

APUSH Essay Review

THE DBQ

DBQ on the Exam

- You will have a mandatory 15 minutes to review the documents prior to writing the DBQ—make an outline
- Then you will have 45 minutes to write the DBQ
- You can write on the DBQ—use this opportunity to make notes and highlight (***) key pieces of information to help you with your essay

On both DBQ's and FRQ's

- You MUST have outside information
- Do not use “weak” words
 - For example: do not use “Says” “Tells” “Speaks of” “Firstly” “Secondly”
 - Instead use action words: the author contends, portrays, presents, argues, illustrates,
 - **Do not UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES state the following in your papers--This topic is alike yet different—It is the kiss of death!**
- **Do not ask a question—you have the answers—let the reader know it**

On both DBQ's and FRQ's

- Have a kick.....thesis statement—once you grab them they will spend more time on your paper
- Don't ramble---be consistent & use transitional sentences/ phrases
 - For example: On the other hand, From a different perspective, Likewise,
 - ALWAYS keep your paper in the 3rd person—do not use “you,” “we,” or “I”
 - For example: “it can be implied” or “one can deduct from this line of reasoning that”

Document-based questions (DBQs) require you to do several things well.

- You must understand the prompt and come up with an “answer” that will be your thesis.
- You must come up with a list of facts—names, dates, treaties, battles, significant events, etc.—from the time period.
- You must use all of the documents that are provided.
- You must write a clearly organized and well-written essay.

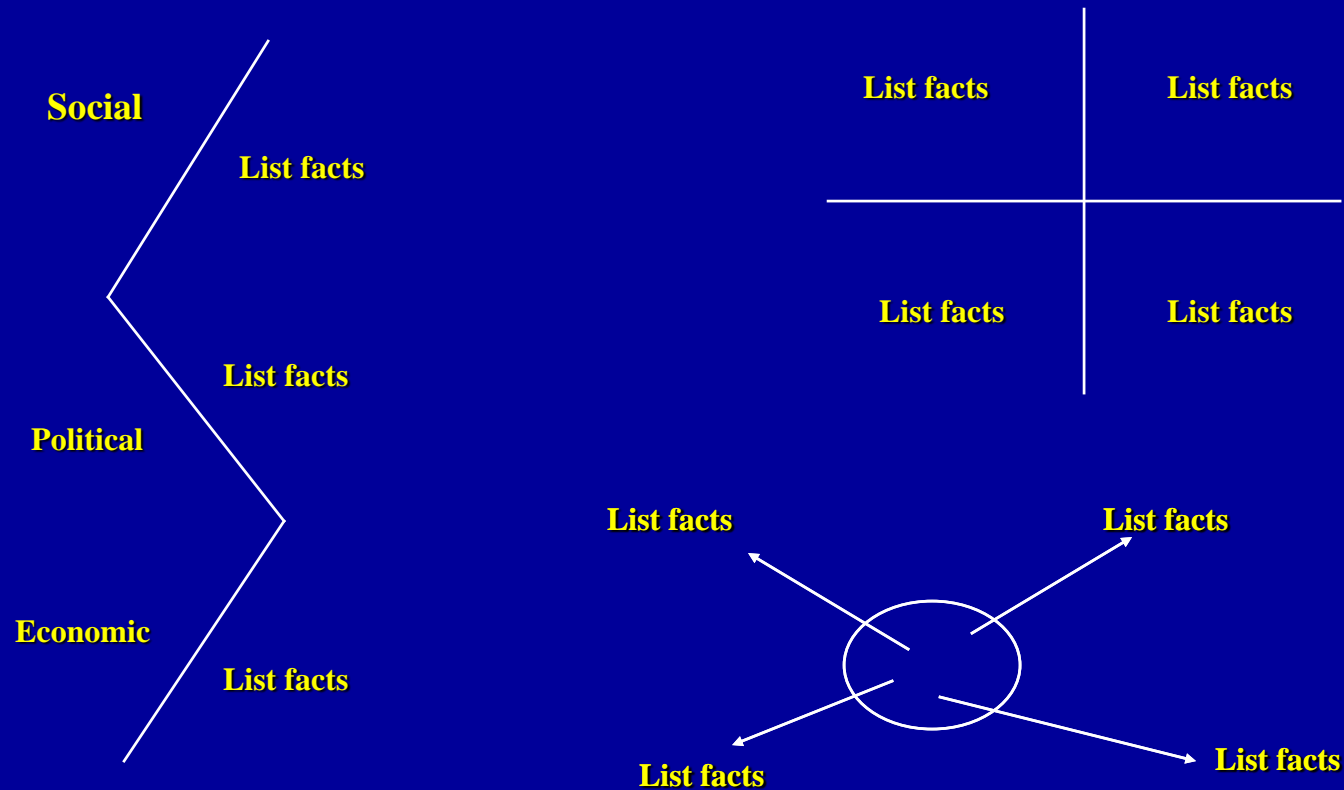
General information about the documents

- All of the documents will be relevant to the topic.
- Plan on using all of the documents provided.
- Sometimes the date or the author in the source notation may be significant.
- The documents are generally presented chronologically.
- Pay special attention to cartoons, charts, & graphs.

Tip #1

- Read the prompt thoroughly several times. Make sure you fully understand the whole prompt.
- Identify the time period you are dealing with.
- Brainstorm
 - Write down all of the relevant information you can think of BEFORE reading the documents.
- Sketch an outline of how your essay will be structured.

Outlines do not have to be formal, just sketch a structure



Tip #1 Summary

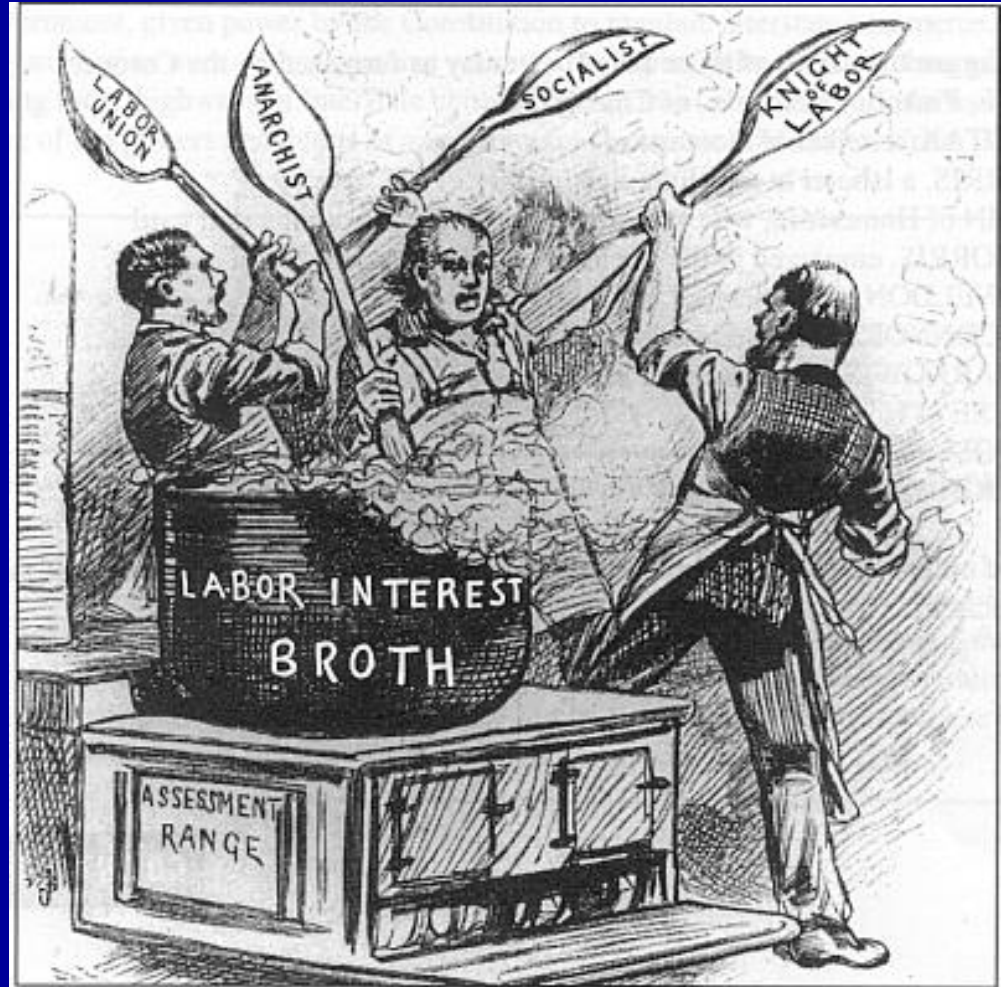
- You have quickly done some very important preparation for the essay.
 - You have carefully read the prompt several times.
 - You have “answered” the prompt, decided your thesis direction.
 - You have quickly jotted down some facts that you can use to support your thinking.
 - Organized this information.
- Now you are ready to deal with the documents.

Tip # 2

- Quickly read all of the documents.
- As you go, indicate where on your essay “outline” they will go.
- Remember to consider the dates in the source material.
- Underline any unusual phrases.
- Jot down any quick summary thoughts about the documents as you read.

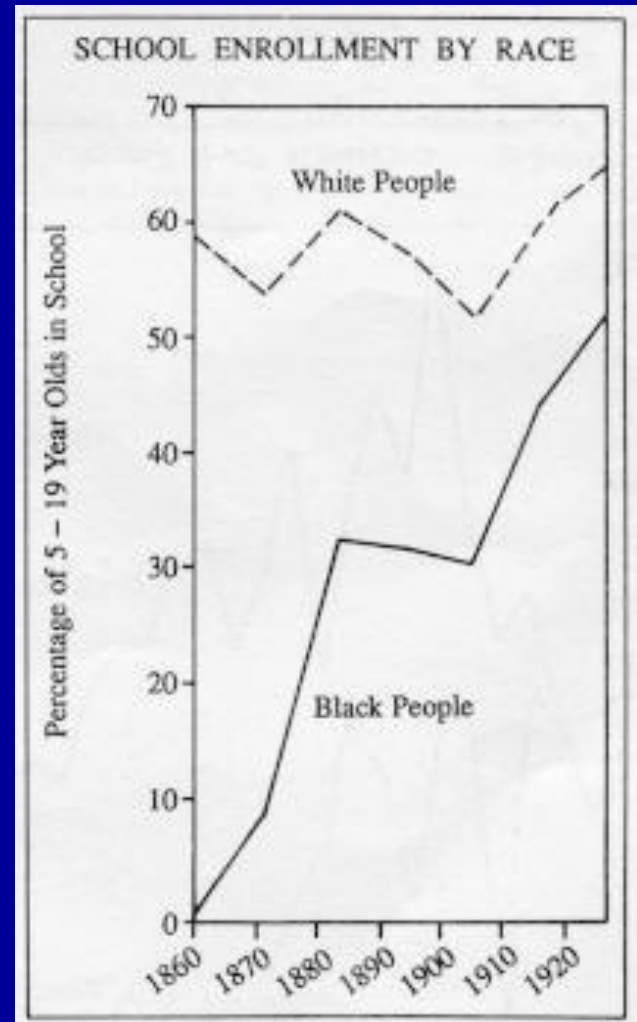
Tip #2 (continued)

- Look carefully at political cartoons.
- Pay attention to any small print.
- Jot down a quick summary of what the cartoon is trying to tell you.



Tip #2 (continued)

- Graphs and charts are important, look at them carefully.
- Note the dates.
- Notice that they frequently show change over time.
- Jot down a quick summary of what they indicate.



Tip #2 (continued)



- Notice dates, especially on pictures.
- The picture on the left is dated 1915; the picture on the right is dated 1919.
- What had changed for working women in those years? Why?

Tip # 2 (continued)

- Look very carefully at data presented in charts.
- Look for
 - trends,
 - for changes over time,
 - for sudden changes.
- Summarize what the chart tells you in a quick sentence.

VOTING IN SELECTED STATES IN THE 1968 ELECTION
(with voting totals for all states)

CANDIDATES FOR PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT
Democratic-Hubert H. Humphrey; Edmund Muskie
Republican-Richard M. Nixon; Spiro T. Agnew
American Independent Party-George C. Wallace; Curtis LeMay

State	(in thousands)			Electoral Vote		
	Dem	Rep.	AIP	D	R	AIP
Alabama	197	147	691			10
Arkansas	188	191	241			6
California	3,244	3,468	487		40	
Florida	677	887	624		14	
Georgia	344	380	536			12
Illinois	2,040	2,175	391		26	
Indiana	807	1,068	243		13	
Kentucky	398	462	193		9	
Louisiana	310	258	530			10
Maryland	538	518	179	10		
Mass.	1,469	767	87	14		
Michigan	1,593	1,371	332	21		
Miss.	151	89	415			7
Missouri	791	812	206		12	
New Jersey	1,264	1,325	262		17	
New York	3,378	3,008	359	43		
N. C.	464	627	496		12	1
Ohio	1,701	1,791	467		26	
Oklahoma	302	450	192		8	
Penn.	2,259	2,090	379	29		
S. C.	197	254	215		8	
Tenn.	351	473	425		11	
Texas	1,267	1,228	584	25		
Virginia	442	590	322		12	
Wisconsin	749	810	128		12	
Totals of all 50 states	31,275	31,785	9,906	191	301	46

Having read the documents. . .

- Go back and add the documents to your essay outline.
- Remember, you must use outside information AND the documents to respond to the essay prompt.
- Make sure that you have both—outside information and documents—to support each point of your essay.

Tip #2 Summary

- You have now spent about 15 minutes
 - Reading the prompt,
 - Brainstorming and listing relevant information,
 - Planning a basic structure for your response,
 - Putting your information onto the essay structure,
 - Reading the documents,
 - Adding the documents to your essay outline.

Tip #3: Writing the essay

- Refer to the document, NEVER quote them at length—no more than a quick phrase or three or four words!
- Don't *explain* the document. Simply *refer* to it to support your thesis.
- Refer to the author of the document: “In Lincoln’s letter” or “Horace Mann makes the point” or “in the Nast cartoon.”
- Cite every document by using its letter, e.g. (A). You don't need to say (doc. A).

PLEASE MAKE A NOTE OF IT!!

- Do NOT NOT NOT (did I say NOT already????) state the following in your essay
 - Document B says----AHHHHHHHHHHH!!!!!!

This document appeared in the 1999 DBQ. Notice the source note.

Document A

Source: Pennsylvania Gazette, 1754



The most significant thing about this document is the date, 1754, in the source note.

- This document was intended to bring to mind the following:
 - The 1754 meeting of the London Board of Trade,
 - Benjamin Franklin, printer from Philadelphia and colonial agent,
 - Franklin's Albany Plan of Union,
 - The Albany Plan of Union's provisions for a colonial legislature,
 - The ultimate failure of the colonies to accept the Albany Plan of Union in 1754.

This document might be used like this:

An excellent indication that the colonies were unwilling to act together in a unified way is their failure to accept Franklin's plan for a colonial legislature as put forth in his 1754 Albany Plan of Union. The cartoon expresses Franklin's contention that the colonies must act together or "die" (A). Yet very few of the colonial assemblies were willing to accept this contention.

Here is a text passage from a recent DBQ and a sample essay reference:

Document I

Source: Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Seneca Falls Declaration, August 2, 1848.

...But we are assembled to protest against a form of government, existing without the consent of the governed--to declare our right to be free as man is free, to be represented in the government which we are taxed to support, to have such disgraceful laws as give man the power to chastise and imprison his wife. ... And, strange as it may seem to many, we now demand our right to vote according to the declaration of the government under which we live.

One of the most significant attempts to extend democratic ideals throughout society was that organized by the women's movement in the late 1840s. Meeting at Seneca Falls, NY, a group of women brought together by Lucy Stone, Lucretia Mott, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton demanded their right to vote and their right to be represented in the government (I). These are the most fundamental and basic of rights in a genuinely democratic society.

Lesson 3 Summary

- Understand the prompt—the time period and any terms that need defining.
- Produce a brainstormed list of relevant and useful fact FIRST, before reading the documents.
- Organize how you will use both the outside information and the documents.
- Use all of the documents without quoting them and citing them as you go.
- Write a clear and well-organized essay that demonstrates an understanding of the prompt.

The FRQ

**Free response essays, in many ways,
are the very heart of the AP exam.
They measure your reasoning ability as
well as your historical knowledge.**

**To succeed with these essays, you must
understand the prompts, organize your
information, and write a clear and
accurate response.**

FRQ's...

- 2 FRQ's
- 70 MINUTES FOR BOTH—
APPROXIMATELY 35 MIN. EACH TO
ANSWER
- CHOOSE 1 OF 2 OPTIONS ON A
QUESTION PRIOR TO THE CIVIL WAR
AND CHOOSE 1 OF 2 OPTIONS ON A
QUESTION AFTER THE CIVIL WAR

Possible topics for both DBQ & FRQ's

- Change over time
- Cause and effect
- Compare and contrast
- Define and Identify—not an essay itself, but may be necessary to answer the essay
- Statement and Reaction
- Evaluation
- Analyzing viewpoints (Do you agree with this statement—is this a valid point of view)

AVOID AT ALL COSTS!!!!

- Make little doodles/pictures/scribbles on your paper—looks like you didn't even try (therefore...why should the person grading your test give you ANY benefit of the doubt)
- Do not use abbreviations or “text slang”
- Do not use familiar terms i.e. Tommy J, Teddy or T.R., George etc...

Free response essay prompts put a lot of responsibility on the writer:

- Some prompts are very open. Here is an example of this type of prompt:
 - The government under the Articles of Confederation has been considered a failure. Describe three actions of the Confederation government and explain how these actions may or may not be considered failures.

These prompts require you to define the terms, specify the time period, and understand the task.

- For instance, read the prompt carefully:
 - The government under the Articles of Confederation has been considered a **failure**. **Describe three actions** of the Confederation government **and explain** how these actions **may or may not** be considered failures.
- To address the prompt, the following questions must be answered:
 - What time period does this question address? [1781-1789]
 - What were 3 (no more) actions of the Confederation Congress that you are going to discuss?
 - How are you defining “failure” or “success”?

Some prompts provide clear time periods to be addressed:

- For instance, here are two prompts that specify very clearly the time periods to be discussed:
 - Compare and contrast United States foreign policy after the First World War and after the Second World War. Consider the periods 1919-1928 and 1945-1950.
 - How did the African American Civil Rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s address the failures of Reconstruction?

These prompts require you to limit your evidence and to define certain terms.

- With the first prompt—
 - Compare **and** contrast United States foreign policy after the First World War and after the Second World War. Consider the periods 1919-1928 and 1945-1950.
- The following need clarifying
 - Deal only with foreign policy decisions
 - You need to pick decisions that are **BOTH** different and similar between the early and the later time periods.

- The next prompt—
 - How did the African American Civil Rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s address the failures of Reconstruction?
- Requires you to specify
 - Several “failures of Reconstruction”
 - Which implies that you know when Reconstruction occurred.
 - And to know several very specific results of the later Civil Rights movement that directly addressed the failures of Reconstruction.

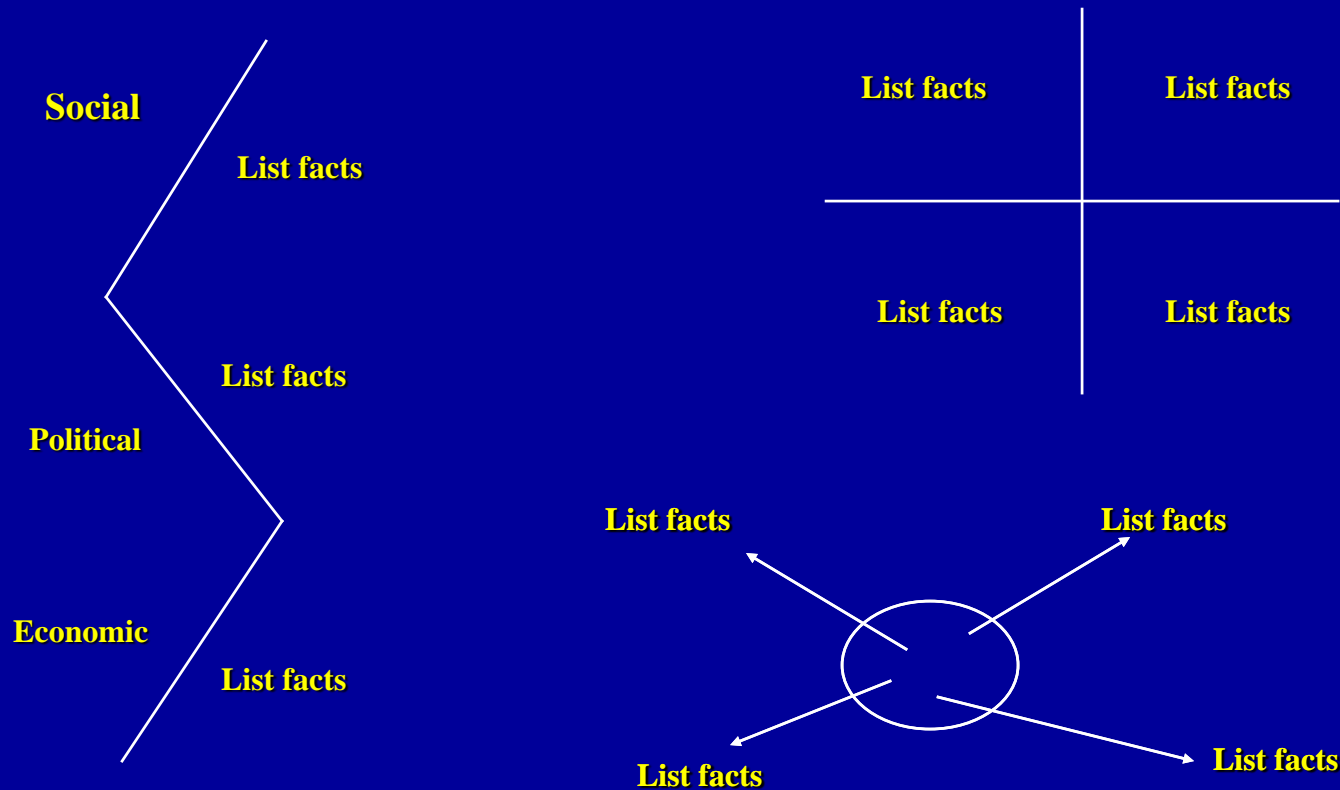
Tip #1

- Make sure you understand exactly your task, what you must “prove” in the essay.
- Stay strictly within the time period. Don’t wander.
- You must be specific, specific, specific.
- Use proper nouns—words that need to be capitalized.
- Never use generalities, i.e. many reforms, lots of reformers, many things changed.

Tip #2

- Organize your thinking BEFORE you write.
- This doesn't need to be a long process
 - Decide two or three things you need to discuss,
 - Organize the facts you have under those headings,
 - Check through them to see that you “balance” the discussion—give each part of the topic equal discussion.

Outlines do not have to be formal,
just sketch a structure and put your
facts into that structure.



Write with clarity and confidence— don't be timid!

- Be definite. Your thesis should ANSWER the prompt with your opinion.
- Having brainstormed then organized specific facts, start each paragraph with a clear topic sentence.
- Refer to specific facts to support your thinking. Stick to your structure, refer to your outline as you write.

Good writing is a problem-solving situation. Work the process!

- After writing your thesis paragraph, go back and re-read the prompt.
- Ask yourself, “Have I ‘answered’ the prompt with my thesis?”
- What three or four points **MUST** you make to support your thesis. Write these down.
- As you write, look back at the prompt and at your thesis. Are you sticking to the topic?