



Writing the DBQ: *Steps to Success*

Before you begin...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read the first page from top to bottom... • Directions • Historical Context • The Task!
THEme & THEsis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study the bullets in the Task • What do they have in common and how do they relate to the Historical Context? • Write one or more sentences (no more than there are bullets in the Task) that state what your essay will show and/or prove. • Remember to “write blind” – NO “I’s”...Do not speak directly to the reader.
OUTSIDE (Brainstorm)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you already know about the topic? • What knowledge do you already have that will help you answer the question? • Create a “web” or a “columns” graphic organizer inside the front cover of the DBQ booklet. • Be sure you do this BEFORE you look at the documents!
DOG (Documents)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with each document one at a time. • Determine what type of document it is. • PREVIEW: Read each scaffolding question and determine what type of and how much information will be needed to for a successful answer. • Read any text (captions, headings, titles, etc.) related to the document. • Mark it up! Use your <i>highlighter</i> to identify what is most important. • Answer in complete sentences.
VERY (Vocabulary)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Very Important!!</i> • Create your “hamburger” (your graphic organizer). • In the “menu” on your graphic organizer, list important terms and names you want to be sure to include in your essay. • Search the documents, your web, the historical context, and your brain for possibilities.
OFTEN (Graphic Organizer)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete your graphic organizer. • Be sure to include document numbers and outside information on each “patty.” • Each “patty” will become one paragraph in the body of your essay!
IGNORED (Introduction)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use information from the historical context. • Use your theme/thesis.
BIG (Body Paragraphs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be sure to have one paragraph for each bulleted item under the question. • Be sure to include information from the documents. • Make SPECIFIC REFERENCES to the documents! • Be sure to include outside information (things that are not already in the documents).
CATS (Conclusion)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revisit your theme/thesis. • Summarize your main ideas. • “Wrap it up” and “tie it together.”
As time allows... (Revise and Edit)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-read your essay from start to finish. • Try to read as a <i>reader</i>, not as the <i>writer</i>. • Try to “listen” to what you have written. If it doesn’t “sound” right, it probably isn’t! • Check spelling, capitalization, and punctuation. • Re-write as needed and as time allows.

