souls are reborn in new bodies through a process known as reincarnation.
   Explanation

2. Hinduism teaches that all gods and living beings are representations of a single, universal spirit called Brahma.
   Explanation

3. Hinduism represents a synthesis of Indian religious cultures, combining elements of both Aryan and pre-Aryan religions.
   Explanation

4. The Era of a Hundred Schools was one of the most creative periods for Chinese religious philosophy.
   Explanation

5. Confucius called for respect of traditional culture and strict observance of the principles of order.
   Explanation

6. Kalidasa’s plays and poems capture the beauty and refinement of Gupta culture.
   Explanation
Civilizations in the Americas

Creating an Outline

An outline is an effective organizational tool that summarizes the main points you wish to communicate in an essay or a paper. There are four steps involved in preparing a useful outline. First, determine how you want to organize your essay by summarizing the main points you will cover. Your main topic should be identified in your introductory paragraph. This will engage your readers and prepare them for the information which will follow. The body of your essay will contain information that supports your main ideas, and the conclusion summarizes the main points of your paper. Organizing the body of your essay is the second step to preparing a useful outline. Using Roman numerals, identify the headings of each of the topics which will form the individual paragraphs of your paper. Third, list the supporting details, indicating your subtopics with numbers and letters. Be careful not to use subtopics unless you have at least two in each category. Finally, use your outline as a framework around which you can write your paper.

Suppose you are going to write a paper about Classic Maya civilization. Organize the following topics into an outline, using the skeleton provided for you.

THE CLASSIC MAYA

Quetzal feathers
Based on agriculture
Long Count

I. Economy
   A. ____________________________
   B. Trade
      1. ____________________________
      2. ____________________________

II. Writing system
    A. ____________________________
    B. Complex series of glyphs

III. Three types of calendars
    A. Sacred calendar
    B. Agricultural calendar
    C. ____________________________

IV. Decline
    A. Reasons not known
    B. ____________________________

8  CHAPTER 8 • WRITING PROJECT  WORLD HISTORY: CONTINUITY AND CHANGE