

# Skill Set

Remember...

it is a *skill based* test!

Reviewing/studying the skills

is just as important as

reviewing the content!

## **DBQ DIRECTIONS**

**REMEMBER TO USE THE DBQ INSTRUCTIONS AS CHECKLIST WHEN PLANNING!!!! IT WILL HELP CONNECT YOU TO THE RUBRIC AND HELP YOU PLAN FOR MAXIMUM POINTS! *Be sure to get the points you know how to get! Use the lingo and cite your documents! Target at least four!***

***In your response you should do the following.***

- **Thesis:**  
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, either in the introduction or in the conclusion.
- **Contextualization:**  
Situate the argument by explaining the broader historical events, developments, or processes immediately relevant to the questions.
- **Use of Evidence:**  
Describe at least three of the documents to address the topic of your essay.  
Utilize the content of at least six of the documents to support the stated thesis or a relevant argument.  
Provide an example or additional piece of specific evidence beyond those found in the documents to support or qualify the argument.
- **Analysis and Reasoning:**  
Explain the significance of the author's point of view, author's purpose, historical context, and/or audience for at least three of the documents.  
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.

Thesis Formula for Causation

**Although X, Y because AB.**

*What are the major causes or consequences of “event” and what were the most important causes or consequences of “event”?*

**X** = least important cause or consequence, with an explanation why – linked to a theme or organizational category which will also be topic of first body paragraph

**A, B** = most important causes / consequences linked to Y, explanations why, broken into organizational categories

**Y** = your assertion statement (with any additional analysis depending on complexity of prompt)

**Remember if you are answering a Causation Prompt... you must evaluate... give value... Which cause or which effect was the MOST significant or GREATEST... Or which impact was SHORT term versus one that was LONG term.**

Thesis Formula for Comparison

**Although X, Y because AB.**

*What similarities and differences are there between/among two or more things, are there more similarities or differences, and why, account for those similarities or differences?*

**X** = less similar or different, your counter-argument – linked to a theme or organizational category which will also be topic of first body paragraph

**A, B** = more similar or different between the things linked to your Y, broken up into organizational categories

**Y** = your assertion statement (with any additional analysis depending on complexity of prompt)

**Remember if you are answering a Comparison Prompt... you must evaluate... give value... Did the items have MORE in common? (Similarities) Or, did they have MORE differences? Don't just describe how they were alike or different... evaluate significance and degree!**

Thesis Formula for Continuity and Change over Time

**Although X, Y because AB.**

*What are the major patterns of continuity or change over the time period and was there more continuity or change over that time period?*

*...make sure you **ATFP!** (Address the Full Prompt)*

**X** = continuity or change, what there was less of, your counter-argument explained thoroughly with reference to one of your events/reasons

**A, B** = continuity or change during the specified time period, what there was more of, linked to categories or events/reasons

**Y** = your assertion statement regarding more change or more continuity (and extent)

**Remember on CCOT essays, you will see lingo such as “foster change” and/or “maintain continuity.” They may only ask for one... address both anyway!**

**Remember with CCOT you must evaluate what there was MORE of... did it foster MORE change or maintain MORE continuity?**

## LONG ESSAY DIRECTIONS

**REMEMBER TO USE THE LONG ESSAY INSTRUCTIONS AS CHECKLIST WHEN PLANNING!!!! IT WILL HELP CONNECT YOU TO THE RUBRIC AND HELP YOU PLAN FOR MAXIMUM POINTS!**

**In your response you should do the following.**

- **Thesis:** Present a thesis that makes a historically defensible claim and responds to all parts of the question and presents a line of reasoning.
- **Contextualization:** Situate the argument by explaining the broader historical events, developments, or processes relevant to the prompt that occur before, during, or continue after the time frame of the question.
- **Application of Historical Thinking Skills:** Develop and support an argument that applies historical thinking skills as directed by the question. (they may identify and describe the skill be tested) Demonstrate historical reasoning and complex understanding of the historical development.
- **Supporting the Argument with Evidence:** Utilize specific examples of evidence to fully and effectively substantiate the stated thesis or a relevant argument.

*If you run out of time, be strategic and target at least 4 points that you know how to get!*

*If you feel your DBQ is weak... make sure you have time to earn 5 or 6 of these points to compensate!*

**SAQ--TIPS**

***Read the questions carefully. On the AP exam, you will likely only have one SAQ without documents. At least one SAQ will have two documents. If you have documents, remember to analyze it carefully and go beyond the obvious!***

1. Identify the **skills** and **topics**.
2. **Plan your answer before you write!** You have approximately 10-15 minutes per SAQ.
3. Write in **complete sentences**, and **separate your answers** (it is not one paragraph... it is three separate answers!)
4. Make concise points. *It is not an essay.*
5. **ATFP!** And **use the lingo** from the prompt!
6. **EXPLAIN HOW OR WHY!** Close the Loop!
7. If it says "ONE" ... **ONLY discuss ONE!** If you talk about three things, and one is incorrect and two are correct... you won't get the point!

*Do not skip any SAQs! Your GOAL is to answer at least 2/3 correctly!*

**Know your THEMES!****MAGPIES**

Migration (Internal and International)

America in the World (foreign policy)

Geography & Environment

Politics and Power

Identity (national and groups)

Economics (work, exchange, technology)

Society and Culture

**The objectives are thematic, and many of your questions will obviously be testing a skill in regards to one or more themes. If you know the themes and identify them in your questions, it will help you identify the correct MC answer, address SAQs more effectively, and write better essays (especially when you contextualize)**

## MULTIPLE CHOICE TIPS

### MC's...READ, ANALYZE, PLAN, ANSWER

1. **Read and analyze the document carefully.** Don't assume you know what it's about just by reading the first few lines or by looking at the title. Pay attention to details such as author, date, etc.  
*All of your multiple choice questions will be grouped with a document. Most will address the document in some way, but you may have a few questions that can be answered independently.*
2. **Read the question carefully. Pay more attention to the question than you do to the answers. Note the verbs!** If you know the era... make a note of it.
3. Identify the **skill, the theme, and the era.** If you understand what is being tested it may help you eliminate choices.
4. **Don't over-analyze!** They are not trying to trick you. Answers will likely emphasize a theme. **Know your MAGPIES and objectives!**
5. **Don't change your mind after you bubble!** *The odds are against you. Go with your first choice!*
6. There is **no guessing penalty.** If you are unable to eliminate choices, have a plan beforehand to guess the SAME letter on all questions that you cannot answer. **When in doubt, choose the longest answer.** Statistically... it barely beats out C as the most common answer. A has the lowest rate.
7. **Bubble as you go**... if you run out of time and haven't transferred your answers from your test book to your answer document... *yikes, don't go there!*
8. **If you have extra time, brainstorm & brain dump... what eras/events were NOT on the multiple choice? Your SAQs and Essays will not overlap topics/themes!**

### THE BIG THREE

*Your essay prompts will test one of the BIG THREE... Make sure you IDENTIFY THE SKILL and target it appropriately in your thesis and throughout your essay! Use the lingo, and don't get off track as you write!*

**Comparison** (*Compare and Contrast, similarities and differences*)

*ARE THEY MORE ALIKE OR MORE DIFFERENT?*

**IS THERE A QUALIFIER? IF SO USE IT!**

**Causation** (*Cause and Effect, reasons for and results of, impact of, led to, etc.*)

*WHAT IS THE MOST SIGNIFICANT CAUSE? LEAST SIGNIFICANT?*

*GREATEST IMPACT ON WHAT? SMALLEST IMPACT ON WHAT?*

**IS THERE A QUALIFIER? IF SO USE IT!**

**Continuity and Change over Time** (*foster change and maintain continuity*)

*DID IT MAINTAIN MORE CONTINUITIES OR FOSTER MORE CHANGES?*

**IS THERE A QUALIFIER? IF SO USE IT!**

*If a prompt seems to test more than one of the BIG FOUR, focus on the first skill and treat the secondary as an "add on" to your thesis and argument.*

### Contextualization

#### TIPS:

--Do NOT describe documents or use documents in your contextualization.

-- Do NOT defend your thesis... you are just setting the scene.

--Ask yourself, "Why are they asking me this question?"

--"What is going on in this era? What led up to this era/topic?"

--LC – Local Context = who, what, where, when

--BC – Broad Context = Big Picture

**--Shoot for at least 4 sentences... many students fail to get this point, because they do not thoroughly explain!**

-- Link your contextualization to the topic of the essay by saying, "This relates to (topic) because..."

### How to Reference the Documents in the DBQ Body Paragraphs

**DO NOT quote the documents. Go Beyond the Obvious! GBO!**

It is okay to have separate paragraph for each document, or you may group them. You *cannot* group them in order to *generalize* any one step, however.

**Step 1: Describe the document... GO BEYOND THE OBVIOUS AND DON'T QUOTE.** You can say "Document 1..." or use the name of the document. **Then... explain how it relates to the main topic of your essay, *Do this for every document, unless you are not targeting the use of six documents point.***

"Document #\_\_ shows/explains....

This document relates to \_\_\_\_\_ because..."

**Step 2: Use the HIPP strategy to analyze the documents.** Choose 4 to thoroughly source, even though you only need three according to the rubric. Remember you only need *one* of the HIPP. **Then... explain how or why the HIPP relates to your argument/thesis. (CLOSE THE LOOP)**

GO BEYOND THE OBVIOUS and explain how or why it is relevant to the argument.

**Tip: USE THE LINGO!**

"The \_\_\_\_\_ of document #\_\_ was.... because...." This is relevant to the argument that ... because..."

**Step 3: Apply your analysis to your essay.** *How does each document support your thesis or support an opposing view?* To get this point you must use *at least six* of the seven documents AS EVIDENCE to support your X or Y. I recommend you use all seven in case you don't get credit for one. **Start with step 1** (description and explanation of how it relates to the topic), and then **CLOSE THE LOOP**. ***If the document is one of the four you HIPPed, then start with steps one and two, and then close the loop.***

"Therefore, document #\_\_ supports the argument that ... because....."



**TIPS ON THESIS**

- A. **No Absolutes!** Do not say things like all, none, always, never... Absolutes are NOT historically defensible claims. History is GRAY. There is always an opposing view.
- B. **ATFP!** (Address The Full Prompt) Many students fail essays because they are not answering the question! **SLOW DOWN** in your preparation and ensure you addressing the entire prompt. Use the lingo of the prompt, include all topics and categories, and **target the skill!**
- i. Identify the skill being tested
  - ii. Identify qualifiers and categories
  - iii. Identify parameters of prompt and stay within it
- C. **FIRST PARAGRAPH!** The thesis CANNOT appear in the second paragraph.
- D. **BOTH SIDES!** Address both sides of the skill, even if the prompt only addresses one side.
- i. Comparison – similarities AND differences and what there was more of
  - ii. Causation – causes AND effects and which was greatest or more significant
  - iii. CCOT – continuities AND changes and which there was more of

**TIPS ON CONTEXTUALIZATION**

- A. **Link it!** After you set the scene – discussing a broad topic/event/development from the era... say, “This relates to the \_\_\_\_\_ (topic of essay NOT THESIS), because....” Make sure you explain how or why it is relevant to the topic.
- B. **Go Broad!** Go beyond the topic of the prompt, making a connection to an overarching theme or development that is relevant to the topic.
- C. **Do Not Defend Your Thesis!** The purpose of contextualization is to show understanding of overarching themes and developments from the time period or in reference to the topic. Your purpose here is NOT to defend your thesis. Don’t mention your thesis in these sentences.
- D. **Evidence!** You need at least ONE piece of specific, outside evidence not found in the documents within your contextualization.
- E. **Elaborate!** Your contextualization should be 3 to 5 sentences.
- F. **You are the Historian!** Do not say, “historians would characterize this era...” YOU are the historian. Do not say, “some may say...” We don’t care about the mysterious “some,” we only care about you!
- G. **The best strategy for contextualizing...**
- i. Start with a simple definition of the chosen topic (preferably from the era preceding),
  - ii. then go broad by linking it to a theme or general development in the era...
  - iii. then explain how that concept preceded or followed the era. [You are allowed to go beyond the parameters of the prompt in your contextualization, and this approach can help you avoid discussing topics that defend the thesis or are included in documents.]
  - iv. And, don’t forget to link it!

## TIPS ON OUTSIDE EVIDENCE

- A. ***Must Stand Alone!*** Do not add a sentence or two along the way expecting it to count as outside evidence. If you target this point, make it stand alone in its own paragraph. Start the paragraph with, “A piece of outside evidence that supports the argument...”
- B. ***Must Be Thoroughly Explained!*** This paragraph should be three to five sentences. You only need ONE piece of specific evidences NOT found in the documents... but you MUST explain HOW or WHY it supports your thesis.
- C. ***Your Evidence Cannot Be in your Thesis!*** Make sure your outside evidence is ADDING TO your overall argument... not an extension of the thesis or of a document.
- D. ***Close the Loop!*** End this paragraph with, “Therefore...” and explain how it supports your thesis!

## TIPS ON DOCUMENT POINT – DESCRIBING DOCUMENTS

- A. **Describe at least three (shoot for four) and Link to the Topic!** After you describe the document with one solid, complete sentence... **LINK IT** by saying, “This document relates to the \_\_\_\_\_ (topic-not thesis) because...” Make sure you explain how or why it relates.
- B. **Don’t Quote!** Go beyond the obvious and try to insert some sort of inference. This doesn’t have to be high level analysis but don’t just say, “Document one says that (insert quote).”

## TIPS ON DOCUMENT POINT – HIPPIING

- A. **Go Beyond the Obvious!** If you are simply pulling words from the source title or its contents, you are not analyzing. You must show the reader that you are INTERPRETING the document.
- B. **Use the Lingo!** Use the lingo from the four HIPP choices.  
 “The historical situation of document 1 was...”  
 “The author’s purpose in document 1 was...”  
 “The author’s point of view in document 1 was...”  
 “The intendant audience for document 1 was...”
- C. **If you choose audience or purpose, the odds are against you. These are difficult to do well. Think about historical situation and/or POV first. With POV, remember to identify the topic of the document and then try to identify a positive or negative POV toward that topic.**
- D. **Link to X or Y in your thesis!** Don’t just HIPP... add a sentence explaining how it is relevant to your thesis (your X or your Y). Say, “This context/purpose/POV/audience is relevant to.... Because...”
- E. **Don’t forget to explain HOW or WHY.** You want to show the reader HOW you figured out the HIPP. If you insert a quote to show how you figured it out, make sure the quote is very brief. Remember, quoting is bad form!
- F. **Don’t Repeat Yourself!** You can use the same HIPP for multiple documents, but you cannot say the same thing. Do NOT group and summarize. HIPP individually! Also make sure you do not have a replica statement addressing multiple documents. There is no double-dipping when it comes to skill points.
- G. **Remember if the document is a chart, graph, or map... your only option is historical situation!**

### TIPS ON DOCUMENT POINT – USING 6 TO DEFEND THESIS

- A. **No Grouping!** Do NOT group documents and then generalize how they defend your thesis. The only exception to this is if you are running out of time and have done all three steps for three documents. In that case, grouping three more and generalizing MIGHT help you get the point.
- B. **Don't Oversimplify!** Make sure you are clearly explaining the significance of the document as you defend your thesis. You cannot simply say, "Therefore document 1 supports the argument..." You must explain HOW or WHY in a sophisticated way.
- C. **Close the Loop!** There is no point in analyzing the documents if you are not fulfilling the purpose. The purpose of the essay is to present and DEFEND a thesis.
- D. **Don't Substitute the document for the topic of the essay!** Remember you are evaluating similarities and differences (comparison essay), continuities and changes (CCOT essay), or causes and effects (causation essay). Apply the skill to the topic in the prompt, NOT the topic of the document.
- E. **Don't sacrifice the first two document steps and points in order to go after this point!** This point is difficult to earn. Ensure you do NOT oversimplify steps 1 and 2.

### TIPS ON COMPLEXITY – three main strategies to ensure you get this point

- A. **Address both sides of the skill!** If the prompt only asks about one side of the skill... address both anyway!
- B. **Make sure your X in your thesis clearly identifies an opposing view or a lesser value, and support that X at least once in the body paragraphs.**
- C. **Add a paragraph explaining how two or more documents either corroborate each other or contradict each other.** Close the loop as you do this, and ensure you have two or three sentences just for this type of analysis.