

LEQ Sample Thesis or Opening Paragraph—

Prompt:

(Comparative Question)

Analyze the similarities and differences between **two** of the following regions and their development in Colonial America during the period from 1607-1754.

- New Spain
- New France
- British North America

Sample Opening Paragraph Response:

From 1607 to 1754, both France and Spain competed with England to establish a dominant presence in Colonial America. Like the English, the French and the Spanish both established colonies composed of settlements and towns in Colonial America during this period (introduction of period and context). Although the French and Spanish settlements in Colonial America shared the characteristics of having both small towns and a good relationship with the Native Americans, they differed in that France was more interested in the economic viability of the fur trade for its colonies and that Spain never engaged in a conflict against either of the major foreign powers in North America to protect its landholdings (thesis statement and introduction of comparisons and contrasts). However, both nations would lose out to the English who would become the dominant player in Colonial America because neither encouraged the mass immigration that would lead to the development of the colonies that belonged to England which featured larger, more diverse and prosperous settlements (major point of comparison). Due to the fact that the French and Spanish settlements and towns in Colonial America remained so small in comparison to those of the English, it will be the English who will win the French and Indian War and become the dominant presence in North America (reasoning). In the next time period, their colonies will become the future independent nation of the United States, which, in turn, will become the dominant presence in North America into the next time period and beyond to the present (window and link to conclusion).

Sample Body Paragraph Response:

During the Colonial Era, from 1607-1754, both the Spanish and the French settlements and towns remained small and the two imperial powers tried to establish a better relationship with the Native Americans (framing the comparisons in context and link to the thesis). Throughout the period, the towns and settlements established by both the Spanish and French remained quite small, as did their colonial populations in comparison to the English colonies along the Atlantic coast (first point of comparison). By 1750, the major outpost of Santa Fe, New Mexico, the most populous Spanish settlement north of Mexico, had a population of only about 8,000 people. In the Spanish-controlled lands in Colonial America, the population by 1750 amounted to only about 20,000 persons (evidence). By 1750, about 75,000 persons lived in the lands controlled by the French. The major French outpost of Montreal, Quebec, would have a population of 30,000 persons which is about 40% of the total population of New France. In comparison, both New York City and Philadelphia, the two largest cities in the British colonies had populations of 25,000 persons apiece and the total population of the British colonies in Colonial America by 1750 was 1.2 million persons (evidence). While the British colonies in Colonial America were in a constant state of warfare with the Native Americans, both the Spanish and the French attempted to have a better relationship with the Native Americans (second point of comparison). After suffering a stinging

defeat in 1680 at the hands of the Pueblo tribes of New Mexico, the Spanish began the process of establishing what became known as the mission system. From 1693-1781, the Spanish would establish mission communities in present-day Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California, all in the effort to Christianize the Native Americans, teach them a trade and to use them as laborers in the small farming communities that would grow alongside the missions (evidence). Though the mission system established by the Spanish would meet with limited success, the French, who relied on the fur trade, would establish a solid relationship with the Native Americans. The French would trade weapons in exchange for furs with the Native Americans and trappers and traders would also intermarry with Native American women (evidence). Despite the fact that the French, who did not desire to take Native American land, would develop a thriving relationship with the tribes of the Mississippi Valley region, their policy of relying upon the natives would also lead them to not desire to populate their land holdings in Colonial America. The lack of thriving settlements and their reliance upon the Native Americans to be an active partner in both trade and the development of religious-based communities meant that the former possessions of both Spain and France would easily be subsumed by first, the English, and then later, in the next period, the young United States of America (window to conclusion).