

America's Rise to Power DBQ Practice

About Using Relevant Historical Evidence Appropriately

The ability to effectively incorporate document analysis into a historical essay will be a major component of the AP exam (Document Based Question), and the ability to make inferences and draw conclusions will be necessary when answering many short answer questions ...and most multiple choice questions as most will have some sort of primary or secondary source stimulus as well.

Before you analyze the documents, consider the following prompt:

Evaluate the relative importance of different causes for the expanding role of the United States in the world in the period from 1865-1910.

1. Define the parameters of this prompt, and characterize the era.

How would you describe the era?

The Era began in/with...

And ended with...

And was characterized by...

2. Which Big Three skill(s) is being tested in this prompt?

Remember to consider this before you plan! If you understand the skill being taught, you will be better prepared to write an essay addressing the skill!

1. **Historical Causation** (Explaining causes and/or evaluating impact of events)
2. **Patterns of Continuity and Change over Time** (Explaining how & why things change or remain the same)
3. **Comparison** (Explaining how and why events are similar and/or different)

3. How will you adapt your thesis formula to match the primary skill being tested?

Remember to break down the prompt, consider your formula, and ensure your thesis/introduction/argument is complete --ATFP—and complex! Some prompts touch on more than one skill. Consider this in adapting your formula.

Remember to READ the directions!

Use them as a checklist for your goal-setting and writing! The seven points are usually within the directions... shoot for at least four!

I recommend everyone go after thesis, contextualization, and the first two document step points.

Remember College Board recently replaced “historical context” for HIPP with “historical situation.”

USE THE LINGO!

Directions: Question 1 is 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. **Thesis Point**
- Describe a broader historical context relevant to the prompt. **Contextualization Point**
- Support an argument in response to the prompt using at least six documents. **Doc. Step 3 - 6 Documents as Evidence Point**
- Use at least one additional piece of specific historical evidence (beyond that found in the documents) relevant to an argument about the prompt. **Outside Evidence Point**
- For at least three documents, explain how or why the document’s point of view, purpose, historical situation, and/or audience is relevant to an argument. **Doc. Step 2 Point – Hipping and explaining relevance**
- Use evidence to corroborate, qualify, or modify an argument that addresses the prompt. **Complexity Point**

Doc. Step 1 Point – describing and relating was not in the directions last year!

4. Use the Three-Step Plan to analyze each document. The first one is completed for you as an example.

How to Reference the Documents in the DBQ Body Paragraphs

Most students fail to earn the document analysis points on the DBQ because they simply string together facts they pull from documents which results in story-telling. Never lose sight of your purpose: defending an argument/thesis! Using documents as evidence requires showing understanding of the content and then applying that understanding to the defense of your argument. Ask yourself questions such as, “How does this document address my prompt?” and “What is this document saying?”

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.
If you do group them, add a couple of sentences explaining how they corroborate or contradict each other. *This will help you get the complex analysis point.*

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...”
(Identify the number of the document you are describing and describe it GBO.) (Identify the main topic of your essay.) (Explain how or why it relates.)

Step 2: Use the HIPPA 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 HIPPA.*

Then... explain how or why the HIPPA 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...”
(purpose/POV/audience/historical situation) (Identify doc.) (Describe HIPPA.) (Explain how/why the HIPPA is evident.)
This is relevant to the argument that ... because...”
(Identify X or Y from your thesis or other relevant argument connected to it.) (Explain how or why the HIPPA relates to your argument/thesis)

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 HIPPAed, then start with steps one and two, and then close the loop.

“Therefore, document #__ supports the argument that ... because.....”
(Identify doc.) (State your X or Y from your thesis.) (Explain how or why it supports the argument.)

Evaluate the relative importance of different causes for the expanding role of the United States in the world in the period from 1865-1910.

Document 1

Source: Treaty concerning the Cession of the Russian Possessions in North America by his Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias to the United States of America, June 20, 1867.

His Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias agrees to cede to the United States, by this convention, immediately upon the exchange of the ratifications thereof, all the territory and dominion now possessed by his said Majesty on the continent of America and in the adjacent islands, the same being contained within the geographical limits herein set forth. . . .

The inhabitants of the ceded territory, according to their choice . . . may return to Russia within three years; but if they should prefer to remain in the ceded territory, they, with the exception of uncivilized native tribes, shall be admitted to the enjoyment of all the rights, advantages, and immunities of citizens of the United States, and shall be maintained and protected in the free enjoyment of their liberty, property, and religion. The uncivilized tribes will be subject to such laws and regulations as the United States may, from time to time, adopt in regard to aboriginal tribes of that country. . . .

In consideration of the cession aforesaid, the United States agree to pay . . . seven million two hundred thousand dollars in gold.

Document 1, Treaty concerning the Cession of the Russian Possessions in North America, describes the terms of United States' acquisition of Russian land in North America which is modern day Alaska. This relates to the topic of the United States' expanding role in the world, because it illustrates the continuation of expansion from east to west on the continent as well as reduced competition with other nations. The historical situation of this agreement in 1867 was post-Civil War Reconstruction and westward migration. This is relevant to the argument that territorial acquisitions were a cause of United States' expanding role in the world, because not only did the U.S. acquire Alaska it also expanded into the Great Plains largely due to the Homestead Act. Therefore, territorial expansion was a major cause for the expanding role of the United States in the world in the period from 1865-1900, because the emperor of Russia ceded a large area of land in North America which helped the U.S. increase its dominance on the continent and further expand its economy.

Document 2

Source: Josiah Strong, *Our Country: Its Possible Future and Its Present Crisis*, 1885.

It seems to me that God, with infinite wisdom and skill, is training the Anglo-Saxon race for an hour sure to come in the world's future. Heretofore there has always been in the history of the world a comparatively unoccupied land westward, into which the crowded countries of the East have poured their surplus populations. But the widening waves of migration, which millenniums ago rolled east and west from the valley of the Euphrates, meet today on our Pacific coast. There are no more new worlds. The unoccupied arable lands of the earth are limited, and will soon be taken. The time is coming when the pressure of population on the means of subsistence will be felt here as it is now felt in Europe and Asia. Then will the world enter upon a new stage of its history—the *final competition of races, for which the Anglo-Saxon is being schooled*. . . . Then this race of unequaled energy, with all the majesty of numbers and the might of wealth behind it—the representative, let us hope, of the largest liberty, the purest Christianity, the highest civilization—having developed peculiarly aggressive traits calculated to impress its institutions upon mankind, will spread itself over the earth.

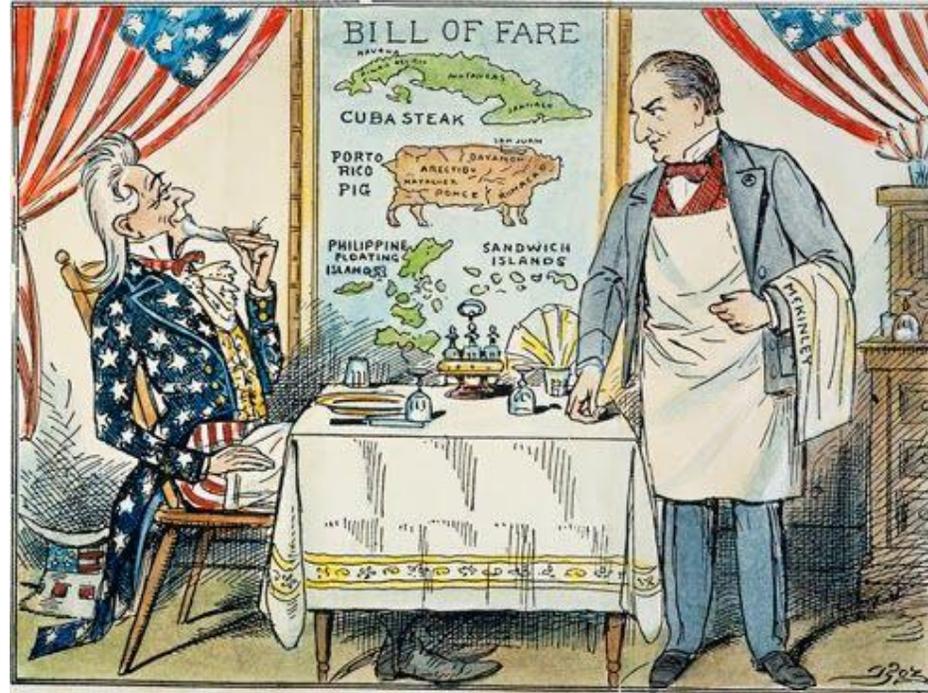
Document 3

Source: Captain Alfred Thayer Mahan, *The Interest of America in Sea Power, Present and Future*, 1897.

To affirm the importance of distant markets, and the relation to them of our own immense powers of production, implies logically the recognition of the link that joins the products and the markets,—that is, the carrying trade; the three together constituting that chain of maritime power to which Great Britain owes her wealth and greatness. Further, is it too much to say that, as two of these links, the shipping and the markets, are exterior to our own borders, the acknowledgment of them carries with it a view of the relations of the United States to the world radically distinct from the simple idea of self-sufficingness? . . . There will dawn the realization of America's unique position, facing the older worlds of the East and West, her shores washed by the oceans which touch the one or the other, but which are common to her alone.

Despite a certain great original superiority conferred by our geographical nearness and immense resources,—due, in other words, to our natural advantages, and not to our intelligent preparations,—the United States is woefully unready, not only in fact but in purpose, to assert in the Caribbean and Central America a weight of influence proportioned to the extent of her interests. We have not the navy, and, what is worse, we are not willing to have the navy, that will weigh seriously in any disputes with those nations whose interests will conflict there with our own. We have not, and we are not anxious to provide, the defence of the seaboard which will leave the navy free for its work at sea. We have not, but many other powers have, positions, either within or on the borders of the Caribbean.

DOCUMENT 4



Source: Boston Globe, May 23, 1898

Document 5

Source: John Hay, United States Secretary of State, The Second Open Door Note, July 3, 1900.

To the Representatives of the United States at Berlin, London, Paris, Rome, St. Petersburg, and Tokyo
Washington, July 3, 1900

In this critical posture of affairs in China it is deemed appropriate to define the attitude of the United States as far as present circumstances permit this to be done. We adhere to the policy . . . of peace with the Chinese nation, of furtherance of lawful commerce, and of protection of lives and property of our citizens by all means guaranteed under extraterritorial treaty rights and by the law of nations. . . . We regard the condition at Peking as one of virtual anarchy. . . . The purpose of the President is . . . to act concurrently with the other powers; first, in opening up communication with Peking and rescuing the American officials, missionaries, and other Americans who are in danger; secondly, in affording all possible protection everywhere in China to American life and property; thirdly, in guarding and protecting all legitimate American interests; and fourthly, in aiding to prevent a spread of the disorders to the other provinces of the Empire and a recurrence of such disasters. . . . The policy of the Government of the United States is to seek a solution which may bring about permanent safety and peace to China, preserve Chinese territorial and administrative entity, protect all rights guaranteed to friendly powers by treaty and international law, and safeguard for the world the principle of equal and impartial trade with all parts of the Chinese Empire.

DOCUMENT 6

Source: Puck, a satirical magazine, November 20, 1901
(Uncle Sam holding a soldier and a teacher in his hands)



Document 7

Source: President Theodore Roosevelt, Fourth Annual Message to Congress, December 6, 1904.

There are kinds of peace which are highly undesirable, which are in the long run as destructive as any war. Tyrants and oppressors have many times made a wilderness and called it peace. Many times peoples who were slothful or timid or shortsighted, who had been enervated by ease or by luxury, or misled by false teachings, have shrunk in unmanly fashion from doing duty that was stern and that needed self-sacrifice, and have sought to hide from their own minds their shortcomings, their ignoble motives, by calling them love of peace. . . .

It is our duty to remember that a nation has no more right to do injustice to another nation, strong or weak, than an individual has to do injustice to another individual; that the same moral law applies in one case as in the other. But we must also remember that it is as much the duty of the Nation to guard its own rights and its own interests as it is the duty of the individual so to do. . . .

It is not true that the United States feels any land hunger or entertains any projects as regards the other nations of the Western Hemisphere save such as are for their welfare. All that this country desires is to see the neighboring countries stable, orderly, and prosperous. Any country whose people conduct themselves well can count upon our hearty friendship. If a nation shows that it knows how to act with reasonable efficiency and decency in social and political matters, if it keeps order and pays its obligations, it need fear no interference from the United States. Chronic wrongdoing, or an impotence which results in a general loosening of the ties of civilized society, may in America, as elsewhere, ultimately require intervention by some civilized nation, and . . . the exercise of an international police power.

5. Now that you've planned, interpreted, and analyzed... start writing! Start with your introduction. Remember your formula and be sure to ATFP!

6. What piece(s) of outside evidence will you use in your body paragraph to further the defense of your argument? Remember you must have at least one piece of outside evidence in your body paragraphs that defends your argument **THAT IS NOT FOUND IN OR INFERRED BY A DOCUMENT. Write 3 or 4 sentences that explain this evidence and how it supports your thesis. If this evidence corroborates or contradicts one of the documents, include that analysis as well.**

7. Are you aiming for the complexity point? Consider TWO things... one is **Ping-Pong**... and the other is **document connections**. Can you connect two or more documents and explain how they are similar or different? Add two or three sentences doing so! Then consider a synthesis (Ping-Pong). What event or development from another era can you connect to? Consider one of the main ideas from your essay then ping-pong back and forth at least three times to your other item. Remember your synthesis needs to be several sentences.

