Essay grading: topics considered

Question 1 (descriptive level)

It addresses the learning goals of the content of this course-unit (not only available in this specific article, but also in additional readings, or in notes taken during lectures, or on slides).

Students must provide:

a) A description of Portugal's economic performance between 1500 and 1800 in comparison with other economies according to main topics of the article (**4 points)**

b) An identification of the role of the empire in Portugal's performance and its functioning in a so-called semi-peripheral economy in the international division of labor (**4 points)**

Additionally, students should underscore

c) the importance of Portugal to better understand other colonizers (it would improve the answer if students did not forget the case of Spain) (**2 points)**

Question 2 (analytical and critical level)

The "old man's" words prompt students to focus on the formative purpose of the exercise. This can be practiced by

a) Identifying the main question(s) (**2 points**)

c) Inserting the motivations of the article into historiographical debates (information available in introduction and section 2) (**2 points)**

d) Presenting a critical view on the old man’s words based on the article’s conclusions (**4 points)**

d) Looking into old man's doubts through the lenses of the early modern economic regime. Empires were built during the Malthusian economic regime, so empire building might have crowded out labour or, conversely, might have improved standards of living in mainland. Recall that the European success stories seem to have escaped the Malthusian trap. (**2 points)**

*Note:*

*Grades were attributed based on how close the essay came to fulfilling both descriptive and creative purposes.*

*There are concise answers that reveal the student's ability to make personal contributions to the exercise. Originality or intellectual maturity were rewarded. However, in some cases, the premium was not enough to achieve a very high mark, but it was important to raise the overall level of the essay.*

Considering that this is a first test, ratings are based on broad intervals of goals.

Grade 10 = "it meets basic expectations poorly"

Range 11- 12 = " it meets expectations".

Range 13-14 = "it exceeds average expectations" = in many cases, the student revealed original and clear reasoning; in other cases, a very good (first or second) response was delivered along with an almost "unanswerable" (first or second) question.

Grade 15 = it is a very good essay = overall both responses are balanced and above average.

Grade 16 = at least one of the answers is outstanding, i.e, much above expectations, and the other may be good but incomplete.