

# Analyzing Evidence, Interpreting Documents, and Synthesizing ... Woodrow Wilson

## From the 2015 Revised Framework:

### *Students Will...*

#### **ANALYZE EVIDENCE...**

1. **Explain the relevance of the author's point of view, author's purpose, audience, format or medium, and/or historical context as well as the interaction among these features, to demonstrate understanding of the significance of a primary source.**
2. **Evaluate the usefulness, reliability, and/ or limitations of a primary source in answering particular historical questions.**

#### **INTERPRET DOCUMENTS...**

1. **Analyze a historian's argument, explain how the argument has been supported through the analysis of relevant historical evidence, and evaluate the argument's effectiveness.**
2. **Analyze diverse historical interpretations.**

#### **SYNTHESIZE...**

1. **Make connections between a given historical issue and related developments in a different historical context, geographical area, period, or era, including the present.**
2. **Make connections between different** course themes and/or **approaches to history** (such as political, economic, social, cultural, or intellectual) for a given historical issue.

One important way to practice this historical thinking skill is to analyze two different sources or viewpoints on one event or era. Just as historians pull information from a plethora of different sources, we must also consider more than one source when analyzing history. In an essay, this skill will enable complex conclusions. On short answer questions, you may be presented with two sources then have to analyze them. **AT LEAST ONE OF YOUR SAQs ON THE AP EXAM WILL BE SYNTHESIS!** Such a task, when analyzing secondary sources, also requires an appreciation of historiography and realizing that history isn't necessarily what happened in the past. It is our perception of what happened in the past. The story changes as perspectives change, but the goal is the same: to better understand the past. As you analyze sources, consider the perspective of the author, but also consider your own viewpoint.

#### 1600's Providential History

Writers wrote about history in terms of man's relationship with God

- History is a chronicle of God's Providence toward his Chosen People
- Success is due to God's blessings, disaster due to His rebukes
- America replaced Britain as God's model of Christian virtue

#### 1700's Rationalist History

Writers began describing history in terms of nature or secularism.

- Natural Law dominated the approach as Divine Providence decreased
- Reason and logic explained things
- Self interest, not piety, became the force of man's actions

#### 1800s (mid to late) Nationalist History

Writers focus on progress, liberty, and Anglo-Saxon destiny in a more romantic way

- Anglos triumph over others as destiny in order to spread freedom

#### 1900's (early) Progressive History

Writers focus on power struggles and the development of democracy.

- History as a series of struggles between the Haves and Have Nots
- The people must fight the elite
- Freedom, democracy, capitalism, are solutions to conflict

#### 1940's – 1980's Consent and Consensus History

Writers focus on shared ideas of the people rather than conflict

- Americans are united in their love of freedom
- History is evolution of ideas, beliefs, motivations
- Politics are in the center and really not as divided as once thought
- Capitalism is to be celebrated

#### 1950's – Present Conservative History

Writers focus on history serving as a moral guide.

- History is more about people than events
- Heroes should be celebrated
- Natural law governs events

#### 1960's-1970's New Left History

Writers focus on the parts of American history that have been overlooked.

- History should expose violence, racism, oppression.
- America is not a melting pot
- Individualists and rebels should be celebrated

#### 1980's – present People's History

Writers focus on common people and their experiences/viewpoints.

- History should be derived from primary sources like diary entries, letters
- Conflict is cultural, not moral or economic
- The ongoing struggle in America is trying to figure out how to live
- History should serve to help people better understand each other
- Global perspective is needed

## Analyzing Evidence, Interpreting Documents, and Synthesizing ●● Woodrow Wilson

Before answering the Short Answer Questions, read and analyze docs using your HIPP strategy. Remember to write your answer in complete sentences, and label them a.-b.-c. Your answers should stand alone, AFTP (Address The Full Prompt), and include at least one piece of specific historical evidence that cannot be found in the documents.

“...Despite the tragedy of his last year in office, Wilson left an enduring legacy. His transformation of the basic objective of American foreign policy from isolation to internationalism, his success in making the Democratic Party a ‘party of reform,’ and his ability to shape and mobilize public opinion fashioned the modern presidency. Under his leadership, Congress enacted the most cohesive, complete, and elaborate program of federal oversight of the nation’s economy up to that time: banking reform...tariff reduction...regulation of business...support for collective bargaining...aid to education and agriculture. Together, these programs helped the United States begin to catch up with what was happening in other industrial states around the world. They reflected a deep commitment to humanization of the industrial system and laid the basis for the modern welfare state. His wartime mobilization program became the model for the New Deal’s fight against the Great Depression in the 1930s and for Franklin Roosevelt’s mobilization during World War II. He was the first statesman of world stature to speak out not only against European imperialism but against the newer form of economic domination sometimes described as ‘informal imperialism.’ For repressed ethnic and national groups around the world, his call for ‘national self-determination’ was the herald’s trumpet for a new era...Domestically he was the most important transitional figure since Abraham Lincoln...[in foreign affairs], the vision of a world made safe and prosperous by the collective action of all nations, explains the enduring power of what former secretary of defense, Robert McNamara, called ‘Wilson’s ghost.’ The spread of freedom and democracy... would benefit everyone...”

Source: excerpt, *Impact and Legacy of Woodrow Wilson*, 2000

“...In his first term he pushed through a flurry of Progressive Era economics and regulatory reforms, and during the second he was hailed abroad as ‘the savior of humanity’... he has... become a target for an increasingly [criticized] as... the man at the helm when everything began to go wrong in America...Reformers like Wilson contended that a system of government established in the late 1700s for a smaller, sparsely populated country had become inadequate in a world of industrialization, immigration, international tensions and other developments the founders couldn’t have foreseen. Government therefore had to adapt. “The Constitution was not meant to hold the government back to the time of horses and wagons,” Wilson wrote in his scholarly tome *Constitutional Government in the United States* (1908). He deplored the way the branches of government checkmated each other to stall progress—or what he saw as progress—and admired the British parliamentary system as more efficient... this was a man *once* endorsed by legendary labor organizer Mother Jones and civil rights activist W.E.B. Du Bois, no less—primarily for two reasons. First, he held typically unenlightened views on race. Born in Virginia and raised in Georgia, he paid little attention to blacks’ legal or economic plight. As Princeton’s president, he refused to consider admitting black students at a time when Ivy League rivals Columbia and the University of Pennsylvania had begun to accept them. Later, as a president who gave considerable autonomy to his Cabinet members, many of them fellow Southerners, he acquiesced as they set about segregating the Postal Service, the Treasury Department and the Bureau of Printing and Engraving; during Wilson’s administration the number of black government employees actually declined. He also permitted a gala White House screening of D.W. Griffith’s hateful epic *The Birth of a Nation*, apparently as a favor to someone he had briefly attended school with; though he later tried to disassociate himself, the incident outraged the protesting NAACP. Black leaders subsequently declined to support his reelection. “We need scarcely to say that you have grievously disappointed us,” Du Bois wrote. [In addition, his support for the Sedition Act led to the limitation on civil liberties and imprisonment of many people including Eugene Debs.] John R. McArthur concluded, “The great proponent of democracy engaged in the most anti-democratic domestic crusade in American history. [Sedition Act]”...

Source: excerpt, “How did Wilson become the most hated President?” 2010, Paula Span

Using the excerpts above, answer (a), (b), and (c).

- Briefly explain ONE major difference between these two historical interpretations of Woodrow Wilson’s legacy.
- Briefly explain how ONE specific event, development, or circumstance in the period 1912-1945 that is not explicitly mentioned in the excerpts could be used to support the first view.
- Briefly explain how ONE specific event, development, or circumstance in the period 1912-1945 that is not explicitly mentioned in the excerpts could be used to support the second view.