

Addressing the Document-Based Question (DBQ) AP US History

Both the AP US History course and the AP US History exam will require to respond to a document-based question (DBQ). Document-based questions will be used throughout the entirety of this course. The AP exam will require students to respond to one question based on evidence provided in seven documents. Students will have one hour to respond to the DBQ, including a fifteen minute period for reading. **The DBQ accounts for 25% of the students' final AP exam score.**

- **DBQ Basics**

- Covers periods 3-8 (1754-1980)
- Generally made up of primary sources
- May include excerpts, political cartoons, maps/graphs/charts
- Worth a total of seven points—your goal is to shoot for **at least** a four!
 - 1 point for contextualization
 - 1 point for a thesis
 - 1-2 points for use of documents (**do not** use same document twice!)
 - 1 point for HIPP
 - 1 point for use of outside information
 - 1 point for reasoning skill

- **Introduction**

- Provide contextualization and your thesis

- **Body Paragraphs**—five points! (reasoning, use of documents, HIPP, outside information)

- First paragraph—set the stage by accurately and explicitly working the essay into the larger story of the time period—five sentences. **Don't reference documents in the first paragraph!** Just lay the framework
- In the following paragraphs, back up your assertion through use of the documents. Cite the document after using it in your response. (Doc. 1, Doc. 2, Doc. 3, etc.)
- Never quote documents—summarize them and ATQ!
- You are provided seven documents—try to use as many as possible!
 - You must use at least three.
- Use HIPP to help back up your answer
 - “The historical context of _____ is....”
 - The intended audience of _____ is...”
 - The purpose of _____ is...”
 - The point of view of _____ is.” (this one is more difficult)
- You get another point for using outside evidence to help support your answer
 - Outside means exactly that—it cannot be mentioned ANYWHERE in any of the documents. Not even a citation
- Your answer must contain evidence that helps answer the question!
 - Explain the similarity and difference OR
 - Explain continuity and change over time OR
 - Explain multiple causes OR
 - Explain cause and effect

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- **Planning your DBQ**

- Expect to spend about twenty-five minutes to plan your DBQ
- It will likely take about ten minutes just to read through the documents
 - In your planning, follow the same format of the LEQ for your introductory paragraph: one sentence before the time period; three sentences during the time period; one sentence of what will happen next.
- Group documents together based on themes (politics, economics, social, etc.)
- Use five paragraphs
 - Introduction
 - Again—contextualization (It is a period of..."
 - Include a thesis statement—take a position and explain how you will back up your assertion to the reader!
 - Provide a road map for groups of documents and how they will help you to ATQ!
 - Explain. Then explain again. Then explain again. (Three paragraphs!)
 - Introduce your group of documents in one sentence—make sure to explain how you're going to answer the question!
 - Introduce your first document (remember to cite!) and use information from the document as well as a reasoning skill (compare/contrast, CCOT, etc.)
 - Explain how that information helps answer the question (three sentences or so)
 - HIPP the document and explain how it helps answer the question!
 - FOLLOW THIS FORMAT FOR THE NEXT TWO PARAGRAPHS!
 - **Rule of thumb—try to have five-seven sentences PER DOCUMENT!**
 - Conclude
 - Tell the reader what you told him/her!