What Causes Ice Ages? (worth 20 points)

The orbital parameters of eccentricity, obliquity, and precession form the basis for Milankovitch's model of the cyclical nature of climate change - specifically the glacial - interglacial cycles. In this assignment, you will explore these orbital parameters in more detail. The following web sites may be used for reference. The questions to be addressed are listed below.

http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/Library/Giants/Milankovitch/
http://www.homepage.montana.edu/~geol445/hyperglac/time1/milankov.htm
http://oceanworld.tamu.edu/students/iceage/iceage2.htm

Read through the information from the web sites. Use the information to complete the following:

- Describe what the parameters of eccentricity, obliquity, and precession each refer to.

- For each parameter, make sure that your description includes what aspects of the Earth's orbit are being affected.

- For each parameter, describe the effect on climate. As you read the information, determine which, if any, of the three parameters is currently in glacial mode.