

PRE-WRITING: CLAIM AND FOCUS

Purpose

Claim writing is a skill that you will use in this course, other courses, and even in the world of work. This activity will help you master the process of writing and defending a strong claim.

Process

1. Review the Claim and Focus section from the OER Project Writing Rubric below.

Claim and Focus
Make a fully developed claim that is historically defensible and responds to the assignment.
Establish a strong line of reasoning and maintain a precise focus on defending the described claim.
Develop the claim and counterclaims while thoroughly addressing the demands of the prompt.

2. In the table below, respond to the following prompt: *How did nationalism and sovereignty reshape the world in the long nineteenth century?* You can use your notes from [this lesson](#) to help develop your claim.

Create a claim statement by responding to the question.	If you are stuck, use the following sentence stems. Note how these sentence starters are connected to the prompt.
	• Nationalism and sovereignty impacted the world in the long nineteenth century because... • Some of the ways that nationalism and sovereignty reshaped the world are...

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3. Review your claim and complete the chart.

Review your claim	Yes/No	Explain
Does my claim make an argument?		
Does my claim take a position that requires defending?		
Is my claim focused and precise?		
Does my claim answer the question, So what?		
Does my claim reference the evidence I will use to support my argument?		

4. Now think about the claim someone would make if they were arguing against you.

Opposing Claim/Counterclaim	If you are stuck, use the following sentence stems
	• On one hand.... On the other hand.... • Though some historians argue..., a deeper analysis shows... • Despite the fact that many people believe... • While many say that...

5. You'll use this claim and counterclaim later in this unit. As you learn more, keep thinking about how you can support your claim with additional evidence.