

Decolonization Dream and Reality

Colonial empires ended swiftly after 1945, but true independence proved far harder to achieve. Why?



Debating the DOCUMENTS

Interpreting Alternative Viewpoints
in Primary Source Documents

Decolonization Dream and Reality

The 2017 World History Course and Exam Description of the College Board Advanced Placement Program* lists five themes that it urges teachers to use in organizing their teaching. Each World History *Debating the Documents* booklet focuses on one or two of these five themes.

The Five Themes

- 1. Interaction between humans and the environment.** (demography and disease; migration; patterns of settlement; technology)
- 2. Development and interaction of cultures.** (religions; belief systems, philosophies, and ideologies; science and technology; the arts and architecture)
- 3. State-building, expansion, and conflict.** (political structures and forms of governance; empires; nations and nationalism; revolts and revolutions; regional, transregional, and global structures and organizations)
- 4. Creation, expansion, and interaction of economic systems.** (agricultural and pastoral production; trade and commerce; labor systems; industrialization; capitalism and socialism)
- 5. Development and transformation of social structures.** (gender roles and relations; family and kinship; racial and ethnic constructions; social and economic classes)

This Booklet's Main Themes:

- 3** State-building, expansion, and conflict.
- 5** Development and transformation of social structures.

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Teacher Introduction

★ Using Primary Sources

Primary sources are called “primary” because they are first-hand records of a past era or historical event. They are the raw materials, or the evidence, on which historians base their “secondary” accounts of the past.

A rapidly growing number of history teachers today are using primary sources. Why? Perhaps it’s because primary sources give students a better sense of what history is and what historians do. Such sources also help students see the past from a variety of viewpoints. Moreover, primary sources make history vivid and bring it to life.

However, primary sources are not easy to use. They can be confusing. They can be biased. They rarely all agree. Primary sources must be interpreted and set in context. To do this, students need historical background knowledge. *Debating the Documents* helps students handle such challenges by giving them a useful framework for analyzing sources that conflict with one another.



*“Multiple,
conflicting
perspectives are
among the truths
of history.
No single
objective or
universal account
could ever put an
end to this endless
creative dialogue
within and
between the past
and the present.”*

From the 2011 Statement on Standards
of Professional Conduct of the Council of
the American Historical Association.

★ *The Debating the Documents Series*

Each *Debating the Documents* booklet includes the same sequence of reproducible worksheets. If students use several booklets over time, they will get regular practice at interpreting and comparing conflicting sources. In this way, they can learn the skills and habits needed to get the most out of primary sources.

Each *Debating the Documents* Booklet Includes

- **Suggestions for the Student and an Introductory Essay.** The student gets instructions and a one-page essay providing background on the booklet's topic. A time line on the topic is also included.
- **Two Groups of Contrasting Primary Source Documents.** In most of the booklets, students get one pair of visual sources and one pair of written sources. In some cases, more than two are provided for each. Background is provided on each source. *Within each group, the sources clash in a very clear way.* (The sources are not always exact opposites, but they do always differ in some obvious way.)
- **Three Worksheets for Each Document Group.** Students use the first two worksheets to take notes on the sources. The third worksheet asks which source the student thinks would be most useful to a historian.
- **One DBQ.** On page 20, a document-based question (DBQ) asks students to write an effective essay using all of the booklet's primary sources.

★ *How to Use This Booklet*

1. Have students read “Suggestions for the Student” and the Introductory Essay.

Give them copies of pages 5–7. Ask them to read the instructions and then read the introductory essay on the topic. The time line gives them additional information on that topic. This reading could be done in class or as a homework assignment.

2. Have students do the worksheets.

Make copies of the worksheets and the pages with the sources. Ask students to study the background information on each source and the source itself. Then have them take notes on the sources using the worksheets. If students have access to a computer, have them review the primary sources digitally.

NOTE: If you are using these materials with an AP world history class, an honors class, or some other group of advanced and/or more knowledgeable students, you may want to make more written sources available to them on this topic. Do a basic Internet search for sources that provide additional perspectives and then add to the sources provided here.

3. “Debate the documents” as a class.

Have students use their worksheet notes to debate the primary source documents as a class. Urge students to follow these ground rules:

- Use your worksheets as a guide for the discussion or debate.
- Try to reach agreement about the main ideas and the significance of each primary source document.
- Look for points of agreement as well as disagreement between the primary sources.
- Listen closely to all points of view about each primary source.
- Focus on the usefulness of each source to the historian, not merely on whether you agree or disagree with that source’s point of view.

4. Have students do the final DBQ.

A DBQ is an essay question about a set of primary source documents. To answer the DBQ, students write essays using evidence from the sources and their own background knowledge of the historical era. (See the next page for a DBQ scoring guide to use in evaluating these essays.)

The DBQ assignment on page 20 includes guidelines for writing a DBQ essay. Here are some additional points to make with students about preparing to write this kind of essay.

The DBQ for this Booklet (see page 20):

Decolonization turned out to be far more difficult than many leaders of the anticolonial independence movements expected. Based on these sources, why do you think that was so?

- Analyze the question carefully.
- Use your background knowledge to set sources in their historical context.
- Question and interpret sources actively. Do not accept them at face value.
- Use sources meaningfully to support your essay’s thesis.
- Pay attention to the overall organization of your essay.

★ *Complete DBQ Scoring Guide*

Use this guide in evaluating the DBQ for this booklet. Use this scoring guide with students who are already familiar with using primary sources and writing DBQ essays.

Excellent Essay

- Offers a clear answer or thesis explicitly addressing all aspects of the essay question.
- Does a careful job of interpreting many or most of the documents and relating them clearly to the thesis and the DBQ. Deals with conflicting documents effectively.
- Uses details and examples effectively to support the thesis and other main ideas. Explains the significance of those details and examples well.
- Uses background knowledge and the documents in a balanced way.
- Is well written; clear transitions make the essay easy to follow from point to point. Only a few minor writing errors or errors of fact.

Good Essay

- Offers a reasonable thesis addressing the essential points of the essay question.
- Adequately interprets at least some of the documents and relates them to the thesis and the DBQ.
- Usually relates details and examples meaningfully to the thesis or other main ideas.
- Includes some relevant background knowledge.
- May have some writing errors or errors of fact, as long as these do not invalidate the essay's overall argument or point of view.

Fair Essay

- Offers at least a partly developed thesis addressing the essay question.
- Adequately interprets at least a few of the documents.
- Relates only a few of the details and examples to the thesis or other main ideas.
- Includes some background knowledge.
- Has several writing errors or errors of fact that make it harder to understand the essay's overall argument or point of view.

Poor Essay

- Offers no clear thesis or answer addressing the DBQ.
- Uses few documents effectively other than referring to them in “laundry list” style, with no meaningful relationship to a thesis or any main point.
- Uses details and examples unrelated to the thesis or other main ideas. Does not explain the significance of these details and examples.
- Is not clearly written, with some major writing errors or errors of fact.

Suggestions to the Student

★ *Using Primary Sources*

A primary source is any record of evidence from the past. Many things are primary sources: letters, diary entries, official documents, photos, cartoons, wills, maps, charts, etc. They are called “primary” because they are first-hand records of a past event or time period. This *Debating the Documents* lesson is based on two groups of primary source documents. Within each group, the sources conflict with one another. That is, they express different or even opposed points of view. You need to decide which source is more reliable, more useful, or more typical of the time period. This is what historians do all the time. Usually, you will be able to learn something about the past from each source, even when the sources clash with one another in dramatic ways.

★ *How to Use This Booklet*

1. **Read the one-page introductory essay.**

This gives you background information that will help you analyze the primary source documents and do the exercises for this *Debating the Documents* lesson. The time line gives you additional information you will find helpful.



2. **Study the primary source documents for this lesson.**

For this lesson, you get two groups of sources. The sources within each group conflict with one another. Some of these sources are visuals, others are written sources. With visual sources, pay attention not only to the image’s “content” (its subject matter) but also to its artistic style, shading, composition, camera angle, symbols, and other features that add to the image’s meaning. With written sources, notice the writing style, bias, even what the source leaves out or does not talk about. Think about each source’s author, that author’s reasons for writing, and the likely audience for the source. These considerations give you clues as to the source’s historical value.

3. **Use the worksheets to analyze each group of primary source documents.**

For each group of sources, you get three worksheets. Use the “Study the Document” worksheets to take notes on each source. Use the “Comparing the Documents” worksheet to decide which of the sources would be most useful to a historian.

4. **As a class, debate the documents.**

Use your worksheet notes to help you take part in this debate.

5. **Do the final DBQ.**

“DBQ” means “document-based question.” A DBQ is a question along with several primary source documents. To answer the DBQ, write an essay using evidence from the documents and your own background history knowledge.

Decolonization: Dream and Reality

In 1900, a map of the world with Great Britain in orange, France in purple, and Russia in green would have also displayed those colors across vast stretches of the world. The colors for Portugal, Germany, the Netherlands, Italy, Spain, Japan, and the United States would also have appeared in other spots around the globe. These were the imperial nations, those that controlled colonial territories beyond their borders (although Russia's many non-Russian lands were within its borders.)

On such a map, this age of empires appeared magnificent and seemed permanent.

Yet discontent among the colonized had always existed. By 1900, for example, the Indian National Congress was already agitating peacefully for India's independence from Great Britain. Violent clashes were also common within India, in many places in Africa, and in other colonized lands as well. Yet the superior military, technological, and economic power of the colonizers seemed unstoppable.

By 1945, however, the imperial powers had fought two horribly destructive world wars and endured the greatest economic crisis of the modern era. Their aura of unbeatable strength and of moral authority vanished. As these imperial powers lost confidence in their right and ability to rule other people, bold independence struggles arose in many colonial lands. In some cases, these took the form of violent guerrilla wars, as in Vietnam or Algeria. Yet in most cases, the transfer of power was peaceful, carried out in local parliaments and via negotiations between political parties and the colonial authorities. In historical terms, the colonial systems disintegrated rapidly. By the early 1970s, they had nearly all gone.

As decolonization proceeded, the former colonies proclaimed a new order of independence, freedom, and development. Such hopes are summed up well in a 1944 photo of India's Muslim League president Muhammed Ali Jinnah with his arms around Mohandas Gandhi (see

Visual Source Document 1). Gandhi, of course, had inspired millions around the globe with his philosophy of nonviolent resistance. In 1944, he could still dream of a united, harmonious India of Hindus, Muslims, and many others. Jinnah, however, decided that Muslims must have a nation of their own or be forever subordinate to India's Hindus. As a result, two nations emerged in 1947: India and Pakistan. As they separated, hundreds of thousands died in Hindu-Muslim violence that made Gandhi despair. In 1948, a Hindu fanatic assassinated Gandhi for trying to cooperate with the new Muslim state of Pakistan.

Complicating things for the newly independent nations was the Cold War rivalry between the pro-free market, capitalist Western powers and the communist and socialist systems of the Soviet Union and its allies. Former colonies were pulled both by the political rivalry itself and by the appeal of the two social and economic systems involved. In addition, long-suppressed ethnic and tribal loyalties in many colonies reappeared. Many groups refused to accept the ways of their newly independent nation-states or the elites ruling them. They longed for a return to a long-vanished past or sought new forms of state and society not tainted by the colonial legacy.

Establishing democratic systems based on the rule of law and with real protections of individual rights has not been easy. Military dictatorship or one-party rule has been all too common. Some see the problem as "neocolonialism"—the continuing corporate, political, and military influence of former colonial powers. Others see the problems as internal, with starkly differing traditional and ultra-modern ways of life clashing and producing huge income gaps and bewildering cultural tensions.

As a result, the reality of decolonization has been very different and much more complicated than the dreams many had for it. The sources here will help you better understand why.

Decolonization Time Line

1899–1901

• • •

The Boxer Rebellion erupts in China as anger at European-imposed “spheres of influence” boils over.

1911

• • •

A Chinese revolution ends the Qing Dynasty. The era of the Chinese Republic will last until 1949.

1914–1919

• • •

World War I tears Europe apart. In 1919, the Ottoman Empire is divided up into League of Nations “mandates” to be supervised by Western powers. The Treaty of Versailles voices the principle of national self-determination.

1917

• • •

The Bolshevik Revolution results in the creation of the Soviet Union, the world’s first communist state.

1919

• • •

British Indian Army soldiers open fire on an unarmed gathering of men, women, and children, killing 379. A storm of outrage in India fuels its independence drive and provides support for Mohandas Gandhi’s non-cooperation movement against the British in 1920.

1933

• • •

In the midst of the worldwide depression, chaotic conditions in Germany lead to the triumph of the Nazis and Hitler’s assumption of power.

1939–1945

• • •

World War II results in massive disruption of the world order. Japanese and Nazi imperialism and the Holocaust undermine faith in any sort of imperialism.

1944

• • •

The Bretton Woods conference establishes the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund to aid developing nations and stabilize the world financial system.

1945

• • •

The United Nations is founded. The same year, the long Indochina war begins as forces under Ho Chi Minh seek independence from France. France will give up the fight in 1954, after which it becomes a struggle between Ho’s Communists in North Vietnam and a South Vietnam backed by the U.S.

1947

• • •

British India is partitioned into two independent states, India and Pakistan.

1948

• • •

The UN passes its *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*.

1949

• • •

Mao Zedong leads the Communists to victory in China. Indonesia becomes independent of the Netherlands.

1954–1962

• • •

A bitter war for Algerian independence is fought.

1954–1969

• • •

A total of 54 former colonies gain independence.

1955

• • •

The Bandung Conference of nonaligned states meets in Indonesia.

1975

• • •

The Portuguese colonies in Africa and Asia become independent. North Vietnam conquers South Vietnam, ending the war there.

1976

• • •

Mao Zedong dies. China’s economic liberalization soon begins.

1991

• • •

The Soviet Union collapses after having lost control over the Eastern European communist regimes it had imposed there.

Visual Primary Source Documents 1–3

Document 1



The Granger Collection,
New York

Document 2



The Granger Collection, New York

Document 3



Albo, Shutterstock Inc.

Information on Documents 1–3

Document 1 shows Muhammed Ali Jinnah, the leader of the All India Muslim League, with Mohandas Gandhi in Bombay, India, September 9, 1944. Jinnah and other Muslim leaders worked with Gandhi and the Indian National Congress during the independence struggle. However, Jinnah and the Muslim League differed with Gandhi's desire for a unified nation of Hindus, Muslims, and others. Instead, independence resulted in the partition of British India into two nations, India and the Muslim nation of Pakistan.

Document 2. "A mountain to see you, sir," is the caption for this 1947 U.S. cartoon by D.R. Fitzpatrick. It comments on the success of Gandhi's campaign of non-cooperation with the British government in India to secure the country's independence.

Document 3. Children at school in Stone Town, Zanzibar, Tanzania. The area was a German colony until 1919. It was then administered by the British until it became independent in 1961 as Tanganyika. In 1964, it merged with Zanzibar to become Tanzania.

Visual Primary Source Documents 4–6

Document 4



Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division
POS 6 - China, no. 180 (C size)

Document 5



Geir Olav Lyngfjell, Shutterstock Inc.

Document 6



Kazi Mah-dee Hasan, Shutterstock Inc

Information on Documents 4–6

Document 4. This is a poster from around 1970 of a sculpture of African anticolonial guerrilla fighters. The poster was produced by the communist regime in China. It reads: “Resolutely support the struggle of the African people against colonialism and racial discrimination; irresistible historical trend: countries want independence, nations want liberation, the people want revolution.”

Document 5. Most African nations won their independence in the 1960s and 1970s. Yet even today, primitive economic conditions still persist throughout much of the continent.

Document 6. Many postcolonial societies today have pockets of modern, urban industrial life amidst ongoing general poverty. The advanced sectors may be tied in with the global economy, but many in these countries are left out entirely, as may be the case with this poor man sleeping on the streets in Bangladesh.

Study the Documents: Visual Sources 1–3

Instructions: Take notes on these questions. Use your notes to discuss the documents and answer the DBQ.

1 Main Idea—Docs. 1–3 _____

Taken together, these three sources could represent an idealized vision of the decolonization process as many hoped it would be. Briefly explain why.

2 Background Knowledge _____

The 1944 photo of Jinnah and Gandhi would probably have seemed strange to both of them by 1948. Based on what you know happened in India between 1944 and 1948, list some of the reactions you think each man would have had to the photo in 1948.

3 Cartoon Analysis _____

The cartoon seems to be making a point by showing “Indian Independence” as a huge mountain and Mohandas Gandhi is a small individual. What point do you think these visual features together help the cartoon make? What overall idea about the Indian independence movement does this cartoon seem to convey? What idea of the British authorities does it convey?

Study the Documents: Visual Sources 4–6

Instructions: Take notes on these questions. Use your notes to discuss the documents and answer the DBQ.

1 Background—Doc. 4

What do you know about China around 1970 that might explain why it would be producing anticolonialism sculptures and posters about Africa? In your view, does this source tell you more about the decolonization process in Africa, or about the Cold War rivalries of the time? Why?

2 Compare & Contrast 1

Study Visual Source Documents 2 & 4. Summarize the different views these illustrations convey of the decolonization process. Which one seems more accurate to you? Why?

3 Compare & Contrast 2

Study Visual Source Documents 5 & 6. In what ways do these sources show two very different aspects of the problems faced by postcolonial societies? Explain what overall challenge or challenges these images together illustrate.

Comparing the Documents

★ *The Visual Sources*

Answer the question by checking one box below. Then complete the statements on the Comparison Essay worksheet. Use all your notes to help you take part in an all-class debate about these documents—and to answer the final DBQ for the lesson.

Which of these primary source documents would be most useful to a historian trying to understand the process of decolonization in the twentieth century?

Document 1



The Granger Collection,
New York

Document 2



The Granger Collection,
New York

Document 3



Albo, Shutterstock Inc.

Document 4



Library of Congress, Prints and
Photographs Division,
POS 6 - China, no. 180 (C size)

Document 5



Geir Olav Lyngfjell, Shutterstock Inc.

Document 6



Kazi Mah-dee Hasan, Shutterstock Inc

Documents 1–3 ☐

Documents 4–6 ☐

Comparison Essay

I chose Documents _____ because:

*I did **not** choose Documents _____.*

However, a historian still might use the documents in the following way:

Keep this in mind: Some sources are very biased. A biased source is one that shows you only one side of an issue. That is, it takes a clear stand or expresses a very strong opinion about something. A biased source may be one-sided, but it can still help you to understand its time period. For example, a biased editorial cartoon may show how people felt about an issue at the time. The usefulness of a source depends most of all on what questions you ask about that time in the past.

Written Primary Source Document 1

Information on Document 1

Jawaharlal Nehru was India's first prime minister after independence in 1947. He placed great faith in the concept of "nonalignment" as a policy for the world's poorer nations recently freed from colonial control. These remarks of his are from a speech he gave in Washington D.C. on December 18, 1956. (Printed in the *U.S. Department of State Bulletin*, January 14, 1957, pp. 49–50).

Document 1

We are now engaged in a gigantic and exciting task of achieving rapid and large-scale economic development of our country. Such development, in an ancient and underdeveloped country such as India, is only possible with purposive planning. True to our democratic principles and traditions, we seek, in free discussion and consultation as well as in implementation, the enthusiasm and the willing and active cooperation of our people. We completed our first Five-Year Plan eight months ago, and now we have begun on a more ambitious scale our second Five-Year Plan, which seeks a planned development in agriculture and industry, town and country, and between factory and smallscale and cottage production. I speak of India because it is my country and I have some right to speak for her. But many other countries in Asia tell the same story, for Asia today is resurgent, and

these countries which long lay under foreign yoke have won back their independence and are fired by a new spirit and strive toward new ideals. To them, as to us, independence is as vital as the breath they take to sustain life, and colonialism, in any form, or anywhere, is abhorrent . . .

The preservation of peace forms the central aim of India's policy. It is in the pursuit of this policy that we have chosen the path of nonalignment in any military or like pact or alliance. Nonalignment does not mean passivity of mind or action, lack of faith or conviction. It does not mean submission to what we consider evil. It is a positive and dynamic approach to such problems that confront us. We believe that each country has not only the right to freedom but also to decide its own policy and way of life. Only thus can true freedom flourish and a people grow according to their own genius.

Written Primary Source Document 2

Information on Document 2

Document 2 is from a 2007 article on Robert Mugabe, the President of Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe had been the British colony of Southern Rhodesia and was later ruled for a time by its white-settler minority. Mugabe was one leader of the resistance that ended white rule in 1980. Starting in 2000, he began a chaotic land-redistribution program and took other ruthless measures against opponents. This article, “Standing Up to Mugabe,” appeared in *Commonweal Magazine: A Review of Religion, Politics and Culture*. © 2007 Commonweal Foundation, reprinted with permission.

Document 2

In fact, despite his fierce opposition to British involvement in his country, Mugabe is in many ways a textbook Anglophile. His rhetoric may be ferociously anticolonial, but he still wants his children to learn the manners of British royalty.

But Mugabe is a dictator—and a particularly dangerous one. First elected as prime minister in 1980, the 83-year-old former school teacher has slowly destroyed his country’s economy.

Zimbabwe was once the breadbasket of southern Africa but now depends on aid from the World Food Program, which estimates that 38 percent of the country’s population is malnourished. This hunger is not mainly the result of natural famine but of greed and maladministration. In 2000, President Mugabe’s government confiscated the land of the country’s remaining white farmers and, in the name of justice and decolonization, gave it to his friends and political supporters, most of whom knew little about agriculture. The farms were neglected or destroyed, while the urban poor went hungry, many of them fleeing to South Africa. As James Kirchick recently reported . . . Zimbabwean state-run television now

warns people not to set brushfires, which are being used to trap mice for food.

Mugabe and his cronies in the Zimbabwean African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) have often used hunger as a political weapon, directing aid to his party’s rank and file, withholding it from those who support the country’s beleaguered opposition party. Having made them hungry, he has also tried to make them invisible. In 2005 he began to “re-ruralize” a million Zimbabweans who lived in poor urban areas of Harare that voted against ZANU-PF candidates in that year’s parliamentary elections . . .

Zimbabwe’s catalogue of miseries is impressive, even by African standards. The rate of inflation is now well above 1000 percent, the highest in the world; it is expected to reach 4000 percent by the end of the year. This—and the 80 percent unemployment—make it hard, if not impossible, for the average Zimbabwean to buy even the most basic provisions. In 1990, the average life expectancy of Zimbabwean men was 62. Today, it’s 37, the lowest in the world, though three years above the life expectancy of women.

Study the Document: Written Source 1

Instructions: Take notes on these questions. Use your notes to discuss the documents and answer the DBQ.

1 Main Idea or Topic _____

In this statement, Nehru is very optimistic about the future of what he calls the “resurgent” former colonial lands. Choose three sentences that you think best explain why he is optimistic about the future for these nations.

2 Interpreting Meanings _____

Nehru speaks of the need for rapid development, saying “such development, in an ancient and underdeveloped country such as India, is only possible with purposive planning” and that this planning will also be “true to our democratic principles and traditions.” What do you think he meant by “purposive planning,” and why do you think he stressed a need to be true to democratic principles?

3 Audience, Author, Purpose _____

Nehru defends the idea of nonalignment, saying “Nonalignment does not mean passivity of mind or action, lack of faith or conviction. It does not mean submission to what we consider evil.” What do you think he means? How might the audience for this speech and the speech’s likely purpose explain his stress on this idea?

Study the Document: Written Source 2

Instructions: Take notes on these questions. Use your notes to discuss the documents and answer the DBQ.

1 Bias, or Point of View

This article accuses “Mugabe and his cronies” of destroying their country. Does this language suggest a bias, and does this bias make you skeptical of the article’s conclusions? Why or why not?

2 Drawing Conclusions

The article states “Zimbabwe was once the breadbasket of southern Africa but now depends on aid from the World Food Program, which estimates that 38 percent of the country’s population is malnourished.” What does this suggest about the causes of Zimbabwe’s problems? Does it suggest anything more general about the causes of problems facing postcolonial societies? Why or why not?

3 Compare & Contrast

How do you think Nehru would have explained the problems and failures of postcolonial life in Zimbabwe? Do you think events there would have caused him to reevaluate his own ideas, or would they have led him to adhere to those ideas even more strongly?

Comparing the Documents

★ *The Written Sources*

Answer the question by checking one box below. Then complete the statements on the Comparison Essay worksheet. Use all your notes to help you take part in an all-class debate about these documents—and to answer the final DBQ for the lesson.

Which of these primary source documents would be most useful to a historian trying to understand the process of decolonization in the twentieth century?

*Remarks by Indian
Prime Minister Jawaharlal
Nehru from a 1956 speech in
Washington D.C.*

Document 1

☐

*Part of
“Standing Up to Mugabe,”
a 2007 article on
Robert Mugabe, the
President of Zimbabwe*

Document 2

☐

Comparison Essay

I chose Documents _____ because:

*I did **not** choose Documents _____.*

However, a historian still might use the documents in the following way:

Keep this in mind: Some sources are very biased. A biased source is one that shows you only one side of an issue. That is, it takes a clear stand or expresses a very strong opinion about something. A biased source may be one-sided, but it can still help you to understand its time period. For example, a biased editorial cartoon may show how people felt about an issue at the time. The usefulness of a source depends most of all on what questions you ask about that time in the past.

Document-Based Question

Your task is to answer a document-based question (DBQ) on the process of decolonization. In a DBQ, you use your analysis of primary source documents and your knowledge of history to write a brief essay answering the question. Using all four sets of documents, answer this question. Below are two DBQs. The first is somewhat less demanding than the second. Use whichever DBQ your teacher assigns.

Document-Based Question

1

Decolonization turned out to be far more difficult than many leaders of the anticolonial independence movements expected. Based on these sources, why do you think that was so?

OR

2

“Given the harm the colonial powers inflicted on their colonized lands, it is easy to understand why decolonization has been and still is such a difficult challenge for the people of those former colonies.” Explain why you do or do not agree with this statement.

Below is a checklist of key suggestions for writing a DBQ essay. Next to each item, jot down a few notes to guide you in writing the DBQ. Use extra sheets to write a four- or five-paragraph essay.

- *Introductory Paragraph*
Does the paragraph clarify the DBQ itself? Does it present a clear thesis, or overall answer, to that DBQ?
- *The Internal Paragraphs—1*
Are these paragraphs organized around main points with details supporting those main ideas? Do all these main ideas support the thesis in the introductory paragraph?
- *The Internal Paragraphs—2*
Are all of your main ideas and key points linked in a logical way? That is, does each idea follow clearly from those that went before? Does it add something new and helpful in clarifying your thesis?
- *Use of Primary Source Documents*
Are they simply mentioned in a “laundry list” fashion? Or are they used thoughtfully to support main ideas and the thesis?
- *Concluding Paragraph*
Does it restate the DBQ and thesis in a way that sums up the main ideas without repeating old information or going into new details?

Worksheet Answers and Guidelines

Some worksheet questions call for specific answers to factual questions. In these cases, correct answers are provided here. Most worksheet questions are open-ended and call on students to offer their own interpretations and personal reactions. In those cases, we offer suggestions based on the purpose of the question and the sort of interpretive activity it calls for.

Worksheet 1

Visual Sources 1–3

1. The sources show the process as peaceful, cooperative, led by the people, resulting in improvements such as better education, etc.
2. Answers will vary, but should reflect the fact that the two men differed drastically over whether Hindus and Muslims could get along in India and that they parted ways over this, etc.
3. Answers will vary. These features could be taken to stress how one individual with moral force is able to have such a huge impact.

Worksheet 2

Visual Sources 4–6

1. China was still under Mao Zedong's rule at the end of the Cultural Revolution, when its revolutionary ideology was at its height. It was competing with the Soviets for support from former colonial lands, etc.
2. Answers will vary, but the contrast between mass peaceful protest and armed guerrilla warfare is a stark one.
3. The contrast is between very poor but traditional, communal rural society and modern urban settings with isolated individuals and huge gaps between rich and poor.

Worksheet 3

Written Source 1

1. Answers will vary. Discuss them in class.
2. Varying interpretations are possible, but purposive planning here is further explained by the concept of the government-guided socialist "Five-Year Plan." The references to democracy could reflect Nehru's awareness that socialist planning of this sort is hard to do democratically or without top-down authoritarian control.
3. He may be seeking to reassure an audience of U.S. officials that India's nonalignment will not mean a passive acceptance of Soviet actions that the U.S. might view as harmful or unjust.

Worksheet 4

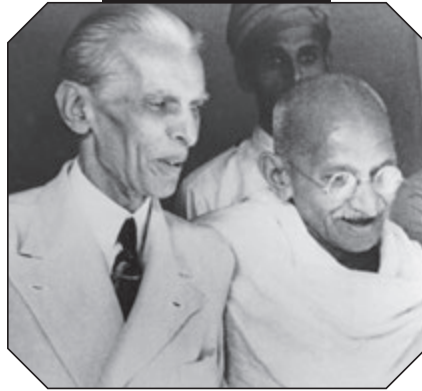
Written Source 2

1. Students will vary in seeing this as biased in a distorting or dishonest way, as opposed to a critical but honest and accurate description.
2. Some students could make the case that this is an extreme and an exception, while others may see it is evidence that postcolonial societies have problems that cannot simply be blamed on past injustices of colonial rule.
3. Answers will vary and should be discussed in class.

Visual Primary Sources

First Group—Documents 1-3

Document 1



The Granger Collection, New York

Document 2



The Granger Collection, New York

Document 3



Albo, Shutterstock Inc.

First Group—Documents 4-6

Document 4



Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division,
POS 6 - China, no. 180 (C size)

Document 5



Geir Olav Lyngfjell, Shutterstock Inc.

Document 6



Kazi Mah-dee Hasan, Shutterstock Inc

