



How to be Successful on the DBQ

Advice from Mrs. Clemens



#1- Outline prior to writing your essay

- Don't just jump into writing before outlining first. You need to plan so that you can write the best essay possible.
- If you have the ability to set another timer (since you already will be setting one for 45 minutes), set it for 5-7 minutes. This is your "look at the documents and outline" time.
- Practice outlining other prompts (you don't have to write the essays) prior to the test. You can find prompts on AP Classroom and on Albert.io

Rubric Break!

Focusing on 2-3 docs, with a solid intro, and some outside info can get you a bunch of points!

10 Point Rubric

1. **Contextualization**- What was happening in the lead up to the prompt?
2. **Thesis**- What are you proving in your essay?
3. **Summarizing 2 documents**- What are the documents talking about?
4. **Analyzing 2 documents**- Relate them back to your thesis
5. **Analyzing 2 more documents**- For a total of 4 documents
 - a. Difficult to get this point- maybe don't attempt
6. **HIPPing 1 document**- Be sure to APE your HIPP
7. **HIPPing 1 more document**- For a total of 2 HIPPs
8. **Outside Info- 1 piece**
 - a. Something not mentioned in the documents
9. **Outside Info- 1 more piece**
 - a. For a total of 2 pieces of outside info
10. **Complexity (aka Unicorn)**
 - a. Get by doing one of the following:
 - i. Cause/Effect, Compare/Contrast, Continuity and Change Over Time (CCOT)

Outlining the Essay

1. Introduction
 - a. **Contextualization**
 - b. **Thesis**
2. Body Paragraph
 - a. 1-2 Documents
 - i. Choose documents that you know and can thoroughly understand
 - ii. You will attempt to: **describe** each document, **HIPP** it, and link it to the prompt (**analysis**)
3. Body Paragraph
 - a. 1-2 Documents
 - i. This might be where you give another reason to address your prompt (ex- here's another reason why the colonists wanted independence) OR this might be where you give a counterpoint (not everyone wanted independence)
4. Conclusion
 - a. Restate **thesis**
 - b. Attempt **Unicorn**

Try to include at least 3 pieces of outside info in body paragraphs

*My suggestion- focus on 2-3 documents that you can REALLY explain thoroughly. Forget about the Unicorn.

Getting Points-

Choose the parts of the rubric you are most comfortable with

4-5 Points	6-7 Points	8-9 Points
Thesis	Contextualization	Contextualization
Summarize 2 Documents	Thesis	Thesis
Analyze 2 Documents	Summarize 2 Documents	Summarize 2 Documents
1 Piece of Outside Info	Analyze 2 Documents	Analyze 2 Documents
Bonus- Contextualization	1 HIPP	2 HIPPs (2 points)
	1 Piece of Outside Info	2 Pieces of Outside Info (2 points)
	Bonus- Another HIPP or Outside Info	Bonus- Analyze another 2 docs or Unicorn

#2- You must Address the Prompt

The prompt is your guide. This will help you to create a THESIS. Your thesis will guide your essay!

- The information from the documents is there to assist you in proving your thesis, think of them as evidence to prove your thesis, not something to just list in your essay
- Formula: **Although X, Y because A and B.**

OR

X. However A and B. Therefore, Y.

#3- Quality Over Quantity

Remember, the purpose of writing this essay is to show what you know to earn college credit. Summarizing documents isn't the key here.

- Focus on 2-3 or 3-4 documents (depending on how well you are on time)
- It is almost impossible to get the point for analysis of 4 documents- don't try to!
- Constantly keep APE in mind
 - Answer- what is the document talking about?
 - Provide Examples- what are some specific people, events, laws, ideas, etc. that are associated with that document?
 - Explain- how does this document prove your thesis?
- This will get you the summarize point, analysis point, and potentially the outside information and HIPP points.

#4- Do NOT Quote from the Documents!

Seriously!!!! Why?

- You don't have time to quote from the documents (I'm figuring you will not be able to copy and paste from the exam)
- The readers already know the documents
- The purpose of the test is to demonstrate your knowledge, not your ability to copy

Instead- put the ideas of the documents into your own words!

#5- HIPPs- APE them!

You will not get the Hipp point by just saying: Doc 1 is from the POV of a patriot.

- Answer- Whichever Hipp you're choosing
- Explain- How do you know that this is the person's POV, Purpose, who the Intended Audience was OR explain the background which led to the document (Historical Situation)
- Provide Examples- This goes in conjunction with your explanation

I really, really, really encourage you to stick to Historical Situation. Few people are getting POV/Purpose/Intended Audience correct or if they are they aren't explaining it correctly.

#6- You need Specific Factual Information

The purpose of this essay is to prove what you know so you can get college credit!

Study vocabulary!

- Study vocabulary for Periods 3-7
- Use specific vocabulary terms in your essays! Your essays should be sprinkled with specific factual information throughout!

#7- Use Topic Sentences and Summary Sentences

The goal is to prove your Thesis. You want to make sure the reader knows that you are attempting to prove your Thesis!

- Start each body paragraph with a topic sentence.
 - Example: While some colonists were in favor of independence from Britain, others remained loyal to their Mother Country. One way this was illustrated was...
- End each body paragraph with a summary sentence.
 - Example: These events caused many colonists to change their opinion about independence. They realized that they no longer wanted to be subject to the whims of the Crown.
- This helps you to get your analysis point(s)
 - You get one analysis point for 2 documents, two points for analyzing 4 documents in relation to your thesis

#8- Practice Extra Essays

- Use AP Classroom- I have opened up all of the FRQ's for Periods 3-7
- Use Albert.io- They have DBQ's for most periods and LEQ's for all Periods

What could/should you do with these prompts?

- Work on timing
- Work on outlining
- Work on Contextualization and Thesis writing
- Work on HIPing and Outside Information
- Write the whole essay!