

## STRATEGY FOR WRITING AN AP WORLD HISTORY DBQ ESSAY

Your response to the essay prompt/question **MUST INCLUDE** the following:

- **Thesis:** You must present a thesis that makes a historically defensible claim and responds to **ALL** parts of the question. The thesis must consist of one or more sentences located in one place, preferably and ideally in the introduction.
- **Argument Development:** You must develop and support a cohesive argument that recognizes and accounts for historical complexity by explicitly illustrating relationships among historical evidence such as contradiction, corroboration, and/or qualification.
- **Use of Documents:** You must utilize the contents of at least 6 of the documents to support the stated thesis or a relevant argument.
- **Sourcing the Documents:** You must explain the significance of the author's point of view, the author's purpose, historical context, and/or the intended audience for at least 4 of the documents
- **Contextualization:** You must situate the argument you are making by explaining the broader historical events, developments, or processes immediately relevant to the question. Put the event in the context of what was going on at the time.
  - ⇒ Does the event fit in with some trend or policy happening at the time?
  - ⇒ What else was going on at the time that can be related to in the time period?
  - ⇒ Can I use this to "set the stage" in my introduction?
  - ⇒ What are some other historical examples that support my argument and are not included in the documents?
- **Outside Evidence:** You must provide an example or additional piece of specific evidence beyond those found in the documents to support or qualify your argument
- **Synthesis:** You must extend the argument by explaining the connections between your argument and **ONE** of the following:
  - ⇒ A development in a different historical period, situation, era, or geographic area—something that happened in the past or a different historical context **OR** something that will happen in the future?
  - ⇒ Does this mark the end of an era or the beginning of something new?
  - ⇒ A course theme and/or approach to history that is not the focus of the essay (such as political, economic, social, cultural, or intellectual history).
  - ⇒ A different discipline or field of inquiry (such as economics, government and politics, art history, or anthropology).

# THE DBQ ESSAY

## **Paragraph #1 = THESIS**

- Address ALL parts of the prompt
- Provide some type of “examples” - summarize document groupings
  - Minimum 2-3 sentences

## **Paragraphs #2, = CONTEXT**

- What is the larger historical process that shapes this topic?
  - What caused the issue or problem?
- Identify the context in terms of time and place
  - Set the historical stage

## **Paragraphs #3, 4, and 5 = SUPPORTING PARAGRAPHS**

- Clearly identify how the paragraph SUPPORTS your THESIS
- EACH supporting paragraph in your essay body should ideally represent a “GROUPING” of the documents to clearly represent how they “speak to each other” and are connected. This will help develop complexity, analysis, and the illustration and identification of relationships among the historical evidence
  - Identify and discuss SPECIFIC EVIDENCE from the documents that supports your THESIS
    - SOURCE at least 4 documents—H.I.P.P. them!!!
  - Think about including “Outside” Information if applicable

## **Paragraph #6 = OUTSIDE INFORMATION**

- If you have not included this in any of your supporting paragraphs then you must provide an example or additional piece of specific evidence beyond those found in the documents to support or qualify your argument

## **Paragraph #7 = SYNTHESIS**

- How does this topic or issue CONNECT to a different ...
- TIME or PLACE or DISCIPLINE (anthropology, economics, government and politics, art history, religion) or PERSIA / SPRITE (political, economic, religion, social, intellectual, technology, arts)

## **Paragraph #8 = CONCLUSION**

- Address ALL parts of the prompt in 2-3 sentences
  - Provide some type of “examples”
- Summarize what you did in paragraphs #3-5