

grip on all the material you just covered in your notes.

# HISTORY OF THE WORLD

EMBRACING FULL AND AUTHENTIC ACCOUNTS  
OF

Every Nation of Ancient and Modern Times.

SHOWING  
THE CAUSES OF THEIR PROSPERITY AND DECLINE,



# “Doing World History”



World history is an enormous topic. The broad time frame and global perspective makes this subject unlike any other history class.

# World History...

- ...is more general than traditional history and emphasizes trends that go beyond cultural boundaries.
- ...stresses the interaction between societies.
- ...compares different patterns of development around the world.
- ...tends to be more superficial and general than local or national histories.
- ...often finds natural or human movements that affect many cultures, such as climatic developments, diseases, natural disasters or human movements like invasions and migrations. They could include dealing with new technologies and life styles.

United States History = one country for about 300 years.

World History = 196 countries over 200,000 years!



World history looks at the forest, not necessarily the trees.



With so much to cover and pull together, this class will teach you **five** methods, which capture the essence of the world history approach.

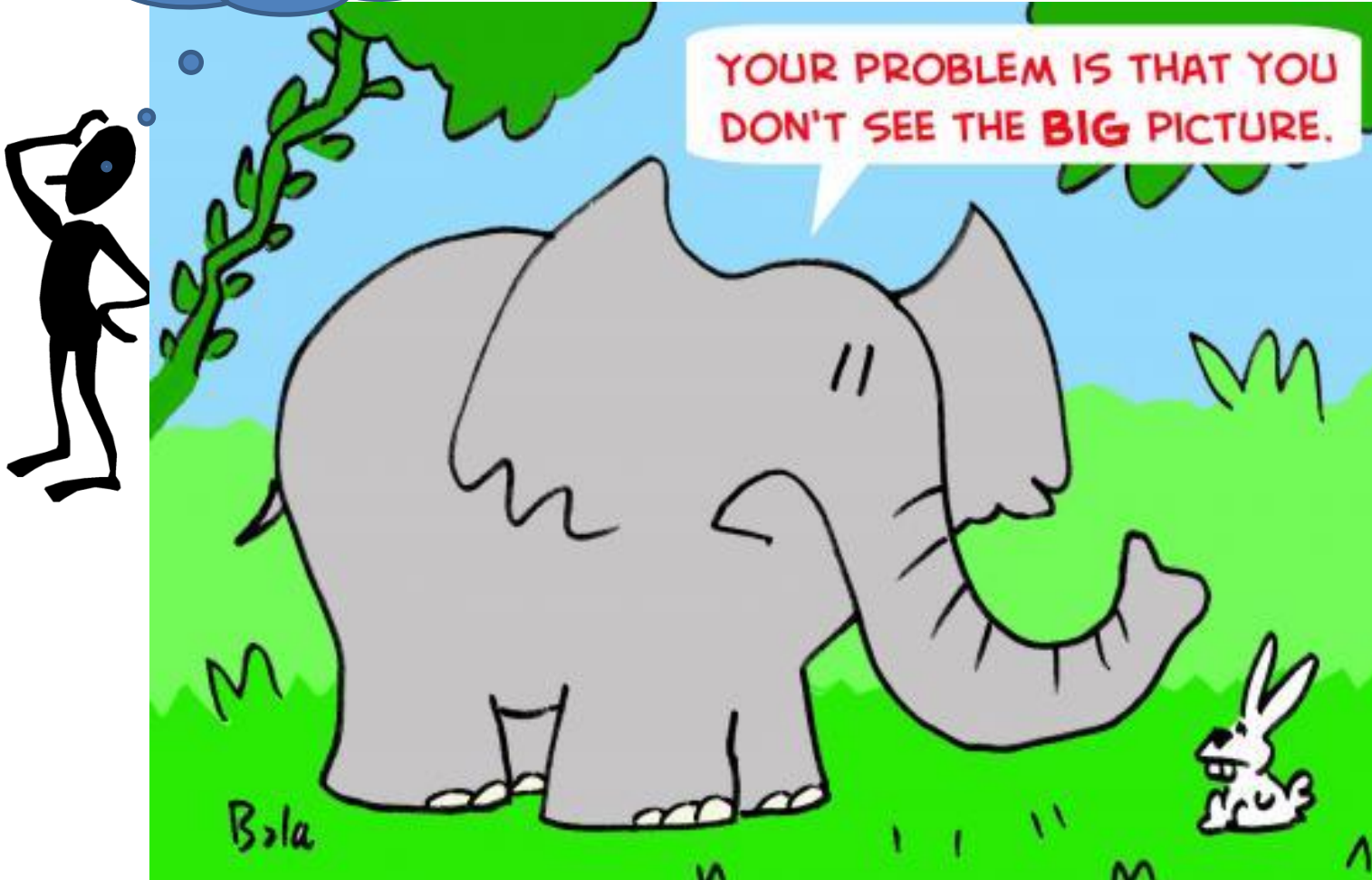


1. Big Picture
2. Diffusion
3. Syncretism
4. Comparison
5. Common phenomena

These methods of analysis are meant as focusing devices to help interpret and give meaning to historical events. They are intended to help guide your reading and notes as you work your way through the textbook.

Look at the...

# 1. Big Picture



This method has you take a broad overview, stressing chronology of major events and an explanation of their significance. After reading a chapter, try to think of its main idea and maybe 4 or 5 events that were important to the “big picture.” Create a simple timeline accompanied by a written explanation of the *significance* of the events. Try to include events from more than one culture or place on the time lines so you can do comparisons and understand what is going on in different places at any given time.



For example:

What is the **thesis**, or **main idea**, of chapter 1?

**Hint:**

The “thesis” of each chapter is always stated towards the end of the opening section of each chapter!



What were a few of the key events in that story and **WHY WERE THEY SIGNIFICANT?**

For example:

What is the **thesis**, or **main idea**, of chapter 1?

**Hint:**

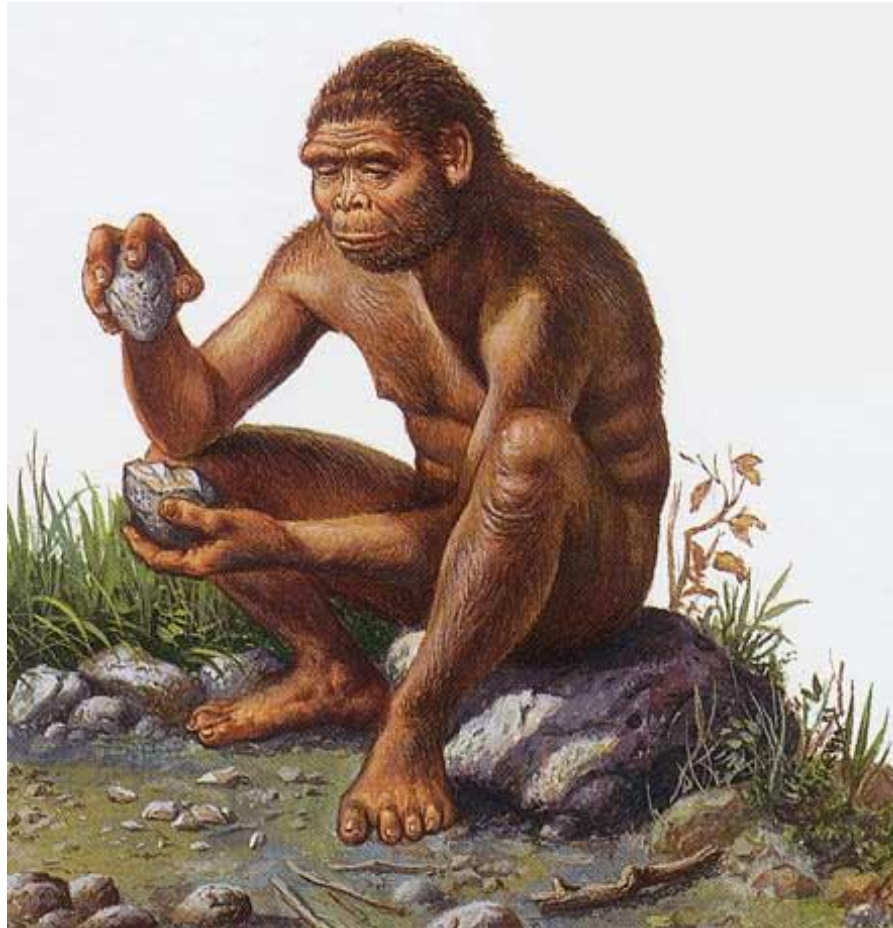
The “thesis” of each chapter is always stated towards the end of the opening section of each chapter!



Chapter 1 is about the evolution of modern humans from early hominids between 2.5 million years ago to around 10,000 BCE.



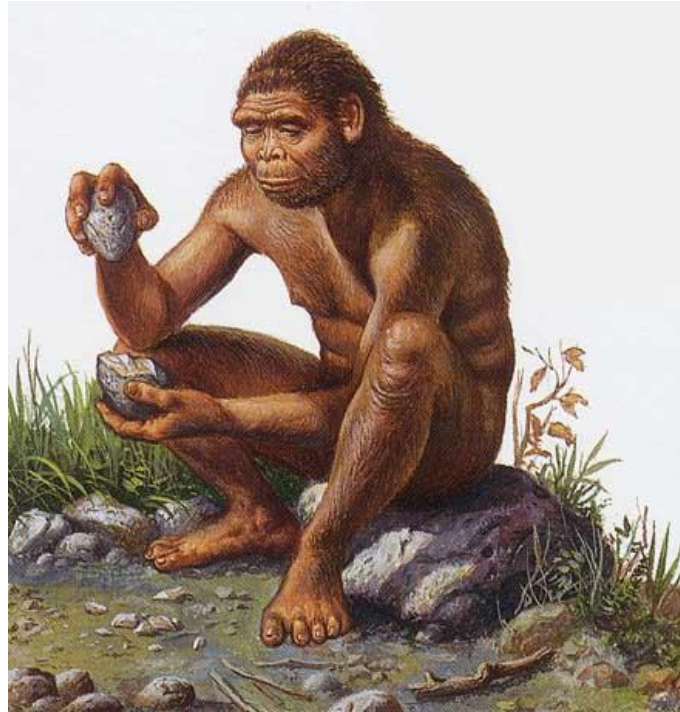
# First tool use by *Homo habilis*, 2.5 million years ago.



This is **NOT ENOUGH!**

The critical part of “big picture” is that you explain the significance of each event and how it contributed to the chapter’s thesis.

First tool use by *Homo habilis*, 2.5 million years ago.



**THIS IS GOOD!**

*“The development of tool use was significant because it gave “skillful man” the ability to acquire food and use resources more efficiently and is one of the defining characteristics of human beings.”*

# Fire first used by *Homo erectus*, 250,000 years ago



This is **NOT ENOUGH!**

The critical part of “big picture” is that you explain the significance of each event and how it contributed to the chapter’s thesis.

Fire first used by *Homo erectus*,  
250,000 years ago

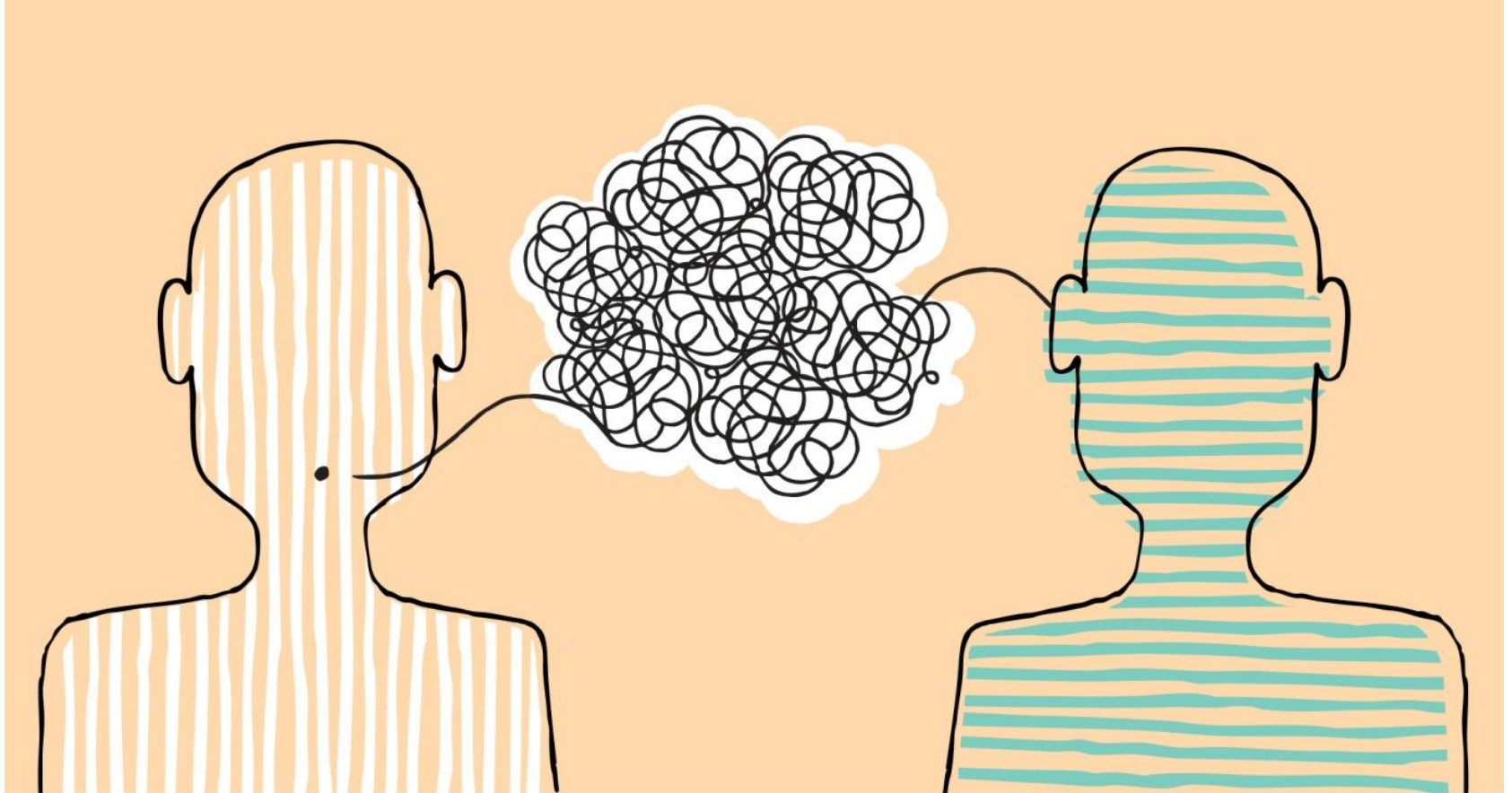


**THIS IS GOOD!**

*“The significance is that fire allowed early humans to cook food, which provided the energy needed for the evolution of increased brain size and functioning.”*



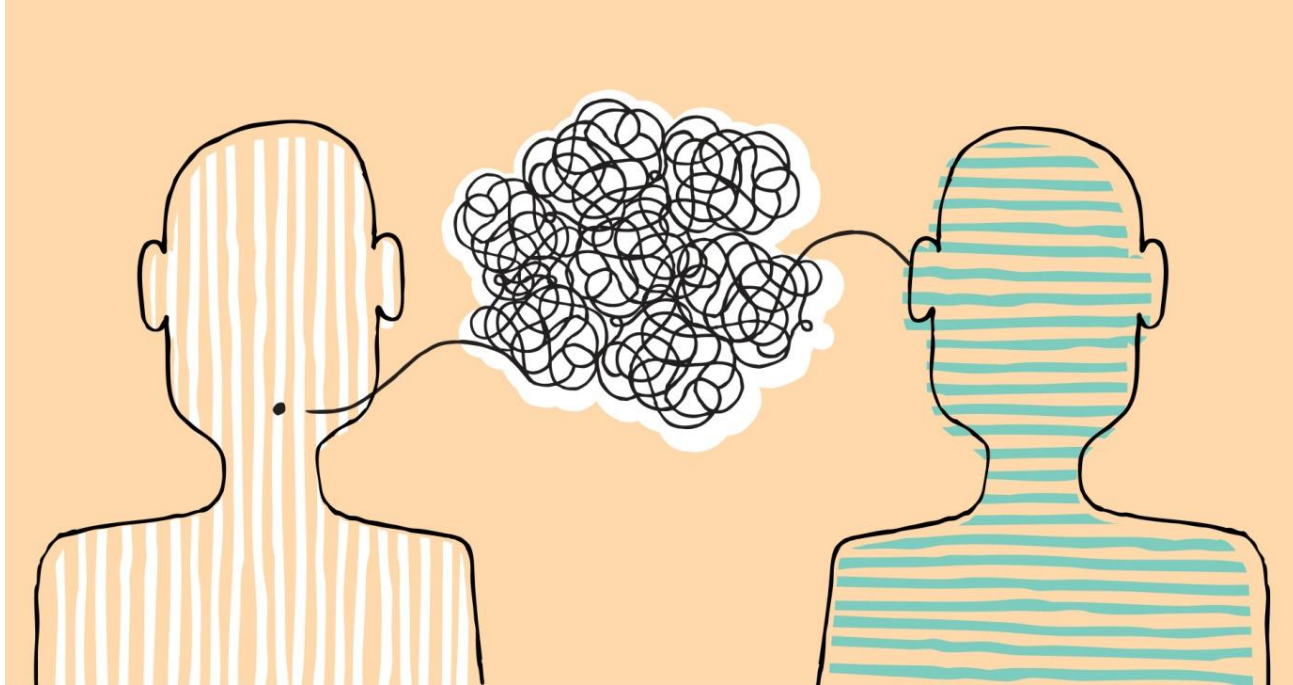
# Complex languages develop, 100,000 years ago.



This is **NOT ENOUGH!**

The critical part of “big picture” is that you explain the significance of each event and how it contributed to the chapter’s thesis.

# Complex languages develop, 100,000 years ago.



**THIS IS GOOD!**

*“The significance is that language allowed individuals to teach words and ideas to others, enhancing their ability to accumulate knowledge that could be transmitted across both space and time.”*

# Humans begin to practice settled agriculture about 12,000 years ago.



This is **NOT ENOUGH!**

The critical part of “big picture” is that you explain the significance of each event and how it contributed to the chapter’s thesis.

Humans begin to practice settled agriculture about 12,000 years ago.

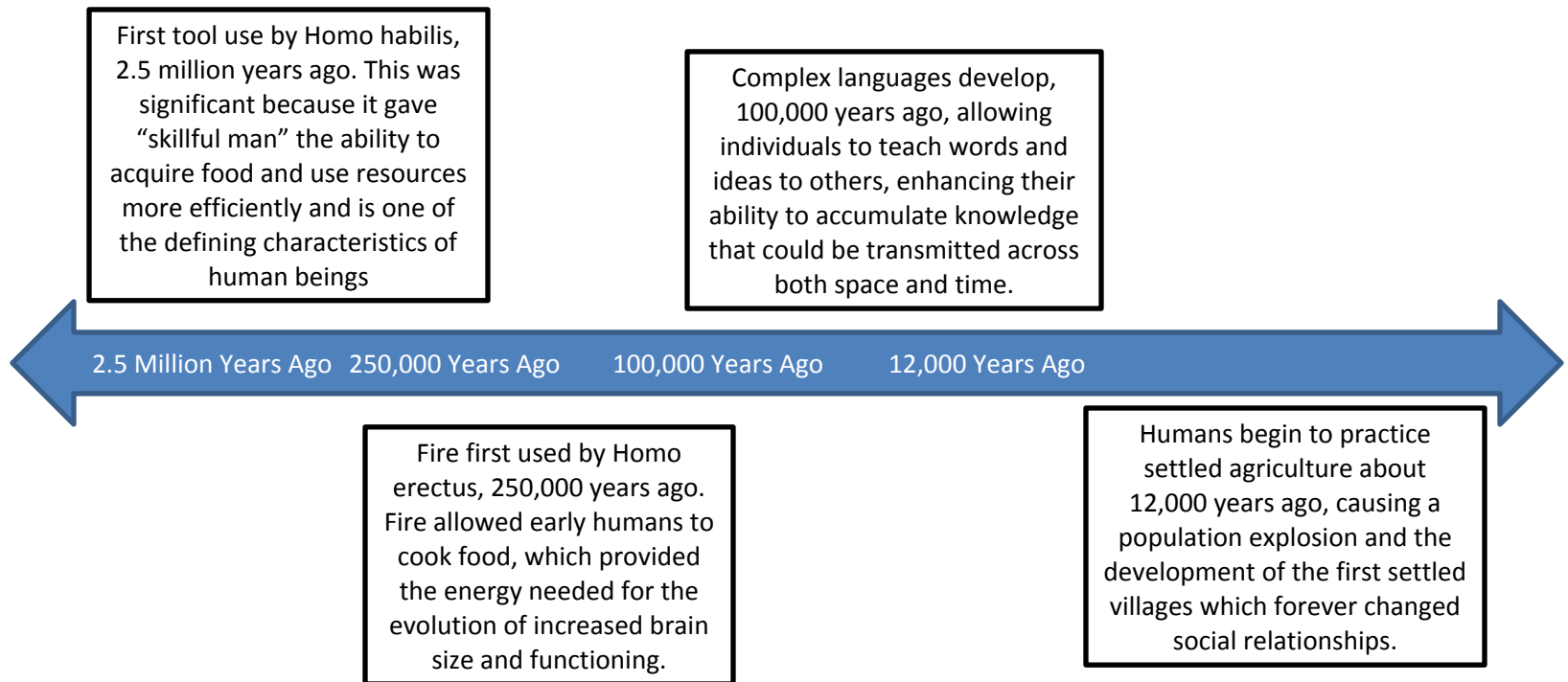


**THIS IS GOOD!**

*“The significance is that farming created a population explosion, led to the development of the first settled villages and changed social relationships.”*



# Chapter 1 is about the evolution of modern humans from early hominids between 2.5 million years ago to around 10,000 BCE.



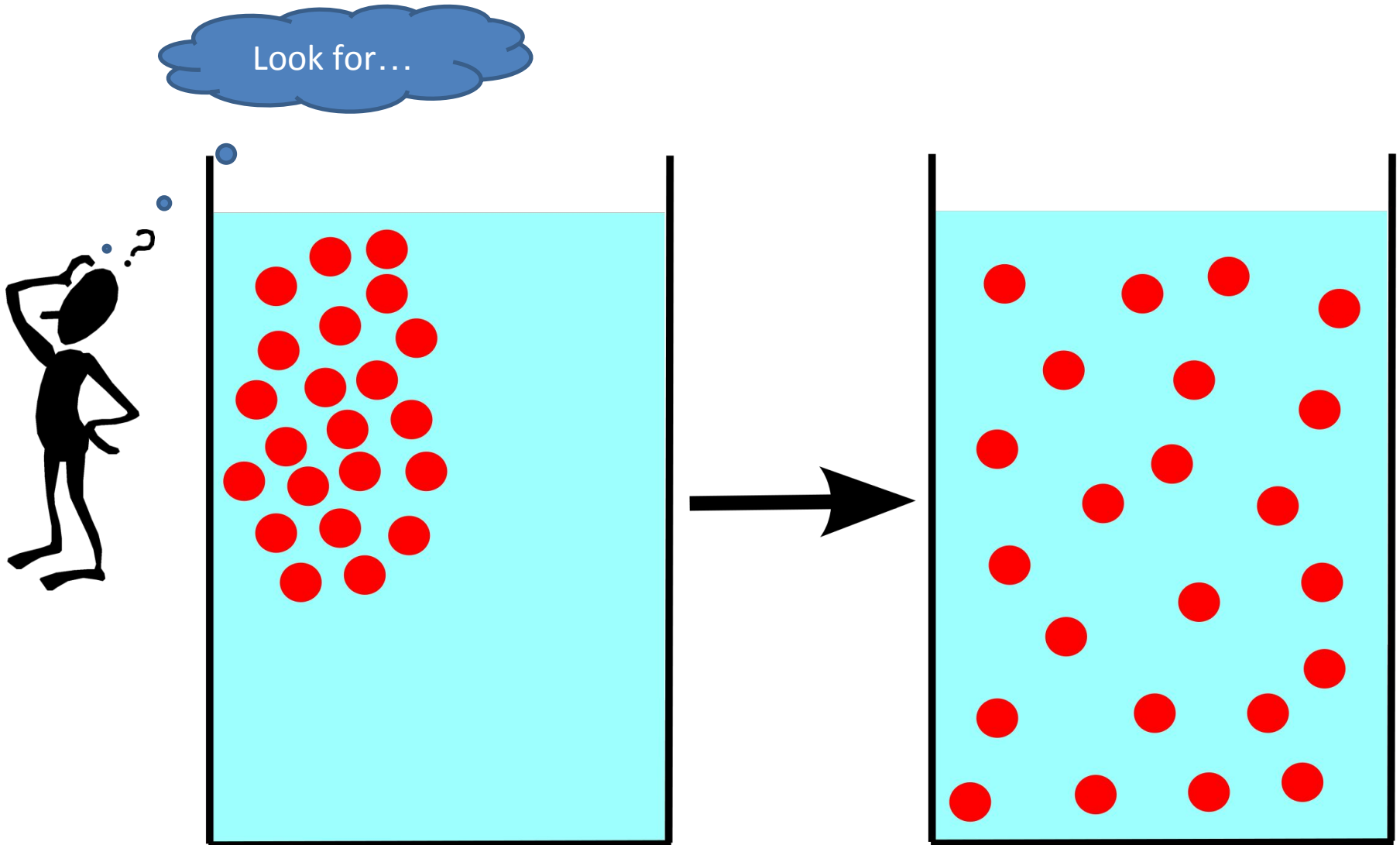
How could we turn this into a question?

*“What were the key events in the evolution of modern humans from early hominids in Africa between 2.5 million years ago and around 10,000 BCE?”*

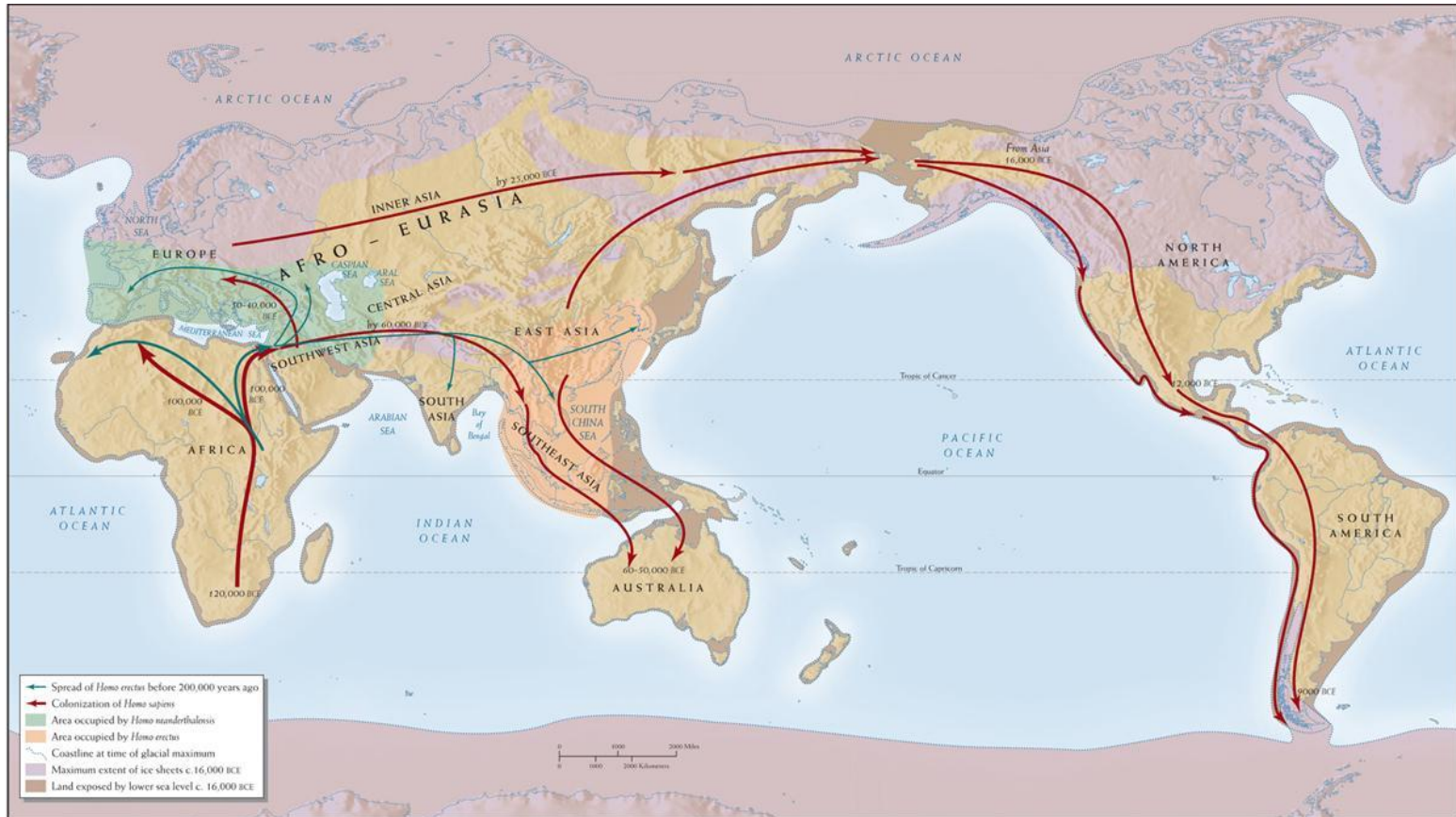
**How can we answer this question?**

*“As humans evolved out of early hominids between 2.5 million years ago and 10,000 BCE, several key events spurred them into their modern form. The first use of tools by *Homo habilis* took place about 2.5 million years ago. This was significant because tool use gave “skillful man” the ability to acquire food and use resources more efficiently and is one of the defining characteristics of human beings. Fire was first used by *Homo erectus*, 250,000 years ago. It allowed early humans to cook food, which provided the energy needed for the evolution of increased brain size and functioning. Complex languages developed about 100,000 years ago, allowing individuals to teach words and ideas to others, enhancing their ability to accumulate knowledge that could be transmitted across both space and time. Humans began to practice settled agriculture about 12,000 years ago, causing a population explosion and the development of the first settled villages which forever changed social relationships.”*

## 2. Diffusion



## 2. Diffusion



Diffusion is the spread of natural elements, people, artifacts, ideas or other cultural creations from one civilization to others. When you consider diffusion, make sure the idea of something spreading is explicit in your analysis, and connect this spreading process to the major points of the chapter. Explain the causes and methods of the spread as well as the consequences.



# Examples of diffusion:



For example:

# What is something important that spread from one culture to another in Chapter 1?





For example:

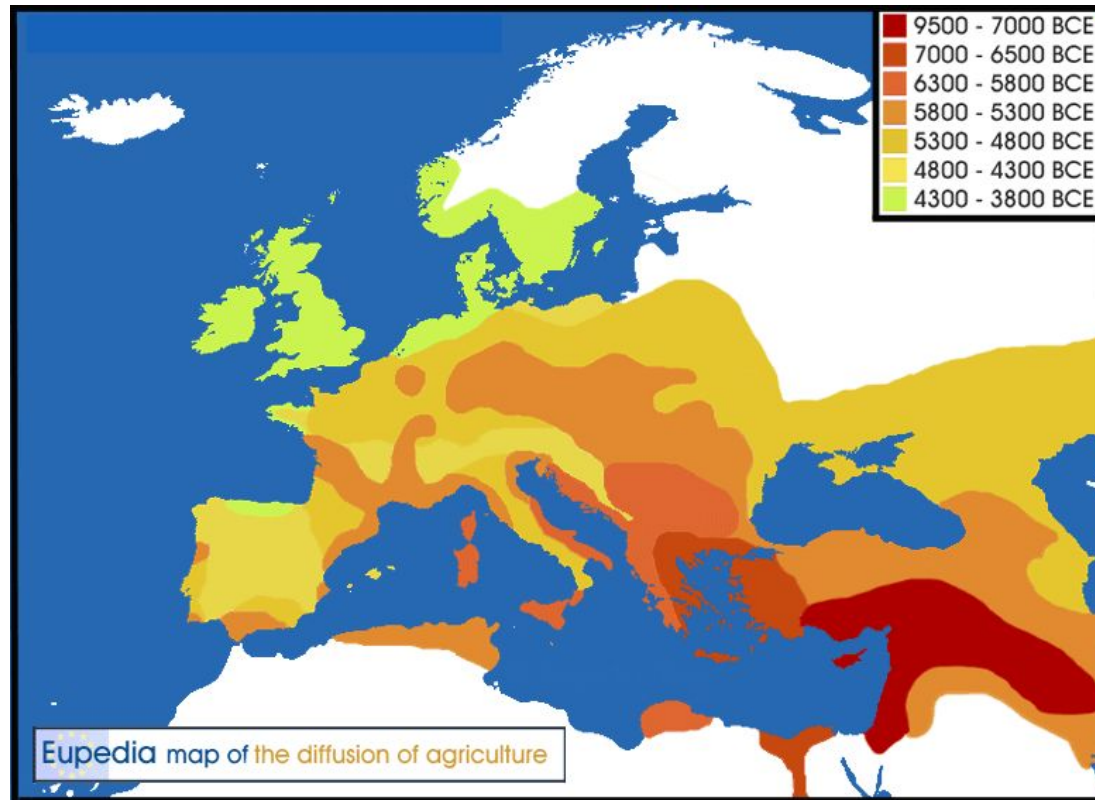
*“After 7000 BCE, agricultural techniques spread from Southwest Asia to Europe.”*



This is **NOT ENOUGH!**

A critical part of “diffusion” is to explain the way something spread.

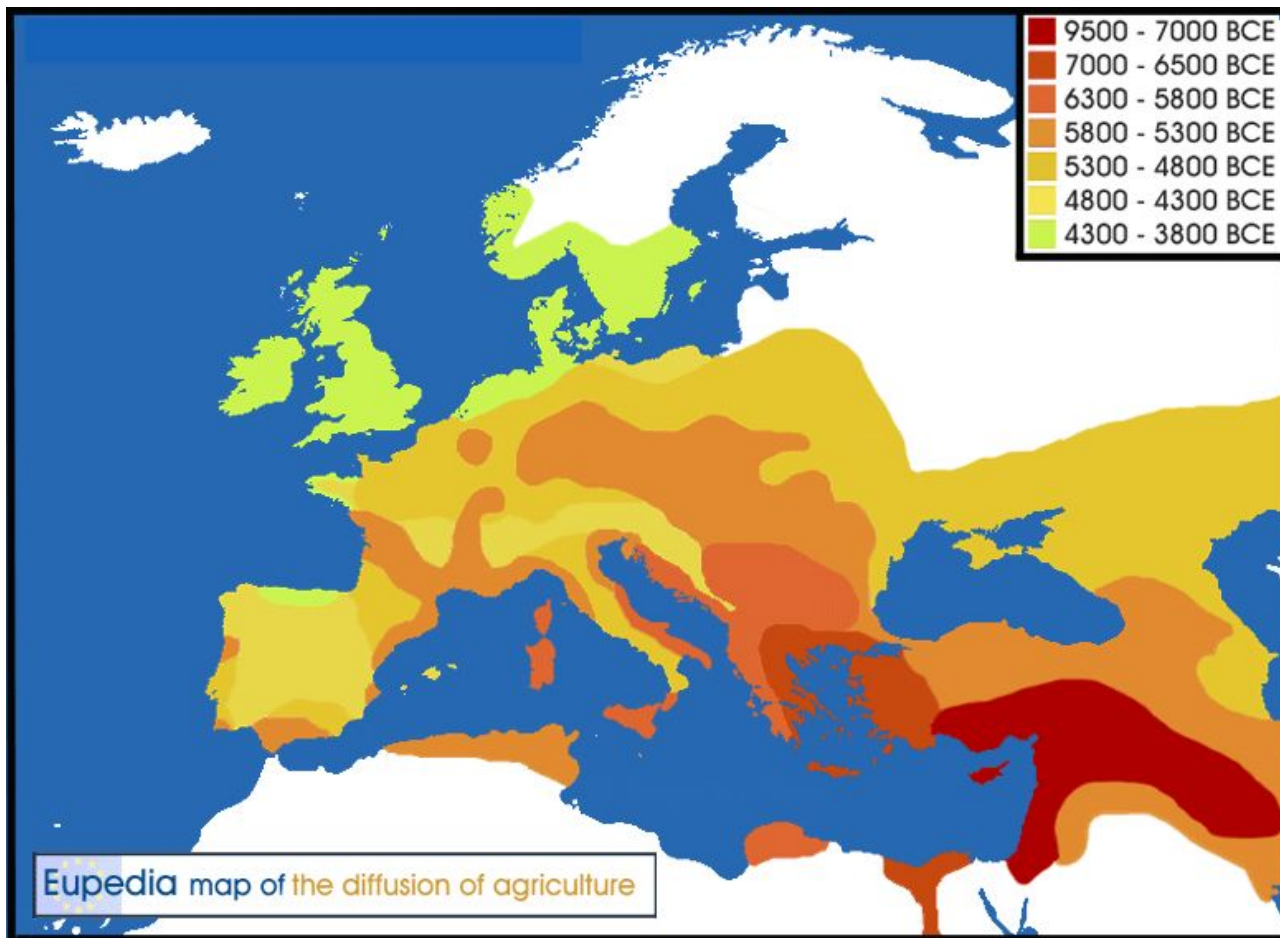
*“Agricultural techniques spread from Southwest Asia to Europe after 7000 BCE along the coastline of the Northern Mediterranean, and by travelers overland into northern Europe near modern-day Germany.”*



This is still **NOT ENOUGH!**

Another critical part of “diffusion” is to explain the significance of the diffusion in terms of the larger idea of the chapter.





## Getting Better!

*“The diffusion of agricultural techniques from Southwest Asia to Europe was important because it spurred the development of settled agricultural communities and larger populations, which were some of the key events in the evolution of modern humans.”*

# So...all together...

*“After 7000 BCE, agricultural techniques spread from Southwest Asia to Europe along the coastline of the Northern Mediterranean, and by travelers overland into northern Europe near modern-day Germany. This diffusion was significant because it spurred of the development of settled agricultural communities and larger populations, which were some of the key events in the evolution of modern humans.”*

How could we turn this into a question?

“How did agricultural techniques spread from Southwest Asia to Europe after 7000 BCE?”

The answer....?

We already have the answer!

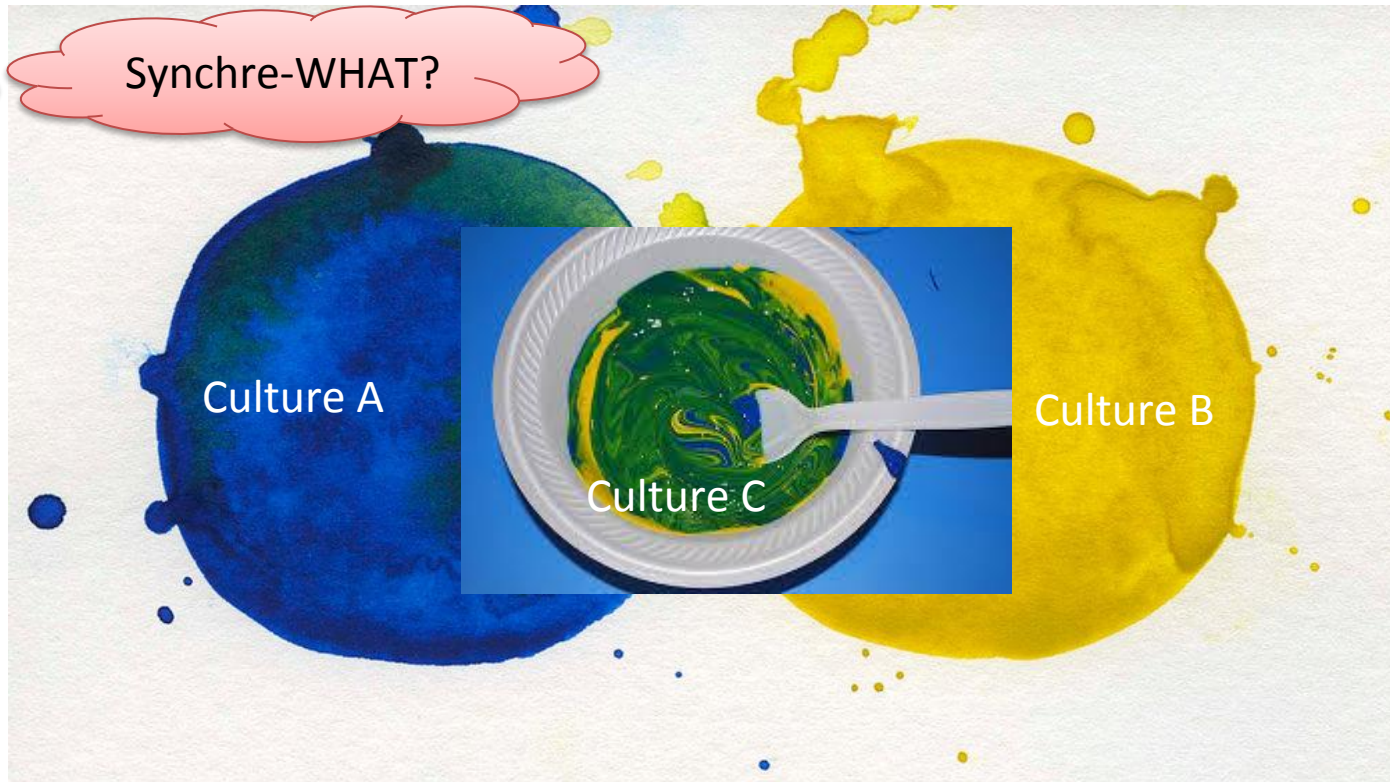
*“After 7000 BCE, agricultural techniques spread from Southwest Asia to Europe along the coastline of the Northern Mediterranean, and by travelers overland into northern Europe near modern-day Germany. This diffusion was significant because it spurred the development of settled agricultural communities and larger populations, which were some of the key events in the evolution of modern humans.”*

Or look for...

# 3. Syncretism



Synchre-WHAT?



If enough items *diffuse* the result is **syncretism**, the most important result of contacts between cultures. Syncretism is from the Greek root for "mixing," and it means:

The mixing of cultures to produce a new civilization.



# For example:

The USA is often called “The Great American Melting Pot” because of all the different cultures that have spread here.



Mexican Culture

+

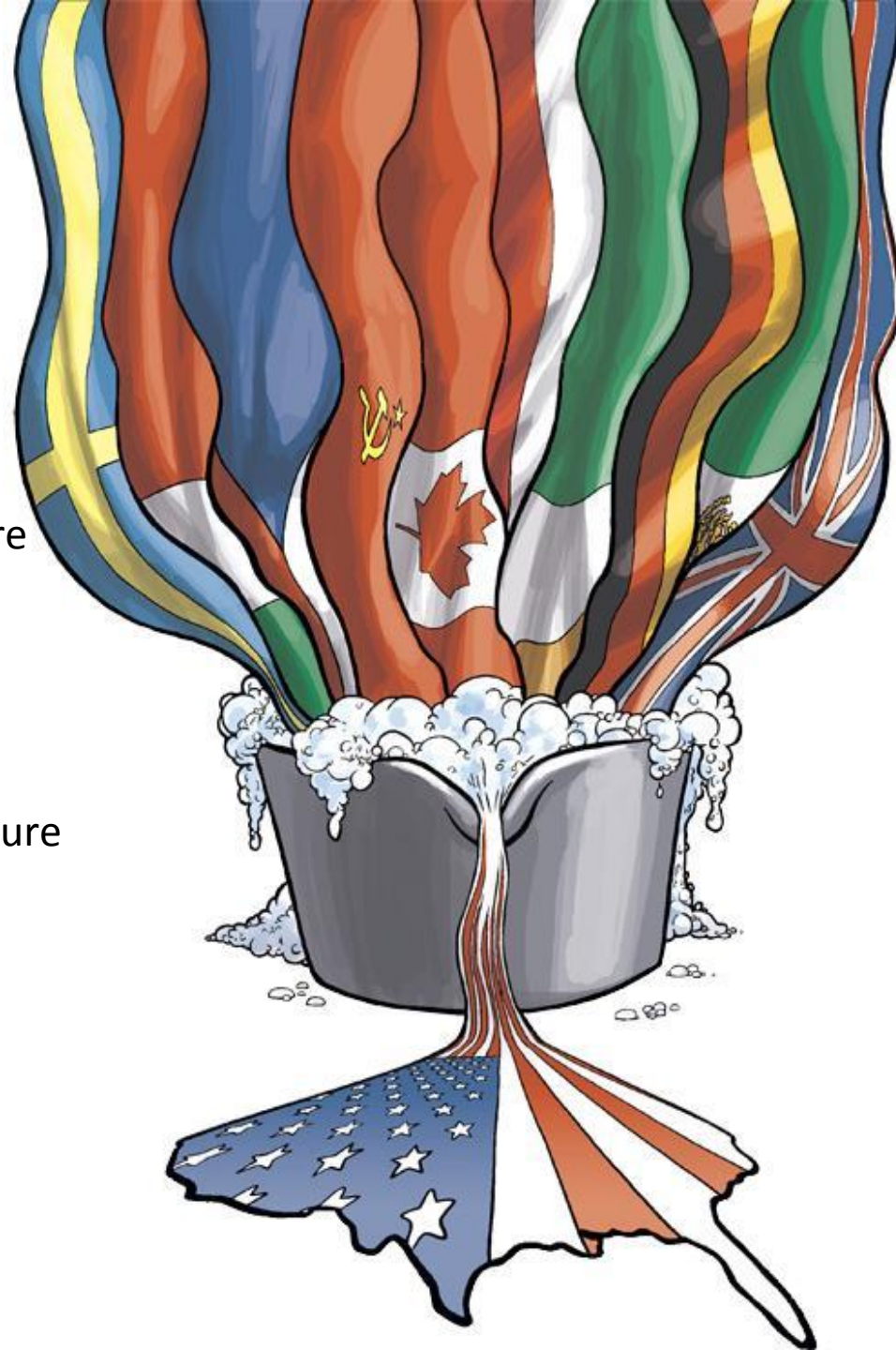


American Culture

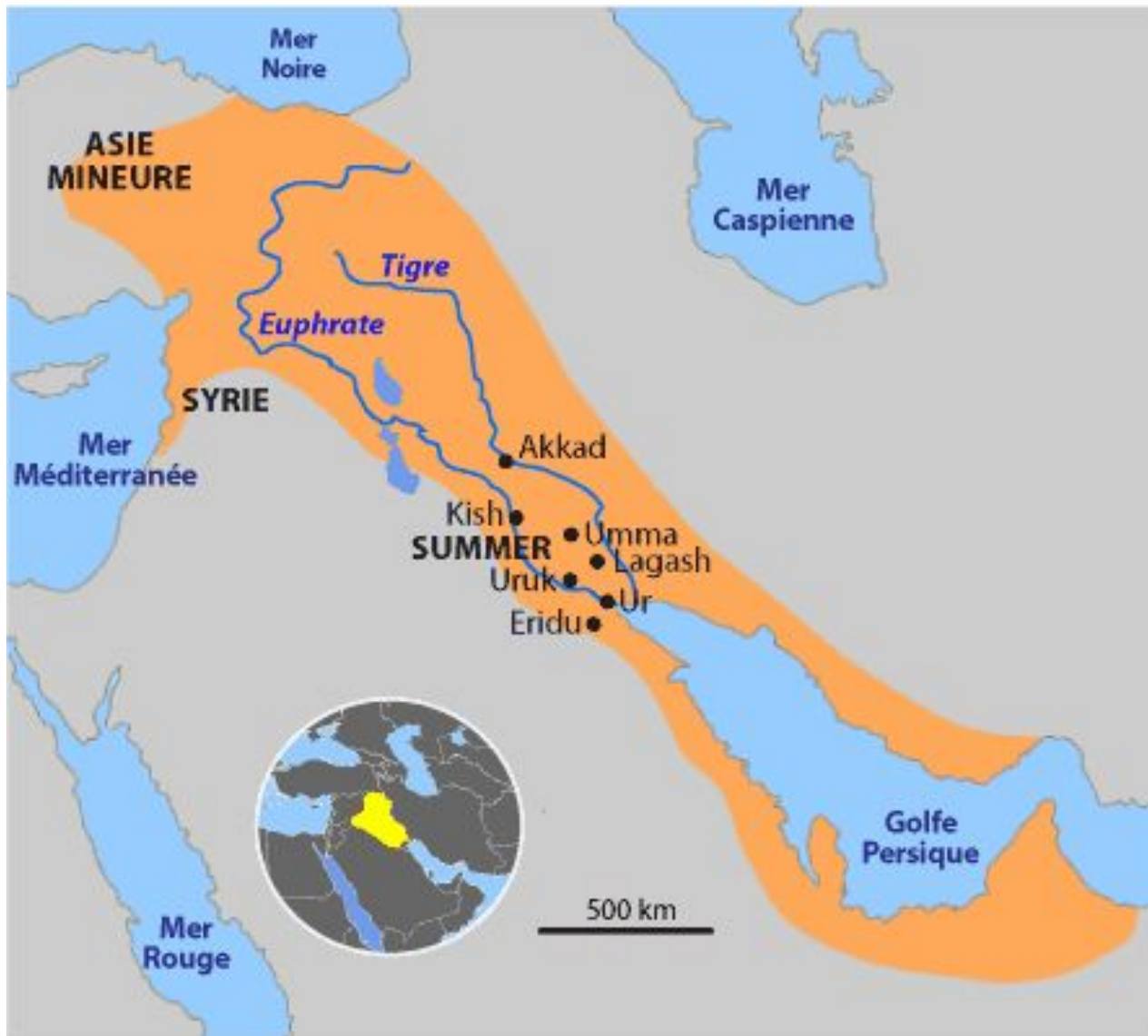
=



Taco Bell



# Hmmm....

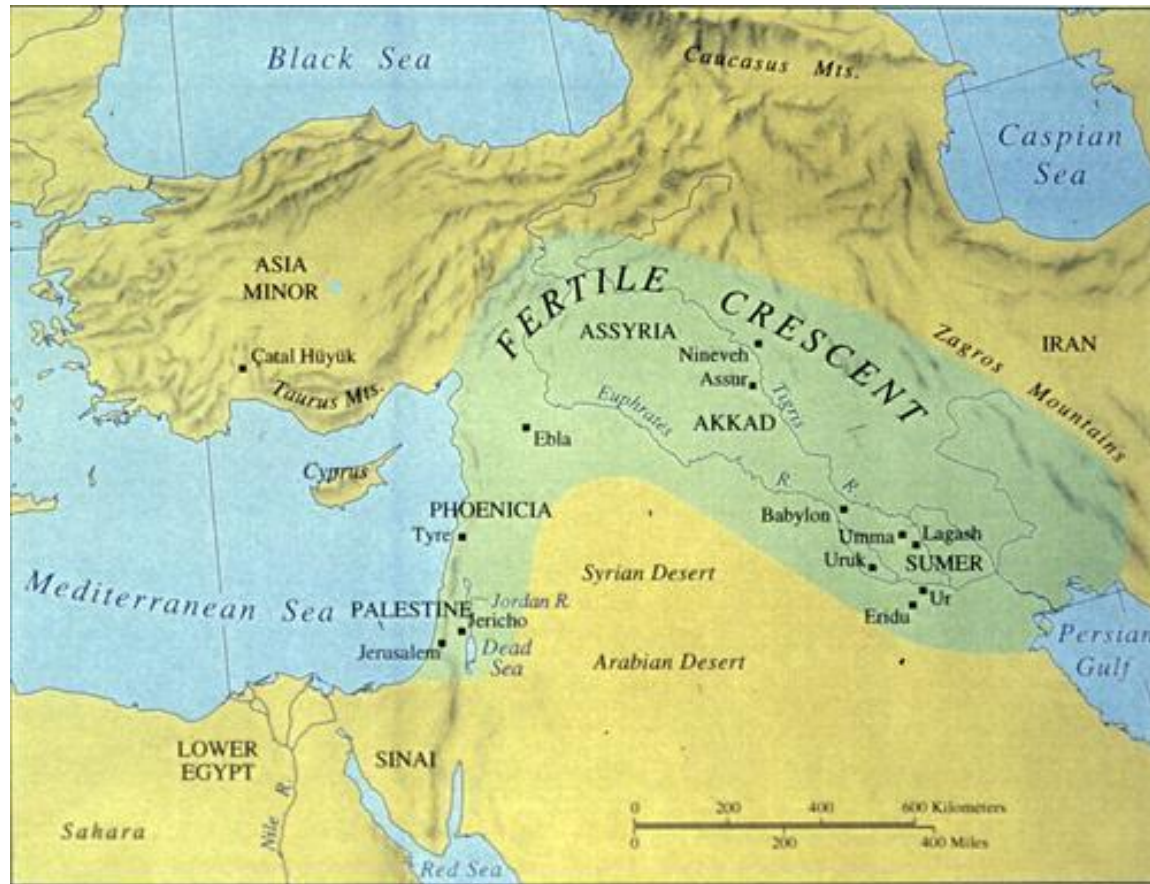


between 3500 and 2000 BCE , the world saw the rise of the first large cities and territorial states along the banks of major river systems.





*“Around 2300 BCE, nomadic pastoralists mixed with settled city-states in Mesopotamia.”*



This is **NOT ENOUGH!**

A critical part of “syncretism” is that you explain how the mixing of separate cultures led to a new, “hybrid” culture that blended elements of both.



*“Around 2300 BCE nomadic pastoralists mixed with settled city-states in Mesopotamia. The arrival of roaming herders led to population growth, increased competition for scarce resources and violent competition among city-states. Out of this mixing of pastoralism and settled cities, Sargon the Great conquered his neighbors, ended warfare, and created the Kingdom of Akkadia.”*



Nomadic Pastoralists

+



Mesopotamian City States

=



Sargon's Kingdom

This is still **NOT ENOUGH!**

Another critical part of “syncretism” is that you explain how the new, “hybrid” culture relates to the main idea of the chapter.

*“Around 2300 BCE nomadic pastoralists mixed with settled city-states in Mesopotamia. The arrival of roaming herders led to population growth, increased competition for scarce resources and violent competition among city-states. Out of this mixing of pastoralism and settled cities, Sargon the Great, conquered his neighbors, ended warfare, and created the Kingdom of Akkadia. This was the world’s first territorial state.”*



How could we turn this into a question?

*“Around 2300 BCE, in what ways did nomadic pastoralists mix with settled city-states in Mesopotamia?”*

*How can we answer this question?*

*“The arrival of roaming herders led to population growth, increased competition for scarce resources and violent competition among city-states. Out of this mixing of pastoralism and settled cities, Sargon the Great, conquered his neighbors, ended warfare, and created the Kingdom of Akkadia. This was the world’s first territorial state.”*

Or you can  
look for ...

## 4. Comparison

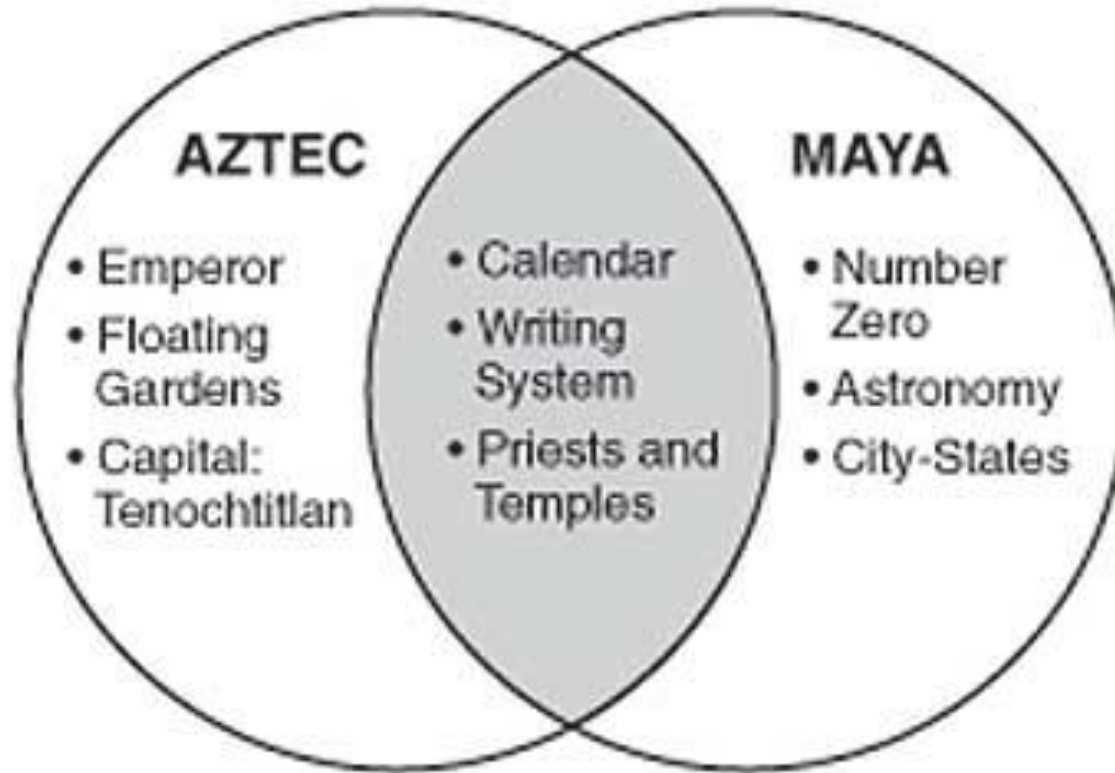


This method is a central part of practicing world history and offers an opportunity to point out similarities and differences between two civilizations in terms of their histories, institutions, cultural accomplishments and economies. You need to offer significant comparisons, not just the superficial and obvious ones.



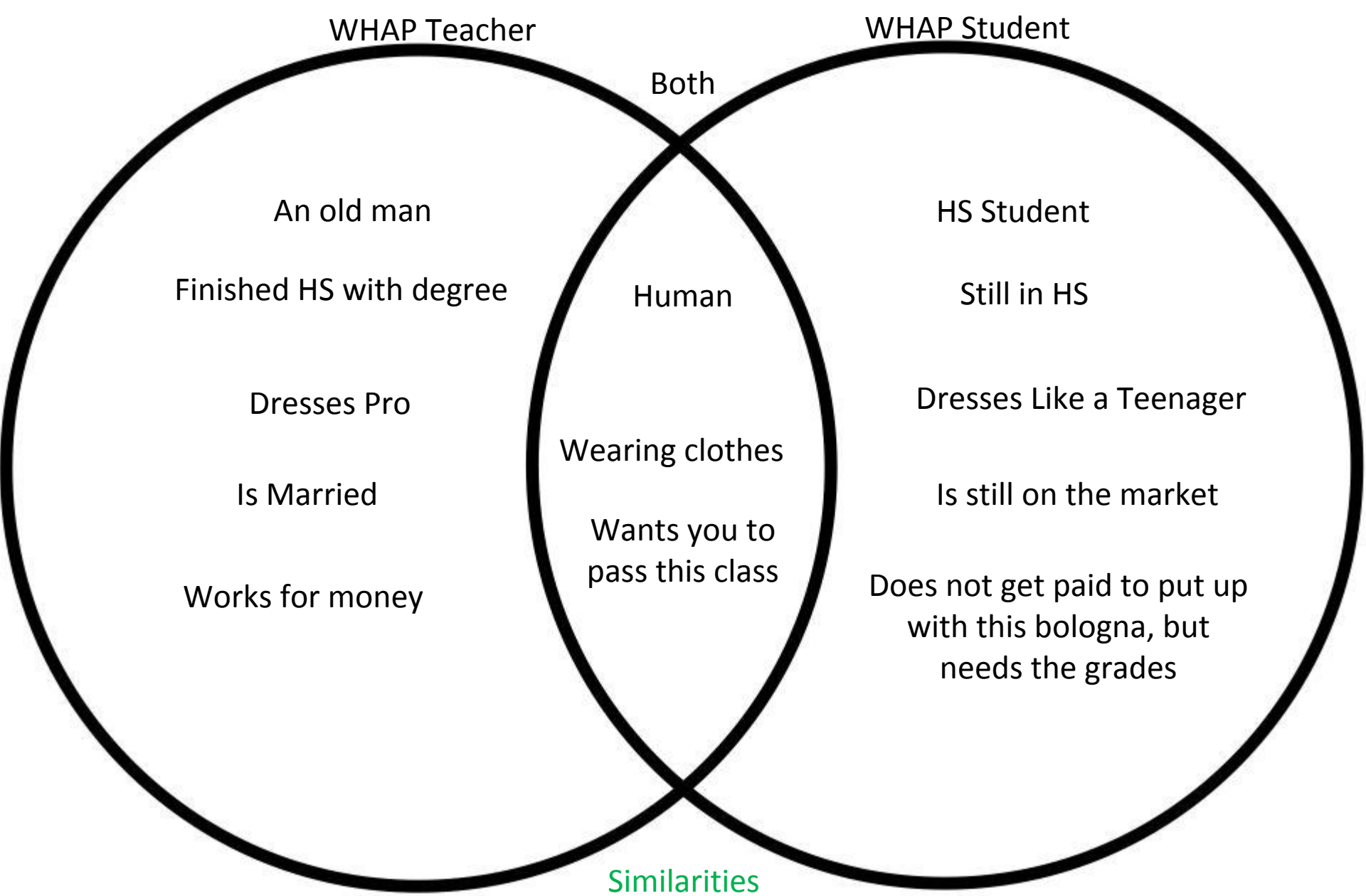
Or you can  
look for ...

## 4. Comparison



Using a Venn diagram or chart would be good way to help you visually compare and contrast.

**You must specify what is different and what is similar about the civilizations you are comparing.**



**Differences**

It's not just enough to say "Students and WHAP teachers differ in age."

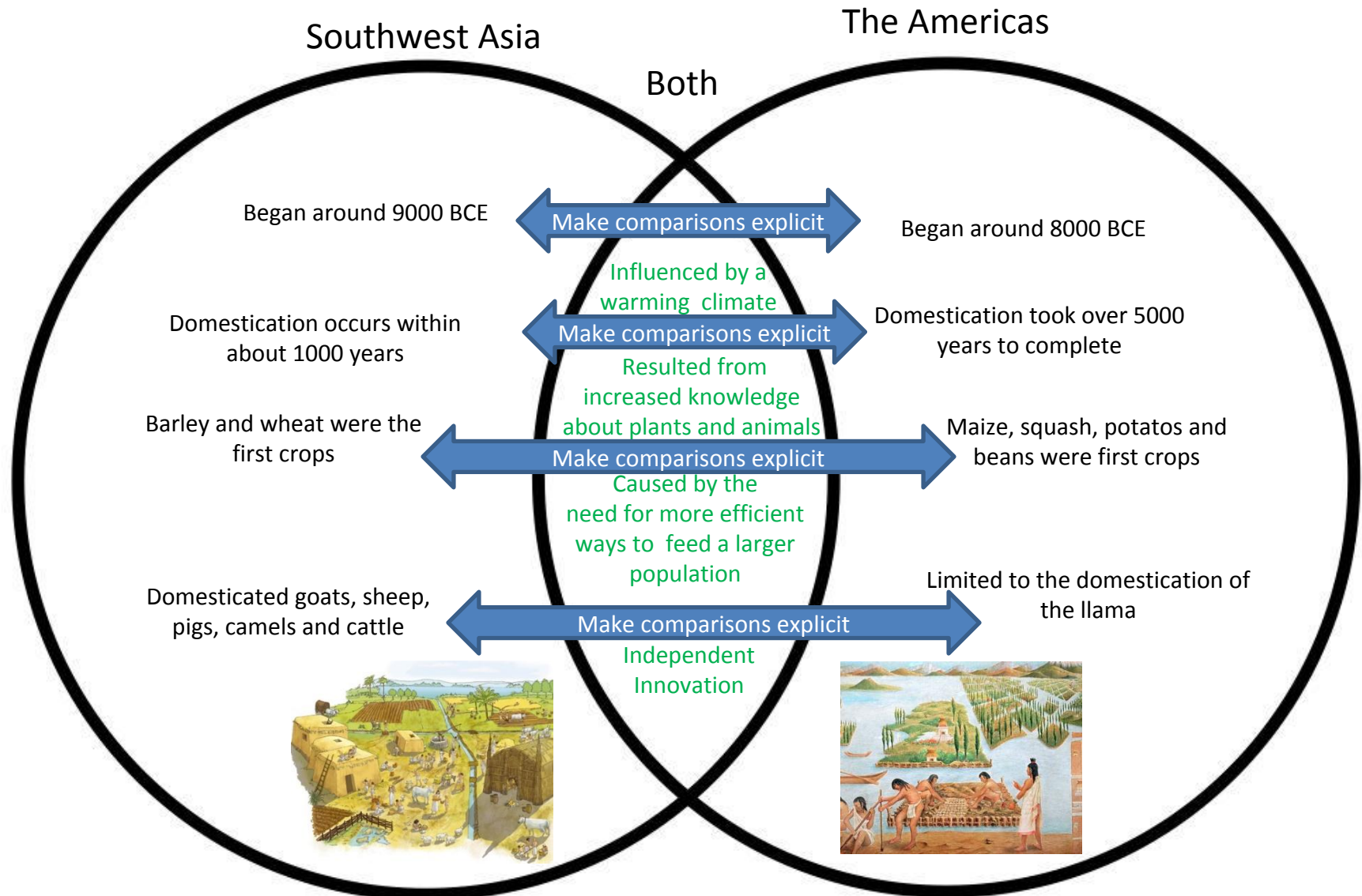
You must explain/describe the difference!

**Differences**

"While WHAP teacher is an old man, this contrasts with the students who are all still teenagers."

# Let's look at an example from Chapter 1

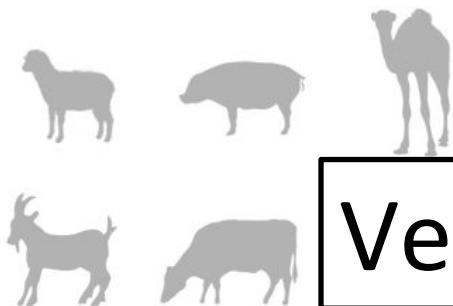
## AGRICULTURAL INNOVATION:



It is not enough to just say:

“One difference was the animals they domesticated.”

You must explain, or analyze, the differences between SW Europe and the Americas by providing specific details and historical evidence.



Versus





So, making sure to note specific similarities and differences, let's put it all together:

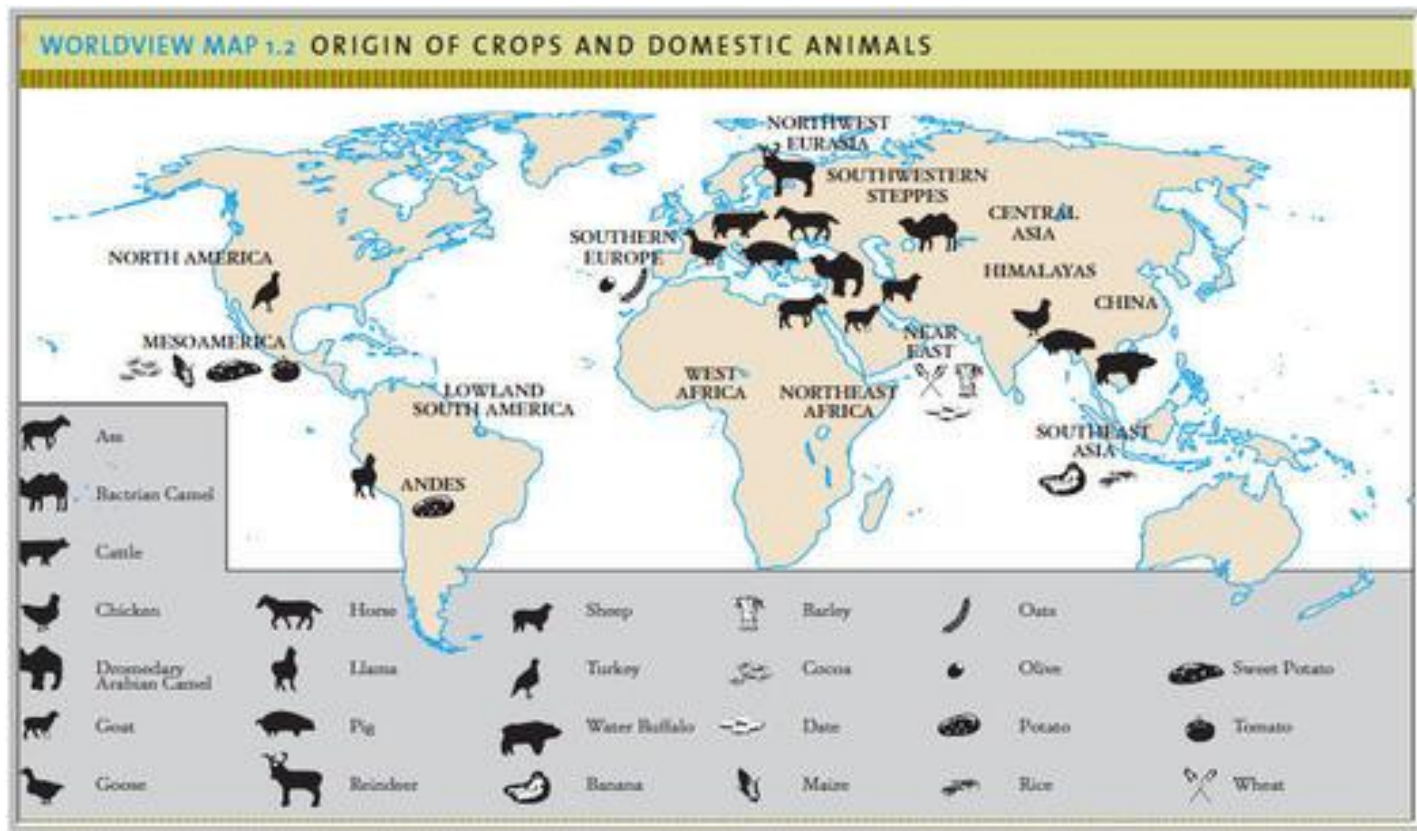
*“The domestication of agriculture in Southwest Asia and the Americas were similar because both were independent innovations spurred by major warming trends, a growing understanding of plants and animals and the need to feed growing populations. They were different, however, because domestication began 1000 years earlier in Southwest Asia in 9000BCE and was completed in under 1000 years, while it was much later and slower in the Americas, taking over 5000 years to complete. Also, while Southwest Asia domesticated cereal grains, such as wheat and barley, the Americas first domesticated maize, beans, potatoes and squash. Perhaps most importantly, Southwest Asia saw the domestication of cattle, pigs, sheep, camels and goats, while the Americas only marginally domesticated one animal: the llama.”*



How could we turn this into a question?



“What were the similarities and differences between the domestication of agriculture in Southwest Asia and the Americas?”



How can we answer this question?

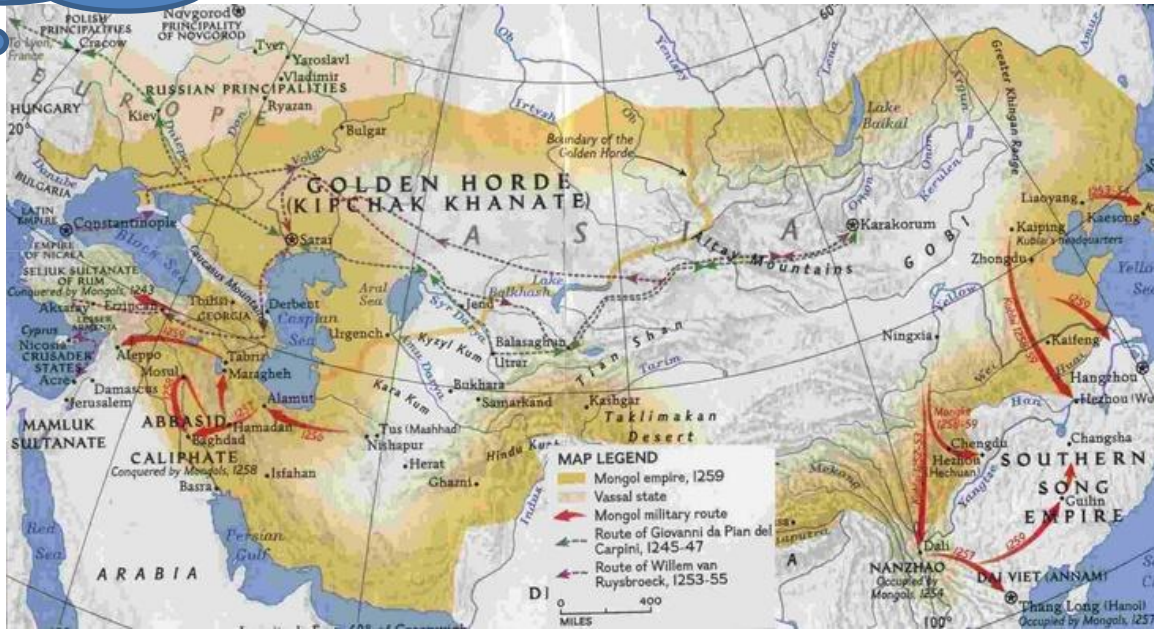
# Once again, we have already answered the question!

*“The domestication of agriculture in Southwest Asia and the Americas were similar because both were independent innovations spurred by a major changes in climate, a growing understanding of plants and animals and the need to feed growing populations. They were different, however, because domestication began 1000 years earlier in Southwest Asia and was completed in under 1000 years, while it was much later and slower in the Americas, taking over 5000 years to complete. Also, while Southwest Asia domesticated cereal grains, such as wheat and barley, the Americas first domesticated maize, beans, potatoes and squash. Perhaps most importantly, Southwest Asia saw the domestication of cattle, pigs, sheep, camels and goats, while the Americas only marginally domesticated one animal: the llama.”*



Lastly, look  
for...

## 5. Common Phenomena



"If it weren't for diapers, I'd have nothing  
in common with him."

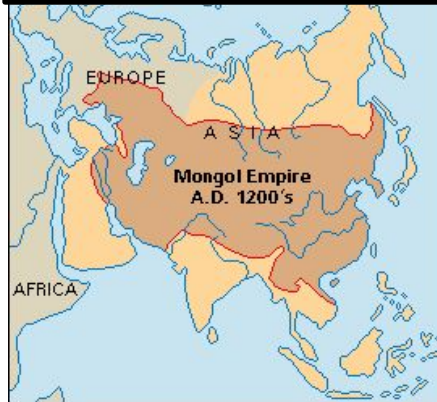
“Common phenomena” refers to natural or historical events that affected more than a single civilization. That is, two or more civilizations experienced something in common. Climatic change, disease, invasions or common developments all fall into this category.

This is the  
“common  
phenomena”

Mongols Attacked both China  
and Japan in the 13<sup>th</sup> Century



China was conquered and forced  
to live under foreign domination  
for almost 100 years



They shared a  
common  
experience, but  
the outcomes  
were different.

Japan was saved by a “kamikaze,” or divine  
wind, which destroyed the Mongol fleet,  
allowing Japan to remain independent



**Note:** this method of doing world history , in many ways, resembles “comparison.”

The idea here, however, is that even though events are shared, responses and results may be different. In other words, the same thing may have happened to different societies (like the Mongol invasions, the Bubonic Plague, the Ice Age) but they may have reacted differently to the same phenomenon.

So what is an example of “common phenomena”  
from Chapter 1?



*“Around 11,000 BCE, the last ‘ice age’ ended, resulting in a period of global warming that affected the domestications of agriculture in Southwest Asia, East Asia, Africa and the Americas.”*

This is **NOT ENOUGH!**

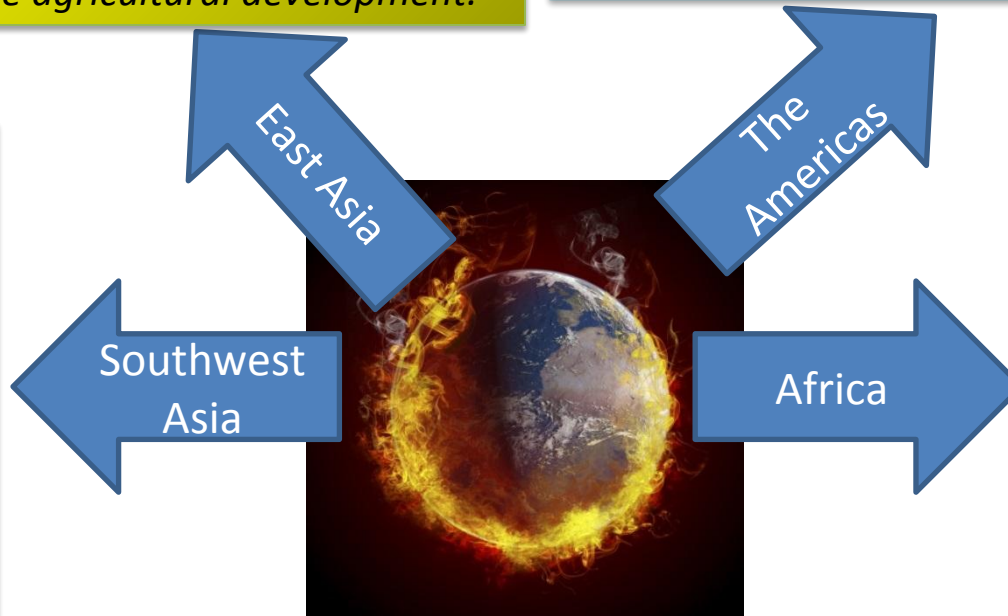
A critical part of “common phenomena” is that you explain how the different civilizations reacted to, or were affected by, the events that they experienced.



*In Japan, the rising sea levels caused by melting ice trapped hunter gatherers on the newly formed islands, forcing them to seek ways to feed their people, spurring a revolution in farming. The same warming trend also produced new river basins in East Asia, the Yellow and Yangzi Rivers, that became focal points for intensive agricultural development.*

*In the Americas, the warming temperatures led to the retreat of big game animals that hunter-gatherers had relied upon for nutrition, forcing them to supplement their food supplies with domesticated farming.*

*In Southwest Asia, the warming led to a profusion of edible plants and useful animals, resulting in the first domestication of agriculture.*



*In Africa, the warming trend led to the expansion of the Sahara desert, forcing early farmers in the Sahel area to migrate, diffusing their agricultural practices across North and West Africa.*

*“Around 11,000 BCE, the last ‘ice age’ ended, resulting in a period of global warming that affected the domestications of agriculture in Southwest Asia, East Asia, Africa and the Americas.”*



*“Around 11,000 BCE, the last ‘ice age’ ended, resulting in a period of global warming that affected the domestications of agriculture in Southwest Asia, East Asia, Africa and the Americas.”*

*“In Southwest Asia, the warming led to a profusion of edible plants and useful animals, resulting in the first domestication of agriculture. In Japan, the rising sea levels caused by melting ice trapped hunter gatherers on the newly formed islands, forcing them to seek ways to feed their people, spurring a revolution in farming. The same warming trend also produced new river basins in East Asia, the Yellow and Yangzi Rivers, that became focal points for intensive agricultural development. In Africa, the warming trend led to the expansion of the Sahara desert, forcing early farmers in the Sahel area to migrate, diffusing their agricultural practices across North and West Africa. In the Americas, the warming temperatures led to the retreat of big game animals that they had relied upon for nutrition, forcing hunter-gatherers to supplement their food supplies with domesticated farming.”*

**How could we turn this into a question?**

*“How did the global warming trend that started around 11000BCE affect Southwest Asia, East Asia, Africa and the Americas?”*

## **How can we answer this question?**

*“Around 11,000 BCE, the last ‘ice age’ ended, resulting in a period of global warming that affected Southwest Asia, East Asia, Africa and the Americas. In Southwest Asia, the warming led to a profusion of edible plants and useful animals, resulting in the first domestication of agriculture. In Japan, the rising sea levels caused by melting ice trapped hunter gatherers on the newly formed islands, forcing them to seek ways to feed their people, spurring a revolution in farming. The same warming trend also produced new river basins in East Asia, the Yellow and Yangzi Rivers, that became focal points for intensive agricultural development. In Africa, the warming trend led to the expansion of the Sahara desert, forcing early farmers in the Sahel area to migrate, diffusing their agricultural practices across North and West Africa. In the Americas, the warming temperatures and the retreat of big game forced hunter-gatherers to supplement their food supplies with domesticated farming.”*

For each chapter, you will be expected to make a “Big Picture” reflection, find and analyze an instance of “Diffusion” and “Syncretism,” make a “Comparison” between civilizations, and find one major “Common Phenomena” and analyze it.



These are the analytical skills we will be practicing all year! These are the tools of analysis that make a great World Historian.

Don't worry if you struggle with these concepts... that's the idea! You need to practice them to get used to looking at the world this way. Guaranteed that if you keep working on these skills, you can be **BRILLIANT**!