

History Matters...

Objectives:

Discuss the relevance of studying history, review themes, and become familiar with the historical thinking skill of historical argumentation as well as other skills that will be practiced and mastered in this course. This is an introduction activity typically completed on the first day of school.

Directions:

1. As you watch the 3 minute “trailer” to American history, identify as many historical events reflected in the scenes as you can. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H3sxZ-ZYATc2>. Evaluate three of these events in terms of the extent to which each has impacted your life.

Consider the following format for your response: _____ impacted me to a _____ extent because... _____
(event) (adjective) (evidence)

2. Consider and discuss three additional events [or current events] that have impacted you. After you finish your list of at least six items, consider the seven historical themes in American history. Categorize your evidence into three themes, and then discuss which event and which theme impacted you the most? Which one impacted you the least?

THEMES: Migration and Settlement, America in the World, Geography and the Environment, Politics and Power, Identity; American and National, Economy; Work, Exchange, & Technology, Society and Culture

3. Assessing the validity of viewpoints is an important historical thinking skill. History is not just about memorizing dates and events, it is about analyzing why things happen and how history changes over time due to changing points of focus. Consider the following prompt, and then discuss how you would address it: *Support, refute, or modify the following statement: We are all strongly impacted by events in American history, and studying history is relevant and significant to understanding our present and preparing for our future.* Identify three specific pieces of evidence that you could use to defend your answer.

From the College Board APUSH Framework, 2015 Revision:

Argumentation - Historical thinking involves the ability to create an argument and support it using relevant historical evidence. Creating a historical argument includes defining and framing a question about the past and then formulating a claim or argument about that question, often in the form of a thesis. A persuasive historical argument requires a precise and defensible thesis or claim, supported by rigorous analysis of relevant and diverse historical evidence. The argument and evidence used should be framed around the application of a specific historical thinking skill (e.g., comparison, causation, patterns of continuity and change over time, or periodization). Furthermore, historical thinking involves the ability to examine multiple pieces of evidence in concert with each other, noting contradictions, corroborations, and other relationships among sources to develop and support an argument.

Argumentation: Using Evidence to Support an Argument - Historical thinking involves the ability to examine multiple pieces of evidence in concert with each other, noting contradictions, corroborations, and other relationships among sources to develop and support an argument.

On thesis writing, on the Document Based Question style essay, your thesis must present “a **historically defensible claim**” which “**responds to all parts of the question**.” It must also clearly develop and defend “a **cohesive argument** that recognizes and accounts for **historical complexity** by explicitly illustrating relationships among historical evidence such as contradiction, corroboration, and/or qualification.” Two of a possible seven points for your DBQ essay will come from your ability to present your historical argument. For your long essay, your thesis/argument is worth 1 of 6 points. This thesis must also make “a historically defensible claim” which addresses the entire question. You will be utilizing the same strategy for both the DBQ and LE thesis.

Introduction to the Thesis Formula! (Insert this formula explanation into your spiral)

Although X, Y because ABC.

[You will need to memorize this formula!]

‘X’ represents an alternative viewpoint, possibly a counter-argument or simply just a differing point of view than the one you present and defend in your exposition. In your introduction, you will be explaining this counter argument.

‘Y’ represents the position you will be taking – in other words, your stand on the prompt. This part of your thesis may also end up being two or more sentences depending on how much explanation you provide.

‘A, B, and C’ represent the three strongest points for your argument. These are your organization categories for your body paragraphs. Your essays will not all have three body paragraphs, but it is an average expectation.

Although this formula is a simple sentence, your introductory paragraphs will consist of more than one sentence. This formula will give you the basic foundation for a strong introduction, but your introductory paragraphs will also include elaborations and explanations beyond a simple sentence.