Key Phrases for Good Historical Writing

In order to strengthen your writing, specifically for the field of history, there are certain key phrases that will help to make your writing sound more professional, cohesive, and allow you to write about specific things (such as cause and effect, interpretation, and express perspective). This is your ultimate guide to good historical writing (think of it as a history writing cheat sheet).

Academic Expressions for Cause-and-Effect Thinking in History

- One reason for their... was...
- It wasn't just one cause, though; we need to think about other factors, such as...
- That was a result of...
- Just because they... doesn't mean that...
- The most likely reason for... was...
- The... led to..., which led to...
- She was motivated by...
- Each... played a key role. First, ...
- There were political, social, and cultural motives for...
- Even though the textbook says the cause was..., I believe it was....
- Seeds have been sown.
- The ramifications of their actions were far reaching.
- If they hadn't ..., what would have happened?
- Had a significant influence on....
- The... laid a foundation for...

Academic Expressions for Interpretation in History

- Those events can teach us about how to act in the future. For example...
- His actions, though seemingly trivial, likely changed the course of history for...
- We aren't very different from those people.
- We can draw several conclusions from our analysis of the documents.
- The evidence strongly suggests that...
- We believe that this event shows how humans are generally...
- One way to interpret this event is...
- Back then, ... had a different meaning.
- This belongs in history books because it...
- This event was important because...
- It really means... because...
- I believe that the author did not include... because...
- For us in modern times, it could mean that...
- If we read between the lines, we might make a guess that...
- What did he really mean when he said...?

Academic Expressions for Perspective Taking in History

- If I had been... I would have... because....
- Imagine you are... Map out your strategy for....
- I think that she felt...
- There are several clues that show us how they might have felt.
- We can draw several conclusions from our analysis of the documents.
- See through her eyes.
- Walk in their shoes.
- When we try to emphasize a bit with...
- Get inside her head for a moment.
- One way to interpret this event is...
- For us in modern times, it could mean that...
- If we read between the lines, we might guess that he...
- I believe that the author did not include... about her because...
- From his perspective, I think he was thinking...
- I think that... because....