

Document-Based Assessment for Global History

SECOND EDITION

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INTRODUCTION

Robin W. Winks, in *The Historian As Detective*, makes the analogy between the works of two professions—the historian and the detective. It is a link that we want students to make as we ask them to “do history.” Just as historians become detectives as they work with clues from the past, students should learn to examine evidence, question its relevance, assess its validity, and then formulate hypotheses which they test further. Often these answers are challenged by others as they interpret the evidence and arrive at conflicting interpretations. Being a historical detective is challenging, engaging, and exciting work.

This book is designed to help teachers and students become better historians, thinkers, and writers. It provides them with opportunities to do the work of all three at one time. They examine evidence and data in order to arrive at informed and thoughtful positions, then present their thoughts clearly, logically, and effectively in writing. Although this is a challenging task, the required skills can be developed with practice—skills that we all need in order to be effective citizens and lifelong learners.

What Is a Document-Based Question, or DBQ?

A document-based question is a writing task in which a student analyzes significant evidence—documents and other data—to reach an informed position, then presents that information in a persuasive, logical, and accurate essay. The questions are generally open-ended, giving students the opportunity to develop responses to the questions using the documents and the information they have learned in their study of global history. The documents are mostly primary sources or eyewitness accounts provided by people who were actually “making history” or witnessing the events being examined. These primary sources include diaries, speeches, newspaper accounts, reports, and cartoons. Other documents considered primary sources are maps, photographs, graphs, and charts. In addition, secondary accounts or later interpretations of the events are included to provide different perspectives. Secondary accounts are written by people who have studied the primary

sources and reached conclusions based on the evidence. At times, these conclusions are contested by others who present conflicting interpretations, making for interesting analysis. Just as two eyewitnesses can disagree about what happened, historians also disagree and offer different interpretations about what happened and why it happened. Both primary sources and secondary accounts provide raw material for historians.

Why Use DBQs?

Document-based questions require students to think analytically when using the documents and to write responses that integrate information from a variety of sources. These are very important skills. Some of the skills involved in historical analysis include the following:

- evaluating the reliability, validity, and accuracy of historical sources
- identifying the point of view of these sources as well as determining bias
- identifying a problem or issue and considering alternative positions and solutions
- categorizing information as political, social, or economic, or as positive or negative
- comparing and contrasting different interpretations of key events
- constructing support for a position by choosing accurate, relevant evidence

Writing skills are crucial. Students need a process in place for addressing document-based questions. They need direct instruction using primary sources and conflicting interpretations of historical events, as well as repeated opportunities to practice these skills in class and in independent practice or homework. The students should be engaged in analyzing documents and writing in conjunction with documents almost daily.

The questions provided in this book can be used as a basis for class discussion or as preparation for a debate or seminar. They can be used for research projects or in extended writing tasks, as well as for

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formal assessment. These questions could also be used in the essay portion of a unit or final exam. If used as part of an assessment, it is important that students understand the expectations for this type of writing. Consequently, students must be familiar with the rubric that defines the criteria or characteristics of the content and skills required for each level of performance. A generic rubric has been included in this book (on pages *xi-xii*); however, it should be tailored to specific questions.

In addition, students benefit most if English and social studies teachers use a common vocabulary and integrate instruction to reinforce the appropriate thinking and writing skills in both classes. Students and teachers need to examine exemplary or “anchor” papers, and to reflect on their own development of writing skills. For that reason, student responses to several questions have been included in this book and can be used for instructional purposes. All students need to be effective thinkers and writers. Consequently, instructional strategies that develop these skills are important parts of every teacher’s repertoire.

How to Use and Teach DBQs

The document-based questions in this book are suitable for use with high-school students and can be used in a variety of ways as described above. They may also be used with more able upper middle-school students who have been given enough practice with this format. Students usually have experience working with documents throughout their educational careers. Students in primary and intermediate grades work with age-appropriate artifacts, diaries, maps, and documents of all kinds. Consequently, when teachers at the middle- or high-school level engage students with these kinds of sources, they need to remind students that they have had plenty of experience in “doing history” with documents. The documents in this book may be complex or lengthy, but students can do this type of thinking and writing. Because of some students’ lack of experience, teachers may want to further edit some of the documents or limit the number of documents they choose to use.

In the beginning, it is best to introduce the documents in this book as part of class instruction, so that the analytical skills can be taught directly or practiced in a supported environment. Each of the DBQs includes scaffolding in the form of questions

that guide the student in interpreting the document and in addressing the main question or prompt. To help students develop these skills, teachers can use the documents as part of instruction on a particular topic. For example, the DBQ on ancient Greece, as well as pictures of representative art and architecture, can be used in daily lessons before it is used as a test question.

In addition to the documents with scaffolding, each DBQ is followed by a grading key. Several DBQs also include a ninth-grade student’s work and teacher-assigned grades and comments. In addition, a Guide to Responding to Document-Based Questions has been included for students because it is important for them to have a process to use when addressing DBQs. With the guide, the rubric, the documents, the model student work, and the suggestions for instruction provided in this book, you are equipped to teach students how to write effective essays using documents.

Ideas for Lessons

At the beginning of the year, you may need to introduce or review the Guide for Responding to Document-Based Questions. At this time, it is important to use DBQs for instructional purposes so that students are comfortable and prepared to write DBQ essays when they are used as part of your assessment plan. Students should have the opportunity to review models of good essays. They should also be familiar with the rubric that you will be using to grade the essays.

In class lessons, use the documents as a basis for engaging the students in learning the essential information about a topic. You can add more visuals and artifacts to supplement those from this book in your daily lessons. For example, this process would work with DBQs dealing with the contributions of ancient Greece, the achievements of ancient Civilizations, Islamic civilization, and the civilizations of the Americas.

Use the documents as a basis for the instruction of an entire unit. For example, when teaching about the Industrial Revolution, have the students complete a graphic organizer of the essential-to-know concepts about the Industrial Revolution. Students begin by writing what they know or what questions they have about the topic before starting the unit. They will complete their graphic organizer

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after they have used the documents for each unit. For DBQ 12, for example, students might begin by asking themselves the following questions:

- What was the Industrial Revolution? Where did it begin, and why?
- What were the results of the Industrial Revolution (positive and negative)?
- How were the problems addressed or solved?

As another example, you could use a similar process to teach imperialism from different perspectives using DBQs 15, 16, and 17.

Set up learning stations by posting each document at a table or different place in the classroom and having students in small groups move from document to document. They will analyze the document together and respond to the scaffolding questions on their answer sheets before moving to the next document after a set time period.

Arrange the class in expert groups and assign each group a document to analyze and prepare to teach the rest of the class. This is a good way to help students prepare to write a response to an assigned DBQ.

Use a DBQ to review a topic across time and place. For example, to review human rights abuses, use DBQ 23. For global interaction, use DBQ 9.

Rewrite the task/question so it is more specific as to the number of examples students must include or the items they must address in their essay.

Use the DBQ as a basis for a seminar or debate. Rewrite the task so that it requires students to take a side or position. Specific DBQs that could be used in this way include the following:

- Imperialism in India: An Evaluation
- Imperialism in Africa: An Evaluation
- Causes of World War I
- Twentieth-Century China

Differentiating Instruction

The following ideas may help when working with students who are unfamiliar with DBQs, or who need extra support in working with documents.

Be sure that students understand the vocabulary by introducing new vocabulary before using the document. You may also need to provide a definition bank with each document.

Rewrite or adapt documents so that only the essential information is included.

Start by using two to four of the documents in a DBQ, and have students write a paragraph. Gradually add to the number of documents the students need to use. Have students practice writing a complete essay with introduction, body paragraph(s), and a conclusion. Start with two categories, and two documents for each category. Give students a graphic organizer or block to plan their response to the task.

Vary the test expectations or assignment. In lieu of having students write a complete essay, assign a mind map, outline, block, or other type of graphic organizer in which the student identifies the important information she or he will include from the documents and from outside information. Check the outline or graphic organizer for understanding and completeness. Another alternative to students writing a complete essay is for students to write the introductory paragraph and the first body paragraph after doing the organization or plan for writing.

To be sure that students are including information from the documents, teach them to cite the document they use. To ensure that students are including outside information, have them highlight it with a light-colored marker in the essay or paragraph.

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Ideas for the AP World History Teacher

Be aware that the DBQ for the AP World History exam has no scaffolding questions and that students are given approximately ten minutes to read and analyze five to six lengthy documents.

It is required that:

- Students write a clear, concise thesis statement in their introductory paragraph.
- Students use all documents and create two or three groups of documents.
- Students analyze and describe the point of view in two or three documents.
- Students create an additional document that is a missing point of view and explain why this document would help them write a better essay.
- Students put the essay topic into the larger picture of world history. Where does this selection of content fit within the larger picture of historical events across the world?
- Students finish the essay with a clear thesis restatement within their conclusion.

To adapt essays from this book for AP world history exam practice, you will need to reflect one of the particular themes that are identified for AP world history:

- Impact of interaction among major societies (trade, systems of international exchange, war and diplomacy)
- Impact of technology and demography on people and the environment (population growth and decline, disease, manufacturing, migration, agriculture, weaponry)
- The relationship of change and continuity across the world history period covered in the course, 8000 B.C.E. to the present
- Cultural and intellectual developments and interactions among and within societies
- Changes in functions and structures of states and attitudes toward states and political identities (political culture), including the emergence of the nation-state (types of political organizations)

Essays from this book can be adapted by adding documents or more evidence of point of view.

DBQ 15: NEW IMPERIALISM: CAUSES

Historical Context

Between 1870 and 1920, the rate of European imperialism increased. This was due to economic, political, and social forces. The Industrial Revolution stirred the ambitions of European nations. The advances in technology allowed these nations to spread their control over the less-developed areas of the world. Historians have studied this empire-building frenzy. They have offered a variety of perspectives on its causes.

■ **Directions:** The following question is based on the accompanying documents in Part A. As you analyze the documents, take into account both the source of each document and the author's point of view. Be sure to do each of the following steps:

1. Carefully read the document-based question. Consider what you already know about this topic. How would you answer the question if you had no documents to examine?
2. Read each document carefully, underlining key phrases and words that address the document-based question. You may also wish to use the margin to make brief notes. Answer the questions that follow each document before moving on to the next document.
3. Based on your own knowledge and on the information found in the documents, formulate a thesis that directly answers the document-based question.
4. Organize supportive and relevant information into a brief outline.
5. Write a well-organized essay proving your thesis. You should present your essay logically. Include information both from the documents and from your own knowledge beyond the documents.

Question: Which economic, political, and social forces were most responsible for the new imperialism of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries?

PART A

The following documents provide information about the causes of the new imperialism. Examine each document carefully. In the space provided, answer the question or questions that follow each document.

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DBQ 15: NEW IMPERIALISM: CAUSES

Document 1

In this excerpt, author Parker T. Moon pointed out which groups were most interested in imperialism.

The makers of cotton and iron goods have been very much interested in imperialism. This group of import interests has been greatly strengthened by the demand of giant industries for colonial raw materials. . . . Shipowners demand coaling stations for their vessels and naval bases for protection. To these interests may be added the makers of armaments and of uniforms. The producers of telegraph and railway material and other supplies used by the government in its colony may also be included. . . . Finally, the most powerful business groups are the bankers. Banks make loans to colonies and backward countries for building railways and steamship lines. . . .

Source: Parker T. Moon, *Imperialism and World Politics*, Macmillan, 1936 (adapted)

Which groups were seeking colonies, according to this author? Explain each group's reason.

Document 2

This excerpt was written by American Senator A.J. Beveridge in 1898.

American factories are making more than the American people can use; American soil is producing more than they can consume. Fate has written our policy for us; the trade of the world must and shall be ours. . . . We will establish trading posts throughout the world as distributing points for American products. We will cover the ocean with our merchant marines. We will build a navy to the measure of our greatness. . . .

According to Senator Beveridge, why should America become imperialistic?

(continued)

DBQ 15: NEW IMPERIALISM: CAUSES

Document 3

This excerpt suggests another cause for imperialism.

. . . [N]one of the colonial undertakings was motivated by the quest for capitalist profits; they all originated in political ambitions . . . the nations' will to power . . . [or] glory or national greatness.

Source: Raymond Aron, *The Century of Total War*, Doubleday & Co., 1954 (adapted)

What did this author say was the cause of imperialism?

Document 4

Cecil Rhodes was a successful British imperialist in Africa. This excerpt is adapted from his position on imperialism.

I contend that we [Britons] are the finest race in the world, and the more of the world we inhabit, the better it is for the human race. . . . It is our duty to seize every opportunity of acquiring more territory and we should keep this one idea steadily before our eyes that more territory simply means more of the Anglo-Saxon race, more of the best, the most human, most honourable race the world possesses.

Source: Cecil Rhodes, *Confession of Faith*, originally written at Oxford, 1877 (adapted)

According to Rhodes, why should Britain pursue a policy of imperialism?

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DBQ 15: NEW IMPERIALISM: CAUSES

Document 5

This excerpt suggests another reason for imperialism.

But the economic side . . . must not be allowed to obscure [hide] the other factors. Psychologically speaking, . . . evolutionary teaching [about the "survival of the fittest"] was perhaps most crucial. It not only justified competition and struggle but introduced an element of ruthlessness. . . .

Source: William L. Langer, *The Diplomacy of Imperialism*, Knopf, 1935 (adapted)

According to Langer, what was the noneconomic reason for the new imperialism?

Document 6

This excerpt is from Rudyard Kipling’s poem “The White Man’s Burden” (1899). It gives another explanation for imperialism.

Take up the white man’s burden
Send forth the best ye breed
Go bind your sons to exile
To serve your captives’ need;
To wait, in heavy harness,
On fluttered folk and wild
Your new-caught, sullen peoples,
Half-devil and half-child.

According to the poem, what was the “white man’s burden”? _____

(continued)

DBQ 15: NEW IMPERIALISM: CAUSES

Document 7

In this excerpt, President William McKinley explains why the United States took over the Philippines.

We could not leave them to themselves. They were unfit for self-government. There was nothing left for us to do but to take them over. Then we would be able to educate the Filipinos. We could uplift and civilize and Christianize them. . . .

Source: General James Rusling, "Interview with President William McKinley," *The Christian Advocate*, 1903 (adapted)

How did President McKinley justify the U.S. takeover of the Philippines?

Document 8

This excerpt gives another reason why Europeans were able to increase their colonial holdings. This is from a letter sent by Phan Thanh Gian, governor of a Vietnamese state, to his administrators in 1867.

Now, the French are come, with their powerful weapons of war, to cause dissension among us. We are weak against them; our commanders and our soldiers have been vanquished. . . . The French have immense warships, filled with soldiers and armed with huge cannons. No one can resist them. They go where they want, the strongest ramparts fall before them.

Source: Phan Thanh Gian, retranslation from *Focus on World History: The Era of the First Global Age and Revolution*, Walch Publishing, 2002 (adapted)

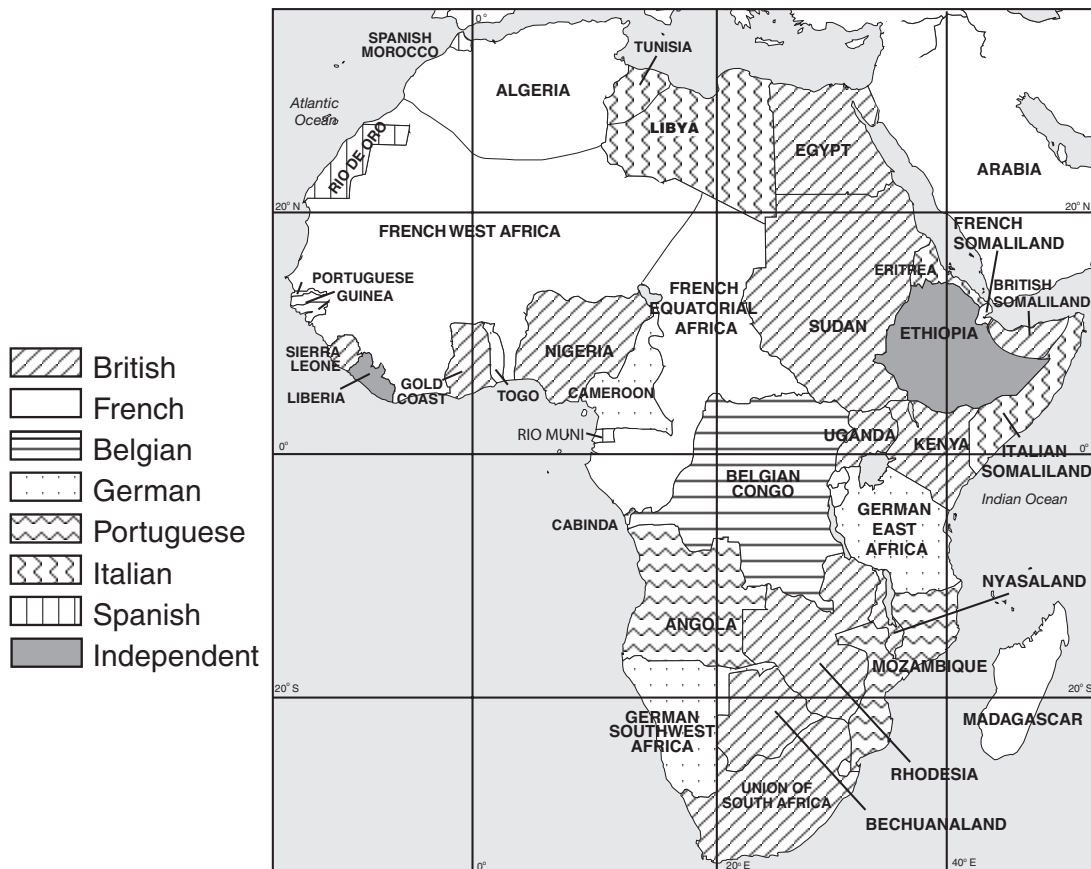
How did this Vietnamese man explain the French imperialism in Indochina in 1867?

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DBQ 15: NEW IMPERIALISM: CAUSES

Document 9

This map details European Imperialism in Africa in 1914.



What cause for imperialism is evident in this map of Africa? Explain.

PART B

Which economic, political, and social forces were most responsible for the new imperialism of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries?