

History
UNFOLDING

DBQ & ESSAY- WRITING PROGRAM

WORLD HISTORY, ANCIENT TIMES–1500



Teacher's Manual

Product Code: HS380TG

MindSparks
CHALLENGING STUDENTS TO THINK HISTORICALLY

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DBQ & Essay-Writing Program

World History, Ancient Times–1500

Teacher's Manual

History Unfolding

We are sure that teaching early world history makes a great many nearly impossible demands on you. Perhaps the biggest is the pressure you are under to cover a great deal of “content,” while at the same time giving your students the critical skills they need to analyze, understand, and appreciate that content.

History Unfolding is designed to help you succeed at that balancing act.

First, it gives your students the strategies and practice they need to develop three absolutely vital history skills:

- **Interpreting and using primary sources**
- **Mastering the art of answering “document-based questions”**
- **Writing effective history essays**

Moreover, the program provides this training in such a way as to fit smoothly into your ongoing course schedule. Early lessons are based on topics and primary sources you are most likely to be using early in your course. Later lessons draw on sources from the time periods you will cover toward the end of your course. The lessons are clear and ready to use. You won't have to divert time from the substance of the course to help students master these important skills. Training students in these skills becomes a part of your daily work, not a distraction from it.

Why a DBQ/Essay-Writing Program?

History teachers are more than ever using primary sources to promote a spirit of historical inquiry in their classrooms. Many states now include primary sources and document-based questions (DBQs) on state assessments. The need to help students interpret primary sources and master effective DBQ essay-writing skills is essential for student success.

MindSparks has developed a huge array of materials that focus on the use of visual primary sources. We now have a vast archive of visuals, and our booklet sets organize these into lessons designed to help you make the best possible use of such sources. In *History Unfolding*, we've added written sources to our visual archive to provide you with a ready-made set of all sorts of primary sources for this program's eight lessons.

The Eight Lessons

This Teacher's Manual is organized around eight lessons. Each of these lessons uses several brief exercise worksheets to help students master various strategies for interpreting primary sources, answering DBQs, or writing other kinds of history essays. The eight lessons are

1. Evaluating Evidence and Primary Sources
2. Analyzing Visual Primary Sources
3. Analyzing the Question
4. Developing a Thesis Statement
5. Outlining and Planning the Essay Structure
6. Writing the Introductory Paragraph
7. Writing and Linking Support Paragraphs
8. Writing a Strong Conclusion

Each lesson includes clear objectives and a listing of the key concepts and essay-writing strategies to be taught. Three pages of primary source documents are also provided. Many of these are visual primary sources (all visuals are from the MindSparks booklets that come with the program). Other sources are speeches, letters, magazine articles, etc. There are nine to eleven of these primary sources per lesson. Finally, and most important, several brief exercises are at the core of each lesson. All of these are based on that lesson's primary source documents.

The Instructional Approach

The exercises in *History Unfolding* reflect a consistent approach to instruction based on the following principles.

- 1. Organize instruction into small, easily manageable tasks.**
- 2. Give students clear definitions or models of correct and incorrect performance.**
- 3. Provide plenty of opportunity for practice.**
- 4. Give immediate and specific feedback.**

Students will get a good deal of writing practice in this program. However, the emphasis is not on practice simply for the sake of practice. The goal of each lesson is to teach students certain key concepts or strategies to use either in interpreting primary sources or in answering DBQs and writing other history essays.

The sequence of exercises within each lesson reflects this instructional approach. The first exercises in a lesson often simply ask students to answer questions about primary sources or to choose among good and bad models of some writing task. Later exercises direct students to edit or add to partially completed writing samples. At the end of most of the lessons, students get to apply the concepts or strategies taught in an essay of their own or in some other writing task.

The purpose of the exercises is to teach as well as test. Encourage students to pay close attention to the detailed instructions at the top of each exercise. These instructions define the basic strategies and concepts illustrated in the exercise. Often they also relate these concepts to what has been learned in earlier exercises.

Program Components

Sixteen Digital Image Sets

All the visual sources used in the program's lessons are taken from these sets. In other words,

You get a high-quality digital image of each visual primary source used in the program!

You may also use these sets throughout your entire course independently of this writing program. The sets start with the ancient river valley civilizations and deal with all the major time periods up to the sixteenth century CE.

The Teacher's Manual

The Teacher's Manual provides you with everything you need to guide your students through the lessons and exercises of *History Unfolding* and to evaluate their work effectively.

How the Teacher's Manual Is Organized

Each lesson in this Teacher's Manual includes the following:

A Teacher's Introductory Page

This page describes the primary sources for the lesson, states the goals of the lesson, and lists key concepts and strategies to be taught.

Exercise Summaries

A one-page or two-page summary of each exercise is provided. It will help to read or re-read each exercise in the student Handouts before looking over its summary here. The summary states the objectives of the exercise. It then gives you two sets of guidelines.

Points to Make with Students

The definitions and principles needed to understand the goal of the exercise are presented here. **Key points are in bold type.** You may want to write these on the board when introducing the exercise.

Evaluating Student Responses

Some exercise activities are open-ended or creative tasks for which there is no right answer. In these cases, we give you tips for how to use student responses to extend learning. In most of the exercises, one choice out of several is clearly correct, or at least preferable. In those cases, you get a detailed explanation of points to make about all possible choices.

Student Handouts

The teacher material for each lesson is followed by the student Handouts and Worksheets. These pages are easy to locate since they have a dark bar across the top (see following page).

The Lessons

Each lesson in this Teacher's Manual consists of . . .

1. Teacher Material on the Lesson

2. Reproducible Student Handouts and Worksheets

(These pages appear with the dark bar across the top.)

Teaching the Exercises

Lesson 1: Evaluating Evidence & Primary Sources

Exercise 4

Interpreting Primary Sources: Making Inferences—1

Objectives for the Exercise

To teach students the value of making reasonable inferences about sources.
To teach them that, while they can rarely be certain about any inference, they can still distinguish between reasonable and unreasonable inferences.

Points to Make with Students

An inference is a reasoned conclusion based on facts presented. **Usually, students must make inferences about a primary source in order to use it effectively.** Sources are generally created for reasons other than those that interest historians. It's rare for a source to describe the context or the era in which it was created. After all, it is directed at an audience that already knows about its own era. **Many important ideas or meanings are only implied in the source.** Students need to read carefully and with the eye of a detective, looking for all the clues that can reasonably be found in a document. Finally, it is important to stress that **making an inference is not the same as guessing or imagining.** Inferences are never absolutely certain. But students do need to apply basic logic. Any inference should be consistent with everything in the source and everything the student knows about the relevant time period. In this exercise, students judge some inferences about Document 6.

Evaluating Student Responses

Statement 1

A reasonable inference? Yes.

Direct observation indicates the marks are uniform and sharply etched.

Statement 2

A reasonable inference? No.

The clay tablet shows a script of some sort. It's reasonable to infer that it served some communicative purpose. However, by itself it indicates nothing about what that purpose might have been, let alone what the quality of that communication was.

Statement 3

A reasonable inference? Yes.

But this is a tentative "yes." Even a culture with paper might also have used harder surfaces to leave more permanent records. But it is less likely to have done so in this fashion if it had paper. The qualifying word "probably" here makes this inference reasonable. Remember, an inference is not the same as a conclusively proved statement of fact.

Statement 4

A reasonable inference? Yes.

The regularity of the marks on the tablet and their lack of any clear pictorial content would make this a reasonable inference even without any other knowledge about Sumerian cuneiform script.

Statement 5

A reasonable inference? No.

This inference is a bit more reasonable than number 2 above, since the tablets would be easier to use as a simple recording device than as "pages" of longer literary or poetic works. But again, without more information than the tablet alone provides, it is very hard to make inferences about the purpose of the writing.

Statement 6

A reasonable inference? Yes.

This avoids the guessing about the purpose of the writing. The nature of the medium itself (a script on a hardened tablet) suggests the keeping of a permanent record of some sort.

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Student Worksheet

Lesson 1: Evaluating Evidence & Primary Sources

Exercise 4

Interpreting Primary Sources: Making Inferences—1

You often need to make inferences about primary sources. An "inference" is a belief you come to accept based on other facts. For example, suppose you find milk spilled on the kitchen floor. You may "infer" that your brother spilled it—even though you didn't actually see him do this. This inference is logical and reasonable, yet it still may not be true. For example, the cat may have knocked over a glass of milk, not your brother. You can usually make many reasonable inferences from a primary source. But as this "spilled milk" example shows, you need to be careful about this. Be sure of all your facts and of what the primary source shows. **Use your background knowledge, and keep in mind what knowing about the source's "author, audience, and purpose" tells you.** If the inference still seems logical, you may be able to use it in your essay or answer.

Below are six statements about Document 7 (a clay tablet with cuneiform marks on it). Some of the statements are reasonable inferences; others are not—that is, they are not supported by Document 7. In the spaces provided, write "yes" or "no" for each statement that is or is not a reasonable inference about Document 7.

1. The ancient Sumerians had writing implements able to make precise marks in clay.

A reasonable inference? _____

2. The ancient Sumerians had produced a great body of literature and poetry.

A reasonable inference? _____

3. The ancient Sumerians probably had not learned how to produce paper.

A reasonable inference? _____

4. The ancient Sumerians had some sort of script or writing system.

A reasonable inference? _____

5. The ancient Sumerians used hardened clay tablets to record taxes and keep records.

A reasonable inference? _____

6. The ancient Sumerians had a need to keep permanent records of some sort.

A reasonable inference? _____

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Evaluating Evidence & Primary Sources

INTRODUCING THE LESSON TO YOUR STUDENTS

The aim of this introductory lesson is to give students some hands-on experience analyzing and interpreting primary sources. All of the primary sources for this lesson have to do in one way or another with the ancient river valley civilizations of Egypt, Mesopotamia, China, and the Indus valley.

Students will do some writing in this lesson. They won't, however, really begin to focus on DBQs and essay-writing skills until Lesson 3. The first two lessons in the program attempt to familiarize students with the problems involved in interpreting types of primary sources. This will certainly help them to answer DBQs. It will also aid in teaching them to think critically about the materials presented throughout their history course.

KEY CONCEPTS AND STRATEGIES

A number of key concepts and strategies will be presented in this lesson. These should help students think more effectively about primary sources and better understand what can and cannot be learned from such sources. The concepts and strategies include the need to

1. Analyze source reliability,
2. Learn to detect bias in sources,
3. Recognize the importance of background knowledge in interpreting any primary source,
4. Learn to make reasonable inferences about sources, and
5. Deal with and use sources that conflict.

THE MINDSPARKS VISUALS

Images for all the visual sources used in this lesson can be found in the digital files entitled *Ancient Mesopotamia*, *Ancient China*, *Ancient Egypt*, and *Ancient India*.

Exercise 1

Primary Sources: How Trustworthy or Reliable?

Objectives for the Exercise

To teach students to question the reliability of the primary sources they use.

To teach that source reliability depends, in part, on the question you ask of the source.

Points to Make with Students

A document is “reliable” if the evidence in it is dependable in some way. **To say a document is reliable does not necessarily mean it is truthful.** A cartoon’s distorted view of an issue, for example, could be reliable evidence of how people felt about that issue at the time.

A source can be “authentic” without being reliable. It’s authentic if it is what it claims to be. A letter supposedly from a famous figure is authentic if it in fact IS from that person. Yet it may be unreliable as evidence of what that person actually believed or did. Finally, **even a reliable document’s value to students depends on how they plan to use it.** That is, its value depends on what question the student is seeking to answer.

Evaluating Student Responses

Doc. 3 Best Answer: B

The choices here focus on the pitfalls of using a contemporary photo as evidence of past history. The photo records evidence that is itself hard to interpret. Archaeological ruins like these may give us evidence of what existed. But alone, they tell us little about why it existed or what it was for. And since the ruins are very old, we cannot know for certain even what the site originally looked like without much additional information.

Doc. 5 Best Answer: A

Choice B is wrong based on the information accompanying the illustration that indicates this was a wealthy couple. As for choice C, the artwork consists of highly stylized and standardized images that are not realistic, a general characteristic of Egyptian art.

Doc. 6 Best Answer: C

This photo is not of ancient rice paddies, but of modern ones. Hence it cannot be evidence for choice A. And as a photo of one hilltop, it cannot by itself be evidence of what “typical” land use patterns were (choice B). However, while not “typical,” this one steep hilltop does suggest a need to develop every inch of arable land to its maximum potential.

Doc. 8 Best Answer: A

Again, since Egyptian art is not realistic representational art, it cannot be depended on this way (choice B). And as for choice C, a visual source cannot tell us much in any direct way about the intentions or views of anyone other than the creator of that source. In this case, the pharaohs were in charge of the construction of such monuments. We can’t use them as evidence of what others thought.

Exercise 2

Primary Sources: How Biased?

Objectives for the Exercise

To teach students to detect various kinds of bias in the primary sources they use.

To teach them to see how a source's (1) author or creator, (2) its audience, and (3) its purpose can be clues as to possible bias and to a source's overall significance.

Points to Make with Students

Many primary sources are biased, or one-sided. That is they express a specific opinion or point of view about some topic. Sometimes this bias is easy to notice. That's true when a definite opinion is expressed openly or when emotional language or imagery is used. However, bias is often subtle and hard to detect. In either case, **it helps to pay close attention to the author or creator of a source, its intended audience, and the purposes for which the source was created.** By doing this, students will view the source as a living document meant to have a specific impact. This will also alert them to its possible bias. Finally, it is important to stress that **bias need not make the source less reliable.** A biased document can still teach the historian a great deal about a past era or event.

Evaluating Student Responses

The bias in these sources is not the kind so easily spotted in political cartoons or newspaper editorials. It is the bias that arises nearly always whenever ideas are expressed in written or visual form. It is the bias that comes from a slight emphasis of some features and not others in a statue or drawing, or in the way certain parts of a scene are given attention and others are not. In this sense, even a realistic photo can be seen as biased (this point will be dealt with in Lesson 2 as well).

In cases of such subtle bias, an analysis of the author, audience, and purpose should be especially useful. The knowledge that Document 5, for example, is of a painting in a tomb of a wealthy couple could alert students to the positive view the painting might present of the life of that couple. If students make a wide variety of choices of documents here (which is likely), you should be able to get a good discussion going about the various forms bias takes. You should also be able to point out that bias does not necessarily make a source unreliable or useless.

Exercise 3

Interpreting Primary Sources: Using Your Background Knowledge

Objective for the Exercise

To teach students that it takes a broad knowledge of the time period to be able to see a primary source's real significance and to use it effectively in a DBQ essay.

Points to Make with Students

Students' ability to understand a source depends on how much they already know about its time period. That is, **students must use their background knowledge to interpret any source**. Primary sources won't make much sense to anyone who knows little about the time in which they were produced. Without this knowledge, the documents will be "mute." They do not "speak for themselves." **Also, without background knowledge, students may have a tendency to list the documents in a random or unconnected way**. This is what produces the infamous "laundry list" style of referring to sources all too common in DBQ essays. By applying their background knowledge in interpreting the documents, students will be much more likely to use them effectively to deal with the question or problem raised by the DBQ.

We rarely notice how much our own background knowledge affects our view of a written document or visual source. This exercise should make that clear to students, especially if students come up with a wide variety of facts or trends in doing this exercise.

Evaluating Student Responses

The aim here should be to get as wide a variety of responses as possible. Some responses may be "wrong," in that some fact or trend might NOT actually add to an understanding of the particular document in question. But the goal should be to push students to see that what they know about the early river valley civilizations can help them gain a deeper understanding of these documents. Encourage students to go beyond simply identifying the figure in an illustration or the author of a written document. They should come to see how a broader knowledge of the nature of ancient Egypt, China, Mesopotamia or India will help them interpret these sources accurately and creatively.

Exercise 4

Interpreting Primary Sources: Making Inferences—1

Objectives for the Exercise

To teach students the value of making reasonable inferences about sources.

To teach them that, while they can rarely be certain about any inference, they can still distinguish between reasonable and unreasonable inferences.

Points to Make with Students

An inference is a reasoned conclusion based on facts presented. **Usually, students must make inferences about a primary source in order to use it effectively.** Sources are generally created for reasons other than those that interest historians. It's rare for a source to describe the context or the era in which it was created. After all, it is directed at an audience that already knows about its own era. **Many important ideas or meanings are only implied in the source.** Students need to read carefully and with the eye of a detective, looking for all the clues that can reasonably be found in a document. Finally, it is important to stress that **making an inference is not the same as guessing or imagining.** Inferences are never absolutely certain. But students do need to apply basic logic. Any inference should be consistent with everything in the source and everything the student knows about the relevant time period. In this exercise, students judge some inferences about Document 6.

Evaluating Student Responses

Statement 1 A reasonable inference? Yes

Direct observation indicates the marks are uniform and sharply etched.

Statement 2 A reasonable inference? No

The clay tablet shows a script of some sort. It's reasonable to infer that it served some communicative purpose. However, by itself it indicates nothing about what that purpose might have been, let alone what the quality of that communication was.

Statement 3 A reasonable inference? Yes

But this is a tentative "yes." Even a culture with paper might also have used harder surfaces to leave more permanent records. But it is less likely to have done so in this fashion if it had paper. The qualifying word "probably" here makes this inference reasonable. Remember, an inference is not the same as a conclusively proved statement of fact.

Statement 4 A reasonable inference? Yes

The regularity of the marks on the tablet and their lack of any clear pictorial content would make this a reasonable inference even without any other knowledge about Sumerian cuneiform script.

Statement 5 A reasonable inference? No

This inference is a bit more reasonable than number 2 above, since the tablets would be easier to use as a simple recording device than as "pages" of longer literary or poetic works. But again, without more information than the tablet alone provides, it is very hard to make inferences about the purpose of the writing.

Statement 6 A reasonable inference? Yes

This avoids the guessing about the purpose of the writing. The nature of the medium itself (a script on a hardened tablet) suggests the keeping of a permanent record of some sort.

Exercise 5

Interpreting Primary Sources: Making Inferences—2

Objectives for the Exercise

To teach students the value of making reasonable inferences about sources.

To teach them that, while they can rarely be certain about any inference, they can still distinguish between reasonable and unreasonable inferences.

Points to Make with Students

Since making inferences is such an important skill in using primary sources, here is another exercise asking students to judge valid and invalid inferences about one of the documents for the lesson. Again, urge students to be sure of their facts and of what the primary source itself shows. **Also, you may want to stress to them that it is a good idea to use their background knowledge in interpreting the source and to pay close attention to what they can infer from the source’s “author, audience, and purpose.”**

Evaluating Student Responses

Statement 1 A reasonable inference? Yes

The Code of Hammurabi is identified with a single ruler. And it is clearly presented as authoritative and not just as a set of suggestions. This implies an agency of some sort able to judge and punish wrongdoers.

Statement 2 A reasonable inference? Yes

This could be inferred from the fact that doing harm to a slave results in an economic punishment, whereas doing harm to a non-slave results in physical punishment.

Statement 3 A reasonable inference? No

The rules relating to the inheritance of a deceased woman’s dowry suggest her sons would be favored over her daughters.

Statement 4 A reasonable inference? Yes

Several of Hammurabi’s laws here provide very detailed punishments for crimes or mistakes involving the control of water.

Statement 5 A reasonable inference? No

One of the laws in Hammurabi’s Code does literally call for such a punishment. And it is true that some overall principle of punishment proportional to the crime seems to underlie some of the laws. But as a whole, the laws presented here do not make clear exactly what that principle is. For example, some of the property crimes result in punishments involving physical harm or death, whereas others result in a fine or payment of goods.

Exercise 6

Interpreting Primary Sources: When Sources Conflict

Objectives for the Exercise

To teach students to expect some primary sources to conflict with one another.

To teach that these conflicts require students to make their own judgments about the sources and qualify their own claims in their essays carefully.

Points to Make with Students

Many primary sources appear to offer views in conflict with one another. Some simply express differing opinions about an issue, event, or trend. Others assert entirely different facts about these issues, events, or trends. In answering a DBQ, this means **students need to make judgments about which source is more reliable, more useful, or more typical of the time period.** Conflicting sources can be a problem. But these conflicts can also be helpful, especially if the student is trying to understand the varying viewpoints that existed on some controversy in the past. In any case, such conflicts should alert the student to **be cautious in making sweeping statements** about what the sources prove.

Evaluating Student Responses

None of the primary sources for this lesson conflicts with one another in obvious ways. In some cases, however, they express quite different ideas or or illustrate different scenes, thereby making it hard to come up with a single sweeping generalization about the period.

For example, Documents 1, 2, 5, and 6 might make it hard to reach any general conclusion about agricultural or land-use practices in the ancient river valley civilizations as a group. Documents 8, 9, and 10 all suggest in different ways fairly authoritarian systems of rule in these civilizations, but there are subtle differences among them as well.

OBJECTIVES

1. To learn to evaluate the reliability, the bias, and the usefulness of primary source documents.
 2. To use your history background knowledge to understand and make inferences about primary source documents.
-

Evaluating Evidence & Primary Sources

The primary source documents for this lesson are displayed on the next three pages. All of the exercises for this lesson are based on these primary sources and the background information provided here.

**THE PRIMARY SOURCES
AND THE EXERCISES****INTRODUCING THE LESSON**

The primary sources for this lesson all have to do with the ancient civilizations that grew up along major rivers in Eurasia or, in the case of ancient Egypt, in North Africa.

These sources could be used to write a complete essay about these ancient river valley civilizations. However, in this lesson, we do not give you a document-based question (DBQ) asking you to focus on all ten of the sources. You will deal with DBQs and other essay questions in later lessons. The aim of this lesson is to help you think more carefully about primary sources themselves. Learning to work with such sources is a skill. The exercises for this lesson will help you learn to work with primary sources and better understand what you can and cannot learn from them.

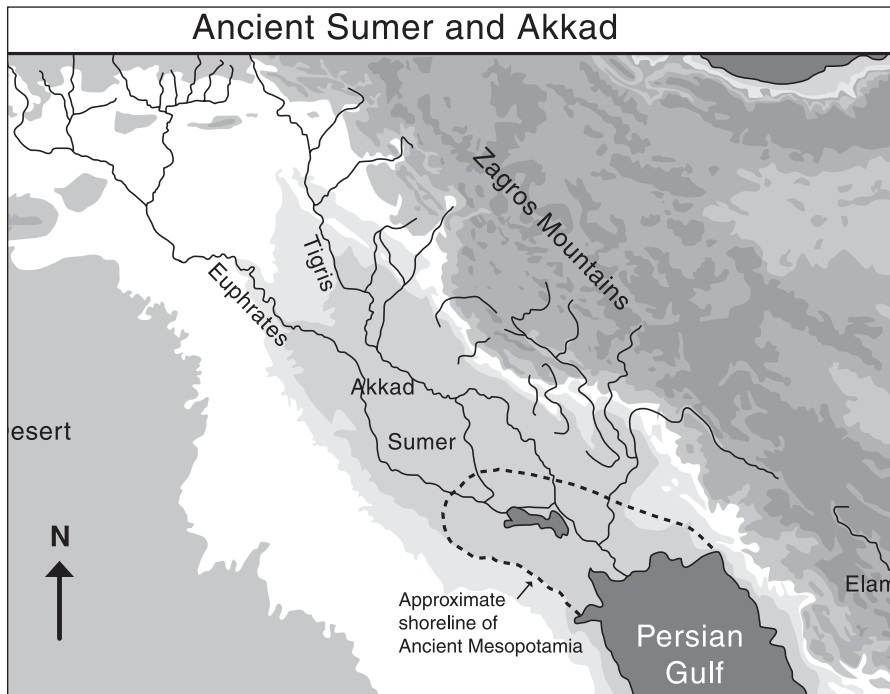
**KEY CONCEPTS
AND LEARNING STRATEGIES**

Basically, the exercises will focus your attention on the following broad concepts and strategies in analyzing primary sources:

1. You need to decide how **reliable** or trustworthy a primary source is. That is, how accurate it is or how dependable the information or evidence in it is.
2. You need to decide how **biased** or one-sided a source is—and whether or not it is still useful in spite of, or because of, its bias.
3. You need to use all your **background history knowledge** in interpreting, or making sense of, any primary source.
4. You need to make reasonable **inferences**, or logical conclusions, about sources.
5. You need to deal with and use **sources that often conflict** with one another.

The Documents

The Ancient River Valley Civilizations



Document 1

A topographical map of Mesopotamia several thousand years ago when Sumer and other ancient civilizations thrived there.

Documents 2, 3 & 4

On the left is a contemporary scene from the valley of the Indus River, where the Indus civilization grew up. On the right are two photographs of the ruins of ancient Harrapa, one of the two key cities of the ancient Indus civilization. The large curved wall in the center photo may have been part of a large central drain. Lower down may have been a well and bathing area. The photo on the right is a covered drain to collect household wastes and drain streets.

© David A. Burack

2



3



4

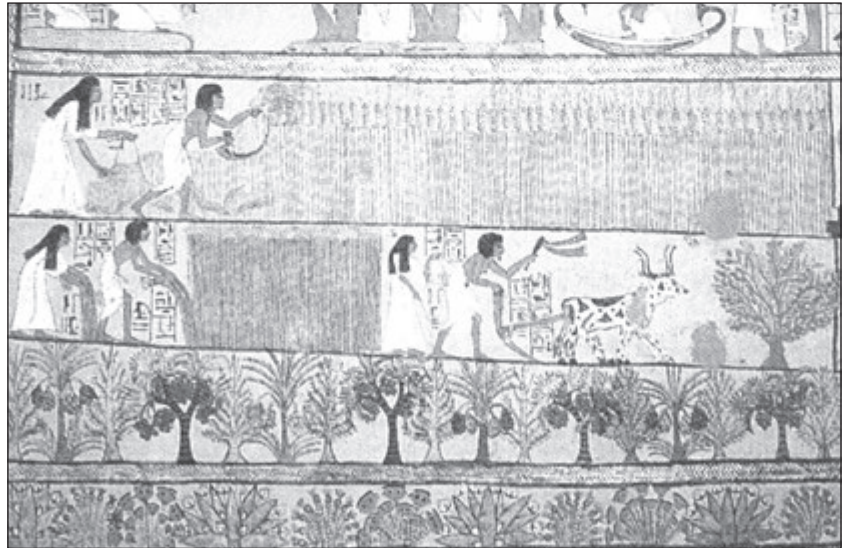


The Documents

Document 5

A wall painting from the tomb of a wealthy Egyptian showing him and his wife harvesting wheat, pulling up reeds, and engaging in other agricultural pursuits.

Graham Harrison



Document 6

A photo of terraced rice paddies in a hilly region of southern China.

© Keren Su/CORBIS



Document 7

Sumerian cuneiform script scratched with a wedged-tip instrument into a hardened clay tablet.

© Gianni Dagli Orti/CORBIS

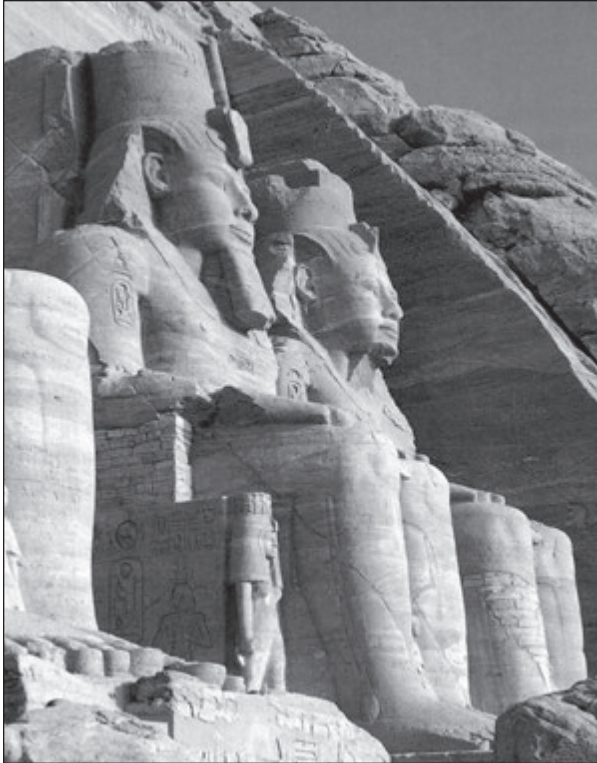


The Documents

Document 8

Two huge statues of the pharaoh Ramesses II outside his temple at Abu Simbel.

Graham Harrison



Document 9

If a son strike his father, his hands shall be hewn off.

If a man put out the eye of another man, his eye shall be put out.

If he put out the eye of a man's slave, or break the bone of a man's slave, he shall pay one-half of its value.

If anyone is committing a robbery and is caught, then he shall be put to death.

If anyone steal a water wheel from the field, he shall pay five shekels in money to its owner.

If anyone open his ditches to water his crop, but is careless, and the water flood the field of his neighbor, then he shall pay his neighbor corn for his loss.

If a man marry a woman and she bear sons to him; if this woman then dies, then her father shall have no claim on her dowry; it belongs to her sons.

Specific laws from the Code of Hammurabi, a king who in the 18th century BCE created a vast empire including what had been Sumer and much of the rest of Mesopotamia.

Document 10

Scribes kept many written records for the pharaohs, especially about the land, crops and animals of his subjects. This made tax collecting much easier. Here a man is punished for failing to pay his taxes.

© Bettmann/CORBIS



Exercise 1

Primary Sources: How Trustworthy or Reliable?

Primary sources are records from the past. But this does NOT mean they can always tell you exactly how “it really was” in the past. You need to evaluate such sources carefully to be able to learn things from them. For example, one important question you need to ask of every primary source is this:

How trustworthy or reliable is this source? In other words, can you depend on it to give you information that you can use to answer the specific DBQ or essay question you have been given? Keep in mind that a reliable source need not be accurate or truthful. An inaccurate report, for example, may still be reliable as evidence of what people believed at the time.

This exercise will help you think about source reliability. Four of the lesson’s documents are listed here. Next to each are three statements about the document’s trustworthiness or reliability. For each document, choose the one statement you agree with most. Mark your choice in the space provided. Discuss your choices in class.

- Doc. 3** **A.** The document is reliable evidence of what Harrapa looked like in 2000 BCE.
B. The document is reliable evidence of some kind of a drainage system in ancient Harrapa.
C. The document is reliable evidence that Harrapans bathed every day in order to keep clean.

Your Choice _____

- Doc. 5** **A.** The document is reliable evidence of ancient Egyptian agricultural practices.
B. The document is reliable evidence of what life was like for most Egyptians.
C. The document is reliable evidence of what this particular couple looked like.

Your Choice _____

- Doc. 6** **A.** The document is reliable evidence of rice paddy terracing techniques in ancient China.
B. The document is reliable evidence of typical land-use patterns in China today and in the past.
C. The document is reliable evidence of a strong drive in China to use all available agricultural land as efficiently as possible.

Your Choice _____

- Doc. 8** **A.** The document is reliable evidence of Egyptian ideas about their pharaohs.
B. The document is reliable evidence of what Pharaoh Ramesses II looked like.
C. The document is reliable evidence of how well-loved Ramesses II was by his subjects.

Your Choice _____

Exercise 2

Primary Sources: How Biased?

Official documents, paintings, drawings, diary entries, ads, photos, and other primary sources are often created by people with specific goals and strong personal opinions. **This can make a source one-sided, or “biased.”** Sometimes this bias is easy to notice—as when an author states a point of view strongly. But more often, the bias is harder to detect. It can be found as much in what is left out as in what is included. Bias can be expressed simply by including some facts while leaving others out. In a visual source it can be shown by an exaggerated or a distorted perspective, or by a selective emphasis on some details in a scene but not others.

You can also get important clues as to bias by noting the **author or creator** of the source, their **purpose in creating that source**, and the **audience** for the source. To help you think about this, choose two documents from those for this lesson. Choose one that is clearly and strongly biased and one that seems biased but in a much less noticeable way. Then answer the questions below.

1. Clearly Biased: Document _____

Why do you think this document is biased? _____

A. How might knowing about the author or creator of the document help explain its bias?

B. Who was the intended audience of the document, and how might that help to explain its bias?

C. For what purpose was the document created, and how might that help to explain its bias?

2. Bias Harder to Detect: Document _____

Why do you think this document is biased? _____

A. How might knowing about the author or creator of the document help explain its bias?

B. Who was the intended audience of the document, and how might that help to explain its bias?

C. For what purpose was the document created, and how might that help to explain its bias?

Exercise 3

Interpreting Primary Sources: Using Your Background Knowledge

Sometimes, you can understand a primary source even if you know nothing about its time period. But this is rare. Usually, **you must use your background knowledge of the historical period to help you interpret, or make sense of, the source.** Keep this in mind when answering a DBQ. The primary sources won't make much sense if you do not already know something about the time in which they were produced. That is, the documents do not "speak for themselves," and it is not enough just to mention them in laundry list fashion. You need to use your background knowledge to interpret the documents and explain how they help answer the DBQ.

You often won't even notice how much your own background knowledge affects your understanding of a source. This exercise may help you see this better. Study each document for this lesson and think about what a person needs to know to understand that document fully or be able to use it in a history essay. In the space provided below, write down two facts or broad trends from ancient history that help explain each document. As a class, share your lists to see how much background knowledge it takes to properly interpret these primary source documents.

Doc. 1 1. _____

2. _____

Doc. 2, 3 & 4

1. _____

2. _____

Doc. 5 1. _____

2. _____

Doc. 6 1. _____

2. _____

Doc. 7 1. _____

2. _____

Doc. 8 1. _____

2. _____

Doc. 9 1. _____

2. _____

Doc. 10 1. _____

2. _____

Exercise 4

Interpreting Primary Sources: Making Inferences—1

You often need to make inferences about primary sources. An **“inference”** is a **belief you come to accept based on other facts**. For example, suppose you find milk spilled on the kitchen floor. You may “infer” that your brother spilled it—even though you didn’t actually see him do this. This inference is logical and reasonable, yet it still may not be true. For example, the cat may have knocked over a glass of milk, not your brother. You can usually make many reasonable inferences from a primary source. But as this “spilled milk” example shows, you need to be careful about this. Be sure of all your facts and of what the primary source shows. **Use your background knowledge, and keep in mind what knowing about the source’s “author, audience, and purpose” tells you.** If the inference still seems logical, you may be able to use it in your essay or answer.

Below are six statements about **Document 7** (a clay tablet with cuneiform marks on it). Some of the statements are reasonable inferences; others are not—that is, they are not supported by **Document 7**. In the spaces provided, write “yes” or “no” for each statement that is or is not a reasonable inference about **Document 7**.

1. The ancient Sumerians had writing implements able to make precise marks in clay.

A reasonable inference? _____

2. The ancient Sumerians had produced a great body of literature and poetry.

A reasonable inference? _____

3. The ancient Sumerians probably had not learned how to produce paper.

A reasonable inference? _____

4. The ancient Sumerians had some sort of script or writing system.

A reasonable inference? _____

5. The ancient Sumerians used hardened clay tablets to record taxes and keep records.

A reasonable inference? _____

6. The ancient Sumerians had a need to keep permanent records of some sort.

A reasonable inference? _____

Exercise 5

Interpreting Primary Sources: Making Inferences—2

Making inferences is easily one of the most important skills needed to write effective essays answering DBQs. Often the best ideas you can get from a source are those you infer from it. Therefore, you need to interpret your sources. That is, you need to look at them closely and think about the clues they may contain on the topic of the DBQ. Since making inferences about sources is so important, here is another exercise asking you to do it.

Again, be sure of all your facts and of what the primary source shows. **Use your background knowledge, and keep in mind what knowing about the source’s “author, audience, and purpose” tells you.** If the inference seems logical, you may be able to use it in your essay or answer.

Below are five statements about **Document 9** (laws from the Code of Hammurabi). Some of the statements are reasonable inferences; others are not—that is, they are not supported by **Document 9**. In the spaces provided, write “yes” or “no” for each statement that is or is not a reasonable inference about **Document 9**.

1. The people to whom this code was directed lived under some sort of government that tried to control behavior through a system of general rules.

A reasonable inference? _____

2. In Mesopotamia during the time of this code, slaves were considered property and had less protection under the law than non-slaves.

A reasonable inference? _____

3. Women under Hammurabi’s rule had the same rights within the family as men.

A reasonable inference? _____

4. Rules regarding the control and distribution of water were very important at the time of this code.

A reasonable inference? _____

5. This code of law was based on a single idea of justice that could be summed up as “an eye for an eye.”

A reasonable inference? _____

Exercise 6

Interpreting Primary Sources: When Sources Conflict

Sometimes primary sources conflict with one another. In other cases, they simply do not seem to fit with one another in any clear way. In other words, they give you evidence that could lead to different or even opposing conclusions about a time period. This can be a problem when answering a DBQ based on several primary sources. It is a problem every historian faces. Sources rarely all agree with one another. This means that you need to make some decisions—about which source is more reliable, more useful or more typical of the time period. It also means you must be cautious in making sweeping statements about what the sources prove. (That’s why historians usually say things such as, “For the most part, we know that . . .,” instead of, “We know for certain that . . .”)

From the documents for this lesson, choose two that you think conflict or do not fit with one another. In the space below, write a paragraph or two describing the documents you have chosen. Explain why you think these documents do not fit or agree with one another. Then write another paragraph in which you try to explain how such conflicting sources could have come from the same historical time period.

Analyzing Visual Primary Sources

INTRODUCING THE LESSON TO YOUR STUDENTS

This lesson narrows the focus of the first lesson a bit by concentrating on the unique challenges of using various kinds of visual primary sources. Nine visual sources are provided for this lesson—paintings, drawings, and photographs.

Young people are often told theirs is a “visual generation.” They may think that this makes them especially skillful at handling and interpreting visual information. By and large, they are wrong about this. Most visuals are instantly interesting and motivating as learning tools, it is true. However, this does not mean they are easy to mine for historical meaning. The exercises in this lesson offer students a chance to practice some analytical skills they will need to effectively interpret visual primary sources in the history class.

The visuals for this lesson all illustrate religious events or ideals from various historical cultures. Here, the images are used mainly to clarify certain general problems in using visual sources. Again, no single DBQ is offered on all of the sources. Instead, the aim is to help you teach students to think critically about visual primary sources in general.

KEY CONCEPTS AND STRATEGIES

A number of key concepts and strategies will be presented in this lesson. These should help students think more effectively about visual primary sources of all sorts. The concepts and strategies include the need to

1. Recognize the unique emotional power of the visual image,
2. Notice the selective nature of the viewpoint of most visuals,
3. Be aware of how one’s own knowledge and values shape one’s interpretation of any visual image,
4. Learn to analyze the formal features of visuals, not just their content, and
5. Become familiar with the special “language” of editorial cartoons, including symbol, metaphor, and size and shape distortion.

THE MINDSPARKS VISUALS

Images for all the visual sources used in this lesson can be found in the MindSparks units entitled *Ancient Egypt*, *Christendom: After Rome’s Fall*, *Christendom: The High Middle Ages*, *India: The Mauryas to the Mughal Empire*, *Civilizations of Africa and the Americas*, and *Clan, Emperor, Shogun: Japan in the Middle Ages*.

Exercise 1

The Power of the Visual Image

Objective for the Exercise

To teach students that the emotional power of the visual image can make visuals vivid and dramatic, but can also distort the truth as well as clarify it.

Points to Make with Students

Visual images often seem to have a life and power of their own. On the one hand, the realism and/or drama of many visual images is what makes them so interesting. They can help us imagine the past as it was actually lived and help us feel what it was like to live in another culture. On the other hand, the “realistic” quality of many visual images can be a problem. Even when we know for certain that a photo, ad, or painting is not real, we still often respond to it as if it were. This gives it a power to affect and influence us even when what it shows us is false, distorted, or biased. This exercise will help students think about the emotional power of the visual image. It will alert them to be on guard against the ability of images to manipulate and fool us. In this way, students will become more critical and more able to use visual primary sources for the truly valid information they often contain.

Evaluating Student Responses

In this exercise, students are simply asked to think about how visual images trigger emotional reactions that can influence judgment. All of the images have to do with religion, and many of them evoke strongly held religious convictions. This is often just as true of a seemingly straightforward and realistic photograph as of a sculpture or drawing. As you discuss the students’ notes, try to point out how even seemingly realistic images have a power to shape responses, distort understanding, and manipulate the viewer. The notes and discussion here can then be extended to the other exercises for this lesson.

Exercise 2

The Visual Image: Always a Selective View—1

Objectives for the Exercise

To teach students that visual images almost always provide a selective view of reality, not reality itself.

To teach students to be on guard for the bias often resulting from this visual selectivity.

Points to Make with Students

Visual images often seem to show us what something is “really” like. A crisp clean photo can give you a sense of being there on the spot. Yet this is an illusion. Visual images offer “mediated,” or altered, views of reality, not reality itself. **Moreover, a visual display almost always provides a limited, or selective, view of its subject.** It reveals some things and leaves out others. The selectivity is often hard to notice, especially when you only have one visual image to analyze. Features can be exaggerated or distorted. The setting can be atypical. **The selectivity of the image can conceal a strong bias.**

Evaluating Student Responses

These points should be easy to grasp in this exercise, in which students are asked to compare three very different images of Christianity in Europe before the modern age. Each visual focuses on a very different aspect of Christianity or its history. Therefore, the selectivity of their viewpoints should be easy to notice. By having to choose just one of the three, students will have to study all of the images closely to decide which one gives the most representative or useful view of Christianity in these centuries. Their responses should be evaluated on how clearly they identify the selective viewpoints embedded in each image. Document 3, for example, depicts a vigorous and triumphant Christianity closely linked with the power of the state, in the form of the Roman empire. Document 4, showing the interior of a Gothic cathedral, conveys a sense of Christianity as a rather majestic and mysterious force. Document 5 stresses its more humble and self-sacrificing spirit in a view of the repentant and saintly Francis.

Exercise 3

The Visual Image: Always a Selective View—2

Objectives for the Exercise

To teach students that visual images almost always provide a selective view of reality, not reality itself.

To teach students to be on guard for the bias often resulting from this visual selectivity.

Points to Make with Students

This exercise deals again with the selectivity of visual sources. The same points made regarding Exercise 2 apply here as well.

Evaluating Student Responses

The selective nature of visual images should be even easier to focus on here. After all, both Documents 8 and 9 are of statues of the Buddha. However, they select very different aspects of these statues for emphasis. Students should be evaluated on how well they explain their choices in terms of these different selective viewpoints. Document 8 conveys a sense of the awe and devotion shown toward the figure of Buddha by adherents, and it also calls attention to the great adaptability of Buddhism throughout Asia. Document 9, a close-up of the mysterious smile on one statue of Buddha, evokes the more serene and personal spiritual quest that is at the heart of Buddhist thought.

Exercise 4

Visual Sources: You “See” What You Know

Objective for the Exercise

To teach students that a person’s own knowledge and values heavily influence the way he or she “sees” and interprets any visual image.

Points to Make with Students

Most visual primary sources are carefully constructed images designed to produce a specific reaction in the viewer. The first three exercises for this lesson focused on how certain aspects of the image help to do this. This exercise shifts the focus from the image to the viewer. Visual images are often so powerful and immediate in their effect that we seem to react directly and simply to what we see and only to what we see. We never realize how much **our own knowledge and experience shapes our understanding of what we see.**

This exercise may help students understand this better. The most important point to stress with them is the need to apply as much background knowledge as they can to the analysis of primary sources of all sorts.

Evaluating Student Responses

Document 1

This ancient Egyptian drawing depicts the “weighing of the heart” ceremony central in Egyptian religious mythology. In it, a person who has died is judged by the god Osiris. Here, the deceased person on the left is being brought in by the jackal-headed god Anubis. The person’s heart is weighed on a scale against the feather of Ma’at, the goddess of truth. Thoth, the Ibis-headed god of scribes, records the results. If the heart weighs the same as the feather, the person is found worthy and is brought before Osiris, on the right. If not, the sinner will be punished. He might even be destroyed by the swallowing monster seated under the scale. Obviously, without a good deal of detailed knowledge, viewers of this drawing are unlikely to make much sense out of it.

Document 3

The illustration depicts a key turning point in the history of Christianity. The description next to the illustration in the student handout sums up the details of the event itself. In addition to these (and no matter what the truth of the story), a viewer needs to know that Constantine did turn away from the pagan gods of Rome, and he did convert to Christianity. He was the first Roman emperor to do so. Three centuries of Roman persecution of Christians came to an end. Later, Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire. All of this background is needed in order to make real sense of the image or understand its significance.

Exercise 5

Interpreting Visual Sources: Think about Form as Well as Content—1

Objectives for the Exercise

To teach students to examine all aspects of any visual primary source, not just its overt content.

To teach them that the formal features of an image affect its meaning in major ways.

Points to Make with Students

An image is a “mediated,” or coded, form of communication. That is, it is not the real thing, it is a representation of that thing. And it constructs that representation through the use of color, shading, cropping, camera angle, painting styles, sharpness or softness of focus, composition, gestures, dress styles, and all sorts of symbols that add significance to the content. **The word “form” or “formal” is used here for all the features that enable the image to represent its subject or content.**

This is a very important point to make with students. Often, the value of a visual primary source in a DBQ essay will have more to do with these formal features than with the content of the image alone. In this exercise, students will focus on those formal visual features that most often affect the meaning and impact of a photograph.

Evaluating Student Responses

Document 2

Here the upturned angle and the cropping of the photo both add to the viewer’s sense of the size and intimidating authority of these huge statues. The sharp shadows give them depth and enhances the dramatic effect. Together, these formal features work to reinforce what was undoubtedly the original aim of the builders of these monuments—to evoke in viewers a sense of awe at the majesty and power of the pharaoh.

Document 9

The most noticeable formal feature here is the cropping. By focusing in on the Buddha’s smile, the photo forces the viewer to react to the subtle emotional power of the statue and the inner meaning of Buddhist spirituality for the followers of this religion.

Exercise 6

Interpreting Visual Sources: Think about Form as Well as Content—2

Objectives for the Exercise

To teach students to examine all aspects of any visual primary source, not just its overt content.

To teach them that the formal features of an image affect its meaning in major ways.

Points to Make with Students

This is a follow-up exercise on the formal features of visual images. Here the emphasis is on several artistic techniques in drawings, non-representational art, political cartoons, etc. In this exercise, students look for these different sorts of formal visual features in two quite different drawings.

Evaluating Student Responses

Document 1

Here the composition is almost like a diagram or comic strip. Each stage in the ceremony is depicted from left to right as it unfolds. This should make the student aware of how visual imagery here is not meant to be realistic. It is used to symbolize the key general phases of the event depicted, not show them in realistic detail. Therefore, the animal heads of deities, the stylized gestures of the figures, and many other features here have to be seen as visual symbols of ideas, not realistic portrayals.

Document 7

If students know anything about the great pyramid in Tenochtitlan where these ritual Aztec sacrifices were carried out, they will see that this is not exactly a realistic depiction of what took place in such ceremonies. The pyramid was far larger in reality than the one shown here. The human figures are clearly the focus of this image. And yet they do not express much in the way of emotion. This drawing is a more realistic image than Document 1, yet it is still meant to represent the general idea of the ceremony more than any actual specific event. The emphasis on the heart and the blood of these victims helps to convey what must have been seen as most central to this ceremony.

OBJECTIVES

1. To appreciate the value of the many kinds of visual primary sources available in any investigation of the past.
 2. To better understand how various features of any visual image can help it to convey information about the past.
-

Analyzing Visual Primary Sources

The primary source documents for this lesson are displayed on the next three pages. All of the exercises for this lesson are based on these primary sources and the background information provided here.

**THE PRIMARY SOURCES
AND THE EXERCISES****INTRODUCING THE LESSON**

Nine primary sources are provided for this lesson. They are all visual primary sources—drawings, paintings, photographs, etc.

These sources all provide visual evidence of the various religious views and ideals that have so strongly influenced societies in the past. You may not yet have covered all the cultures or time periods dealt with here in your history class. But that shouldn't be much of a problem for you given the aim of this lesson and the nature of the exercises. Again, no single DBQ is offered on all of these sources. Instead, the aim here is to help you think critically about how to interpret visual primary sources. Visual sources can be fun to work with. But learning to understand and interpret them is not as easy as it may seem. The exercises for this lesson will help you better understand what you can and cannot learn from such sources.

**KEY CONCEPTS
AND LEARNING STRATEGIES**

Basically, the exercises will focus your attention on the following broad concepts and strategies in analyzing visual primary sources:

1. You need to be aware of **the power of visual images to call forth strong emotions** that can shape the way you respond to or understand the meaning of an image.
2. You need to recognize that **any image is a limited, or selective, view of reality, not reality itself**. The image may leave out or distort aspects of the subject and give you a one-sided view of it without your really being aware of this.
3. You need to realize how **your own knowledge, opinions, and values shape what you see** and how you react to what you see in any visual primary source.
4. You need to think about how the various **formal features** of any visual affect your response to it and the meaning you read into it.

The Documents

Images of the Gods: Faith and Belief Before the Modern Age

Document 1

Ancient Egyptian drawing of the “weighing of the heart” ceremony, in which a person who has died is judged by the god Osiris. The deceased is brought in on the left by the god Anubis and his heart is “weighed” by Ma’at, the goddess of truth, to see if he is to be punished, or if he is worthy of being brought before Osiris, seated on the right.

© Bettmann/CORBIS



Document 3

According to legend, in 312 CE, Roman Emperor Constantine saw a cross above the sun and the words *in hoc signo vinces*—“In this sign you will conquer.” After winning a key battle the next day, Constantine supposedly became a Christian. This illustration of the event is from a much later time.

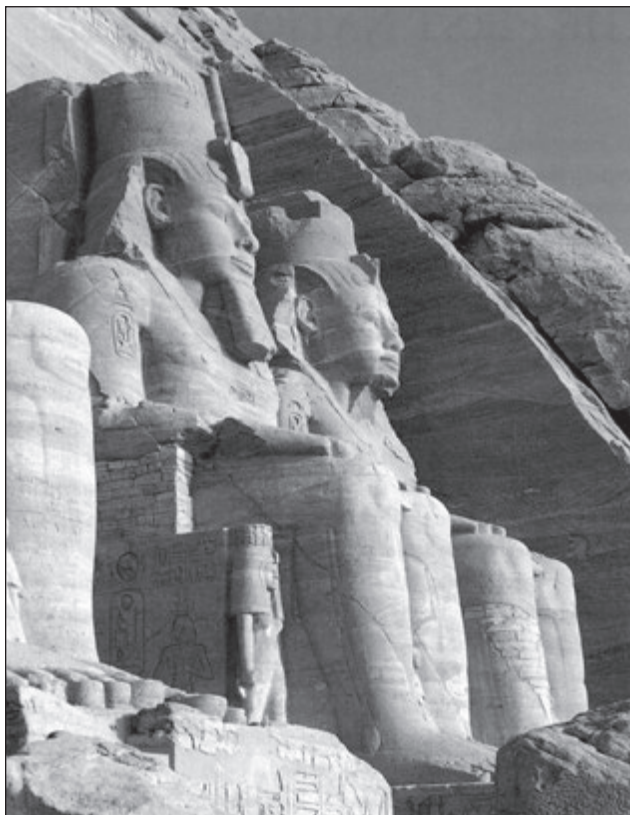
Stock Montage, Inc.



Document 2

Two huge statues of the pharaoh Ramesses II outside his temple at Abu Simbel.

Graham Harrison



The Documents



Document 4

The inside of the Abbey Church in Bath, England. This photo captures the spirit of the Gothic architecture of European cathedrals and other buildings in the 12th, 13th, and 14th centuries throughout Western Europe.

© Royalty-Free/CORBIS

Document 5

A painting titled *Saint Francis Receiving the Stigmata*. It refers to an incident at the end of St. Francis's life when he supposedly miraculously received marks similar to those suffered by Christ on the cross.

© Arte & Immagini srl/CORBIS



Document 6

A stone idol at Copan, one of the city-states of the Mayan civilization.

Courtesy of the Library of Congress



Document 7

An Aztec drawing of the ceremony in which Aztec priests ripped out the hearts of captives in order to appease their sun god and hold off the final destruction of the world.

Courtesy of the Library of Congress



The Documents

Document 8

A huge statue of the Buddha in Japan.

Courtesy of the Library of Congress



Document 9

The smile on a large statue of Buddha in India.

© Lindsay Hebbert/CORBIS



Exercise 1

The Power of the Visual Image

Visual primary sources can be real aids to understanding past historical periods. **Many visual sources are dramatic and thought-provoking.** Often, in fact, a visual seems much more “real” than mere words on a page. But this power of the visual image can also cause problems. As we will see in this lesson, visuals do not show you the world as it “really” is. All of them leave things out or distort things in one way or another. That means that their powerful appeal can fool you—as can their ability to call out strong feelings.

Each of the visual primary source documents for this lesson is able to call forth some kind of emotional response from each viewer. That is, each image will cause you to react to or feel something about the scene it shows. In the spaces below, jot down some notes on the kind of emotional response you think each visual source for this lesson is meant to call forth. Then briefly answer the questions below the list of documents. As a class, discuss your results.

Doc. 1

Doc. 2

Doc. 3

Doc. 4

Doc. 5

Doc. 6

Doc. 7

Doc. 8

Doc. 9

Which image calls forth the strongest emotional reaction, positive or negative? Why?

Exercise 2

The Visual Image: Always a Selective View—1

Visual primary sources may seem to offer a direct view of what things were “really like” in the past. However, no image, not even a crisp photograph, is a simple “window” showing you reality itself. Any visual gives you only a partial and sometimes distorted view of its subject. **Most visual images are carefully arranged, and all of them are highly selective views of reality.** That is, every visual image “selects” certain features to include or emphasize and leaves out other features.

For example, **Documents 3, 4, and 5** all have to do with Christianity in Europe from the end of the Roman Empire to the late Middle Ages. Pretend you are to teach a group of younger students about Christianity in Europe before the modern age. But pretend also that **you can only use one** of these three visual primary sources. Which one would you use? Make your choice. Then write a one-paragraph answer for each of the two questions below. Share your ideas in a class discussion about the selective views provided by each of these three visual primary source documents.

1. Of Documents 3, 4 & 5, I would use Document ____ in a lesson on Christianity in Europe before the modern age. I would use this visual document because . . .

2. Of Documents 3, 4 & 5, I would not use Documents ____ & ____ in a lesson on Christianity in Europe before the modern age. I would not use these visual documents because . . .

Exercise 3

The Visual Image: Always a Selective View—2

Here is another exercise focusing on the selective viewpoint of visual sources. Remember, any visual gives you only a partial and sometimes distorted view of its subject. **Most visual images are carefully arranged, and all of them are highly selective views of reality.** That is, every visual image “selects” certain features to include or emphasize and leaves out other features.

Documents 8 and 9 are both photographs of statues of Buddha. Pretend you are to teach a group of younger students about the rise of Buddhism in India and its spread to many other parts of Asia. But as in the last exercise, pretend that **you can only use one** of these two visual primary sources. Which one would you use? Make your choice. Then write a one-paragraph answer for each of the two questions below. Share your ideas in a class discussion about the selective views provided by each of these two visual primary source documents.

1. Of Documents 8 & 9, I would use Document ____ in a lesson on the rise of Buddhism and its spread throughout Asia. I would use this visual document because . . .

2. Of Documents 8 & 9, I would not use Document ____ in a lesson on the rise of Buddhism and its spread throughout Asia. I would not use this visual document because . . .

Exercise 4

Visual Sources: You “See” What You Know

It’s hard to interpret primary sources of any kind without having some background knowledge of their historical time period. This may be even more true of visual primary sources than others. In spite of the famous saying, a picture is often NOT worth a thousand words. If anything, a thousand words of background information may be needed to make sense of a picture. In other words, **your background knowledge deeply affects how you make sense of any visual image you seek to understand.** Or to put it another way, what you see is shaped by what you already know.

This exercise gives you a simple way to prove this to yourself. Block out the information above **Document 1 and Document 3** for this lesson. Now, show these two visual primary source documents to two different people. Ask them to fully describe and explain both visuals as well as they can. Don’t give them any hints about these visual sources. In the spaces provided below, take notes on what each person says about the two visuals. Then complete the assignment at the bottom of the page. (You do not have to identify the two people by name, if they prefer to be anonymous. Just write down “friend,” “relative,” etc.)

Docs. 1 & 3

Shown to _____

Notes on discussion

Docs. 1 & 3

Shown to _____

Notes on discussion

Based on the notes above, write a brief report to share in class on how these two individuals interpreted Documents 1 & 3 and how their own background knowledge seemed to affect their interpretation.

Exercise 5

Interpreting Visual Sources: Think about Form as Well as Content—1

When you look at a photo or other visual image, you usually pay attention to the subject or the scene in it. That is, you pay attention to its “content.” **Yet the real impact of an image often comes from its form, not its content.** By “form” we mean all the features that affect how the content is presented. For example, in a photo this means the composition of objects in the image, lighting, dress, cropping, color, camera angle, sharpness or softness of focus, gestures or expressions of subjects, etc. In a drawing, painting or political cartoon, form means composition, artistic style, visual symbols, shape and size distortions of various objects, shading and coloring, etc. **All these “formal” features add information to the image.** They can be very important in interpreting a visual primary source. In answering a DBQ, you may even want to spend more time on these aspects of the image than on the content itself.

Certain formal features of even a simple, realistic photograph can shape your reaction to it. And they can affect its usefulness as a historical primary source document. Take notes on the formal features listed below for **Document 2** and **Document 9**. Then, as a class, discuss the question at the bottom of the page.

Take some notes on the following formal features of Document 2:

Cropping

Camera Angle

Shading

Size distortion

Take some notes on the following formal features of Document 9:

Cropping

Camera Angle

Shading

Size distortion

Discuss in class: How do these formal features add to or interfere with the usefulness of these images as primary source documents for the historian?

Exercise 6

Interpreting Visual Sources: Think about Form as Well as Content—2

Here is another exercise looking at the formal features of two of the visual sources for this lesson. Again, keep the main point in mind here, which is that **the real impact of an image often comes from its form, not its content**. “Form” means all the features that affect how the content is presented. In the case of drawings or cartoons, the key formal features are the gestures or expressions of subjects, the overall composition, the artistic style, any visual symbols used, shape and size distortions of various objects, shading and coloring, etc. **All these “formal” features add information to the image**. They can be important in interpreting a visual primary source. In answering a DBQ, you may even want to spend more time on these aspects of the image than on the content itself.

These formal features of drawings or cartoons add to their meaning and usefulness as historical primary source documents. Take notes on the formal features listed below for **Document 1 and Document 7**. Then, as a class, discuss the question at the bottom of the page.

Take some notes on the following formal features of Document 1:

Composition

Artistic style

Visual symbols

Shape and size distortion

Take some notes on the following formal features of Document 7:

Composition

Artistic style

Visual symbols

Shape and size distortion

Discuss in class: How do these formal features add to or interfere with the usefulness of these images as primary source documents for the historian?

Analyzing the Question

INTRODUCING THE LESSON TO YOUR STUDENTS

The ten primary sources for this lesson all have to do with the Classical age of ancient Greece and ancient Rome. They focus on the political ideals and the artistic and technical accomplishments of these two civilizations.

The overall goal of this lesson is to teach students to pay close attention to all the nuances of the question they are asked when doing a DBQ essay. It is not uncommon for students to give an acceptable answer to a DBQ that was not in fact the one actually asked. Students are generally in a hurry to start writing, especially when they are under the intense time pressures of a testing situation. It is crucial to convince them to take the time to read and think carefully about each key part of the DBQ.

A broader goal of this lesson is to help students see that learning history will generally be more rewarding if done with an active, questioning mindset. If the student simply tries to absorb information as it is presented, passively and without a clear focus, the materials will be harder to master. Questions are what drive the historian, and they can enliven history for students as well.

KEY CONCEPTS AND STRATEGIES

A number of key concepts and strategies will be presented in this lesson. The concepts and strategies include the need for students to

1. Actively question all sources,
2. Use questions to help them compare sources,
3. Become familiar with typical DBQ question formats, and
4. Read and reflect on all key aspects of the question asked.

THE MINDSPARKS VISUALS

Images for all the visual sources used in this lesson can be found in the MindSparks units entitled *Ancient Greece* and *Ancient Rome*.

Exercise 1

Questioning the Documents—1

Objective for the Exercise

To teach students to question each individual document thoroughly as a way to determine its value in relation to the DBQ.

Points to Make with Students

In answering any document-based question, students need to **adopt a questioning attitude toward the entire set of primary sources provided**. This will aid them as they analyze the sources and organize their thoughts to answer the main DBQ. In addition, some tests using DBQs also ask students to answer an initial set of questions about each document. This exercise (and others you may want to create yourself) will give students practice in doing this. It should also help them to see the general value of always questioning all the sources as thoroughly as possible.

Evaluating Student Responses

1. Doc. 6

This drawing offers fairly realistic depictions of several of the kinds of structures for which Rome was most famous. Document 7 might also fit here, though it is of only one specific group of impressive Roman buildings.

2. Doc. 3

Pericles' Funeral Oration does specifically address both themes (e.g., "the hands of the many . . ." versus "the claim of excellence is also recognized").

3. Doc. 5

This statement by Polybius deals directly with this issue. Some may say that Documents 9 and 10 touch on aspects of Roman life that were not democratic. However, these documents are not directly concerned with that matter, and in any case both are from the time of the Empire, not the Republic.

4. Doc. 2

This illustration of the mythical story of Phaeton deals with his confidence that his own human powers were also partially godlike. The illustration stresses the bold nature of the way he tried to prove this. Since the illustration is from the 18th century, it is also evidence of how long-lasting this view of the ancient Greeks was.

5. Doc. 9

This scene is in a fictional work, it is true. But it suggests a great deal about what the audiences for this play may have thought about slavery and its impact on the enslaved.

6. Doc. 4

The armed hoplite soldiers were not aristocrats. The dependence on them was a factor in the rise of democracy in certain Greek city-states.

Exercise 2

Questioning the Documents—2

Objective for the Exercise

To give students practice in questioning pairs of documents in order to learn to identify meaningful links among the sources for any DBQ.

Points to Make with Students

Not all of the primary sources for any DBQ are likely to agree with one another. This can make it hard for students who want to refer to most of the documents as they write their DBQ essay. If they learn to look for meaningful ways to group documents that are similar, their task may be easier. To help familiarize them with this idea, we take the first exercise for this lesson a step further. Here, students will find meaningful linkages among the lesson's sources by choosing two documents to help answer each of four questions.

(In this exercise, more than one correct pair of documents may be possible for some of the questions. Our view of the best pairings is presented below.)

Evaluating Student Responses

1. Best Answer: Doc. 1 & Doc. 6

Documents 2 or 3 might work in place of Document 1 here, since in different ways they also depict ideals the Greeks held dear. But the gracefulness of the Parthenon and its sculptures are perhaps the clearest examples of this idealism. As for Document 6, possible alternatives might be Document 7 or even Aurelius's stoic acceptance of reality in Document 8.

2. Best Answer: Doc. 8 & Doc. 9

The passage from Aurelius's *Meditations* clearly pertains to this question. Document 9 also expresses the ideal that one must accept one's place in society and bear the burden of the duties it imposes, no matter how painful or even unfair they are.

3. Best Answer: Doc. 1 & Doc. 10

Though separated by more than six centuries, these reliefs are remarkably similar in their artistic styles. The hoplite soldier of Document 4 might also be used here.

4. Best Answer: Doc. 3 & Doc. 5

These two documents are the most directly relevant to the question. However, a number of other documents could be used to address this comparison, Documents 8, 9, and 10 in particular.

Exercise 3

Types of DBQs

Objectives for the Exercise

To teach students to recognize several standard question formats often encountered in writing DBQs.

To teach them the need to read every part of a DBQ thoroughly.

Points to Make with Students

This two-page exercise involves a good deal of careful reading. But its main purpose is very simple. **Students must learn to think carefully about the exact wording and format of each DBQ** they are asked to answer. There are a number of common patterns for DBQs. We have presented four of them here. These are certainly not the only four ways in which DBQs are worded or framed. But these four formats do cover most of the major types students will encounter. The exact wording of a DBQ may differ from these patterns, yet it can still conform to one or another of them. For example, questions beginning with, “Why . . .,” “What caused . . .,” “How did . . .,” might all be variants of the question type we have labeled “Explain Why.”

You should stress to students that these formats are not the only ones used, and that they are not worded rigidly in only one way whenever they are used. The reason for looking at them here is to **help students think strategically about the questions they are asked**. Think, that is, about the underlying logic of a question and what it suggests about how best to organize an answer. Therefore, **students must pay close attention, above all, to all the key defining terms and phrases and directives in the question**. The question should then become their guide in deciding how to organize their use of the documents.

Evaluating Student Responses

1. Question Format 4
2. Question Format 1
3. Question Format 2
4. Question Format 3

For the most part, the four DBQs fit the four question types in a fairly obvious way. However, in a few cases they use somewhat different terminology or they combine elements of more than one of the types. Question 2, for example, ends with the phrase “explain why you agree or disagree with this statement.” Superficially, this sounds like an “Explain Why” question. But in fact, it is asking students to assess the validity, in their opinion, of the prior statement. The confusion here is intentional. Students should use the formats as strategic concepts; they should not regard them as simple formulas that automatically unlock every DBQ. Moreover, the real heart of the exercise is the discussion you will have about their follow-up comments on each question. Do students see clearly the need to pay attention to all the key phrases of each question and use them to organize their thoughts about their essay? Do they offer good reasons for choosing three documents to stress with each question? These are the issues you should focus on in evaluating their responses.

Exercise 4

Choosing DBQs

Objective for the Exercise

To help students see that the format and details of a DBQ can guide them in using the primary sources and organizing their essay.

Points to Make with Students

This exercise is a direct follow-up to the previous one. It will give students a chance to think about the previous four DBQs in relation to the primary sources provided with this lesson. In a sense, the students get a chance to look at DBQs from the point of view of a teacher who has to select or create one to use with a given set of sources.

Evaluating Student Responses

There really are no correct or even best answers for this exercise. Any of the four DBQs can be answered using this lesson's documents and applying some basic background knowledge of the time period. The value of the lesson is that it forces students to think rigorously about the relationship of the documents to the DBQs. Your evaluation of student responses should be based on how thoughtfully they do this in explaining their choices.

Exercise 5

Answering a DBQ

Objective for the Exercise

To give students some initial practice in writing a complete DBQ essay.

Points to Make with Students

The aim here is to give the student a chance to write a brief but complete essay answering a DBQ. Many students will still need the remaining lessons in this program to develop a full understanding of what such essays require. However, there is no real substitute for practice. And you can use the results to get a sense of student strengths and weaknesses.

Evaluating Student Responses

The Advanced Placement history exams all include a DBQ, and the AP Program has developed its own scoring guide for DBQ essays. However, that and similar guides may not be appropriate for judging an initial essay-writing exercise such as this one. We have developed a somewhat simplified scoring guide for this exercise. A more complex guide for the last few exercises will be provided later.

Simplified DBQ Scoring Guide**Excellent Essay**

- Offers a clear answer or thesis statement explicitly addressing the essay question.
- Does a good job of interpreting at least some of the documents and relating them meaningfully to the thesis and the DBQ.
- Uses details and examples to support the thesis and other main ideas.
- Uses background knowledge and the documents in a balanced way.
- Is clearly written. Only a few minor writing errors or errors of fact.

Acceptable Essay

- Offers at least a partly developed thesis addressing the basics of the essay question.
- Adequately interprets at least some of the documents.
- Usually relates details and examples meaningfully to the thesis or other main ideas.
- Includes some 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.

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.
- Is not clearly written, with some major writing errors or errors of fact.

OBJECTIVES

1. To understand a variety of question formats commonly used in DBQs and other history essays.
 2. To understand how important it is to study *all* aspects of the question and use that question as a guide in planning the essay.
-

Analyzing the Question

The primary source documents for this lesson are displayed on the next three pages. All of the exercises for this lesson are based on these primary sources and the background information provided here.

**THE PRIMARY SOURCES
AND THE EXERCISES****INTRODUCING THE LESSON**

Ten primary sources are provided for this lesson, including drawings, photos of artwork, and passages from important written works. The sources all have to do with the Classical age of ancient Greece and ancient Rome. They focus on the political ideals and the artistic and technical accomplishments of these civilizations.

The primary sources for the lesson will be used to help you think about the types of questions that make up most DBQs. One of the most common mistakes students make in answering a DBQ is failing to read the question carefully. In fact, it is not unusual for a student to give a good answer to a question that was not asked! No advice is more important than the following: Pay close attention to each phrase and every key part of any DBQ you are given. Do not start writing until you have done this thoroughly.

**KEY CONCEPTS
AND LEARNING STRATEGIES**

Basically, the exercises will focus your attention on the following broad concepts and strategies for dealing with DBQ questions:

1. You need to see the primary source documents as useful mainly in helping you to answer specific questions. **Actively question your sources.**
2. Also, **use questions to help you compare the various sources.** Try to see the sources in relationship to one another, to your own questions, and to the DBQ you are to answer.
3. Be aware of the typical **question formats** most commonly used for DBQs and for other kinds of history essays.
4. Become accustomed to **studying all parts of the question.** Be sure you understand exactly what is asked of you before you begin to organize and write your essay.

The Documents

The Classical Age in Greece and Rome

Document 1

A photo of a small portion of the east frieze of the Parthenon. This sculpture is a good example of what is so admired about Greek art—its lifelike detail, its beauty and grace, and the individuality of its portrayal of human life.

© Gianni Dagli Orti/CORBIS



Document 2

A 1731 CE engraving depicting a scene from Greek mythology in which Phaeton is being struck down by Zeus. Phaeton believed the sun god Helios was his father. To prove it, he begged Helios to let him drive the chariot that pulls the sun across the sky. Phaeton soon lost control of the chariot, swinging the sun too close to earth and setting huge regions on fire. To save the world, Zeus struck Phaeton down.

Historical Picture Archive/CORBIS

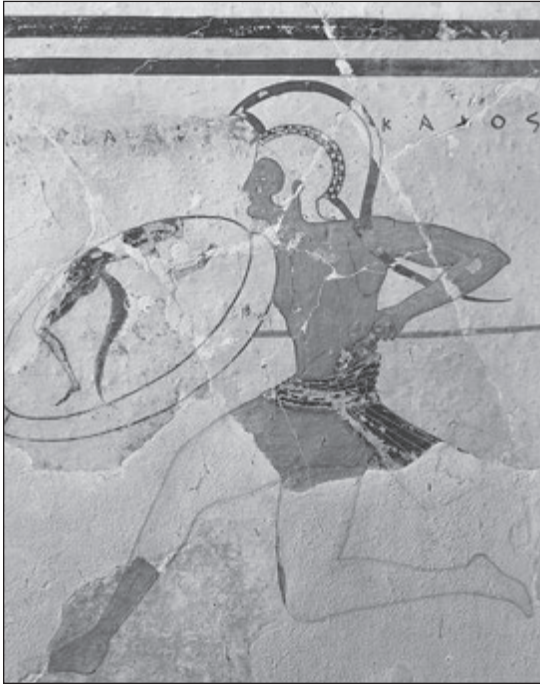


Document 3

"Our form of government does not enter into rivalry with the institutions of others. Our government does not copy our neighbors', but is an example to them. It is true that we are called a democracy, for the administration is in the hands of the many and not of the few. But while there exists equal justice to all and alike in their private disputes, the claim of excellence is also recognized; and when a citizen is in any way distinguished, he is preferred to the public service, not as a matter of privilege, but as the reward of merit. Neither is poverty an obstacle, but a man may benefit his country whatever the obscurity of his condition. There is no exclusiveness in our public life, and in our private business we are not suspicious of one another, nor angry with our neighbor if he does what he likes; we do not put on sour looks at him which, though harmless, are not pleasant. While we are thus unconstrained in our private business, a spirit of reverence pervades our public acts; we are prevented from doing wrong by respect for the authorities and for the laws, having a particular regard to those which are ordained for the protection of the injured as well as those unwritten laws which bring upon the transgressor of them the reprobation of the general sentiment."

Pericles' Funeral Oration (delivered in the winter of 431–430 BCE) as recorded later by Thucydides in his history, The Peloponnesian War. In this oration, Pericles presents an eloquent though idealized view of Athenian democracy. Translated by Benjamin Jowett (1881).

The Documents



Document 4

At first, warfare was carried on mainly by wealthy nobles rich enough to own horses. But over time, Greeks learned to fight in organized formations of foot soldiers called hoplites. The ancient Greek illustration here is of a hoplite.

© Gianni Dagli Orti/CORBIS

Document 5

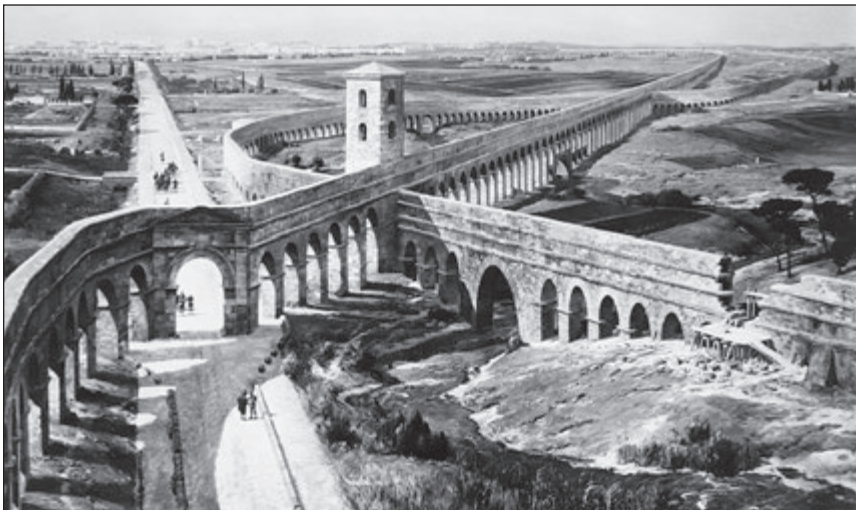
As for the Roman constitution, it had three elements, each of them possessing sovereign powers; and their respective share of power in the whole state had been regulated with such a scrupulous regard to equality and equilibrium that no one could say for certain, not even a native, whether the constitution as a whole were an aristocracy or democracy or despotism. And no wonder, for if we confine our observation to the power of the consuls, we should be inclined to regard it as despotic; if on that of the Senate, as aristocratic; and if finally one looks at the power possessed by the people, it would seem a clear case of a democracy.

From Histories, Book 6, by Polybius (200–118 BCE), Translated by I. Scott-Kilvert.

Document 6

Rome's ability to use wood and stone (and later, concrete), soon outpaced all earlier societies. Roman roads, for example, were wonders of engineering skill. Merchants and legionaries traveled by foot or horseback from one end of the empire to the other rapidly. Aqueducts like the one shown could carry a water supply to a Roman city from streams and hills many miles away.

Bettmann/CORBIS



The Documents



Document 7

Under Emperor Augustus, the Roman Senate continued to meet. But all real political control was in the hands of Augustus and the emperors who came after him. Augustus began a huge building program in cities throughout the empire, especially Rome. As this illustration of Rome shows, beautiful temples, theaters, public baths, and other buildings were added to the city.

Bettmann/CORBIS

Document 8

“Every moment think steadily as a Roman and a man to do what thou hast in hand with perfect and simple dignity, and feeling of affection, and freedom, and justice; and to give thyself relief from all other thoughts. And thou wilt give thyself relief, if thou doest every act of thy life as if it were the last, laying aside all carelessness and passionate aversion from the commands of reason, and all hypocrisy, and self-love, and discontent with the portion which has been given to thee. Thou seest how few the things are, which if a man lays hold of, he is able to live a life which flows in quiet, and is like the existence of the gods; for the gods on their part will require nothing more from him who observes these things.”

*Marcus Aurelius, The Meditations, Book Two, 167 CE.
Translated by George Long.*

Document 9

A SLAVE: “If the immortal Gods have wished you to undergo this affliction, it becomes you to endure it calmly; if you do so, your trouble will be lighter. At home you were free men, I suppose; now if slavery has befallen you, it would be best for you to put up with it and by your attitudes render it easier, under a master’s rule. Anything unworthy which a master does must be deemed worthy.”

Scene in The Captives, a play by Plautus (195–200). Text based on The Comedies of Plautus. Henry Thomas Riley. London. G. Bell and Sons. 1912.

Document 10

Stone relief showing a settler in Germany paying taxes to a Roman tax collector in the 3rd century CE. The image is not dramatic, but it does touch on the problems that began to beset the Roman Empire soon after the death of Emperor Marcus Aurelius in 180 CE.

Bettmann/CORBIS



Exercise 1

Questioning the Documents—1

Every DBQ asks you to write an essay using your own knowledge of history and your ideas about a group of primary source documents. Some DBQs also first ask you to answer questions about EACH source in turn. This helps you to think more clearly about what the sources actually say or show before you use them in a longer essay. It also helps you to **think carefully about the questions themselves, how they are worded, and what they really ask**. This is a very important skill to develop in dealing with DBQs. It's not always as easy as you may think to fully understand what a question is asking.

In this exercise, you need to decide which of the primary source documents for this lesson best matches each of the six questions below. Choose just ONE document for each question and write its number in the space provided. Then write a single-sentence answer to the question itself. (It may help to read ALL six questions before answering any of them.)

1. Ancient Greece may have excelled in its philosophical and artistic triumphs. But Rome was the master builder and engineer of the ancient world. How does this document help to make that clear?
Doc. ____ Answer: _____

2. Some say ancient Greece stressed the will of the majority and government by the people. Others say it valued above all the excellence and accomplishments of the superior individual. Did the Greeks combine these two values, or were they unable to combine them smoothly?
Doc. ____ Answer: _____

3. In what ways was the Roman Republic a democracy, and in what ways was it not a democracy at all?
Doc. ____ Answer: _____

4. Down the ages, many have seen ancient Greece as above all a culture that glorified the nobility and almost godlike powers of the individual. How does this document show that such views have lasted for a long time?
Doc. ____ Answer: _____

5. Both ancient Greek and ancient Roman society were based on the labor of slaves. What does this document suggest about Roman attitudes toward slavery and about slavery's impact on slaves and non-slaves alike?
Doc. ____ Answer: _____

6. Some historians say democracy in Greece was strong in part because the military obligations of citizenship were so widely shared. Explain what these historians mean.
Doc. ____ Answer: _____

Exercise 2

Questioning the Documents—2

Most DBQs ask you to write about seven, eight, or more primary source documents. However, these documents will not always agree with one another. They may not even be closely related—though they will all be about one broad topic. **Before answering a DBQ, try to see which documents are connected most closely.** This can make it easier for you to plan your use of the documents in answering the DBQ.

This exercise should help you see the value of doing this. The exercise asks you to link TWO primary source documents to a single question. This will give you practice in thinking about how one document connects up with another. Choose the two documents for this lesson that you think would best help to answer each of the following questions. Then write a one-sentence or two-sentence answer to each question. As a class, discuss your answers for Exercises 1 and 2.

1. “The ancient Greeks contemplated beauty and an ideal of perfection. The ancient Romans were the builders who sought to master reality as it was.” How valid do you think this statement is?
Docs. ____ & ____ These documents help show that _____

2. A stoic philosophy stressing duty and a calm acceptance of life’s burdens was widely held in the late Roman Empire. Both of these documents illustrate this fact in very different ways. Explain how.
Docs. ____ & ____ These documents help show that _____

3. “In spite of their differences, the ancient Greeks and Romans shared an artistic vision or a set of artistic ideals that can fairly be called a single ‘Classical’ tradition.” Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not?
Docs. ____ & ____ These documents help show that _____

4. Compare and contrast the views of the ancient Romans and ancient Greeks on what the best form of government is.
Docs. ____ & ____ These documents help show that _____

Exercise 3

Types of DBQs

In answering a DBQ, one of the most common mistakes is failing to read the question carefully. **It is not unusual for a student to give a good answer to a question that was NOT even asked!** Below are descriptions of four typical DBQ question formats. These describe some of the most common types of DBQs. Of course, all DBQs have a great deal in common. All require you to state a clear thesis, or answer, to a question. All also require you to back up your thesis using primary sources and your background history knowledge. Moreover, no matter what the question format, you must always **pay close attention to each phrase and ALL parts of the question.** Never start to write until you have done this thoroughly.

Read the descriptions of the question formats shown here. Then complete the exercise on the next page.

Question Format 1

“Assess the Validity”

As in this question: *“The colonists could not have won the Revolutionary War without the leadership of General Washington.” Assess the validity of this statement.*

This question usually calls on you to respond to a firm conclusion about a historical event, problem, trend, group, or personality. You do not have to agree with that conclusion. What is important is that you state clearly your own opinion about it and that you back that opinion with your own history knowledge and with comments about the documents. In your answer, use the primary sources to support your view. However, also try to account for sources that seem to go against your view.

Question Format 2

“Compare and Contrast”

As in: *Compare and contrast the strengths and weaknesses of the colonists and the British in the American Revolution.*

Questions of this type ask you to describe similarities and differences between two trends or sets of events in the same historical time period or in two different time periods. Try to group the documents into those that clarify one of the two things being compared and those that clarify the other thing being compared. The goal is to describe a broad pattern, but usually you will have to try to explain it as well.

Question Format 3

“Explain Why” or “Explain to What Extent”

As in: *Explain why the colonists won the Revolution in spite of Great Britain’s superior numbers and military strength.*

This type of question asks you to devise your own explanation for some historical trend, development, or event. Your focus will usually be on causes and effects. Complicated historical events almost always have many causes. A handful of primary sources will not be enough to prove your explanation completely. Look to the sources only for partial proof of your thesis. State your case clearly but cautiously. A variation on this question type singles out one factor and asks you to decide **“to what extent”** it was important as compared with other possible factors. Again, be cautious about making sweeping claims either for or against the importance of the factor singled out.

Question Format 4

“Describe the Changes,” or “Describe and Explain”

As in: *Describe how colonial attitudes toward the British shifted from 1763 to 1776, and explain why these changes took place.*

Here the emphasis seems to be on description more than explanation. But don’t describe just anything and everything. You probably ARE also supposed to explain something—by suggesting what factors caused some trend or historical pattern. In describing a process of change, pay attention to chronology, the flow of events over time. Notice carefully what the dates of primary sources tell you about how events unfolded.

Exercise 3 (Continued)

Types of DBQs

Below are four DBQs that could be used with the primary sources for this lesson. Read these DBQs and re-read the four question formats described on the previous page. For each DBQ below, write the number of its correct question format in the space labeled "Question Format." Then, under the DBQ itself, write all the words and phrases in it that are key to understand it fully. Finally, choose the three primary source documents you would most want to use in answering each DBQ. As a class, discuss the choices you have made.

Question**Format** _____

1. Classical Greece and Rome both expressed a faith in the nobility of the individual. But this ideal changed from early on in the rise of Classical Greek civilization to the later years of the Roman Empire (approximately 500 BCE to 500 CE). Describe this ideal and explain how it changed in these years.

Key phrases to know in this DBQ _____

The 3 best documents to use are ____, ____, & ____.

Question**Format** _____

2. "The democratic ideal in the so-called Classical age of Greece and Rome was just that, an ideal. The reality was far from democratic." Explain why you agree or disagree with this statement.

Key phrases to know in this DBQ _____

The 3 best documents to use are ____, ____, & ____.

Question**Format** _____

3. Both ancient Greece and ancient Rome are seen as expressing a "Classical" artistic and architectural ideal. But their ways of doing this were not exactly the same. Define this artistic and architectural ideal in your own words and compare and contrast the Greek and Roman versions of it.

Key phrases to know in this DBQ _____

The 3 best documents to use are ____, ____, & ____.

Question**Format** _____

4. Various kinds of democracy or republican government arose in the ancient Greek and Roman world. Yet these never developed into fully representative governments such as those in Western Europe and America today. Explain why, in your view, this never happened.

Key phrases to know in this DBQ _____

The 3 best documents to use are ____, ____, & ____.

Exercise 4

Choosing DBQs

The four DBQs in Exercise 3 may not necessarily all be good ones to use with the primary sources for this lesson. Which DBQs do you think are the best? Which are the worst? This exercise asks you to decide this as if you were a teacher making up your mind about which DBQ to assign. The goal of the exercise is to help you think further about the nature of the question and how a question's format can affect the way you use the primary sources.

Of the four DBQs listed on the previous page, choose the two you think would be best to use with this lesson's primary source documents. In the spaces provided below, identify these two questions and explain your choices. Then choose the two DBQs you would least want to use with this lesson's documents. Identify them and explain your choices.

The Two BEST DBQs Are _____

Explain your choices

The Two WORST DBQs Are _____

Explain your choices

Exercise 5

Answering a DBQ

In the last exercise, you chose what you felt were the two best DBQs out of the four presented in Exercise 3. Now pick one of those two DBQs and write an answer to it on this page. Usually a DBQ is presented with introductory comments such as those in the box below. After these comments, write in the DBQ you have chosen. Then on the rest of this page, write a brief essay answering that DBQ.

Instructions: Document-Based Essay

This question is based on the ten documents for this lesson. As you analyze the documents, take into account both the source of each document and any point of view presented in it. Using information from the documents, and your knowledge of world history, write a well-organized essay answering the following DBQ.

The DBQ You Have Chosen

Developing a Thesis Statement

INTRODUCING THE LESSON TO YOUR STUDENTS

The primary sources for this lesson all have to do with social class, caste, and gender divisions in a wide variety of traditional societies. They also present a variety of political, religious, and philosophical justifications for, or defenses of, such divisions. The DBQ used in the lesson will focus on these justifications.

The key objective of the exercises is to help students see the central role played by the thesis statement in a DBQ essay and to learn to write effective thesis statements. The thesis statement is the writer's overall response or answer to the DBQ. It is an answer presented as an assertion that can be proved or backed up with facts. To be effective, the thesis must respond to all parts of the DBQ, not just some of them. And it must be a statement the writer can support by using their background knowledge and by making meaningful references to the primary source documents.

KEY CONCEPTS AND STRATEGIES

A number of key concepts and strategies having to do with thesis statements will be presented in this lesson. The concepts and strategies include the need for students to understand that

1. A thesis is a clear statement of what the essay will try to prove,
2. The thesis statement must respond to all key aspects of the question,
3. The thesis must be supportable with evidence from the sources and with references to other background knowledge, and
4. A good thesis statement will be a helpful guide for organizing the entire DBQ essay.

THE MINDSPARKS VISUALS

Images for all the visual sources used in this lesson can be found in the MindSparks units entitled *Christendom: The High Middle Ages*, *India: The Mauryas to the Mughal Empire*, and *Clan, Emperor, Shogun: Japan in the Middle Ages*.

Exercise 1

Choosing Thesis Statements

Objective for the Exercise

To define the crucial role of the thesis statement in a DBQ and enable students to make some initial judgments about a group of sample thesis statements.

Points to Make with Students

Exercises 1 and 2 together give students practice in distinguishing between good and bad thesis statements. Five thesis statements are presented in Exercise 1 and used again in Exercise 2. All five are in response to a single DBQ.

Some of these thesis statements are fine. Others are flawed in ways typical of what many students do wrong when answering DBQs. **A workable thesis statement should first of all be a clear and direct answer to the DBQ.** That is, it should address all key aspects of the DBQ. This may take more than a single sentence, since it often helps to reword the question or problem posed before presenting the thesis itself. The thesis should not be just any opinion; it should be one the student knows to be supportable. **A thesis is an opinion students can support with references to the sources and to their own background knowledge of the time period in question.**

Evaluating Student Responses

Here students choose what they see as the two best thesis statements and discuss the reasons for their choices. The aim is to give students time to think about and discuss their own criteria for judging among those statements. Therefore, rather than evaluating their comments in detail, simply encourage them to talk. By committing themselves this way, they should be more motivated and thoughtful in doing Exercise 2. In that exercise, they will have to make more systematic distinctions among these same five thesis statements.

Exercise 2

Classifying Thesis Statements

Objective for the Exercise

To teach students that a thesis statement must provide a brief answer to the DBQ, one they will then be able to back up or support in the rest of the DBQ essay.

Points to Make with Students

This exercise extends the analysis of the five thesis statements presented in Exercise 1. Here, students match five descriptions with those five thesis statements. In the list of correct match-ups below, two thesis statements are indicated as “acceptable.” The follow-up discussion should focus on exactly what is right about these two thesis statements and what is wrong with the three “unacceptable” statements. The unacceptable statements each make a typical kind of error that students need to guard against.

Evaluating Student Responses

Here are the correct match-ups between the descriptions and the thesis statements. Also, “acceptable” and “unacceptable” thesis statements are indicated.

Description A matches with Thesis Statement 3

Unacceptable: A thesis is hinted at, but it is not a response to the full DBQ statement. Students often answer only part of the question or a slightly different question from the one actually asked. This mistake comes from not paying close attention to all key phrases and qualifiers in the DBQ. Also, this writer’s rush to begin referring to specific documents is a mistake. The references are too hasty and they divert the writer from the task of making a clear presentation of the thesis.

Description B matches with Thesis Statement 1

Unacceptable: Here again the thesis, such as it is, seems to respond to only part of the DBQ statement (to its words about social divisions being “cruel, unjust and totally unnecessary”). The DBQ statement is about how societies defended their social divisions, not about which social divisions were the worst.

Description C matches with Thesis Statement 5

Acceptable: The first three sentences of this statement clearly identify the issue raised by the DBQ. Then the thesis is presented, which is that the DBQ statement is too simplistic and needs to be qualified in a specific way. It is important that students see that a valid thesis need not agree with the DBQ question or statement.

Description D matches with Thesis Statement 4

Unacceptable: This could be part of a good internal paragraph analyzing some sources in order to back up a thesis. But by themselves, these words about Aristotle do nothing to clarify what that overall thesis is.

Description E matches with Thesis Statement 2

Acceptable: This statement agrees with the DBQ statement. It also provides just enough detail to suggest the kind of evidence it will offer in the rest of the essay to support the position it takes.

Exercise 3

The Thesis Statement and the Sources

Objective for the Exercise

To teach students that a thesis statement should be an effective guide for organizing the entire essay and determining how the primary source documents will be used.

Points to Make with Students

To back up a thesis, students must use their background history knowledge in writing the essay. They must also make meaningful references to the primary sources. In this case, a “meaningful” reference is one that shows the relationship of a document to the thesis and the DBQ. **To avoid the “laundry list” style of referring to sources, students should use the thesis to guide their decisions about which sources to use and how to use them.** In this exercise, students can work with either of the two “acceptable” thesis statements from Exercise 2. They then choose the five sources they would most want to use to support this thesis. The aim is to help them see the need to analyze the sources carefully with their thesis in mind. Comments on each primary source document are provided below.

Evaluating Student Responses

Most of the documents for this lesson could be used to support either of these two thesis statements. All the documents clearly suggest the existence of class, caste and gender divisions in various traditional societies—especially Documents 1, 3, 7, 8, and 9. However, many of these documents also offer reasoned arguments for various social divisions, such as Documents 1, 6, 8, and 9. Documents 4 and 5 could be seen as illustrating a paternalistic view of the role of women in society. On the other hand, both could also be seen as giving that role some dignity and independence as well. In other words, these documents seem particularly open to varying kinds of interpretations. If students see how this is so, it will be another benefit of the exercise.

Exercise 4

Write a Three-Paragraph Essay

Objective for the Exercise

To give students some practice at writing a complete essay based on a clearly stated thesis.

Points to Make with Students

As at the end of Lesson 3, students here are again given a chance to write a brief but complete essay answering a DBQ. This time, they get slightly more structured guidance in doing this. First, they will use the thesis statement they chose in the previous exercise. Secondly, a few tips for writing a brief three-paragraph essay will give them a better sense of the basic structure such an essay should have. Later lessons will develop this idea of essay structure in more detail.

Evaluating Student Responses

You may wish to use the simplified DBQ scoring guide again from Lesson 3, Exercise 5 in judging the quality of the brief essays students do in this exercise.

OBJECTIVES

1. To understand that a thesis statement is the main opinion or idea that your entire essay will try to support or prove.
 2. To see that the thesis must respond to all parts of the DBQ and must also be a guide for using the primary sources.
-

Developing a Thesis Statement

The primary source documents for this lesson are displayed on the next three pages. All of the exercises for this lesson are based on these primary sources and the background information provided here.

**THE PRIMARY SOURCES
AND THE EXERCISES****INTRODUCING THE LESSON**

Nine primary sources are provided for this lesson. They include photos, drawings, and passages from philosophical works and sacred texts. They deal in a wide variety of ways with social divisions of class, caste, and gender in many traditional societies. The DBQ used in this lesson will focus on these social divisions and on the various justifications given for them. A series of possible thesis statements will be presented, all seeking to answer that DBQ. Your goal will be to understand why some of those thesis statements are acceptable and others are flawed.

**KEY CONCEPTS
AND LEARNING STRATEGIES**

The primary sources and the exercises for this lesson will be used to help you think about what is perhaps the most important single part of any DBQ essay, the thesis statement.

1. A **thesis statement** is the main idea or viewpoint you will develop in your answer to the DBQ. That is, the thesis is a clear statement of what you hope to prove in your essay.
2. Your thesis statement should **respond directly to all aspects of the question** asked. Be sure your thesis is not about just one part of the question—or about a question that was not asked at all.
3. Your thesis statement should make a claim or state an opinion that you can back up in part with **evidence from the primary sources** and in part with your own **background knowledge**.
4. Think of the thesis statement as a guide for you in how to interpret and use the primary sources as evidence in your essay. That is, all your references to sources and other information should help in some way to support the thesis statement.

The Documents

Class, Caste, and Gender in Europe and Asia

Document 1

“From the hour of their birth some are marked out for subjugation, others for rule.”

“Now . . . almost all things rule and are ruled according to nature. But the kind of rule differs; the freeman rules over the slave after another manner from that in which the male rules over the female, or the man over the child; although the parts of the soul are present in all of them, they are present in different degrees. For the slave has no deliberative faculty at all; the woman has, but it is without authority, and the child has, but it is immature.”

“Different kinds of rule are not, as some affirm, the same with each other. For there is one rule exercised over subjects who are by nature free, another over subjects who are by nature slaves. The rule of a household is a monarchy, for every house is under one head: whereas constitutional rule is a government of freemen and equals.”

*Passages on slavery from Aristotle's Politics.
Translation by Benjamin Jowett (1885).*

Document 2

Japanese peasants engaged in wet-rice cultivation using methods little different from those common during the earliest centuries of Japan's recorded history, nearly 2,000 years back.

© Seattle Art Museum/CORBIS



Document 3

A serf in the Middle Ages in Europe paying the fees due to the lord of the manor. He is paying the lord “in kind.”

Stock Montage, Inc.



The Documents

Document 4

"[This] section is necessary to increase the profit of the household, gain friends and save one's possessions; to succour and aid oneself against the ill fortunes of age to come. . . . The first article [in this section] is that you have care of your household, with diligence and perseverance and regard for work; take pains to find pleasure therein and I will do likewise on my part, and so shall we reach the castle whereof it is spoken. The second article is that at the least you take pleasure and have some little skill in the care and cultivation of a garden, grafting in due season and keeping roses in winter. The third article is that you know how to choose varlets, doorkeepers, handymen or other strong folk to perform the heavy work that from hour to hour must be done, and likewise labourers etc. And also tailors, shoemakers, bakers, pastry-makers, etc. And in particular how to set the household varlets and chambermaids to work, to sift and winnow grain, clean dresses, air and dry, and how to order your folk to take thought for the sheep and horses and to keep and amend wines. The fourth article is that you, as sovereign mistress of your house, know how to order dinners, suppers, dishes and courses, and be wise in that which concerns the butcher and the poulterer, and have knowledge of spices. The fifth article is that you know how to order, ordain, devise and have made all manner of pottages, civeys, sauces and all other meats, and the same for sick folk."

Second section of The Goodman of Paris: Instructions on Being a Good Wife, written between 1392 and 1394 by a merchant in Paris to his new, much younger wife. Eds. G. G. Coulton and Eileen Power. Trans. Eileen Power. London: George Routledge & Sons, 1928.

Document 5

In Medieval Europe, the vassal who was granted land took a solemn oath to serve the lord who granted it. The oath of loyalty was binding for life. It was also a bond based on a code of chivalry. Along with respect for the lord, there was a duty to defend the honor of the lord's lady.

Stock Montage, Inc.



Document 6

"The Duke Ching, of Ch'i, asked Confucius about government. Confucius replied, "There is government, when the prince is prince, and the minister is minister; when the father is father, and the son is son."

Chi K'ang asked Confucius about government, saying, "What do you say to killing the unprincipled for the good of the principled?" Confucius replied, "Sir, in carrying on your government, why should you use killing at all? Let your evinced desires be for what is good, and the people will be good. The relation between superiors and inferiors is like that between the wind and the grass. The grass must bend, when the wind blows across it."

K'ung Fu-tsu (Confucius) from Book 12 of The Analects.

The Documents



Document 7

Close-up of “suttee” stones. An old custom in some parts of India was for the wife to immolate herself in order to accompany her husband to heaven. Her last act in life would be to dip her hand in pigment and leave her print on a doorway or gate. The practice of suttee was not universal in India, and similar practices were followed in some other cultures outside of India.

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Document 8

The Laws of Manu

31. But for the sake of the prosperity of the worlds he caused the Brahmana, the Kshatriya, the Vaisya, and the Sudra to proceed from his mouth, his arms, his thighs, and his feet.
88. To Brahmanas he assigned teaching and studying the Veda, sacrificing for their own benefit and for others, giving and accepting of alms.
89. The Kshatriya he commanded to protect the people, to bestow gifts, to offer sacrifices, to study the Veda, and to abstain from attaching himself to sensual pleasures;
90. The Vaisya to tend cattle, to bestow gifts, to offer sacrifices, to study the Veda, to trade, to lend money, and to cultivate land.
91. One occupation only the lord prescribed to the Sudra, to serve meekly even these other three castes.

Passages from Chapter 1 of The Laws of Manu, a key ancient Hindu text.

Document 9

The Koran on Men and Women

“Men are the managers of the affairs of women for that God has preferred one of them over another, and for that they have expended of their property. Righteous women are therefore obedient, guarding the secret for God’s guarding. And those you fear may be rebellious admonish, banish them to their couches, and beat them. If they then obey you, look not for any way against them; God is All-high, All-great.” (Koran: 4:34)

“Muslim men and Muslim women, believing men and believing women, obedient men and obedient women, truthful men and truthful women, enduring men and enduring women, humble men and humble women, men and women who give in charity, men who fast and women who fast, men and women who guard their modesty, men and women who remember God oft—for them God has prepared forgiveness and a mighty reward.” (Koran 33:35)

Passages on men and women in the Koran from sura (chapter) 4 and sura 33.

Exercise 1

Choosing Thesis Statements

Your thesis is the main idea or viewpoint you will develop in your DBQ essay. That is, **the thesis is a clear answer to the DBQ; it is a statement of what you hope to prove in your essay**. It should respond directly to the question asked, and it should make a claim you can back up at least in part with evidence from the primary sources provided. You state the thesis in the introductory paragraph of the essay.

In the box is a DBQ along with typical instructions often provided with DBQs. This DBQ is based on the primary source documents for this lesson. Below it are **five thesis statements**, all responding to this DBQ. Of these five statements, check the *two* you think are best. Then complete Exercise 2 for this lesson.

Instructions: Document-Based Essay

This question is based on the nine documents for this lesson. As you analyze the documents, take into account both the source of each document and any point of view presented in it. Using information from the documents, and your knowledge of world history, write a well-organized essay answering the following DBQ.

Historical Context

Before the modern age, many traditional societies contained sharp differences between rich and poor; between social, ethnic, religious groups; between men and women. These differences of class, caste, and gender took many forms. And the reasons given for these divisions also differed greatly from one society to the next.

The Question

"Past societies defended differences of class, caste, and gender in a great many ways. However, those defenses were just excuses for social divisions that were cruel, unjust and totally unnecessary." Assess the validity of this statement.

Check the TWO best thesis statements of the five listed here.

- _____ 1. The serfs in the Middle Ages had some rights. So did women in Europe, under Islam, and in Asia. All these groups suffered at the hands of more powerful classes. But none suffered as badly as the untouchables (sudras) in India did, or the slaves in Greece and Rome.
- _____ 2. Class, caste, and gender divisions have been defended in many ways from society to society. Some defenses were based on religion; others on notions about human nature; still others on philosophical grounds. In all these cases, however, these defenses were only ways for some dominant group to justify its power.
- _____ 3. Conditions in the past were harsh, as Documents 2 and 3 clearly suggest. Farm production was at a very low level. Most people had no choice but to do backbreaking labor all their lives. A small class of people were rich and powerful, but there was little wealth to spread around anyway.
- _____ 4. Aristotle believed some people are not as rational or intelligent as others and that such people are by nature meant to be slaves. Therefore, he felt society had to have different rules for them than it had for others. So according to Aristotle social divisions are necessary and even good.
- _____ 5. Divisions of class, caste, and gender existed in every traditional society. It is not clear that this could have been avoided. The various reasons offered for such divisions may have been excuses. But they may also have been sincere efforts to understand and even limit the harshness of such divisions.

Exercise 2

Classifying Thesis Statements

The same five thesis statements you worked with in Exercise 1 are listed on the left below. On the right are five descriptions. Each is a description of one of the thesis statements on the left. In the spaces provided write the number of the thesis statement on the left that matches with its description on the right. Then as a class, discuss the reasons for the choices you make.

The Question

“Past societies defended differences of class, caste, and gender in a great many ways. However, those defenses were always just excuses for social divisions that were cruel, unjust and totally unnecessary.” Assess the validity of this statement.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>1. The serfs in the Middle Ages had some rights. So did women in Europe, under Islam, and in Asia. All these groups suffered at the hands of more powerful classes. But none suffered as badly as the untouchables (sudras) in India did, or the slaves in Greece and Rome.</p> <p>2. Class, caste, and gender divisions have been defended in many ways from society to society. Some defenses were based on religion; others on notions about human nature; still others on philosophical grounds. In all these cases, however, these defenses were only ways for some dominant group to justify its power.</p> <p>3. Conditions in the past were harsh, as Documents 2 and 3 clearly suggest. Farm production was at a very low level. Most people had no choice but to do backbreaking labor all their lives. A small class of people were rich and powerful, but there was little wealth to spread around anyway.</p> <p>4. Aristotle believed some people are not as rational or intelligent as others and that such people are by nature meant to be slaves. Therefore, he felt society had to have different rules for them than it had for others. So according to Aristotle social divisions are necessary and even good.</p> <p>5. Divisions of class, caste, and gender existed in every traditional society. It is not clear that this could have been avoided. The various reasons offered for such divisions may have been excuses. But they may also have been sincere efforts to understand and even limit the harshness of such divisions.</p> | <p>A. Some primary sources are named. These seem to focus on whether class divisions were inevitable, not on how societies justified such divisions. Also, since no thesis is stated clearly, these references to the documents are wasted. That is, they are not used as evidence to “assess the validity” of the DBQ statement.</p> <p>Best Describes Thesis Statement _____</p> <p>B. Again, a thesis seems to be stated. But it is about the relative harshness of class, caste, and gender divisions, not about how various societies defended or justified such divisions. In other words, the thesis addresses only part of the statement in the DBQ and fails to assess the actual claim it makes.</p> <p>Best Describes Thesis Statement _____</p> <p>C. A clear thesis is provided. It denies the validity of the DBQ statement in that it sees that statement as too simplistic and too general.</p> <p>Best Describes Thesis Statement _____</p> <p>D. A single document is discussed in detail. A thesis may be implied in that this document’s defense of social inequality is pictured as sincere and not just “an excuse.” But no overall thesis pertaining to all class, caste and gender divisions is ever made.</p> <p>Best Describes Thesis Statement _____</p> <p>E. A clear thesis is provided basically supporting the validity of the statement in the DBQ.</p> <p>Best Describes Thesis Statement _____</p> |
|---|---|

Exercise 3

The Thesis Statement and the Sources

If your thesis statement is a good one, you will be able to use it to organize your entire essay.

It should also help you decide how to use the primary source documents provided along with the DBQ. This exercise gives you a chance to see how a thesis statement can help you in this way.

Below are two of the five thesis statements used in both Exercise 1 and Exercise 2. Your task is to see if these thesis statements do provide a good guide for deciding how to use the primary sources for this lesson. Of the two thesis statements, choose the one you agree with most. Then pick five primary sources to support this thesis statement, using the primary sources for this lesson. In the spaces provided, identify your choices and write brief explanations of why you chose them. Discuss these choices in class.

A. *Class, caste, and gender divisions have been defended in many ways from society to society. Some defenses were based on religion, others on notions about human nature, still others on philosophical grounds. In all these cases, however, these defenses were only ways for some dominant group to justify its power.*

B. *Divisions of class, caste, and gender existed in every traditional society. It is not clear that this could have been avoided. The various reasons offered for such divisions may have been excuses. But they may also have been sincere efforts to understand and even limit the harshness of such divisions.*

QUESTION A OR B (Circle your choice)

Doc. _____

Doc. _____

Doc. _____

Doc. _____

Doc. _____

Exercise 4

Write a Three-Paragraph Essay

In this exercise you will write a complete essay using the thesis statement you chose for Exercise 3. Most effective DBQ essays will take more than three paragraphs. But this one is just for practice. And it will start to give you an idea of how a full DBQ essay is organized. On the left are some guidelines for your three paragraphs. Follow these guidelines and use your notes from Exercise 3 to write this brief essay.

Introductory Paragraph

Include the thesis statement and any other ideas needed to clarify it.

Middle Paragraph

Use the most important ideas from your notes in Exercise 3 to back up the thesis statement here with evidence and reasons for your views.

Concluding Paragraph

Sum up the main points you have made and show how they back up the thesis statement you chose to use.

Outlining and Planning the Essay Structure

INTRODUCING THE LESSON TO YOUR STUDENTS

The sources for this lesson all focus on the concept of feudalism and the specific forms it took in Medieval Europe and Japan from as early as the 7th century CE to as late as the 17th century CE. The DBQ for the lesson focuses on this theme as well.

The goal of the lesson is to provide students with some helpful strategies for taking notes and creating an outline for a DBQ essay. The time limits of a testing situation make this an especially difficult task. Students are usually anxious to begin writing and are nervous about devoting time to outlining. This is understandable, and it will rarely make sense to try to outline an essay in any elaborate way under such time constraints. Nevertheless, the tips provided in this lesson should help students take notes and sketch an outline in an effective manner. If students do this, they are likely to find that the effort actually saves time when it comes to writing the essay itself.

KEY CONCEPTS AND STRATEGIES

A number of key concepts and strategies will be presented in this lesson. These should help students think more effectively about note-taking and outlining. The concepts and strategies include the need to

1. Take notes quickly in “brainstorming” fashion;
2. Try to group or classify these notes (1) as main ideas, (2) as details, facts, or examples, or (3) as explanations of details, facts, and examples;
3. Become familiar with some typical essay-structure formats; and
4. Use these essay formats flexibly and adapt them to the specific DBQ and to the nature of the thesis the student proposes.

THE MINDSPARKS VISUALS

Images for all the visual sources used in this lesson can be found in the MindSparks units entitled *Christendom: After Rome’s Fall*, *Christendom: The High Middle Ages*, and *Clan, Emperor, Shogun: Japan in the Middle Ages*.

Exercise 1

Brainstorming Main Ideas, Details, and Explanations

Objective for the Exercise

To teach a simple method for taking and organizing notes quickly in the few minutes normally available in a DBQ testing situation.

Points to Make with Students

Normally during an exam with a DBQ essay, students have only a short time in which to read the question and the primary sources and take a few notes. Not all students like taking notes in this setting. Some may not even need to. However, **a few notes and an outline of ideas can actually help save time during the actual writing**. In this exercise we focus on taking notes. In Exercise 2, students will use these notes to develop a simple outline.

These exercises present a three-part classification system for note taking, identified by the shorthand label of “**M-D-E**.” The core of any DBQ essay will be a few key subtopics or main ideas (**M**) that explain the essay’s thesis. Each main idea must be supported by details, facts, or examples (**D**). In turn, it is usually necessary to explain (**E**) how these details, facts, and examples contribute to each main idea or to the thesis.

The notes along the left side of the exercise sheet are already identified using this system, with the main ideas also indicated in bold. It’s unlikely anyone can take notes rapidly in as organized a fashion as this. We show the notes here this way simply to illustrate the classification system. You, however, should **stress that this system should be used flexibly as time permits**. The goal with such a system is to save time, not waste it. Encourage students to add as many notes as they can in the blank space on the right in just a few minutes. Urge them to think of a wide variety of other ideas, such as “Norse invasions,” “Pope and Church vs. Buddhist monasteries,” “Knights’ armor and lances vs. samurai swords,” etc.

Evaluating Student Responses

No evaluation of student notes is needed at this point. In Exercise 2, students will have more time to arrange the notes they come up with in an outline form.

Exercise 2

Organizing Your Notes

Objective for the Exercise

To teach students a simple method for organizing notes and outlining ideas quickly before writing a DBQ essay.

Points to Make with Students

This exercise shows students how to create a more organized outline using their notes from the brief brainstorming session in Exercise 1. That exercise's DBQ is again provided here. All the student has to do is come up with a thesis statement and an outline of two internal paragraphs supporting that thesis. The same **"Main Idea-Details-Explanations"** scheme is followed here. Guidelines based on it are provided along the left side of the exercise sheet. This outlining framework is certainly not the only one students might use. What is important is that they **get a sense of how to outline quickly and of how an outline of this sort can vastly simplify the task of actually writing the essay**. In other words, if done quickly and simply, note-taking and outlining can save time, not waste it.

Evaluating Student Responses

Students will continue to use their notes and their outline in later exercises in this lesson. For now, evaluate them simply on how many other notes they come up with in Exercise 1 and how logically they group all the notes into the outline headings provided in this exercise.

Exercise 3

Essay Structure: Some Typical Formats

Objectives for the Exercise

To teach students some standard formats for structuring a DBQ essay.

To teach them that the format they use must follow logically from the DBQ question type and the thesis statement.

Points to Make with Students

In the first two exercises, students worked with a very general and schematic outlining method. In answering any actual DBQ, this method obviously must be adapted in all kinds of ways. It is important to stress to students that **this outlining method should be an aid to them in organizing details, not a strict formula to be followed rigidly.**

In varying the outlining for any essay, the most important factor to consider is the DBQ question type. To make this clear, this exercise lists the same four question types presented in Lesson 3. The question types are on the left. On the right, in boxes, are four possible outline formats for an entire DBQ essay. Each format fits best with one of the four question types. Students should match each question type with its most suitable format.

All four formats begin with an introductory paragraph, which always includes the thesis, and end with a concluding paragraph. In between are several internal paragraphs that have the job of backing up the thesis with main ideas and details. It is these internal paragraphs that the formats describe in more detail. The formats are meant to describe basic patterns in the internal paragraphs of the essay, not their exact number.

Evaluating Student Responses

The match-ups of question type and essay format are as follows:

Format A Question Type 3

Format B Question Type 4

Format C Question Type 2

Format D Question Type 1

Discuss the match-ups with students. What is important for students is not just to make these match-ups correctly but to see the logic of adapting the essay's structure to fit the DBQ.

Exercise 4

Using Your Outlining Skills

Objective for the Exercise

To give students a chance to use their notes and essay outlines to write part of a DBQ essay.

Points to Make with Students

All students need to do here is use their work from the first three exercises to help them construct a partial essay made up of an introductory paragraph (with a thesis statement) and two internal paragraphs. These should be based on the outlining done in Exercise 2. Stress to students that they should be able to write these paragraphs simply by elaborating each outline point with complete sentences. They should not need to come up with completely new concepts or explanations.

Evaluating Student Responses

Students should be evaluated on the basis of how complete their Exercise 2 outlines were and how thoroughly their partial essays flesh out the ideas in those outlines. The next two lessons will elaborate on such things as the introductory paragraph, effective ways to refer to primary sources, the use of transitional phrases and other ways to link ideas together logically, etc. The goal with this exercise is simply to help students see how an effective outline can simplify the writing task.

OBJECTIVES

1. To understand a few strategies for taking notes quickly to use in answering a DBQ.
 2. To see the value of deciding on a DBQ essay structure and to learn about a few typical formats for the essay's structure.
-

Outlining and Planning the Essay Structure

The primary source documents for this lesson are displayed on the next three pages. All of the exercises for this lesson are based on these primary sources and the background information provided here.

**THE PRIMARY SOURCES
AND THE EXERCISES****INTRODUCING THE LESSON**

Ten primary sources are provided for this lesson, including paintings, drawings, photographs, passages from books, official documents, and other texts. All of these sources focus on the concept of feudalism and the specific forms it took in Medieval Europe and Japan from as early as the 7th century CE to as late as the 17th century CE. The DBQ for the lesson focuses on this theme as well.

**PUTTING TOGETHER
A COMPLETE ESSAY**

The first four lessons in this program focused on strategies and concepts that can help you interpret primary sources, understand what DBQs are, and help you get ready to write an essay answering a DBQ. The final four lessons will focus on the key tasks you face in organizing and writing your entire essay. These are:

- Lesson 5* *Taking notes and creating a clear essay organization.*
- Lesson 6* *Writing an effective introductory paragraph based on your thesis statement.*
- Lesson 7* *Writing the internal paragraphs of your essay and using transitions to link them together effectively.*
- Lesson 8* *Writing a strong conclusion.*

**KEY CONCEPTS
AND LEARNING STRATEGIES**

The primary sources and the exercises for this lesson will help you think about how to take notes and organize your essay.

1. Take notes quickly. If possible, identify them as: **(1) main ideas or subtopics**, each of which supports your thesis; **(2) details, facts, or examples** that support one or another main idea or subtopic; and **(3) explanations** of the details, facts, or examples.
2. Learn a variety of **formats of different essay structures**. You should use the format that fits best with the type of DBQ you are asked. However, you should feel free to **alter or adapt the format** flexibly depending on the specific topic, facts, and sources.

The Documents

Feudalism in Europe and Japan



Document 1

Detail of a Japanese samurai warrior on his horse from a scroll painting of *The Burning of the Sanjo Palace*. A samurai warrior pledged his loyalty and service directly to a more powerful lord. Starting in the 10th and 11th centuries CE, the samurai were increasingly a basic means of maintaining order in Japan.

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Document 2

In Medieval Europe, a lesser landholding noble was often bound to fight as a knight for the higher noble who granted him his land. Here, a man is being knighted by his lord. This personal bond between lord and “vassal” was the key element of the feudal political order. A knight’s landholdings enabled him to afford the horse, lance, swords, and armor he needed.

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Document 3

Especially in the chaos of the 9th and 10th centuries CE, many in Europe retreated into small rural communities. The fortified manor house here suggests the local and rural basis of this life, as well as its insecurity. The lord of such manorial lands would assign plots to individual peasants, who gave the lord crops and labor time in exchange for his protection. Under attack, the people of the manor would gather in the manor house while the lord and his knights did battle with the intruders.

Stock Montage, Inc.



The Documents

Document 4

“Since it is known familiarly to all how little I have whence to feed and clothe myself, I have therefore petitioned your piety, and your good-will has decreed to me that I should hand myself over or commend myself to your guardianship, which I have thereupon done; that is to say in this way, that you should aid and succor me as well with food as with clothing, according as I shall be able to serve you and deserve it.

“And so long as I shall live I ought to provide service and honor to you, suitably to my free condition; and I shall not during the time of my life have the ability to withdraw from your power or guardianship; but must remain during the days of my life under your power or defense. Wherefore it is proper that if either of us shall wish to withdraw himself from these agreements, he shall pay [a certain amount] to the other party.”

From a 7th century formula of commendation of a European vassal to his lord. Edward P. Cheyney, ed., “Documents Illustrative of Feudalism,” in Translations and Reprints from the Original Sources of European History, vol. IX, No. 3 (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1898).

Document 6

The great Japanese land-holding families, called *daimyo*, grew more powerful in the 1400s and 1500s. Constant warfare forced them to build huge fortress castles, such as the one shown here. But after 1600, a new, more powerful shogunate imposed order on the *daimyo* and brought a new era of peace. The *daimyo* soon forced their samurai warriors to give up their lands, settle in castle towns and take positions as salaried officials.

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Document 5

As feudal relationships spread in Japan, the emperors lost power. In 1192, after decades of chaos, Minamoto Yoritomo, shown here, came to power—not as an emperor, but as a military leader called a “shogun.” Yet Yoritomo did still have to rely on other great lords and their samurai.

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Document 7

“The entire country will soon be in the hands of your master, Lord Ieyasu. If this is so, the men who served him will no doubt hope to become daimyo by his appointment. You should know that if such feelings arise, they are inevitably the beginning of the end of one’s fortunes in the Way of the Warrior. Being affected by the avarice for office and rank, or wanting to become a daimyo and being eager for such things... will not one then begin to value his life? And how can a man commit acts of martial valor if he values his life?”

Torii Mototada (1539–1600), Ideals of the Samurai. The name “Ieyasu” refers to Tokugawa Ieyasu, the man who soon (1603) founded the new shogunate that would finally tame the powers of the daimyo.

The Documents

Document 8

The Way of the Samurai

Outwardly, he stands in physical readiness for any call to service, and inwardly he strives to fulfill the Way of the lord and subject, friend and friend, father and son, older and younger brother, and husband and wife. Within his heart, he keeps to the ways of peace, but without he keeps his weapons ready for use.

Yamaga Soko (1622–1685), a Japanese writer who wrote about the idea of a code of conduct for samurai in the early years of the Tokugawa Shogunate.

Document 9

The Hundred Years' War was a series of conflicts between England and France from 1337 to 1453. Toward the end of this war, feudal knights on horseback were becoming less useful, especially as kings organized larger and better-equipped armies using artillery—as here in the Siege of Dieppe.

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Document 10

“Since, moreover, for God and the amendment of our kingdom and for the better allaying of the quarrel that has arisen between us and our barons, we have granted all these concessions, desirous that they should enjoy them incomplete and firm endurance for ever, we give and grant to them the underwritten security, namely, that the barons choose five-and-twenty barons of the kingdom, whomsoever they will, who shall be bound with all their might, to observe and hold, and cause to be observed, the peace and liberties we have granted and confirmed to them by this our present Charter.”

From the Magna Carta, an agreement in 1215 between King John of England and his feudal barons.

Exercise 1

Brainstorming Main Ideas, Details, and Explanations

Before you start to write a DBQ essay, you need to look over the primary sources. As you do, it helps to take notes. You only have minutes to do this, but it can actually SAVE you time. Do it in a “brainstorming” fashion, jotting down words and phrases as you think of them. As you take notes, keep this in mind: A good DBQ essay includes your thesis as well as paragraphs with the following three kinds of statements:

(M) A few main ideas or subtopics supporting the thesis.

(D) Details, facts, or examples supporting the main ideas or subtopics.

(E) Explanations or general statements about the details, facts, or examples.

In the box is a DBQ based on the sources for this lesson. Below it are a few notes about the DBQ and the primary sources. Each note is labeled as either **(M)** for “main idea or subtopic,” **(D)** for a “detail, fact, or example,” or **(E)** for “explanation of a detail, fact, or example.” They’ve been arranged in order here and labeled. We realize that in a test situation, you can’t jot notes quickly in this organized way. We only show them this way here so that you can see how this **M-D-E** system looks in practice.

Now, for about ten minutes, add as many notes as you can in the blank area provided on the right. Then see how many of your own notes you can label using this same **M-D-E** lettering system.

You will use all of these notes in Exercise 2

The Question:

Compare and contrast feudalism in Japan and in Europe from as early as the 7th century CE to as late as the 17th century.

Feudalism, overall definition (M)

based on landholding **(D)**

personal bond, not to state or nation **(D)**

military purpose is key **(D)**

a way to organize political power
when no strong state exists. **(E)**

Add some notes of your own here . . .

European feudalism (M)

response to invasion and chaos **(D)** Code of Chivalry **(D)**

contract between lord and vassal **(D)**

forced to rely on local military rule
in absence of any central state **(E)**

Japanese feudalism (M)

failure of emperor to control clans **(D)**

daimyo control
of land grows **(D)**

daimyo vs. shogun **(D)**

single imperial gov't., but never strong **(E)**

Conclusion, similar with some differences

Exercise 2

Organizing Your Notes

Use your notes from Exercise 1 for this lesson to create a more organized outline for part of an essay on the DBQ from that exercise. The DBQ is repeated here. All you need to do is come up with a brief thesis statement (see Lesson 4) and an outline of TWO main ideas supporting your thesis statement. Along the left side of the sheet below are guidelines based on the three-part classification system presented in Exercise 1 (**Main idea-Details-Explanations**). Follow these guidelines in creating your partial outline.

In Exercise 4, you will have a chance to write a partial essay based on this outline.

The Question:

Compare and contrast feudalism in Japan and in Europe from as early as the 7th century CE to as late as the 17th century.

Thesis Statement:

Use this space to fill in your outline.

1. Main Idea or Subtopic

Should be a key idea that you think helps to prove the thesis.

Details, Facts, or Examples

Details or primary sources that prove or support the main idea or subtopic listed above.

Explanations of Details or Facts

Brief ideas showing why the details, facts, examples, or primary sources back up the main idea listed above.

2. Main Idea or Subtopic

Should be a key idea that you think helps to prove the thesis.

Details, Facts, or Examples

Details or primary sources that prove or support the main idea or subtopic listed above.

Explanations of Details or Facts

Brief ideas showing why the details, facts, examples, or primary sources back up the main idea listed above.

Exercise 3

Essay Structure: Some Typical Formats

As you take notes for a DBQ, you should also think about the overall structure of your essay. By **“structure,” we mean the way all the paragraphs in your essay are organized.** Four essay-structure formats are summarized in the boxes below. All of these formats follow a single basic pattern: (1) an introductory paragraph presents the thesis; (2) two or more internal paragraphs present the main ideas and key points; and (3) a final paragraph concludes. The only thing that changes from one format to the next is how the internal paragraphs are organized.

Which essay format you choose depends on the type of question you have been asked. On the left are the four question types you studied in Lesson 3. In the spaces provided in the boxes on the right, indicate the question type best suited to the essay format described. As a class, discuss your choices.

QUESTION TYPES

Essay-Structure Formats

1. “Assess the Validity”

As in this question: *“The colonists could not have won the Revolutionary War without the leadership of General Washington.” Assess the validity of this statement.*

2. “Compare and Contrast”

As in: *Compare and contrast the strengths and weaknesses of the colonists and the British in the American Revolution.*

3. “Explain Why” or “Explain to What Extent”

As in: *Explain why the colonists won the Revolution in spite of Great Britain’s superior numbers and military strength.*

4. “Describe the Changes,” or “Describe and Explain”

As in: *Describe how colonial attitudes toward the British shifted from 1763 to 1776, and explain why these changes took place.*

Format A Question Type _____

Introductory Paragraph - Thesis
Internal Paragraphs:

- “One reason or factor . . .” (back with details and explanations).
- “Another reason or factor . . .” (back with details and explanations).
- “Perhaps the most important reason or factor . . .” (back with details and explanations).

Concluding Paragraph

Format B Question Type _____

Introductory Paragraph - Thesis
Internal Paragraphs:

- “First this key event or development took place . . .” (back with details and explanations).
- “Then this occurred . . .” (back with details and explanations).
- “Finally this happened, . . .” (back with details and explanations).

Concluding Paragraph

Format C Question Type _____

Introductory Paragraph - Thesis
Internal Paragraphs:

- Similarities between two things . . . (back with details and explanations).
- Differences between two things . . . (back with details and explanations).

Concluding Paragraph

Format D Question Type _____

Introductory Paragraph - Thesis
Internal Paragraphs:

- “I disagree (or agree) because . . .” (back with details and explanations).
- “On the other hand, it is true that . . .” (back with details and explanations).

Concluding Paragraph

Exercise 4

Using Your Outlining Skills

Here is a chance to use the work you have done in all three previous exercises. Look back over your notes from Exercise 1 and Exercise 2. Re-read the DBQ (it is presented here again). Also, look over Exercise 3 and think about the essay format that would be best given the DBQ and your thesis statement. Now, write a partial DBQ essay made up of one introductory paragraph (this is where your thesis statement goes) and the two internal paragraphs you outlined in Exercise 2.

The Question:

Compare and contrast feudalism in Japan and in Europe from as early as the 7th century CE to as late as the 17th century.

Writing the Introductory Paragraph

INTRODUCING THE LESSON TO YOUR STUDENTS

The primary source documents for this lesson deal with Islam, Christianity, and the interactions between them from around the 7th to the 13th century CE. The DBQ used in this lesson will ask students to think about how inevitable conflict was between Islamic civilization and the Christian West.

The purpose of the lesson is to teach students a set of guidelines for constructing an effective introductory paragraph. It is this paragraph above all that gives overall direction to a DBQ essay—or any other history essay, for that matter. The introductory paragraph should help the reader anticipate the entire pattern of the essay and the line of argument it will present. A well-constructed introductory paragraph should also help guide the writer as he or she works on the rest of the essay.

KEY CONCEPTS AND STRATEGIES

A number of key concepts and strategies will be presented in this lesson. These should help students understand the basic purpose of the introductory paragraph. The concepts and strategies stress that an introductory paragraph should

1. Restate the topic or DBQ and set it in context,
2. State a clear thesis in direct response to the entire DBQ,
3. Perhaps hint at the essay's overall plan for supporting the thesis, and
4. AVOID going into details or explanations that belong in the body of the essay.

THE MINDSPARKS VISUALS

Images for all the visual sources used in this lesson can be found in the MindSparks units entitled *Christendom: The High Middle Ages* and *The Rise of Islam*.

Exercise 1

Analyzing Introductory Paragraphs

Objective for the Exercise

To teach students that the introductory paragraph of the DBQ essay basically presents and clarifies the thesis statement.

Points to Make with Students

The typical DBQ essay consists of an introductory paragraph, several internal paragraphs, and a conclusion. The internal paragraphs provide the detailed evidence and arguments supporting the thesis. But sometimes students plunge ahead with the details immediately in the first paragraph. They need to see how confusing this can be—and how writing generally has to be much more explicit than speech. The introductory paragraph is a place where students must be VERY explicit about the topic and their stance on it.

This means **the central task of the introductory paragraph is to present and clarify the thesis statement**. In some cases, the thesis statement alone may be all that is needed—for example, when the thesis itself adequately identifies the time period, the topic and the question asked. Otherwise, **it may help to reword the topic, or DBQ, provide background context for it, state the thesis, and then hint at the main points backing up that thesis**. We say “hint” since students should NOT go into detail or tell us what they will be telling us later (as in such infamous phrases as, “I will now prove that . . . ,” etc.).

Evaluating Student Responses

In this exercise, five introductory paragraphs are provided as models, both good and bad. All of the paragraphs respond to the same DBQ, which is shown in the box on the exercise worksheet. Warn students that some of the paragraphs may not even have a clear thesis statement or any hints as to how that thesis will be proved. Students should use their notes and answers to discuss the paragraphs and make their own judgments about them. Just let them express their ideas. There is no need to evaluate their responses rigorously. You’ll have a chance to do that in the next exercise, where the same five paragraphs are used again.

Exercise 2

Choosing an Introductory Paragraph

Objective for the Exercise

To give students a chance to analyze several introductory paragraphs and judge them according to a simple set of standards.

Points to Make with Students

Having read and discussed the five paragraphs for Exercise 1, students are now asked to choose the best and the worst of them. Urge students to make this choice using the standards highlighted in bold in the instructions for Exercise 1. Those standards suggest that students do the following in the introductory paragraph:

- **Describe the overall topic, or reword the DBQ and give it context.**
- **State their thesis clearly as an answer or direct response to the DBQ.**
- **Perhaps hint at their main points or their approach in backing up the thesis.**
- **Do NOT go into details and explanations that will be used to support the thesis.**

Using these standards, students should choose what they regard as the single best and single worst of the five introductory paragraphs and defend their choices in writing.

Evaluating Student Responses

Introductory Paragraph 1 *(Unacceptable)*

The paragraph does a good job of defining the overall topic and giving the DBQ some context. That is, it describes key similarities between Islam and the Christian West. But it never states a thesis about the DBQ's claim that, despite such similarities, the two cultures were bound to clash. Instead, it merely promises to address this claim later.

Introductory Paragraph 2 *(Unacceptable)*

This paragraph suggests a thesis of sorts—that Islam's rigid monotheism made it likely to expand and clash with other societies. However, the DBQ also asked students to address the similarities between Islamic civilization and the Christian West, and their relationship to this conflict. The paragraph leaves out the Christian West entirely.

Introductory Paragraph 3 *(Acceptable)*

The last sentence of the paragraph states a thesis that accepts but qualifies the DBQ statement. This follows sentences that deal with key similarities between the two civilizations which the rest of the essay can explore as a way to back up its thesis.

Introductory Paragraph 4 *(Unacceptable)*

As with Paragraph 2, this one also suggests the thesis that violent conflict between Islam and the Christian West was inevitable. Only now, it is the Christian West that is to blame. Again, the part of the DBQ on the similarities between the two cultures is not dealt with. Hence, the thesis is not really a response to the whole DBQ. Also, several documents are referred to superficially. The introductory paragraph is not the place for such detail.

Introductory Paragraph 5 *(Acceptable)*

A thesis rejecting the validity of the DBQ's statement is made in the last sentence. The rest of the paragraph identifies a set of similarities hinting at what the rest of the essay will probably look at in order to back up its thesis.

Exercise 3

Completing an Essay Using One Introductory Paragraph

Objective for the Exercise

To give students additional practice at writing a complete essay based on a clearly stated thesis and an effective introductory paragraph.

Points to Make with Students

Students are again given a chance here to write a brief essay answering a DBQ. This time, they can use the introductory paragraph they chose in the previous exercise. If they did not choose either Paragraph 3 or Paragraph 5, you might want to urge them to do so for this exercise, since those are clearly the best paragraphs to use.

Evaluating Student Responses

We recommend that you continue to use the simplified DBQ scoring guide from Lesson 3, Exercise 5 in judging the quality of the brief essays students do in this exercise. A more complete scoring guide will be provided in the next lesson.

OBJECTIVES

1. To understand the key role played by the introductory paragraph in giving direction and focus to your essay.
 2. To focus on a few key elements that go into writing an effective introductory paragraph.
-

Writing the Introductory Paragraph

The primary source documents for this lesson are displayed on the next three pages. All of the exercises for this lesson are based on these primary sources and the background information provided here.

**THE PRIMARY SOURCES
AND THE EXERCISES****INTRODUCING THE LESSON**

The eleven primary source documents for this lesson deal with Islam, Christianity, and the interactions between them from around the 7th to the 13th century CE. The sources include photos, pages from books, drawings, passages from sacred texts, autobiographies, and other works. Your task will be to use these sources to assess several alternative introductory paragraphs all answering a single DBQ.

**PUTTING TOGETHER
A COMPLETE ESSAY**

Keep in mind that the final four lessons in this program are the ones that focus on the key tasks in organizing and writing an entire essay. Here is where you are in this sequence of lessons:

- | | |
|----------|--|
| Lesson 5 | Taking notes and creating a clear essay organization. |
| Lesson 6 | <i>Writing an effective introductory paragraph based on your thesis statement.</i> |
| Lesson 7 | Writing the internal paragraphs of your essay and using transitions to link them together effectively. |
| Lesson 8 | Writing a strong conclusion. |

**KEY CONCEPTS
AND LEARNING STRATEGIES**

The primary sources and the exercises for this lesson will help you think about how to write the most important paragraph of your DBQ essay, the introductory paragraph.

1. The introductory paragraph should **restate the topic or DBQ in your own words**; it should **present your thesis** simply and clearly; and it may also **hint at the few key ideas or points you will develop** in detail in the rest of the essay.
2. **The introductory paragraph should NOT develop in detail your main ideas or supporting details or explanations.** Save these for the internal paragraphs of the essay. Make few if any specific references to the primary sources. Your goal should be to set the scene and introduce the main themes in your essay.

The Documents

Islam and the Christian West in the Middle Ages

Document 1

“And God spake all these words, saying,
 “I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out
 of the land of Egypt out of the house of bondage,
 “Thou shalt have no other gods before me.
 “Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image,
 or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above,
 or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water
 beneath the earth:
 “Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve
 them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting
 the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the
 third and fourth generation of them that hate me.”

Exodus 20 in the Hebrew Bible, or Old Testament, King James version.

Document 2

“In the Name of God, the Merciful, the
 Compassionate. Praise belongs to God,
 the Lord of all Being, the All-merciful, the
 All-compassionate, the Master of the Day of
 Judgment. Thee only we serve; to Thee alone
 we pray for succor. Guide us in the Straight
 Path, the path of those whom Thou hast
 blessed, not of those against whom Thou are
 wrathful, nor of those who are astray.”

*From the “Fatiha,” the opening Sura, or chapter, of
 the Koran. Based on a translation by A.J. Arberry as
 modified in The Koran: A Very Short Introduction, by
 Michael Cook (Oxford University Press, 2000).*

Document 3

A battle scene illustrated on a page from
 a Persian Koran.

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Document 4

An illustration from a later time showing Christian Crusaders
 attacking the city of Jerusalem in the Holy Lands.

Stock Montage, Inc.



The Documents

Document 5

"From the confines of Jerusalem and from the city of Constantinople a grievous report has gone forth and has repeatedly been brought to our ears; namely that a race from the kingdom of the Persians, an accursed race, a race wholly alienated from God, 'a generation that set not their heart right, and whose spirit was not steadfast with God,' has violently invaded the lands of those Christians and has depopulated them by pillage and fire. They have led away a part of the captives into their own country, and a part they have killed by cruel tortures. They have destroyed the churches of God or appropriated them for the rites of their own religion. . . . The kingdom of the Greeks [i.e. the Byzantines] is now dismembered by them and has been deprived of territory so vast in extent that it could not be traversed in two months' time."

From Pope Urban II in 1095 CE in his call to the "race of Franks" and others in Europe to join the First Crusade in response to a plea for help from the Byzantine emperor. From Readings in European History, vol. I (Ginn, 1904).

Document 6

"Then, when the sacred months are drawn away, slay the polytheists wherever you find them, and take them, and confine them, and lie in wait for them at every place of ambush. But if they repent, and perform the prayer, and pay the alms, then let them go their way. God is All-forgiving, All-compassionate."

"Fight those who believe not in God and the Last Day and do not forbid what God and His Messenger have forbidden—such men as practice not the religion of truth, being those who have been given the Book—until they pay the tribute out of hand and have been humbled."

Sura 9:5 and Sura 9:29 in the Koran (Michael Cook's version.) "Polytheists" in the first passage has also been translated as "idolaters." The phrase "those who have been given the Book" refers to Jews and Christians who accept the teachings of the Old and New Testaments.



Document 7

A view inside the famous Great Mosque in Cordoba, Spain, showing its delicate ceiling and pole structure. Cordoba was the capital of the Spanish Muslim dynasty of the Umayyads (756–1031). The Great Mosque was founded 785 CE. Cordoba was, for a time, a great center of Islamic and Jewish culture. It was from Spain that a good deal of Islamic learning made its way into Europe in the late Middle Ages, along with written works by the ancient Greeks translated and preserved by Muslim and other scholars.

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The Documents

Document 8

An Islamic miniature painting from the 1500s illustrating the medicinal uses of certain herbs.

© Archivo Iconografico, S.A./CORBIS



Document 9

"I was now a master of Logic, natural sciences and mathematics. I therefore returned to metaphysics; I read Aristotle's *Metaphysica*, but did not understand its contents and was baffled by the author's intention; I read it over forty times until I had the text by heart. Even then, I did not understand it or what the author meant, and I despaired within myself, saying, "This is a book which there is no way of understanding." But one day at noon, I chanced to be in the booksellers' quarter, and a broker was there with a volume in his hand which he was calling for sale. . . . So I bought it, and found that it was a book by Abu Nasr al-Farabi *On the Objects of the Metaphysica*. I returned home and hastened to read it; and at once the objects of that book became clear to me, for I had it all by heart. I rejoiced at this, and upon the next day distributed much alms to the poor in gratitude to Almighty God."

From the autobiography of Ibn Sina (980–1037 CE), known in the West as Avicenna. Avicenna was a Muslim physician and philosopher from Persia. For centuries, he was the major medical authority in both Christian Europe and the Islamic world. His philosophical works, influenced by Aristotle, in turn influenced many Christian philosophers, including Thomas Aquinas. From A. J. Arberry, Aspects of Islamic Civilization (George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1967).

Document 10

Thomas Aquinas, European medieval scholar who used Aristotle's ideas in an effort to reconcile faith and reason.

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Document 11

"Since every effect depends upon its cause, if the effect exists, the cause must pre-exist. Hence the existence of God, in so far as it is not self-evident to us, can be demonstrated from those of His effects which are known to us.

"The existence of God and other like truths about God, which can be known by natural reason, are not articles of faith, but are preambles to the articles. . . . Nevertheless, there is nothing to prevent a man, who cannot grasp a proof, accepting, as a matter of faith, something which in itself is capable of being scientifically known and demonstrated."

From the Summa Theologica, by Thomas Aquinas.

Exercise 1

Analyzing Introductory Paragraphs

The introductory paragraph is often the most important part of a DBQ essay. In it, you should re-state the DBQ topic or question in your own words and offer any background information needed to clarify it. You must present a clear thesis or answer to the DBQ. And you may want to hint at how you will back up your thesis. But if you do, avoid phrases such as, “I will prove that . . .,” etc. Usually such sentences just repeat details that will appear later in the essay. Your goal instead should only be to suggest broadly how you will support your thesis. To sum up, do the following in your introductory paragraph:

- **Describe the overall topic, or reword the DBQ and give it context.**
- **State the thesis clearly as an answer or direct response to the DBQ.**
- **Perhaps hint at your main points or your approach in backing up the thesis.**
- **But do NOT go into details and explanations that will be used to support the thesis.**

For this two-page exercise, you will evaluate five introductory paragraphs. Each responds to the DBQ presented in the box. Read the DBQ and each introductory paragraph carefully. Then answer the questions following each paragraph. In class, discuss your answers.

You will use these same five introductory paragraphs in Exercise 2.

Instructions: Document-Based Essay

This question is based on the eleven documents for this lesson. As you analyze the documents, take into account both the source of each document and any point of view presented in it. Using information from the documents, and your knowledge of world history, write a well-organized essay answering the following DBQ.

Historical Context

The religion of Islam arose in the 7th century CE and spread, carried by Arab armies. In a century and a half, these armies conquered lands from Spain to India, laying the foundation for a huge Islamic empire. At the time, Christian Europe was far weaker and less advanced, and only began to grow in strength again after about the 10th century.

The Question

“Despite many similarities between them, Islamic civilization and the Christian West were from the start almost certain to clash, and clash violently.” Assess the validity of this statement with respect to the 7th through the 13th centuries.

Introductory Paragraph 1

Tensions between the Islamic world and Christian Europe developed soon after the rise of Islam and remained deep-seated throughout the time period of the 7th to the 13th centuries. In a way, this is ironic. As the Hebrew Bible and the Koran make clear, both religious faiths share a monotheistic view of the world. “Thou shalt have no other gods before me,” God tells Moses in the Old Testament. “Thee only we serve,” Muslims promise to the one God who alone can guide believers in the “Straight Path.” This monotheistic view, it seems, gave Christian and Muslim civilizations something in common, and something that set them apart from many other cultures of the time. Why it did not unite them is an important problem which the rest of this essay will address in detail.

- 1. Can you find a thesis statement here? If so, underline the sentence or key phrases in it.**
- 2. What phrases or sentences, if any, show how the writer of the paragraph will prove a thesis?**

Exercise 1 (Continued)

Analyzing Introductory Paragraphs

Introductory Paragraph 2

Islam arose on the Arabian peninsula early in the 7th century. A little over a century later, Arab armies had carved out a huge empire extending into northern Spain in the west and the eastern edges of India in the east. The armies that conquered this land were driven by a rigid monotheistic belief system that regarded all who were not Muslims as infidels. It is true, Jews and Christians could continue to follow their religions under Islam—if they paid extra taxes and agreed to other restrictions. But Islam’s militant, monotheistic vision made it a force for expansion against other societies for centuries.

1. Can you find a thesis statement? If so, underline the sentence or key phrases in it.
2. What phrases or sentences, if any, show how the writer of the paragraph will prove a thesis?

Introductory Paragraph 3

Islam and Christianity both derive from a similar monotheistic world view, one going back all the way to the Hebrew Bible. In these centuries (7th to the 13th CE), the two cultures shared a growing interest in knowledge and the wisdom of ancient Classical authors such as Aristotle and Plato. However, they also shared an intolerance of outsiders and a rigid belief that they alone knew what God wanted of human beings. So not just despite their similarities, but because of them, conflict between them was inevitable.

1. Can you find a thesis statement? If so, underline the sentence or key phrases in it.
2. What phrases or sentences, if any, show how the writer of the paragraph will prove a thesis?

Introductory Paragraph 4

“Thou shalt have no other gods before me.” So said the god of the Hebrew Bible long before the rise of Islam. In 1095 CE, Pope Urban II labeled the Muslims of the Middle East “an accursed race, a race wholly alienated from God” (see Document 5). What followed from his call for a great Crusade is captured accurately by Document 4, showing the Christian Crusaders attacking the city of Jerusalem. More than anything else, this spirit of intolerance made conflict between Christian Europe and Islam unavoidable.

1. Can you find a thesis statement? If so, underline the sentence or key phrases in it.
2. What phrases or sentences, if any, show how the writer of the paragraph will prove a thesis?

Introductory Paragraph 5

As Islam expanded, it clashed with Christian Europe. And in the Crusades, Christian Europe clashed back. Both Islam and Christianity shared a monotheistic belief system that often led to rigid intolerance. Yet both also shared many strengths, including a common heritage in the stories in the Hebrew Bible, a real thirst for knowledge and a desire to base society on a moral code. The two cultures fought. But they also could cooperate in areas of trade and learning. Therefore, violence and hatred between them was not inevitable.

1. Can you find a thesis statement? If so, underline the sentence or key phrases in it.
2. What phrases or sentences, if any, show how the writer of the paragraph will prove a thesis?

Exercise 2

Choosing an Introductory Paragraph

Re-read the DBQ and the five introductory paragraphs in Exercise 1. Also go back and study the primary source documents for this lesson. Now, decide which introductory paragraph of the five is the best and which is the worst. In the spaces provided here, identify and explain your choices. Share your decisions in a class discussion about the right way to write an introductory paragraph for a DBQ essay.

The BEST Introductory Paragraph is _____

Explain your choice

The WORST Introductory Paragraph is _____

Explain your choice

Exercise 3

Completing an Essay Using One Introductory Paragraph

In Exercise 2, you chose what you saw as the best introductory paragraph from a group of five. Are you still satisfied with your choice? If so, copy that paragraph in the space below and complete an entire DBQ essay supporting the ideas in that introductory paragraph. If you have changed your mind, choose one of the other four introductory paragraphs and use it as the start of a complete DBQ essay of your own. (Use additional sheets for your essay if you need to.)

The Question

“Despite many similarities between them, Islamic civilization and the Christian West were from the start almost certain to clash, and clash violently.” Assess the validity of this statement with respect to the 7th through the 13th centuries.

Writing and Linking Support Paragraphs

INTRODUCING THE LESSON TO YOUR STUDENTS

The eleven primary source documents for this lesson all deal with the various civilizations that arose in Africa and the Americas in the centuries before the modern age and before any sustained contact with Europe.

The purpose of the lesson is to focus student attention on the internal paragraphs of the various history essays they will be called on to write. Special attention is given to various ways of linking ideas within and between paragraphs, including the use of transitional words and phrases. The goal is to help students see that the logic of their argument must be made explicit and easy to follow. Simple sentences, clear organization and a careful use of transitional phrases and other linking words are the key to doing this effectively.

The internal paragraphs are where the bulk of the references to the primary sources will be made in any effective DBQ essay. Some time is devoted here to looking at acceptable and unacceptable ways of using the primary sources.

KEY CONCEPTS AND STRATEGIES

A number of key concepts and strategies will be presented in this lesson. These should help students think more effectively about the internal paragraphs of the essay. These internal paragraphs are the place to make the detailed case in support of the thesis. The concepts and strategies include the need to

1. Link details logically within and between paragraphs,
2. Use transition phrases effectively,
3. Use primary sources to support the thesis or other main ideas (avoid a “laundry list” manner of referring to the sources), and
4. Keep sentence and paragraph structure simple, in part by using the “Main Ideas-Details-Explanations” system presented in Lesson 5.

THE MINDSPARKS VISUALS

Images for the visual sources used in this lesson can be found in the MindSparks unit entitled *Civilizations of Africa and the Americas*.

Exercise 1

Using Transitional Phrases

Objective for the Exercise

To teach students to recognize the importance of transitional phrases and other linking words as tools for connecting ideas within and between paragraphs.

Points to Make with Students

The focus of this exercise is on the use of certain transitional words and phrases in linking together sentences and paragraphs. But the goal is not to have students memorize a master list of these words and phrases. It is more important that they see how transitional words work as markers indicating the logical connections between ideas. **What makes transitional phrases important is their role in making the logic of an argument clear.**

The paragraph for this exercise, for example, is based on a chronological logic. That is, the jumbled paragraph (see the corrected version below) describes the evolution over time of human societies in Africa from primitive hunter-gatherer tribes to the complex empires of the Middle Ages. A close attention to transitional phrases should help students unravel the paragraph, though doing so will still be a challenge. Phrases such as “But in time,” “Even before,” “Later,” or “Meanwhile” help indicate what came first and what followed later. Students should also pay attention to specific dates and to other words that link one sentence with a previous one. The point to stress is that the logic of the paragraph can only be made clear through the careful use of these transitional markers.

Evaluating Student Responses

Sample Paragraph: Correct Order

Humanity first evolved on the African continent. And village-based tribes existed there for thousands of years. But in time, more organized kingdoms also developed all over Africa, just as they did elsewhere. Even before the age of Classical Greek and Roman civilization in the first millenium BCE, some African kingdoms had appeared, mainly in the northeast where they were in contact with ancient Egypt. Later, from the 5th to the 15th century CE, other kingdoms emerged mainly on the savannahs, vast grasslands just south of the Sahara, as the camel caravan trade with Muslim North Africa steadily expanded. Meanwhile, other Muslim and Arab traders were establishing outposts along the coast of East Africa. And this East African trading system was linked with a few African kingdoms in the interior far to the south.

Exercise 2

Types of Transitional Links

Objective for the Exercise

To give students further insight into the relationship between transitional phrases and the logic of the argument the essay seeks to make.

Points to Make with Students

This exercise further develops the ideas from Exercise 1. It does this by presenting the student with four sets of transitional words and phrases. Each set has to do with one particular kind of logical structure common in a DBQ or other history essay.

These are not the only ways such transitional phrases could be classified. They are only offered here to help students see that **transitional phrases are important tools for making the logic of the essay's argument clear**. Students can learn two important strategies from this insight. First, the need to think about the types of logical arguments that various DBQs will require. Second, the need to see how vital it is for the logical connections in an essay to be clear. Transitional words and phrases are a key tool in accomplishing this latter task.

Evaluating Student Responses

Here are suggested solutions to the four paragraphs (other solutions are possible):

Sample Paragraph 1 (Chronological)

A number of fascinating civilizations arose in Mesoamerica, the lands of southern Mexico and Central America. The Olmecs were the first of these peoples that we know much about at all. They were centered on the coast south of present-day Veracruz. Shortly after they disappeared around 400 BCE, the mysterious Mayan civilization began to develop just a bit to the south. It would thrive for over a thousand years. During this same time, the city of Teotihuacan grew up just north of Lake Texcoco; it was the center of a thriving culture until about the eight century CE. Finally several centuries later, the mighty Aztecs based their civilization in Tenochtitlan, just a few miles to the south on that same lake.

Sample Paragraph 2 (Cause and Effect)

Many African kingdoms grew up in the savannah grasslands south of the Sahara. Why? One factor is this region's location, which enabled its rulers to play a middle-man role between Saharan caravans from the north and trading societies in the jungles farther south. Another reason has to do with the Niger River, which reached up into these grasslands and then descended south to the ocean, offering a convenient route through the region. Finally, Islam was able to penetrate this region. It gave the kings there a broader set of religious ideas they could use to claim a right to rule beyond the confines of a tribe or village.

Exercise 2 (Continued)

Types of Transitional Links

Sample Paragraph 3 (Order of Importance)

Many are amazed at the accomplishments of Mayan civilization, given its complete isolation from Eurasia and Africa. What is it about the Mayans that people find most amazing?

One amazing thing is the simple fact that this complex society existed at all, in a part of the world without horses or certain other domesticated animals on which Old World civilizations depended, and without the cultural contact most other civilizations had with one another. Also amazing are their magnificent pyramids, mysterious ball courts, and other impressive ruins. But perhaps most amazing of all are the Mayans' cultural and intellectual accomplishments—a written script, mathematical concepts, astronomical knowledge, and more. These are what mark Mayan civilization off as one of the great early civilizations of human history.

Sample Paragraph 4 (Compare and Contrast)

The cities of Tenochtitlan and Timbuktu are both impressive, existing as they did far from any other advanced civilization. In what ways were the cities alike and not alike? On the one hand, they were similar in that each was a center of trade set in the interior of a region, yet with ties to societies far beyond that region. Also, each was the seat from which its rulers could dominate surrounding territories. On the other hand, Timbuktu was a more strictly commercial and cultural capital than Tenochtitlan was. Islam in time became the dominant faith in Timbuktu. Its rulers were Muslims, but they were not themselves the key leaders of that worldwide religion. In Tenochtitlan, however, the priests and the Aztec ruler were the main intermediaries between all of humanity and the gods who controlled the destiny of the world. In this sense, Tenochtitlan was a far more important religious capital for the Aztecs than Timbuktu was for its Muslim inhabitants.

Exercise 3

Dealing with Primary Source Documents

Objective for the Exercise

To teach students to think carefully about the way they use primary source documents to support their thesis and the main ideas in their essays.

Points to Make with Students

Students should refer to the primary sources almost entirely in the internal paragraphs of their essays. That is where they will present detailed evidence for their thesis and the main ideas supporting it. A common mistake students make is to mention sources carelessly, with little effort to explain their connection to the thesis or any major idea. This exercise offers students contrasting models of correct and incorrect ways of referring to primary sources. With these models in mind, students should have a better sense of how to use primary sources effectively.

Evaluating Student Responses

Paragraph 1 A Poor Use of the Sources

This paragraph is mainly a string of references to the sources, with little detail as to their actual content and almost no explanation of how they help to answer the question. That question asks how Islam shaped the African kingdoms. In the rush to mention documents, this writer only indicates (briefly) how Islam came to the region, not how it influenced that region. There is no real analysis of the content of the documents. Hence, the references to them only leave the reader confused as to what the paragraph's main point is, especially since the last document mentioned is entirely unrelated to the question.

Paragraph 2 A Good Use of the Sources.

This paragraph clearly addresses the question. It first explains the rise of the African kingdoms and cities as a result of trading ties established by Muslim merchants. It then uses the passage from Leo Africanus to suggest some ways in which the Islamic faith of these merchants shaped Timbuktu—and by implication other parts of West Africa. Only one document is referred to directly, yet it is used in depth and in such a way as to address the question meaningfully. In other words, it is the question that guides which documents are used and how they are used.

Exercise 4

Keep the Essay Simple and Direct

Objective for the Exercise

To give students a chance to complete a DBQ essay using a set of simple guidelines for writing and linking the internal paragraphs of the essay.

Points to Make with Students

By now, students should be familiar with most of the features of a good DBQ essay. The guidelines on the exercise sheet will help them stay on track as they complete this essay. Use the more complete DBQ scoring guide below to evaluate these essays.

Evaluating Student Responses

DBQ Scoring Guide

Excellent Essay

- Offers a clear answer or thesis explicitly addressing all aspects of the essay question.
- Does a very 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 very 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.

OBJECTIVES

1. To understand various ways of linking ideas within and between paragraphs, including the use of transitional words and phrases.
 2. To adopt a simple and direct way of presenting ideas within the internal paragraphs of the essay.
-

Writing and Linking Support Paragraphs

The primary source documents for this lesson are displayed on the next three pages. All of the exercises for this lesson are based on these primary sources and the background information provided here.

**THE PRIMARY SOURCES
AND THE EXERCISES****INTRODUCING THE LESSON**

The eleven primary source documents for this lesson consist of photos, drawings, a sculpture, ancient written documents, and personal travel accounts. All deal with the various civilizations that arose in Africa and the Americas in the centuries before the modern age and before any sustained contact with Europe. The exercises for the lesson use these documents to teach some important points about linking the internal paragraphs of a DBQ essay.

**PUTTING TOGETHER
A COMPLETE ESSAY**

Keep in mind that the final four lessons in this program are the ones that focus on the key tasks in organizing and writing an entire essay. Once again, here is where you are in this sequence of lessons:

- | | |
|----------|---|
| Lesson 5 | Taking notes and creating a clear essay organization. |
| Lesson 6 | Writing an effective introductory paragraph based on your thesis statement. |
| Lesson 7 | <i>Writing the internal paragraphs of your essay and using transitions to link them together effectively.</i> |
| Lesson 8 | Writing a strong conclusion. |

**KEY CONCEPTS
AND LEARNING STRATEGIES**

The primary sources and the exercises for this lesson will help you see how to link the paragraphs of your essay together logically.

1. Keep in mind the need to **link details logically** within and between the paragraphs of the essay.
2. **Use transition phrases** effectively.
3. Use the primary source documents to support your argument or thesis. Do not simply list documents “**laundry list**” style.
4. **Aim for clarity and simplicity** in the way you write your sentences. In most cases, try to organize paragraphs into three-part units using the **Main Idea-Details-Explanations** system presented in Lesson 5.

The Documents

Early Civilizations of Africa and the Americas

Document 1

The city of Timbuktu in the kingdom of Mali, which lay south of the Sahara. Timbuktu was a major destination for caravans crossing the Sahara from North Africa to West Africa.

Courtesy of the Library of Congress



Document 3

The world's largest mud mosque, built in the 14th century in Jenne on the southern edge of the Sahara. Jenne was a key city in ancient Mali, one of several medieval kingdoms that arose in Africa due to growing trade across the desert with Muslim merchants from North Africa and the Middle East.

Stock Montage, Inc.



Document 2

"The women of the city maintain the custom of veiling their faces, except for the slaves who sell all the foodstuffs. The inhabitants are very rich, especially the strangers who have settled in the country; so much so that the current king has given two of his daughters in marriage to two brothers, both businessmen, on account of their wealth. There are many wells containing sweet water in Timbuktu; and in addition, when the Niger is in flood canals deliver the water to the city. Grain and animals are abundant, so that the consumption of milk and butter is considerable. But salt is in very short supply because it is carried here from Tegaza, some 500 miles from Timbuktu. . . .

"The royal court is magnificent and very well organized. When the king goes from one city to another with the people of his court, he rides a camel and the horses are led by hand by servants. . . .

"The king is a declared enemy of the Jews. He will not allow any to live in the city. If he hears it said that a Berber merchant frequents them or does business with them, he confiscates his goods. There are in Timbuktu numerous judges, teachers and priests, all properly appointed by the king. He greatly honors learning. Many hand-written books imported from Barbary are also sold. There is more profit made from this commerce than from all other merchandise.

"The people of Timbuktu are of a peaceful nature. They have a custom of almost continuously walking about the city in the evening (except for those that sell gold), between 10 p.m. and 1 a.m., playing musical instruments and dancing. The citizens have at their service many slaves, both men and women."

Parts of an account of Timbuktu from The Description of Africa (1526), by Leo Africanus, a Muslim who had been captured by Christian pirates and later freed by Pope Leo X. The Pope enabled him to write about his travels in Africa. Translated by Paul Brians.

The Documents

Document 8

Most African peoples believed in a supreme deity and a range of lesser gods, along with the power of the souls of ancestors to help their living descendants. Masks such as this one were usually seen as embodying gods or ancestral figures and their spiritual powers during ritual ceremonies. The mask on the left is from the Bakota people of what is now Gabon.

Courtesy of the Library of Congress



Document 6

Ruins of “Great Zimbabwe,” capital of a state far down in the interior of southern Africa, this city was linked to the outside world by its gold-trading ties with East African coastal cities, which in turn traded via the Indian Ocean with Arabia and Asia.

Courtesy of the Library of Congress



Document 7

A drawing based on a stone relief known as the “Tablet of the Slaves.” It provides details on a king and a top official in the Mayan city-state of Palenque. The intricate designs on top are examples of the written hieroglyphics the Mayans developed.

Stock Montage, Inc.



The Documents



Document 9

A small portion of the *Codex Tro-Cortesianus*, a Mayan document preserved by Spanish conquerors. It is printed on paper made from fibers of the maguey plant. The figures here are various nature deities, including the corn god, center, and rain god, right. This is one of only three codices to have survived book burnings by the Spanish clergy in the 1500s. These codices contain astronomical data and Mayan mathematics used to fix calendar dates important in the Mayan religion. They also record information about myths, rituals, historical events and rulers, farming, weather, astronomy and more.

Stock Montage, Inc.

Document 10

Aztec drawing of the religious ceremony in which Aztec priests sacrifice captives by ripping their hearts out and offering them to the Aztec sun god in order to stave off the end of the world.

Courtesy of the Library of Congress



Document 11

"From this place we could likewise see the three causeways which led into Mexico. . . . We also observed the aqueduct which ran from Chapultepec, and provided the whole town with sweet water. We could also distinctly see the bridges across the openings, by which these causeways were intersected, and through which the waters of the lake ebbed and flowed. The lake itself was crowded with canoes, which were bringing provisions, manufacturers, and other merchandise to the city. From here we also discovered that the only communication to the houses in this city, and of all the other towns built in the lake, was by means of drawbridges or canoes. In all these towns the beautiful white plastered temples rose above the smaller ones, like so many towers and castles in our Spanish towns, and this, it may be imagined, was a splendid sight."

A description of the Aztec city of Tenochtitlan in The Conquest of New Spain, by Bernal Diaz. Diaz was with Hernan Cortes during his conquest of the Aztecs in 1519.

Exercise 1

Using Transitional Phrases

This exercise will help you see how important “transitional words and phrases” and other linking words can be in connecting sentences within a paragraph. First read the definition of “transitional phrases” in the box and study the examples there. Then read the paragraph below the box. This paragraph is about Manifest Destiny. Its sentences, however, are out of order. In the space below it, copy these sentences in the correct order so that the paragraph makes sense. Then, underline all the transitional phrases or other connecting words that helped you figure out the correct order.

Transitional Phrases: Words or phrases that link one sentence or paragraph to the next in some way, or that show the connection between a sentence or paragraph and the one just before it. Here are a few common transitional words or phrases:

In general . . . For example . . . But on the other hand . . .
Even before . . . Then, next . . . Still later, another thing . . .
Most importantly . . . Next in importance . . .
At first, I was informed . . . Then on the contrary I was told . . .
One group . . . Another group . . . Finally . . .

Transitions help the reader follow your reasoning or your argument. When speaking, you help your listener do this by your gestures or tone of voice. When you write, you need to work much harder to show clearly how each idea connects to the next idea. In addition to transitional words such as “however,” “but,” “next,” “after that,” etc., dates can be helpful transitional links. Pronouns also act as important linking words. That is, words such as “he,” “she,” or “they” always refer back to people named or identified earlier. In this way, they link the ideas in one sentence to those in previous sentences.

Sample Paragraph: Jumbled Order

And village-based tribes existed there for thousands of years. Later, from the 5th to the 15th century CE, other kingdoms emerged mainly on the savannahs, vast grasslands just south of the Sahara, as the camel caravan trade with Muslim North Africa steadily expanded. Even before the age of Classical Greek and Roman civilization in the first millennium BCE, some African kingdoms had appeared, mainly in the northeast where they were in contact with ancient Egypt. Humanity first evolved on the African continent. And this East African trading system was linked with a few African kingdoms in the interior far to the south. Meanwhile, other Muslim and Arab traders were establishing outposts along the coast of East Africa. But in time, more organized kingdoms also developed all over Africa, just as they did elsewhere.

Sample Paragraph: Correct Order

Exercise 2

Types of Transitional Links

The way you link ideas within a paragraph depends in part on the kind of question you are answering. For example, if the question asks you to compare and contrast two developments or trends, you will use transitional phrases that point out similarities and differences. A question about when various trends or events occurred calls for transitional phrases linking events over time.

For this two-page lesson you will work with four separate paragraphs. The paragraphs are not related to one another. Each paragraph links its ideas in a different way, identified as “Chronological,” “Cause and Effect,” “Order of Importance,” or “Compare and Contrast.” These terms are explained in each box below, along with some typical transitional phrases of that type. Each sample paragraph has blank spaces where transitional words or phrases should go. Complete these paragraphs. As a class, discuss how transitional words help make clear the different kinds of reasoning in each paragraph.

1. Chronological

Having to do with the order of events over time. Use a chronological organization when you need to describe changes over time carefully.

Examples: At first, . . . Next, . . . Then last . . .
 For years, . . . After that . . . And then . . .
 Beginning with . . . Then came . . . This finally led to . . .

Complete the Transitions in the Sample Paragraph Below: You may use the transitional phrases in this box, alter them, or use any others that seem to work.

Sample Paragraph 1 (Chronological)

A number of fascinating civilizations arose in Mesoamerica, the lands of southern Mexico and Central America. The Olmecs _____ of these peoples that we know much about at all. They were centered on the coast south of present-day Veracruz. _____ they disappeared around 400 BCE, the mysterious Mayan civilization began to develop just a bit to the south. It would thrive for over a thousand years. _____, the city of Teotihuacan grew up just north of Lake Texcoco; it thrived from around 100 BCE to the eighth century CE. _____, the mighty Aztecs based their civilization in Tenochtitlan, just a few miles to the south on that same lake.

2. Cause and Effect

When you want to focus on the factors explaining an event or trend, especially with “explain why” or “assess the validity” questions.

Examples: One factor explaining . . . Then there was . . . Also . . .
 To begin with . . . Also . . . Together, all these factors . . .
 At first . . . Adding to this factor was . . . Finally . . .

Complete the Transitions in the Sample Paragraph Below: You may use the transitional phrases in this box, alter them, or use any others that seem to work.

Sample Paragraph 2 (Cause and Effect)

Many African kingdoms grew up in the savannah grasslands south of the Sahara. Why? _____ is this region’s location, which enabled its rulers to play a middle-man role between Saharan caravans from the north and trading societies in the jungles farther south. _____ the Niger River, which reached up into these grasslands and then descended south to the ocean, offering a convenient route through the region. _____, Islam was able to penetrate this region. It gave the kings there a broader set of religious ideas they could use to claim a right to rule beyond the confines of a tribe or village.

Exercise 2 (Continued)

Types of Transitional Links

3. Order of Importance

From the most to the least important factors that explain something (or the least to the most important factors). Most useful with “explain why” question types.

Examples: The most important factor . . . Also significant . . . Then finally . . .
 First of all . . . Another factor . . . Also . . . As a result, . . .
 For one thing . . . More importantly . . . But most of all . . .

Complete the Transitions in the Sample Paragraph Below: You may use the transitional phrases in this box, alter them, or use any others that seem to work.

Sample Paragraph 3 (Order of Importance)

Many are amazed at the accomplishments of Mayan civilization, given its complete isolation from Eurasia and Africa. What is it about the Mayans that people find most amazing? _____ is the simple fact that this complex society existed at all, in a part of the world without horses or certain other domesticated animals on which Old World civilizations depended, and without the cultural contact most other civilizations had with one another. _____ are their magnificent pyramids, mysterious ball courts, and other impressive ruins. But _____ are the Mayans’ cultural and intellectual accomplishments—a written script, mathematical concepts, astronomical knowledge and more. These are what mark Mayan civilization off as one of the great early civilizations of human history.

4. Compare and Contrast

Use this organization to describe similarities and differences in two separate historical events or trends. It can also be useful with “assess the validity” questions when you agree partly with the DBQ statement but also want to make some qualifications.

Examples: On the one hand . . . On the other hand . . .
 For one thing . . . Moreover . . . However . . . Finally . . .
 It is true that . . . But nevertheless . . . Also . . .

Complete the Transitions in the Sample Paragraph: You may use the transitional phrases in this box, alter them, or use any others that seem to work.

Sample Paragraph 4 (Compare and Contrast)

The cities of Tenochtitlan and Timbuktu are both impressive, existing as they did far from any other advanced civilization. In what ways were the cities alike and not alike? _____, they were similar in that each was a center of trade set in the interior of a region, yet with ties to societies far beyond that region. _____, each was the seat from which its rulers could dominate surrounding territories. _____, Timbuktu was a more strictly commercial and cultural capital than Tenochtitlan was. Islam in time became the dominant faith in Timbuktu. Its rulers were Muslims, but they were not themselves the key leaders of that worldwide religion. In Tenochtitlan, _____, the priests and the Aztec ruler were the main intermediaries between all of humanity and the gods who controlled the destiny of the world. In this sense, Tenochtitlan was a far more important religious capital for the Aztecs than Timbuktu was for its Muslim inhabitants.

Exercise 3

Dealing with Primary Source Documents

The first two exercises in this lesson could apply equally to a DBQ essay or to any other kind of history essay. What is unique about a DBQ essay is the need to use primary sources. But what exactly is the best way of using or referring to these sources?

The right way: First, focus on the question and think about how the primary sources are related to it. Then decide on your thesis. Use your own history knowledge and the primary sources to support your argument or thesis. Use as many sources as you can. You don't need to mention every source. It is more important that you **always use the sources you do mention to back up your thesis**.

The wrong way: A common mistake in writing a DBQ essay is to list primary sources without really connecting them to the thesis. This is referred to as a "laundry list" approach to the sources. Use the sources to prove your thesis, not simply to show that you can list them all.

Below are two paragraphs responding to the same question. Each mentions some of the primary sources for this lesson. Read the paragraphs, answer the questions below them and discuss your answers in class.

Question:

A number of medieval empires arose in West Africa between about 500 CE and 1500 CE. Explain how these empires were shaped in part by Islam and by contacts with Muslims in North Africa.

Sample Paragraph 1

Ghana, Songhai, and Bornu were three African kingdoms that arose on the savannah south of the Sahara Desert. Another one was Mali. As Document 1 shows, Timbuktu was a major center of this kingdom. Another city was Jenne, also in Mali. Islam's influence is proved by the huge mud mosque there, which was built in the 1300s (see Document 3). As Document 2 seems to suggest, Islam was brought across the Sahara by merchants who made Timbuktu a key trading center. The city was wealthy, as was also Great Zimbabwe, however, which was located far to the south of the West African empires (see Document 6).

Sample Paragraph 2

Islam spread across North Africa in the 7th and 8th centuries. Starting around this time or a little later, African kingdoms arose just south of the Sahara desert. These two trends were linked. In part, this was because of the camel and the way it enabled Muslim merchants from North Africa to cross the Sahara and trade with societies throughout West Africa. Cities such as Timbuktu arose in the savannah just south of the desert as key stopping off points in this camel caravan trading system. But these merchants brought much more than goods with them. They brought Islam. Leo Africanus, himself a Muslim, gives us a good idea of how Islam came to affect all aspects of life in Timbuktu, from female dress to the king's love of the books and scholarship the Muslims brought with them. This king's power, his laws, even some of his prejudices were shaped by Islam, which had, by the 1500s, become such a strong force in this city.

Paragraph _____ uses
the primary sources
effectively because . . .

Paragraph _____ uses
the primary sources
poorly because . . .

Exercise 4

Keep the Essay Simple and Direct

There is no one formula for writing an effective DBQ essay. However, there are some useful guidelines. Your introductory paragraph restates the topic and presents your thesis. The paragraphs that follow support that thesis as directly as possible. Usually, each paragraph develops one main idea. All details, examples, primary sources, and explanations follow logically so as to back up the paragraph's main idea and the thesis. Finally, transitions or other phrases clearly connect each paragraph to the next one.

Along the left column below and on the next page is one framework designed to guide you in writing this kind of a DBQ essay. It is again based on the **Main Idea-Details-Explanations** scheme. A DBQ is provided. Your task is to write an introductory paragraph, three internal paragraphs and a brief conclusion. Try to follow the guidelines on the left for each paragraph. (Notice that you have some leeway as to how many supporting details and explanations you must include.)

Instructions: Document-Based Essay

This question is based on the eleven documents for this lesson. As you analyze the documents, take into account both the source of each document and any point of view presented in it. Using information from the documents, and your knowledge of world history, write a well-organized essay answering the following DBQ.

The Question

Compare and contrast the city of Timbuktu and Tenochtitlan. Explain how their similarities and differences reflected broader similarities and differences between the civilizations of Mesoamerica and those of Africa in the centuries before the modern era.

Introductory Paragraph**Internal Paragraph 1**

Transition and Main Idea

1. Detail, fact, or reference to primary source document.

Explanation of the importance of this detail, fact, or source to the paragraph's main idea or the overall thesis.

2. Transition plus possible additional details, facts, or references to primary source documents.

Explanation of the importance of the details, facts, or sources to the paragraph's main idea or the overall thesis.

(Continue writing on next page)

Exercise 4 (Continued)

Keep the Essay Simple and Direct

Internal Paragraph 2

Transition and Main Idea

1. Detail, fact, or reference to primary source document.

Explanation of the importance of this detail, fact, or source to the paragraph's main idea or the overall thesis.

2. Transition plus possible additional details, facts, or references to primary source documents.

Explanation of the importance of the details, facts, or sources to the paragraph's main idea or the overall thesis.

Internal Paragraph 3

Transition and Main Idea

1. Detail, fact, or reference to primary source document.

Explanation of the importance of this detail, fact, or source to the paragraph's main idea or the overall thesis.

2. Transition plus possible additional details, facts, or references to primary source documents.

Explanation of the importance of the details, facts, or sources to the paragraph's main idea or the overall thesis.

Brief Conclusion

Writing a Strong Conclusion

INTRODUCING THE LESSON TO YOUR STUDENTS

The nine primary source documents for this lesson illustrate in very different ways the impact of geographic location and natural setting on historical development. The DBQ used for the exercises focuses on the impact of these factors on several very different historical cultures.

The essay-writing task for the lesson is to teach students to appreciate the value and importance of a concise and effective conclusion to a DBQ essay. The conclusion should be seen as closing a circle by bringing the essay back to the DBQ and the thesis as stated in the introductory paragraph. However, this does NOT mean mere repetition. The key to a good conclusion is a valid generalization about the evidence presented in the essay, a generalization that will nail down with finality the case the student wishes to make.

KEY CONCEPTS AND STRATEGIES

A number of key concepts and strategies will be presented in this lesson. These should help students think about how to write an effective conclusion to their essays. The concepts and strategies include the need to

1. Look back and refocus on the DBQ topic and the thesis,
2. Sum up the way the evidence backs up the thesis,
3. AVOID repeating points already made or adding new evidence or topics, and
4. Find a simple and forceful way to formulate the overall thesis and its significance.

THE MINDSPARKS VISUALS

Images for all the visual sources used in this lesson can be found in the MindSparks units entitled *Clan, Emperor, Shogun: Japan in the Middle Ages*, *Civilizations of Africa and the Americas*, *Ancient Greece*, *Christendom: The High Middle Ages*, and *Nomads of the Steppes*.

Exercise 1

Choosing Your Conclusion

Objective for the Exercise

To teach students to use the concluding paragraph mainly to summarize the way the evidence supports the thesis and answers the DBQ.

Points to Make with Students

The model essay for this exercise answers an “explain why” type of DBQ. The challenge is actually to explain the role of two different geographical factors in shaping the history of various societies. The essay’s structure reflects this aspect of the DBQ. That is, the introductory paragraph is followed by two internal paragraphs, each focusing on one of the two geographical factors. Three alternative concluding paragraphs are then provided for this essay. Students must choose the one they think is best.

A conclusion should **refocus attention on the DBQ and the essay’s thesis**. To “refocus” does not mean simply to repeat what was already said. It means to call attention to the DBQ in a way that relates it directly to the thesis and to the essay’s findings. **Mainly, the conclusion should sum up the evidence in support of the thesis**. This should take the form of a broad generalization about that evidence. **Summing up does NOT mean repeating the specifics of the internal paragraphs. Nor does it mean adding new facts, or topics**. All the evidence should have been presented in the internal paragraphs. The goal of the conclusion is to clarify for the reader what the entire essay is about.

Evaluating Student Responses

Conclusion 1 (Best Conclusion)

This conclusion restates and clarifies the thesis, which is that both factors influence political, cultural and economic development. Rather than repeating specifics, the conclusion then qualifies the thesis in a thoughtful way by suggesting that humans can make choices about how they respond to these geographical factors. In other words, the conclusion elaborates on the thesis without going into any new topics or details.

Conclusion 2 (Unacceptable)

This conclusion just keeps adding new details and new references to the documents. It does not really explain the relevance of these details. And it never really returns to the DBQ and the thesis in order to sum up and indicate how the body of the essay supports that thesis.

Conclusion 3 (Unacceptable)

This paragraph simply continues to develop in detail the last point mentioned in the previous paragraph. It could have been a fine extra internal paragraph in a longer essay. But it fails to do what a conclusion should do. That is, it fails to sum up all the details and related them back to the overall thesis presented in the introductory paragraph.

Exercise 2

History Unfolding—Review Exercise

Objective for the Exercise

To give students a chance to review the key concepts of the *History Unfolding* program.

Points to Make with Students

This exercise gives students a chance to review the key ideas developed in all eight lessons. Give them time to review the introductory pages for the earlier lessons and think about the central concepts and strategies they have been taught. Then have students jot down notes evaluating the essay presented in this lesson. This essay was NOT actually written by a student. It was purposefully designed to illustrate many of the features described in earlier lessons. However, it is not a perfect essay, and students should be encouraged to evaluate it as critically as you would evaluate their essays.

Evaluating Student Responses

You may wish to direct the discussion of the sample essay here by applying the complete DBQ scoring guide from Lesson 7, Exercise 4.

OBJECTIVES

1. To understand the value of a concise and effective conclusion to your essay.
 2. To learn to avoid repeating points or adding new ones when concluding your essay.
-

Writing a Strong Conclusion

The primary source documents for this lesson are displayed on the next three pages. All of the exercises for this lesson are based on these primary sources and the background information provided here.

THE PRIMARY SOURCES AND THE EXERCISES

INTRODUCING THE LESSON

The nine primary source documents for this lesson are all visuals. They all illustrate in very different ways the impact of geographic location and natural setting on historical development. You will use these documents in exercises focused on the final part of a DBQ essay, the conclusion.

PUTTING TOGETHER A COMPLETE ESSAY

As you know, the final four lessons in this program focus on the key tasks in organizing and writing an entire essay. This is the last of these lessons, which have introduced the following key tasks:

- Lesson 5 Taking notes and creating a clear essay organization.
- Lesson 6 Writing an effective introductory paragraph based on your thesis statement.
- Lesson 7 Writing the internal paragraphs of your essay and using transitions to link them together effectively.
- Lesson 8 *Writing a strong conclusion.*

KEY CONCEPTS AND LEARNING STRATEGIES

The primary sources and the exercises for this lesson will help you see the importance of an effective conclusion to your DBQ essay.

1. Look back at your introductory paragraph. Your conclusion should **refocus on the DBQ topic and on your thesis** about it.
2. Reword key points in both the DBQ and your thesis and **sum up the way the evidence backs up your thesis**.
3. **Do NOT simply restate points** you have already made. Also, **do NOT add new evidence or specifics at this point**.
4. Try to find a simple and forceful way to call attention to your overall thesis and its significance.

The Documents

Geography and History Interacting

Document 1

Rice paddies and a mountain range in Japan.

© Bob Krist/CORBIS



Document 2

An ancient Mayan temple as depicted by artist Frederick Catherwood who was with the group that discovered the site in the early 1800s.

Courtesy of the Library of Congress



Document 3

The Greek town of Lindos and an ancient fortified hilltop on the island of Rhodes at the southeastern edge of the Aegean Sea.

© Hubert Stadler/CORBIS



The Documents



Document 4

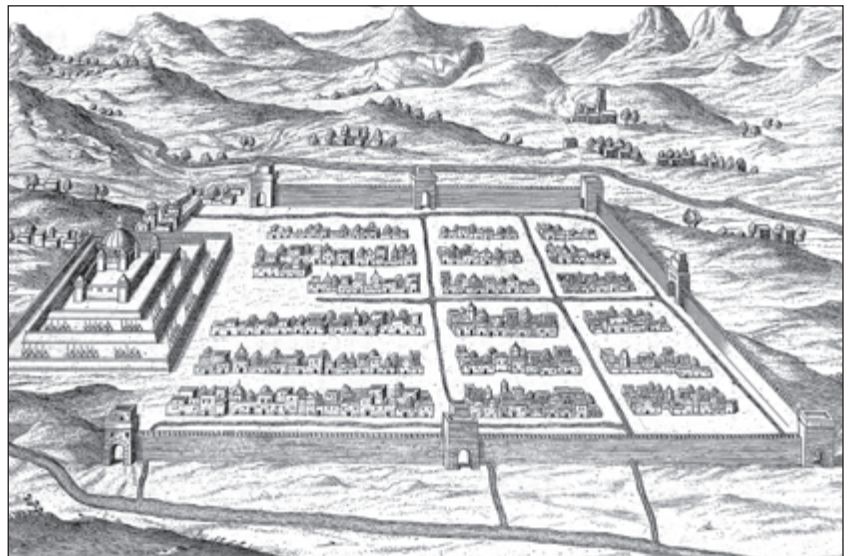
Medieval Cologne is shown here, located in the lowlands of northern Europe along important trade routes.

© Historical Picture Archive/CORBIS

Document 5

Drawing of Cuzco in the 1500s. Cuzco was the main city of the Inca empire and was located high in the Andes in present-day Peru.

Stock Montage, Inc.



Document 6

Societies of horse-riding pastoral nomads inhabited the vast Eurasian steppe for centuries, starting as far back as 2000 BCE. Here, a man rides across the Gobi Desert along the Mongolian steppes. His shaggy Przewalskii horse is typical of the smaller, lighter horses the nomads learned to handle with such deadly skill.

© Brian A. Vikander/CORBIS

The Documents



Document 7

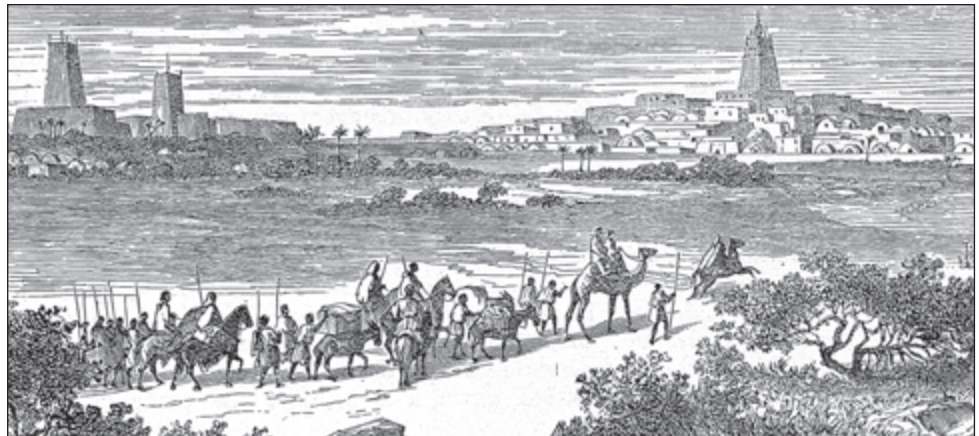
A *ger*, or *yurt*, the typical home of many of the pastoral nomads of the Eurasian steppes throughout their history.

Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Document 8

During Europe's Middle Ages, Muslim merchants and their camel caravans in North Africa were crossing the Sahara to key trading towns in empires such as Ghana or Songhai. Perhaps the most famous city was Timbuktu in Mali. On the left, a caravan approaches Timbuktu from the north.

Stock Montage, Inc.



Document 9

Goods and ideas passed from one end of the Eurasian landmass to the other along a series of routes known as the Silk Road. In Central Asia, travelers could cross high mountain ranges at only a few key passes. One of the most famous was the Khyber Pass, leading down from the Hindu Kush range toward India.

Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Exercise 1

Choosing Your Conclusion

To write a good conclusion to a DBQ essay, first look back at your introductory paragraph. This will focus you again on the question and your thesis. Your conclusion should refer in some way to both the DBQ and your basic thesis, and it should comment on how the evidence you have presented supports your thesis.

Do NOT simply restate points you have already made. Also do NOT add new evidence or specifics at this point. Try instead to find a simple and forceful way to call attention to your thesis and how you have backed it up.

In the box is a DBQ based on the documents for this lesson. Below it is an essay minus a conclusion. A typical DBQ essay will be a bit longer and more detailed than this one. But this one will be easier to work with for now. On the second page of this exercise are three possible conclusions to the essay. Choose the conclusion you think is best and explain your decision in the spaces provided.

The Question

All societies are deeply influenced by their natural settings and by geographic location. Assess this statement with respect to some of the major societies or cultural regions of the world in the centuries before the modern age.

Natural setting and location are among the most important geographic factors influencing the way societies have developed over time. The phrase “natural setting” refers to the unique natural characteristics of a place, such as climate, resources, nearby rivers, mountains and other key features. “Location” refers to where the place is in relation to other distant but important natural features and human communities. These factors profoundly shape the economic choices societies can make, their political institutions and the cultural influences they experience.

Take, for example, the economic impact of the natural setting. The vast steppes of Eurasia are dry and treeless. Some farming was possible there, especially at oases and along rivers. But for the most part, pasturing of herds was a far more efficient way to live. Once the peoples of this region mastered horse riding, the open spaces became far more accessible to them. A life of pastoral nomadism arose, and it dominated this natural setting for centuries (Documents 6 and 7). In a different way, the Greek town of Lyndos and its fortress (Document 3) suggest how natural setting affects both economic and political life. The lands surrounding the Aegean Sea are rocky, divided by hills and mountains, yet also full of protected harbors. This was a perfect setting for small, independent city-states to arise with an economic life geared to seafaring and trading. The small valley in Japan surrounded by mountains (Document 1) illustrates this same theme in another way. As in ancient Greece, a divided landscape made it hard for any ruler to unite Japan for long. Japanese feudalism is rooted in this aspect of the natural setting.

As for location, this factor can be key to understanding the rise of early towns and cities. A city like Cologne—on a major river and at a trading crossroads in northern Europe—was perfectly located to take advantage of late Medieval Europe’s reviving trade patterns (Document 4). The political and cultural impact of geographic location is also important. Along the famous Silk Road routes connecting eastern and western Asia, certain key passes were strategic hot spots. This is certainly true of the Khyber Pass (Document 9), through which many conquerors over the centuries passed into an otherwise well protected India. Timbuktu was located in the savannah south of the Sahara Desert and near the Niger River (Document 8). This made it a key stopping point for caravans from North Africa. It also helped to make Timbuktu a major center for the transmission of Islamic culture into West Africa.

(see second page of this lesson for three alternative conclusions to this essay)

Exercise 1 (Continued)

Choosing Your Conclusion

Below are three conclusions to the DBQ essay found on the first page of this exercise. Read these through and choose the conclusion that you think best completes the essay. Then in the spaces provided, give a brief explanation of your decision about each of the three conclusions.

Conclusion 1

As these examples suggest, geographic location and natural setting influence the economic, cultural and political history of societies in a wide variety of ways. This influence is not fixed and unalterable. Timbuktu might have resisted Islam instead of accepting it. The nomads of the steppes might not have learned to master the horse as well as they did. Human choice is always a factor in what happens in history. But those options that humans get to choose among are always deeply shaped by natural setting and location.

Did you choose this conclusion? Why or why not? _____

Conclusion 2

Timbuktu was not alone in being a city shaped profoundly by geographic location. Whether it was a Mayan city-state deep in the jungles of Central America, or Cuzco high in the Andes in present-day Peru, every city is what it is in part because of geographic location and natural setting. A vast system of roads helped make Cuzco a powerful capital of the Inca empire in the centuries just before the arrival of the Spanish. These are just further examples of the impact of natural setting and location on history.

Did you choose this conclusion? Why or why not? _____

Conclusion 3

Islam was carried across the desert by, among others, Berber merchants from North Africa. In time, Islam deeply affected the native African kingdoms south of the Sahara. It gave them a powerful religious philosophy to unify their people and justify wider rule over more than one tribe or village. In time, this influence reshaped culture in many ways—from dress, to the arts and literature, to political roles and the relationships between men and women. All these and more were affected in the end by Timbuktu's geographic location.

Did you choose this conclusion? Why or why not? _____

Exercise 2

History Unfolding—Review Exercise

Here is a chance to apply what you have learned in all eight lessons in this workbook. Below is a checklist of the basic ideas stressed in these lessons. Use this checklist as a set of guidelines for evaluating the essay in Exercise 1 (including the conclusion you chose for it). Study the checklist. Also, look back at the instructions for some of the past exercises in this workbook if you need to. Now, next to each item on the checklist, jot down a few notes evaluating the essay in Exercise 1. How good a job do you think it does in meeting each standard on the checklist? In class, discuss your notes.

Introductory paragraph

Does the paragraph clarify the DBQ itself and present a clear thesis, or answer, to that DBQ?

Use of Primary Source Documents

Are they simply used in a “laundry list” fashion, or are they used thoughtfully to support key ideas and examples?

The Internal Paragraphs—1

Are these paragraphs organized around main points with supporting details and explanations related to those main points? (Look back at the **M-D-E** system suggested in Lesson 5 and Lesson 7. *But keep in mind that a good paragraph may vary the way it uses these elements.*)

The Internal Paragraphs—2

Are transitions and other phrases used effectively to connect points in a logical way?

Conclusion

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?

