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The DBQ, or document-based-question, is a somewhat unusually formatted timed essay on AP history exams: AP History of the United States, AP European History and AP World History. Because of its indebtedness, many students are at a loss of how to prepare, let alone how to write a successful DBQ essay on the day of the test. Never fear! Me, the Wizard and Master DBQ, have a wealth of preparation strategies for you, as well as advice on how to bulk everything you need to cover in your limited DBQ writing time on the day of the exam. When you're done reading this guide, you'll know exactly how to write a DBQ. For a general overview of the DBQ, what is it, its purpose, its format, etc., see my article "What is a DBQ?" Content Table What should be my study timeline? Prepare for the DBQ Establish a Baseline Foundational Skills Breakdown Take another practice DBQ How can I succeed during Test Day? Read the question and documents Plan your Essay Write your Essay Key Takeaways What Should My DBQ Study Timeline Be? Your AP timeline search exam depends on some things. First, how long do you have to study a week, and how many hours do you want to study in total? If you don't have much time a week, start a bit earlier. If you can devote a considerable amount of time per week (10-15 hours) to prepare, you can wait late in the year. One thing to keep in mind, though, is that first you start studying for your AP test, less material you will have covered in class sure to constantly review the older material as the school year goes on to keep things fresh in your mind, but in terms of dbq prep probably makes no sense to start before February or January at the earliest. Another factor is how much you need to work on. I recommend you complete a basic dbq at the beginning of February to see where you need to focus your efforts. If, for example, you have a six out of seven and you have lost a point to further document analysis, you won't have to spend too much time studying how to write a dbq. Maybe you do just a document analysis exercise every few weeks and check a couple of months later with another dbq of practice timed to make sure you have. However, if you have two or three out of seven, you will know that you have more work to do, and you will probably want to devote at least an hour or two of every week to refine your skills. The general flow of your preparation should be: take a dbq practice, do the practice of focused skills, take another dbq practice, do the practice of focused skills, take another dbq practice, and so on. how many times you take the practice dbqs and how many times you repeat the cycle really depends on how much preparation you need, and how often you want to control your progress. take practice dbqs often enough that the format remains familiar, but not so much that you just did any skill practice between. He's ready to study! preparation for dbq the general process of preparation is to diagnose, practice, test andFirst, you will understand what you have to work on, setting a basic level for your DBQ skills. Then, the construction skills are practiced. Finally, you will take another DBQ to see how you have improved and what you still have to work on. In this next section, I will pass the whole process. First, I will give directions on how to establish a basic line. Then I'll take care of some simple, basic skills of writing essays and how to build them. Then I'll destroy the DBQ rubric. You'll have to practice DBQ before you know it! #1: Establish a basic line The first thing you have to do is establish a basic line, understand where you are about your DBQ skills. This will allow you to know where you need to concentrate your preparation efforts. To do this, you require a timed, practice DBQ and have a trusted teacher or a degree of consultant according to the appropriate rubric. AP US History For the AP US History DBQ, you will be given a reading period of 15 minutes and 45 minutes of writing time. A selection of practice applications from the exam can be found online at the College Board, including a DBQ. (Go to page 136 in the connected document for the practice prompt.) If you have already seen this practice question, perhaps in class, you could use the DBQ application 2015. Other DBQs available at the College Board will be in the old format (find them in the documents "Free-Response Questions"). This is good if you need to use them, but be sure to use the new rubric (which is on seven points of nine) to the degree. I recommend you to save all these links, or even download all free response questions and score guides, for reference because you will use them again and again for practice. AP European History For this exam, you will be given a reading period of 15 minutes and 45 minutes of writing time. The College provided practical applications for the exam, including a DBQ (see page 200 in the linked document). If you have already seen this question, the only other questions available through the College Board are in the old format, because the DBQ 2016 is in a new seven-point format identical to the AP US History exam. Just be sure to use the new DBQ rubric if you want to use one of the old tips provided by the College Board. (DBQs are in the documents entitled "Free-Response Questions".) I recommend you to save all these links (or even download all free answer questions and score guides) for reference, because you will use them again and again for practice. Who knows, maybe it's one of your papers! AP World History For this exam, you will be given a reading period of 15 minutes and 45 minutes of writing time. As for the other two history exams, the College provided practical questions. See page 166 for the DBQ. If you have already seen this question, the only other questions available through the College Board are in the old format, because the World History DBQ 2017 is in a new, seven-point format identical to AP USand ap european history exams. then, make sure you use the new dbq rubric if you want to use one of the old tips provided by the college board. (dbqs are in the documents entitled "Free-Response Questions.") I recommend you to save all these links (or even download all free response questions and score guides) for reference, because you will still and still enjoy them for practice. finding a trust historian to look at your documents a historian would be a great resource, but if they are not at your disposal in this capacity, here are some other ideas: ask a librarian of your school or public library! If they cannot help you, they may be able to direct you to the resources they can. You may also ask a school counselor to direct you to the school resources that you may hate. a tutor, this is particularly useful if they are familiar with the test, although although they are not, they can still recommend - the dbq is mainly testing the academic writing skills under pressure. Your parents! Once again, ideally your trusted advisor will be familiar with the ap, but if you have oated your parents to write help in the past they can also help here. you could try an old friend who has already taken the exam and did well...even if keep in mind that some people are better to do than score and/or explaining! can I prepare myself for my basic line? If you don't know anything about the dbq and you'd like to get some basic knowledge before you establish your baseline, that's fine, does not make sense in the practice examination if you are going to panic and enter through it; will not give a useful picture of your skills. for a basic orientation, check my article for a basic introduction to the dbq, including the dbq format. If you want to look at one or two sample essays, see my article for a list of dbq sample essay resources. Keep in mind that you should use a cool prompt you have not seen to establish your baseline, however, so if you look at samples do not use those tips to set your baseline. I would also like to check this page on the various task words associated with essay questions ap. This page was created mainly for the ap european history long by question, but the definitions are still useful for dbq on all history exams, especially because these are the definitions provided by the college board. once you feel oriented, do the practice exam! Don't worry if you don't do well to your first workout! That's why studying is, the point of establishing a basic line is not to make you feel bad, but to allow you to focus your efforts on areas you need to work on, even if you need to work on all areas, which is completely fine and feasible! every skill you need for the dbq can be built. in the following section, we will pass on to these skills and how to build them for each exam, you need a stronger foundation than this sand castle. #2: Developing foundational skills in this section, I will talk about the basic skills of wringneer to write a DBQ. I will begin with some general information about creating an effective thesis, as this is a skill you will need for any DBQ exam (and for all academic life). Then, I'll go over the essays that show us, with some ideas for the DBQ. After I've touched time management. Finally, it will briefly discuss how to integrate non-awkwardly information from your documents in your writing. It seems very, but not only are these vital skills for your academic career in general, they probably already have the basic blocks to master them in your arsenal! Writing an effective thesis Writing a good thesis is a skill you will have to develop for all your DBQs, and for any essay you write, on AP or other. Here are some general rules on what makes a good thesis: A good thesis makes more than re-examine the prompt. Let's say our class request is: "Analyzing the main factors that led to the French Revolution." Gregorio writes: "There were many factors that caused the French revolution" as his thesis. This is not an effective thesis. All he does is vaguely reaffirm the prompt. A good thesis makes a plausible statement that you can defend in a wise-length piece of writing. Maybe Karen writes: "Marie Antoinette caused the French revolution when she said 'Let the cake eat' because she made people angry." This is not an effective thesis, either. For one thing, Marie Antoinette never said. More importantly, how are you about to write an entire hour on an offhand comment of marie antoinette caused the entire revolution? This is both stackable and excessively simplistic. a good thesis answers the question. If Sideya writes, "the realm of terror has led to the definitive disappearance of the French revolution and, finally, has paved the way for Neapolitan bonaparte to take control of the franc," could be a reasonable, disable claim, but does not answer the question, which is not on what happened after the revolution, but what caused it! a good thesis makes clear where you are going in your essay. Let's say that juan writes: "The French revolution, as caused by a variety of political, social and economic factors, was mainly encouraged by the emergence of the highly educated bourgeois class." This thesis provides a mini-roadmap for the entire essay, which states that juan is about to discuss the political, social and economic factors that led to the revolution, in that order, and that he asserts that the members of the bourgeois class were the final motors of the revolution. This is a great thesis! string out historical information, and make a comparison with another historical situation or time (you will see these last points further explained in the breakdown column). Of course, all the organizational skills in the world will not help you if you can't write your entire essay over time. The next section will cover time management skills. You can be organized like this library! Time management skills for writing Essay Know all your writing skills of essays, but can't you get a DBQ essay together in a 15-minute planning period and 40-minute writing? There may be some things at stake here: Are you spending a lot of time fixing a blank sheet? If you feel like you don't know where to start, spend a couple of minutes brainstorming as soon as you read the question and the documents. Write something here, don't censor yourself, but nobody's gonna look at those notes, but you! After you have brainstorming for a while, try to arrange those thoughts in a thesis, and then in body paragraphs. It's better to start working and change things around than waste time agonizing that you don't know the perfect thing to say. Are you too eager to start writing, or is anxiety distracting you in the middle of your writing time? Do you feel overwhelmed? Are you just two-thirds of the way you cross your essay when it's been 40 minutes? You're probably spending too long on your profile, bitingMore than you can chew, or both. If you are spending 20+ minutes outlining, you must train to break down your account. Remember, a profile is just a guide for your essay—it is good to change things as you are writing. It doesn't have to be perfect. To reduce your schema time, practice just outlining for shorter and shorter time intervals. When you can write one in 20 minutes, bring down to 18, then down to 16. You could also try to cover too much in your paper. If you have five body paragraphs, you have to resize those to three. If you are spending twenty minutes writing two paragraphs of contextual information, you need to cut up to some relevant phrases. Be aware of where you are spending a lot of time, and target those areas. You don't know the problem, you can't do it! If you can't exactly figure out what takes you so long, I suggest you simply write DBQ in less time. Start with 20 minutes for your profile and 50 for your essay, (or more, if you need). Then, when you can do in 20 and 50, return to 18 minutes and 45 for writing, then to 15 and 40. You absolutely can learn how to manage your time effectively so that you can write a great DBQ in the allotted time. Next skill! Integration of quotations The final skill that is not explicitly covered in the rubric, but will make a great difference in the quality of the essay, is integrating document quotes in your essay. Inwards, how do you report information in documents clearly, not awkward? It is usually better to use the author or title of the document to identify a document instead of writing "Document A". So instead of writing "Document A describes the revolt as...", you might say: "In the description of Sven Svenson of the revolt..." When you quote a document directly without otherwise identifying it, you may want to include a parent-ethnic quote. For example, you could write: "The strikers have been described as 'true and true' by citizens of the working class of the city (Document E)." Are you looking for help studying for your AP exam? Our online AP tutoring services can help you prepare your AP exams. Get matched with a top tutor that has got a high score on the exam you are studying for! Now that we have examined the essential and fundamental skills of the DBQ, I will move into rubric failures. We will discuss every skill that AP degrades with rubric failures. However, sure you are not only summarizing documents in a list, but are binding them to the main points of your paragraphs. It's better to avoid writing things like: "The A document says X, and the B document says Y, and the C document says Z." Instead, you could write something like, "The anonymous author of document C expresses his support and admiration for suffragettes, but also expresses the fear that giving women the right to vote will lead to conflicts in the house, highlighting the common fear that the female suffrage would lead to the upheaval in the traditional role of women in society". Any summary should be linked to a point. Essentially, any explanation of what a document says must be linked to a "so what"? If it is not clear to you because what you are writing on a document is tied to your main point, it will not be clear to the AP degree. You can get another point here to do further analysis on 4 of the documents. This further analysis could be in one of these 4 sectors: Author's point of view - Why does the author think the way they do? What is their position in society and how does it affect what they are saying? The purpose of the author - Why is the author writing what they are writing? What are they trying to convince their audience? Historical context - What broader historical facts are relevant to this document? Audience - Who is the public destined for this document? Who is the author who addresses or tries to convince? Make sure to tie up further analysis again toMain topic! And remember, you have to do it only for four credit documents, but it's good to do it for more if you can. Does your school report your GPA as weighted or unweighted? What would be your GPA, considered on a scale 4.0, 5.0 or 6.0? Use our tool to calculate your unweighted and weighted GPA to figure out how they accumulate against other college candidates. You will also have our own college core GPA calculation and advice on where to improve to be a better college candidate. Practice document analysis So how do you practice document analysis? Analyzing documents! Luckily for AP Test personnel everywhere, New York State has an exam called Regents Exam which has its DBQ section. Before writing the essay, however, New York students must answer short questions about documents. Responding to Regents DBQ exam short answer questions are good practices for analysis of basic documents. While most of the questions are quite fundamental, it is a good heading in terms of thinking more deeply about documents and how to use them. This set of DBQ Regent-style from the Master's Program are mainly about US History, but practice could also be useful for other tests. This prompt from Morningside center also has some good document understanding questions on a US-history based prompt. Note: While the short response questions of the document are useful to think about the analysis of the basic documents, I would not recommend completing the Regents DBQ exam or practice, because the format and rubric are both a little different from the ap. your ap history textbook can also have documents with questions you can use to practice. Turn in these! history is ready to swim in the waters of the dbq, when you want to make a deeper dive on documents, you can also pull out those old college board dbq tips, read the documents carefully, write everything that comes to your attention. to do further analysis — viewpoint of the author, purpose, public and historical context — on all documents for the practice, although it will be necessary to do additional analysis only on four the test day, of course, you might not be able to do all kinds of additional analyses on things like maps and graphs, which is fine, you could also try to think about how you would arrange those observations in a topic, or even try to write a practice profile! This exercise combines your thesis and practice of document analysis skills. when you have analyzed everything you can think for all documents, pull up the score guide for that prompt, has an entire list of analysis points for each document. Consider what they have identified that you have lost. Do you look very out of your interpretation? If so, how did it happen? part c: use of the evidence beyond the documents - 2 points do not be frightened by the fact that this is two points! a point is only for the context, if it is possible to identify the problem within its wider historical you need to write different sentences to a paragraph on it, but not stress; all you need to know to be able to get this point is information about the main historical trends over time, and you will need to know this however for the multiple choice section. If the question concerns the dust bowl during the great depression, for example, make sure to include some of the general information you know about the great depression! Boom. contextualized, the other point is to name a specific and relevant example in your essay that does not appear in documents. to practice your external information skills, pull up your college board tips! read through the prompt and documents and then write all the facts contextualize and how many specific examples you can think of. I suggest timing yourself — maybe 5-10 minutes to read the documents and request and list your external knowledge — to imitate the dbq's time pressure. when you have exhausted your knowledge, make sure to check your examples and contextual information! you do not want to use incorrect information per day of the test. if you can't remember examples or contextual information about this topic, look for a little high! this will help you fill in holes in your knowledge. part d: synthesis - 1 point all you have to do for synthesis is refer your topic to this period of specific time to a different period of time, geographical area, historical movement, etc. is probably easier to do so in the conclusion of an essay. if your essay concerns the Great Depression, you may connect it to the Great Recession of 2007-2009. You need to do more than just mention the synthesis connection. You have to make it meaningful. How are the two things you're comparing like that? What does the other reveal? Is there a key difference that highlights something important? To practice your synthesis skills — you have guessed — press your college advice! Read through the prompt and documents and then identify which historical connections you could do for the synthesis point. Make sure to write a few words about why the connection is significant! A great way to make sure that your synthesis connection makes sense is to explain it to someone else. If you explain what you think the connection is and get it, you're probably on the right path. You can also look at sample responses and score guide for old tips to see what other students of connections and AP degrades did. It's a shell on the rubric! Let's move on to the skill creation strategy. Don't let the DBQ turn you into a fading ghost person, though. #4: Focus on Your Skill-Building Strategy You probably noticed that my advice on how to practice individual rubric skills is quite similar: pull out a prompt and do a timely exercise that only focuses on that skill. However, there are only 20 potential old College councils in the universe (sadly, if you are working on different skills, I recommend you combine your practice!What do I mean? Let's say, for example, that you are studying for the History of the United States and want to work on writing a thesis, bringing external information, and document analysis. Set the timer for 15-20 minutes, pull up a prompt, and write 3-5 potential these statements in response to the prompt Write all the historical contextual information you can think about, and some specific examples Write analytics notes on all documents. Then, when you pull up the Scoring Guide, you can check how you are doing on all those skills right now! This will also help you to prime for the test day, when you will have to combine all the rubric skills in a timed environment. That said, if you are overwhelming to combine too many exercises immediately when you are beginning in your study process, which is completely fine, you will have to put together all the skills, at the end, but if you want to spend time working on them individually at the beginning, it's fine too. So, once you establish your reference point and prepped for days, what do you have to do? Time to get another DBQ to see how you got better! I know you're tired, but you can do it! #5: Take another practice DBQ So, he established a basic line, identified the skills you need to work on, and practiced writing a thesis statement and document analysis for hours. What now? Take another time, practice DBQ from a prompt you didn't see before to check how you improved. Recruit your own trusted advisor to evaluate your exam andfeedback. After, work on any skill that still needs to be refined. Repeat this process as necessary until you are constantly scoring your goals score. Then you just have to make sure you keep your skills until the day of the test by doing an occasional DBQ practice. In the end, it will come the day of the test, read for my advice of DBQ-test-taking. How can I succeed at DBQ Test Day? Once you've predicted your brain, you still have to take the test! I know, I know. But I have some advice on how to make sure that all your hard work pays the test day, both general tips and some specific tips on how to write a DBQ. #1: Test-Taking General Tips Most of these are probably advice you've heard before, but they're up to repeat: Take a good night's sleep for the two nights before the exam. This will keep your memory sharp! Eat a good breakfast (and lunch, if the exam is in the afternoon) before the examination with protein and whole grains. This will keep your sugar in the blood from crashing and will make you tired during the exam. Don't study the night before the exam, if you can help him. Instead, do something relaxing. You're getting ready, and you'll have a much easier time during the exam if you're not stressed out trying to mass the night before. This guy knows he needs to rest a good night! #2: DBQ Plan and Strategies Below I explained how to use your time during the DBQ exam. I'll give you advice on reading your application and documents, planning your essay and writing! Make sure you keep an eye on the watchso you can monitor general progress. Read the application and documents: 5-6 min First thing: read the question carefully, two or even three times. You may want to circle the task words "analyze," "describe," "evaluate," "compare" to the right direction. You could also quickly discover some contextual information you already know before you go to documents, but if you can't remember right then, go to documents and leave them jog the memory. It's okay to have a general idea of a thesis after reading the question, but if you don't, go to the documents and let them guide you in the right direction. Then, go to the documents. Mark them as you read—circles things that seem important, joke thoughts and notes on the margins. After passing the documents once, you should choose the four documents that you are going to analyze more deeply and read them again. You will probably not analyze the purpose of the author for sources such as maps and graphs. The good choices are documents where the author's social or political position and the stakes in the problem are clear. Prepare to drop the rabbit hole of the document. Planning Your essay: 9-11 min Once you read the question and have preliminary notes on documents, it's time to start working on a thesis. If you're still not sure what to talk about, spend a minute or so brainstorming. Write themes and concepts that seem important and create a thesis from those. Remember, your thesisanswer the question and make a complaint! When you have a thesis, it's time to work on a profile. once you have some appropriate arguments for your body paragraphs, use notes on documents to popularize your profile. What documents do they support? you don't need to take every little thought you had on the document when you read it, but you should be sure to hate every document. here are three things to make sure: make sure that the profile notes where you are going to include the contextual information (often placed in the first paragraph of the body, but this is to you), your specific example (as in one of the body paragraphs.) and your synthesis (the conclusion is a good place for this.) make sure you have also integrated the four documents that you are going to analyze further and how to analyze them. make sure you use all the documents! I can't stress it enough, take a quick step on your profile and documents and make sure you all documents appear in your profile. If you go beyond planning time a couple of minutes, it is not the end of the world. This probably just means you have a very accurate profile! but be ready to write fast enough, write the essay - 45 min if you have a good profile, the hard part is off the road! You just have to make sure you have all your big ideas in the exam booklet. Don't be too mad to write a super exciting introduction, you will not get points for this, so try to be fancy but lose time. to spend on two sentences that introduce the problem, then get right to your thesis. For your body paragraphs, make sure you connect the thesis to the evidence you have in the documents. This guy knows he needs to rest a good night! #2: DBQ Plan and Strategies Below I explained how to use your time during the DBQ exam. I'll give you advice on reading your application and documents, planning your essay and writing! Make sure you keep an eye on the watchso you can monitor general progress. Read the application and documents: 5-6 min First thing: read the question carefully, two or even three times. 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This probably just means you have a very accurate profile! but be ready to write fast enough, write the essay - 45 min if you have a good profile, the hard part is off the road! You just have to make sure you have all your big ideas in the exam booklet. Don't be too mad to write a super exciting introduction, you will not get points for this, so try to be fancy but lose time. to spend on two sentences that introduce the problem, then get right to your thesis. For your body paragraphs, make sure you connect the thesis to the evidence you have in the documents. This guy knows he needs to rest a good night! #2: DBQ Plan and Strategies Below I explained how to use your time during the DBQ exam. I'll give you advice on reading your application and documents, planning your essay and writing! Make sure you keep an eye on the watchso you can monitor general progress. Read the application and documents: 5-6 min First thing: read the question carefully, two or even three times. 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