

Unit 1 LEQ Review Summary Sheet

Topics 1.1 – 1.5 (1200–1450)

Use this to review the main argument patterns and evidence likely to appear in Long Essay Questions.

Topic 1.1 – Developments in East Asia (Song Dynasty, 1200–1450)

Themes: Governance (GOV), Culture (CDI), Economics (ECN)

Big Idea: China was the world's most sophisticated centralized state.

Focus	Key Points to Review	Example Evidence
Continuity & Change	Song Dynasty maintained imperial bureaucracy & Confucian hierarchy while expanding exam system and Neo-Confucian values.	Civil Service Exams / Scholar-gentry class / Mandate of Heaven
Innovation & Effect	New tech and commercialization expanded trade and population.	Champa rice / paper money / Grand Canal / gunpowder
Cultural Influence	Confucian patriarchy shaped gender roles (foot-binding).	Filial piety / Neo-Confucianism / Empress Wu as outlier

Practice Thesis Prompt:

Evaluate the extent to which the Song Dynasty's political systems represented continuity or innovation from earlier Chinese traditions.

Topic 1.2 – Dar al-Islam: Innovation & Intellectual Exchange

Themes: Culture (CDI), Technology (TEC), Economics (ECN)

Big Idea: Muslim states unified Afro-Eurasia through faith, trade, and scholarship.

Focus	Key Points to Review	Example Evidence
State Development	Abbasid Caliphate fragmented but intellectual exchange flourished.	House of Wisdom / Delhi Sultanate / Seljuk Turks
Intellectual Transfer	Muslim scholars preserved & advanced Greek science, math, medicine.	Al-Khwarizmi (algebra) / Ibn Sina (medicine) / Ibn Rushd (philosophy)
Diffusion & Trade	Networks spread tech (paper, astrolabe, numerals).	Trans-Saharan & Indian Ocean trade / Arabic language / Islamic architecture

Practice Thesis Prompt:

Evaluate the extent to which Islamic intellectual and economic systems fostered cross-cultural interactions between 1200 and 1450.

Topic 1.3 – South & Southeast Asia: Belief Systems & Society

Themes: Culture (CDI), Governance (GOV)

Big Idea: Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam shaped diverse state and social structures.

Focus	Key Points to Review	Example Evidence
Religious Pluralism	Hindu & Buddhist states (Angkor, Srivijaya) coexisted with Islamic sultanates.	Angkor Wat / Srivijaya / Delhi Sultanate
Cultural Synthesis	Trade routes brought Islamic and Hindu art, architecture, and literacy.	Indian Ocean trade / mosques in Java / Bhakti movement
Social Impact	Caste endured where Hinduism remained dominant; Islam offered mobility.	Varna system / Sufi missionaries

Practice Thesis Prompt:

Evaluate how belief systems influenced political and social structures in South and Southeast Asia from 1200 to 1450.

Topic 1.4 – State Building in the Americas

Themes: Governance (GOV), Culture (CDI), Environment (ENV)

Big Idea: American empires developed innovative bureaucratic and agricultural systems independent of Eurasia.

Focus	Key Points to Review	Example Evidence
Political Organization	Maya city-states, Aztec empire, and Inca empire had complex governance.	Aztec tribute system / Inca mit'a labor / Maya city-states
Engineering & Environment	Adapted to terrain with terraces, chinampas, and roads.	Inca roads / Machu Picchu / chinampas
Religion & Rule	Leaders used religion to legitimize authority.	Human sacrifice / Sun God Inti / Temple complexes

Practice Thesis Prompt:

Evaluate the extent to which American states between 1200 and 1450 used religion and labor systems to consolidate political power.

Topic 1.5 – State Building in Africa

Themes: Governance (GOV), Economics (ECN), Culture (CDI)

Big Idea: African states demonstrated continuity and innovation through trade networks and spiritual syncretism.

Focus	Key Points to Review	Example Evidence
Regional Kingdoms	Political diversity from city-states to large empires.	Ghana / Mali / Songhai / Hausa Kingdoms / Great Zimbabwe / Ethiopia
Economic Power	Gold–salt trade linked West Africa to Dar al-Islam & Med world.	Trans-Saharan routes / Mansa Musa's pilgrimage / Timbuktu learning
Cultural Exchange	Islam merged with local customs without erasing indigenous traditions.	Swahili language / Islamic architecture in Africa / mosques at Kilwa

Practice Thesis Prompt:

Evaluate the extent to which trans-Saharan and Indian Ocean trade networks influenced state formation and cultural change in Africa between 1200 and 1450.

How to Structure Any LEQ

Section	What to Do	Example for Practice
Intro + Thesis	Context (1–2 sentences) + specific argument with extent language (“to a great extent,” “to a limited extent,” etc.).	“To a great extent, trade networks linked Africa to Afro-Eurasian commerce, driving state formation through wealth and Islamic influence.”
Body Paragraph 1 – Cause or Continuity	Use specific evidence + reasoning (causation or continuity).	Mansa Musa → Islamic legitimacy + wealth from gold.
Body Paragraph 2 – Change or Comparison	Contrast region/time period or demonstrate shift over time.	Mali’s bureaucracy vs. Great Zimbabwe’s trade autonomy.
Conclusion	Restate thesis + evaluate degree of change or continuity.	“Although local cultures persisted, integration into Islamic trade networks profoundly reshaped African politics and culture.”

Quick Study Tips Before the LEQ

1. **Memorize at least two specific examples you can use in your essay** for each region (state + innovation + belief system).
2. **Practice “extent” language** → avoids yes/no arguments.
3. **Use comparisons** between regions (e.g., Song China vs. Mali vs. Aztec Empire).
4. **Show complex understanding** by connecting trade, religion, and governance.
5. **Write clear thesis and topic sentences** using AP reasoning skills (Causation, CCOT, Comparison).