

**Unit 7 FR** Document-based Question (DBQ)

1. **Directions:** Construct an argument based on the accompanying documents. The documents have been edited for the purpose of this exercise.

In your response you should do the following.

- Respond to the prompt with a historically defensible thesis or claim that establishes a line of reasoning.
- Describe a broader historical context for the prompt.
- Support an argument in response to the prompt with at least six documents.
- Use at least one additional piece of specific historical evidence (beyond that found in the documents) relevant to an argument about the prompt.
- For at least three documents, explain how or why the document is relevant to your argument in terms of its point of view, purpose, historical situation, and/or audience relevant to an argument.
- Use evidence to corroborate, qualify, or modify an argument that addresses the prompt.

Evaluate the extent of change in the domestic United States during the Second World War from 1939 to 1945.

**Document 1**

Source: Editorial, "New National Policy," *Washington Post*, September 17, 1940.

President Roosevelt issued a proclamation fixing October 16 as the date of registration for all men between the ages of 21 and 35. In doing so he acted with the promptness which the situation demands. Compulsory training for military service is now our national policy.

Because of the world crisis, which has set in motion forces of a magnitude and ferocity never before witnessed, the United States must acquire the most powerful naval and military defense system it has ever possessed. We can no longer depend on the voluntary method to build up our armed forces. So it is important that the whole Nation cheerfully accept the selective service system. After all, it is the fairest method by which an army of the size we need can be recruited.



## Unit 7 FRQ: Document-based Question (DBQ)

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### Document 2

Source: Ted Nakashima, "Concentration Camp: U.S. Style," *The New Republic*, 1942.

Unfortunately in this land of liberty, I was born of Japanese parents; born in Seattle of a mother and father who have been in this country since 1901. Fine parents, who brought up their children in the best American way of life....

Now that you can picture our thoroughly American background, let me describe our new home.

The resettlement center is actually a penitentiary—armed guards in towers with spotlights and deadly tommy guns, fifteen feet of barbed wire fences, everyone confined to quarters at nine, lights out at ten o'clock. The guards are ordered to shoot anyone who approaches within twenty feet of the fences. No one is allowed to take the two-block-long hike to the latrines after nine, under any circumstances....

The food and sanitation problems are the worst. We have had absolutely no fresh meat, vegetables or butter since we came here. Mealtime queues extend for blocks; standing in a rainswept line, feet in the mud, waiting for the scant portions of canned wieners and boiled potatoes, hash for breakfast or canned wieners and beans for dinner....

Can this be the same America we left a few weeks ago?

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### Document 3

Source: Editorial, *Pittsburgh Courier*, an African American newspaper, 1942.

Americans all, are involved in a gigantic war effort to assure victory for the cause of freedom—the four freedoms that have been so nobly expressed by President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill. We, as colored Americans, are determined to protect our country, our form of government and the freedoms which we cherish for ourselves and for the rest of the world, therefore we have adopted the... war cry—victory over our enemies at home and victory over our enemies on the battlefields abroad. Thus in our fight for freedom we wage a two-pronged attack against our enslavers at home and those abroad who would enslave us. WE HAVE A STAKE IN THIS FIGHT. . . . WE ARE AMERICANS, TOO!

### Document 4



## Unit 7 FRQ: Document-based Question (DBQ)

Source: Office of War Information, a United States government agency, 1943.



Courtesy of the Library of Congress #LC-USZCN4-203

### Document 5

Source: Corporal Rupert Trimmingham, letter to *Yank*, a magazine produced by the United States military, published in April 1944.

Dear *Yank*,

Here is a question that each Negro soldier is asking. What is the Negro soldier fighting for? On whose team are we playing? Myself and eight other soldiers were on our way from Camp Claiborne, [Louisiana], to the hospital here at Fort Huachuca [Arizona]. We had to lay over until the next day for our train. On the next day we could not purchase a cup of coffee at any of the lunchrooms around there. As you know, Old Man Jim Crow rules. The only place where we could be served was at the lunchroom at the railroad station but, of course we had to go into the kitchen. But that's not all; 11:30 a.m. about a two dozen German prisoners of war, with two



**Unit 7 FRQ: Document-based Question (DBQ)**

American guards, came into the station. They entered the lunchroom, sat at the tables, had their meals served, talked, smoked, in fact had quite a swell time. I stood on the outside looking on, and I could not help but ask myself these questions: Are these men sworn enemies of this country? Are they not taught to hate and destroy... all democratic governments? Are we not American soldiers, sworn to fight for and die if need be for this our country? Then why are they treated better than we are? Why are we pushed around like cattle? If we are fighting for the same thing, if we are to die for our country, then why does the Government allow such things to go on? Some of the boys are saying that you will not print this letter. I'm saying that you will.

**Document 6**

Source: *Walter Williams, "Watch the West Coast," The Nation, September 1944*

A spectacular population increase has accompanied the west coast's industrialization. The Portland metropolitan area showed a 31 per cent increase in population since 1930; the Seattle area shows an increase of 25 per cent for the same period of time. There are now an estimated 1,500,000 people here in California since 1940. Since most of the activity on the west coast is confined to the production of aircraft and the construction of ships, sharp curtailment of employment is threatened after the war period. With a population increase of 14 per cent, California, for example, faces the problem of shifting 1,000,000 workers from war activities to civilian jobs after the war....

The typical white defense migrant is a man, twenty-five years of age or younger, married, from a small town or rural area in the northwest, anxious to settle in the area, and primarily interested in industrial work during the war period. A study made recently in the Kaiser yards in Portland indicates that only 10 per cent of the migrants are women.

23.6 per cent of the migrants had a definite intention of returning to their homes after the war; that only a very few have maintained family ties elsewhere or have other relatives to which they might return; that considerable numbers have purchased property in the area; that a majority have their families with them; and that 86 per cent must find new employment immediately after their present employment terminates.

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**Document 7**



**Unit 7 FR** Document-based Question (DBQ)

Source: B. J. Stern, “The Challenge of Advancing Technology,” *Journal of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 1945.

Even before the announcement of the unlocking of atomic energy, it could be said that advances in technology during the years of the war had been greater than during many preceding decades....

With the development of prewar household and passenger planes and helicopters, quick-frozen, dehydrated, and canned and packaged foods, improved gasoline, and new and improved types of industrial production, for transportation, for illumination, and for easing household burdens, man can be freer to develop functionally in terms of the harmonious living of their communities. Advances in public health and in medicine have made possible precipitous decreases in death and morbidity rates, so that healthy city populations can enjoy the leisure after working hours made available to them. Illiteracy and ignorance, long anachronisms of industrial societies, can easily be liquidated through advances in human psychology and in educational processes.

The tools are ready. Are they thwarted in their use?

Stern, B. J. “The Challenge of Advancing Technology.” *The American Academy of Political and Social Science* Vol. 242(1)p. 46–52. Copyright © 1945 American Academy of Political and Social Science. Reprinted by permission of SAGE Publications, Inc.



Please respond on separate paper, following directions from your teacher.

**A. Thesis/Claim (0–1 points)**

Responses earn one point by responding to the prompt with a historically defensible thesis that establishes a line of reasoning about changes in the domestic United States from 1939 to 1945.

Examples of acceptable theses:

- “The U.S. is now officially catapulted into the worst conflict in human history, forever altering nearly everything about the nation, from its economy to governmental role, as well as its industries and scientific developments. But while it changed dramatically, the U.S. remained the same in aspects such as racial equality and discrimination.”



**Unit 7 FRQ: Document-based Question (DBQ)**

- “The Second World War transformed the home front by providing full employment in wartime industries and ending years of depression in the United States.”

Example of an unacceptable thesis:

- “During World War 2 many things changed the U.S. homefront.” (*Response does not identify the main line of argument or establish an evaluative position that responds to the prompt.*)



0	1
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Student earns 1 of 1 point(s)

Responses earn one point by responding to the prompt with a historically defensible thesis that establishes a line of reasoning about changes in the domestic United States from 1939 to 1945.

Examples of acceptable theses:

- “The U.S. is now officially catapulted into the worst conflict in human history, forever altering nearly everything about the nation, from its economy to governmental role, as well as its industries and scientific developments. But while it changed dramatically, the U.S. remained the same in aspects such as racial equality and discrimination.”
- “The Second World War transformed the home front by providing full employment in wartime industries and ending years of depression in the United States.”

Example of an unacceptable thesis:

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**B. Contextualization (0–1 points)**



## Unit 7 FRQ: Document-based Question (DBQ)

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Responses earn one point by describing a broader historical context relevant to the topic of the prompt (1 point). The context can be from before, during, or continue after the period 1939–1945 as long as the response accurately and explicitly connects the context to changes in the domestic United States. This point is not awarded for merely a phrase or reference.

Examples of context might include the following:

- The role of the government in United States society expanded greatly during the New Deal.
- The federal government made use of film and radio (e.g., Franklin D. Roosevelt’s fireside chats) to promote government initiatives.
- Civil rights activism by African Americans and the movement for women’s equality continued during and, especially, after wartime (e.g., the Nineteenth Amendment, African American activism during and after the First World War).
- Isolationist sentiment was predominant in the United States before the First and Second World Wars (e.g., Neutrality Acts of 1935, 1936, and 1937).
- During earlier national conflicts, Americans reacted to perceived domestic threats by curtailing civil liberties.
- Descriptions of the international, diplomatic, and military aspects of the Second World War represent context. These may include discussions of the conflicts in Europe or in the Pacific theater.
- During the Second World War, public accommodations in much of the United States were legally segregated by race and African Americans had limited civil rights. African Americans also engaged in a long struggle for civil rights during this period.
- During the war, female participation in the labor force increased sharply.
- The United States experienced massive expansion of its industrial production during the Second World War.



## Unit 7 FRQ: Document-based Question (DBQ)

- The Second World War was a period of enormous scientific and technological advancement for the United States.
- The Second World War prompted massive internal immigration within the United States.

Example of acceptable contextualization:

- “Outside of the U.S., the foreign policies were changing and causing the U.S. government to change with it. At first in the war, the U.S. claimed to be isolationist and neutral, but Roosevelt supported the British and introduced the Lend Lease Act, allowing the U.S. to provide war supplies for the British. The biggest change of the U.S. home front was the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor triggering the involvement of U.S. in the war. This made Roosevelt increase the number of soldiers needed for the army.”

Example of unacceptable contextualization:

- “Although war is a struggling time for any nation, the United States of America was able to grow and advance technologically. It would become the start of major improvements to the lives of American citizens. Stern writes that ‘during the years of the war . . . [advances in technology] had been far greater than during many proceeding decades’ (7). There were already major developments during the Era of Good Feelings and previous inventions of railway and automobiles, however, this grew and expanded. America would show no signs of slowing down in the technological advancement even during the Second World War.” *(This example does not earn the point for contextualization because it does not explicitly connect the technological innovations of the twentieth century to those of the late nineteenth century.)*



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Student earns 1 of 1 point(s)

Responses earn one point by describing a broader historical context relevant to the topic of the prompt (1 point). The context can be from before, during, or continue after the period 1939–1945 as long as the response accurately and explicitly connects the context to changes in the domestic United States. This





## Unit 7 FRQ: Document-based Question (DBQ)

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- During earlier national conflicts, Americans reacted to perceived domestic threats by curtailing civil liberties.
- Descriptions of the international, diplomatic, and military aspects of the Second World War represent context. These may include discussions of the conflicts in Europe or in the Pacific theater.
- During the Second World War, public accommodations in much of the United States were legally segregated by race and African Americans had limited civil rights. African Americans also engaged in a long struggle for civil rights during this period.
- During the war, female participation in the labor force increased sharply.
- The United States experienced massive expansion of its industrial production during the Second World War.
- The Second World War was a period of enormous scientific and technological advancement for the United States.



## Unit 7 FRQ: Document-based Question (DBQ)

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- The Second World War prompted massive internal immigration within the United States.

Example of acceptable contextualization:

- “Outside of the U.S., the foreign policies were changing and causing the U.S. government to change with it. At first in the war, the U.S. claimed to be isolationist and neutral, but Roosevelt supported the British and introduced the Lend Lease Act, allowing the U.S. to provide war supplies for the British. The biggest change of the U.S. home front was the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor triggering the involvement of U.S. in the war. This made Roosevelt increase the number of soldiers needed for the army.”

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### C. Evidence (0–3 points)

#### a) Document Content—Addressing the Topic

In order to achieve the first point, the response must use the content of at least **three** documents to address the **topic** of the prompt (1 point). To earn one point for evidence from the documents, the response must accurately describe—rather than simply quote or paraphrase—content from at least three of the documents to address the topic.

OR

#### b) Document Content—Supporting an Argument

In order to achieve the second point for evidence from the documents, the response needs to support an



## Unit 7 FRQ: Document-based Question (DBQ)

**argument** in response to the prompt by accurately using the content of at least **six** documents (2 points). To earn two points, responses must accurately describe the document’s content; they cannot earn a point by merely quoting or paraphrasing the documents with no connection to the topic of the prompt.

Examples of supporting an argument using the content of a document:

“Not everything changed during the war, however. Ugly prejudices remained against African Americans and, increasingly, Japanese Americans. The Japanese Americans, believed to be engaged in ‘subversion’ on the West Coast, were sent to horrible internment camps, as written by Ted Nakashima (2). Nakashima and others were appalled that they were being held in a ‘penitentiary’ even though they had done nothing wrong.”

### c) Evidence beyond the Documents

Responses earn one point for using at least one additional piece of specific historical evidence (beyond that found in the documents) relevant to an argument about changes in the domestic United States during the period 1939–1945. (1 point) To earn this point, the evidence must be described with more than a phrase or reference. This additional piece of evidence must be different from the evidence used to earn the point for contextualization. Typically, statements credited as **contextualization** will be more general statements that place an argument or a significant portion of it on a broader context. Statements credited as **evidence** will typically include more specific information.

Example of acceptable use of an additional piece of specific historical evidence:

- “During this time, many Americans believed that Japanese Americans were spies for the Japanese government, and were plotting to defeat the U.S. government; as a result, Japanese along the West Coast were placed into internment camps which were legalized during the Korematsu court case.”



0	1	2	3
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Student earns 3 of 3 point(s)

### a) Document Content—Addressing the Topic

In order to achieve the first point, the response must use the content of at least **three** documents to



## Unit 7 FRQ: Document-based Question (DBQ)

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address the **topic** of the prompt (1 point). To earn one point for evidence from the documents, the response must accurately describe—rather than simply quote or paraphrase—content from at least three of the documents to address the topic.

OR

### b) Document Content—Supporting an Argument

In order to achieve the second point for evidence from the documents, the response needs to support an **argument** in response to the prompt by accurately using the content of at least **six** documents (2 points). To earn two points, responses must accurately describe the document’s content; they cannot earn a point by merely quoting or paraphrasing the documents with no connection to the topic of the prompt.

Examples of supporting an argument using the content of a document:

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## Unit 7 FRQ: Document-based Question (DBQ)

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### D. Analysis and Reasoning (0–2 points)

#### a) Document Sourcing

Responses earn one point by explaining how or why the point of view, purpose, historical situation, and/or audience of at least **three** documents is relevant to an argument about changes in the domestic United States during the period 1939–1945. (1 point)

Example of acceptable explanation of the relevance of the document’s point of view:

- “According to Document 5, Black soldiers were treated as less than White soldiers just like in real American society and the Jim Crow laws continued on base. The author’s point of view of being a Black soldier shows that he knows best what was happening among races in the army.”

Example of acceptable explanation of the relevance of the document’s purpose:

- “This patriotism is advocated by the Office of War Information who urge women to fill the jobs left behind by soldiers in order to support the war effort and make U.S. victory come sooner (4). The purpose of this is to promote the war effort at home through propaganda.”

Example of acceptable explanation of the relevance of the historical situation of a document:

- “Women’s role in the home front changed, to become more involved. Many of the men were away fighting the war. This left openings in jobs for women. The government even encouraged women to work. A poster from a government agency promises women that if they work the United States will win the war sooner. (4)”

Example of acceptable explanation of the relevance of the document’s audience:

- “Most of the male workers had gone to fight in the war, leaving the industries that fueled America and its military without workers. This forced women to take responsibility and join the workforce. The government also encouraged this through flyers such as the aforementioned poster. The intended audience of these posters were women across the country who sought to change their way of life.”



## Unit 7 FRQ: Document-based Question (DBQ)

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### b) Demonstrating Complex Understanding

Responses earn one point by demonstrating a complex understanding of the historical development that is the focus of the prompt, using evidence to corroborate, qualify, or modify an argument that addresses the question of

change in the domestic United States from 1939 to 1945. (1 point) A response may demonstrate a complex understanding in a variety of ways, such as the following.

- Explaining a nuance of an issue by analyzing multiple variables
- Explaining both similarities and differences, or explaining both continuity and change, or explaining multiple causes, or explaining both causes and effects
- Explaining relevant and insightful connections within and across periods
- Confirming the validity of an argument by corroborating multiple perspectives across themes
- Qualifying or modifying an argument by considering diverse or alternative views or evidence

This understanding must be part of the argument, not merely a phrase or reference.

Demonstrating a complex understanding for this prompt might include the following:

- Arguing that, while many women entered the workforce to support the war effort, experiencing newfound independence in manufacturing jobs traditionally held by men, American film and media continued to emphasize more traditional gender roles for women
- Arguing that the wartime experience of mobilizing new workers to replace men who went to combat and of avoiding political protest and dissent in favor of national unity was not very different from the effects of previous wars on the home front
- Arguing that the reaction of the United States to perceived domestic threats during the war (i.e., Japanese internment) and the curtailment of civil liberties was not different than earlier times of national emergency (e.g., Alien and Sedition Acts in the 1790s, Sedition Act during the First World



**Unit 7 FRQ: Document-based Question (DBQ)**

War)

- Arguing that, despite the implementation of wartime rationing, economic growth and full employment fostered by the United States mobilization for the war generated increased household savings and pent-up consumer demand that would contribute to a dramatic postwar boom
- Arguing that, despite the drive to end discrimination against African Americans and to expand civil rights, racial segregation continued and in some ways was strengthened in the United States during the war, revealing a gap between the ideals and realities of democracy

Example of demonstrating complex understanding:

- “During the war, as in all wars, the government exerted a much greater influence on the economy and the citizenry than during peacetime. The War Production Board set prices for industry, and the Office of War Information produced propaganda to rally support for the war effort. (This propaganda was crucial, because, as proven by the immense backlash to the Vietnam War in the 1960s, wars must be fought with the support of the public and with clearly defined and communicated goals in order for them to succeed.) Just as in World War I, taxes were raised and “Liberty Bonds” were sold to the public to generate additional revenue for fighting the war. However, unlike World War I, a rationing system was imposed to curb consumption of much-needed goods (in World War I, rationing had been done on a voluntary basis). President Roosevelt imposed a selective service system (a draft), which added to the size of the military. Newspapers such as the *Washington Post* tried to advocate for cheerful compliance with the draft as the ‘fairest method by which an army of the size we need can be recruited’ (1). All of these examples prove that the U.S. government dramatically grew in power during World War II.”



0	1	2
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Student earns 2 of 2 point(s)

**a) Document Sourcing**

Responses earn one point by explaining how or why the point of view, purpose, historical situation, and/or audience of at least **three** documents is relevant to an argument about changes in the domestic United



## Unit 7 FRQ: Document-based Question (DBQ)

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States during the period 1939–1945. (1 point)

Example of acceptable explanation of the relevance of the document's point of view:

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## Unit 7 FRQ: Document-based Question (DBQ)

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