

ASSESSMENT – UNIT 2 DBQ

Preparation

- [Download the WHP DBQ Rubric](#)
- Have the Comparison, CCOT, and Causation Tools available (find all resources on the [Student Resources page](#))

Purpose

This assessment helps prepare you for the document-based questions (DBQs) you will encounter on the AP® World History: Modern exam. It will also give you a better understanding of your skills development and overall progress related to constructing an argument, interpreting historical documents, and employing the historical reasoning processes you are using in this course.

Practices

Contextualization, sourcing, reading, writing

All DBQs require you to contextualize, research, and source documents, and of course as part of this, read and write.

Process

Day 1

In this activity, you're going to prepare to respond to a DBQ, or document-based question. In this course, document-based questions give you a prompt or question along with seven source documents, and you'll use the information in those documents (and additional knowledge you have) to respond to the prompt. Your responses will be written in essay format and will usually be five to six paragraphs long.

This DBQ asks you to respond to the following prompt: *Develop an argument that analyzes the similarities and differences between various networks of exchange from c. 1200 to 1450 CE.* To make sure you're clear on what you're being asked, take out the Question Parsing Tool. Work with your classmates to deconstruct the prompt.

Next, take out the DBQ and relevant historical thinking tool to help you analyze the documents. Take a look at the document library. As you do with the Three Close Reads process, quickly skim the documents for gist. Then, do a closer read of each one. For each document, write down the information you think you might use in your essay. You must provide source information for at least two of the documents in your essay. Write your ideas on the relevant tool as you work through the documents. Discuss your ideas with the class.

Now, come up with a major claim or thesis statement that responds to the prompt. Use the information from your thinking tool to help you come up with an idea. What you have written should help you support your claim. One common mistake students make when responding to a DBQ is not directly answering the prompt—so, in creating your thesis, make sure that it directly answers and is relevant to the prompt.

Finally, it's time to contextualize. Remember that ALL historical essays require you to contextualize. If you need to refresh your memory, contextualization is the process of placing a document, an event, a person, or process within its larger historical setting, and includes situating it in time, space, and sociocultural setting. In this case, you are contextualizing the documents. Contextualization will often come at the beginning of your essay, or at least in the first paragraph, either before or after your thesis statement. As needed, you can use the Contextualization Tool for this part of the process.

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Day 2

This second day is your writing day. Feel free to use your tools and notes from any prewriting work you completed as you craft your essay response. Make sure you have a copy of the WHP DBQ Writing Rubric available to remind you of what's important to include in your essay. And don't forget to contextualize! In doing so, think of the entire time period, not just the time immediately preceding the historical event or process you are writing about. Your teacher will give you a time limit for completing your five- to six-paragraph essay responding to the DBQ.

UNIT 2 DBQ

Directions: This question is based on the accompanying documents. In your response, make sure to include the following:

- ☐ Thesis/major claim – respond to the prompt with a historically defensible thesis or claim that establishes a clear line of reasoning.
- ☐ Contextualization – describe a broader historical context relevant to the prompt. Think of the entire time period, not just the time immediately preceding the historical event or process.
- ☐ Evidence and use of documents – use at least four of the documents to support your thesis or argument.
- ☐ Outside evidence – use at least one additional piece of historical evidence (outside of those found in the document collection) that is relevant to your argument and the prompt.
- ☐ Sourcing – for at least two documents, include how or why the source's historical situation, audience, purpose, and/or point of view is relevant to your argument.
- ☐ Complexity – demonstrate a complex understanding of the topic by using advanced argumentation and/or effective use of evidence.

Develop an argument that analyzes the similarities and differences between various networks of exchange from c. 1200 to 1450 CE.

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Document 1

This account of travel through Central Asia by Yelü Chucai (1190–1244), a Khitan minister provides information about the Mongol armies of Chinggis (Genghis) Khan. **Source:** Bretschneider, E. *Mediæval Researches from Eastern Asiatic Sources*. Vol I. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co. Ltd., 1887 (13-15).

In the year A.D. 1218, in spring, in the third month (April), [Yelü Chucai] left [northern Shanxi in China], crossed the [Tianshan] mountain, traversed the (great stony desert) and the (sandy desert), and reached the camp of Chinghiz [Chinggis] Khan.

In the next year (1219) a vast army was raised and set in motion towards the west. The way lay through the [Jinshan] mountain. Even in the middle of the summer, masses of ice and snow accumulate in these mountains. The army passing that road was obliged to cut its way through the ice. The pines and kui trees are so high, that they (seem to) reach heaven. The valleys there are all abounding in grass and flowers. The rivers west of the [Jinshan] all run westward, and finally discharge into a lake. South of the [Jinshan] is *Bie-shi-ba*, a city of the *Hui hu* (Uigurs). There is a tablet dating from the time of the Tang dynasty [618–907], on which it is stated that here at that time was the *Han hai kün* (military administration of [Mongolian desert]).

Document 2

Ibn Battuta (1304–1369), a Muslim scholar from Morocco, traveled widely through Dar al-Islam (house of Islam) or the Islamic world recording his observations. **Source:** Ross, E. Denison and Eileen Power, eds. *Ibn Battuta: Travels in Asia and Africa, 1325–1354*. Translated by H.A.R. Gibb. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., 1929 (109-10).

I travelled thence to 'Aden, the port of Yemen, on the coast of the ocean. It is surrounded by mountains and can be approached from one side only; it has no crops, trees, or water, but has reservoirs in which rainwater is collected. The Arabs often cut off the inhabitants from their supply of drinking-water until they buy them off with money and pieces of cloth. It is an exceedingly hot place. It is the port of the Indians, and to it come large vessels from Kinbayat (Cambay), Kaulam (Quilon), Calicut and many other Malabar ports [on the south-west coast of India]. There are Indian merchants living there, as well as Egyptian merchants. Its inhabitants are all either merchants, porters, or fishermen. Some of the merchants are immensely rich, so rich that sometimes a single merchant is sole owner of a large ship with all it contains, and this is a subject of ostentation and rivalry amongst them. In spite of that they are pious, humble, upright, and generous in character, treat strangers well, give liberally to devotees, and pay in full the tithes due to God.

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Document 3

Ruy Gonzalez de Clavijo (d. 1412) was sent as an envoy by Spain over the Silk Roads to Samarkand (present-day Uzbekistan) and the court of Timur (Tamerlane). **Source:** de Clavijo, Ruy González. *Clavijo: Embassy to Tamerlane 1403-1406*. Translated by Guy Le Strange. London: George Routledge & Sons Ltd., 1928 (177-78).

It was too through [Timur's] orders that daily along the way we were provided stage by stage with fresh mounts from the government studs as we passed by, and thus they hastened our going.

All along this route Timur causes horses to be kept stationed ready for use at post-stages, in one place there may be a hundred in another two hundred horses, and this is the case right up to Samarkand. These are kept for the service of the special messengers or envoys sent to distant places by Timur, or for the use of such envoys as may be coming to him, and such as come and such as go may ride these horses day and night without halt. These government studs are stationed both in those desert or uninhabited regions along the route, and in places where there is a settled population, further for this service there have been built caravanserais at diverse intervals, where there are stables for the horses ... When any envoy sent by Timur, or any messenger carrying despatches to him arrives at one of these post-houses forthwith they unsaddle the horses that have come in, and saddle fresh beasts of those they keep. ... After this fashion the messenger will pass along continuously: but should ever the horse that envoy is riding tire on the road, and by chance should he meet with any other horse whatever in these parts,—for instance should he come on one riding a horseback for his pleasure or business,—the messenger will take that horse, making the rider give it up, the Yamchi [attendant] being then held responsible for the animal thus taken on loan, in place of the government horse discarded.

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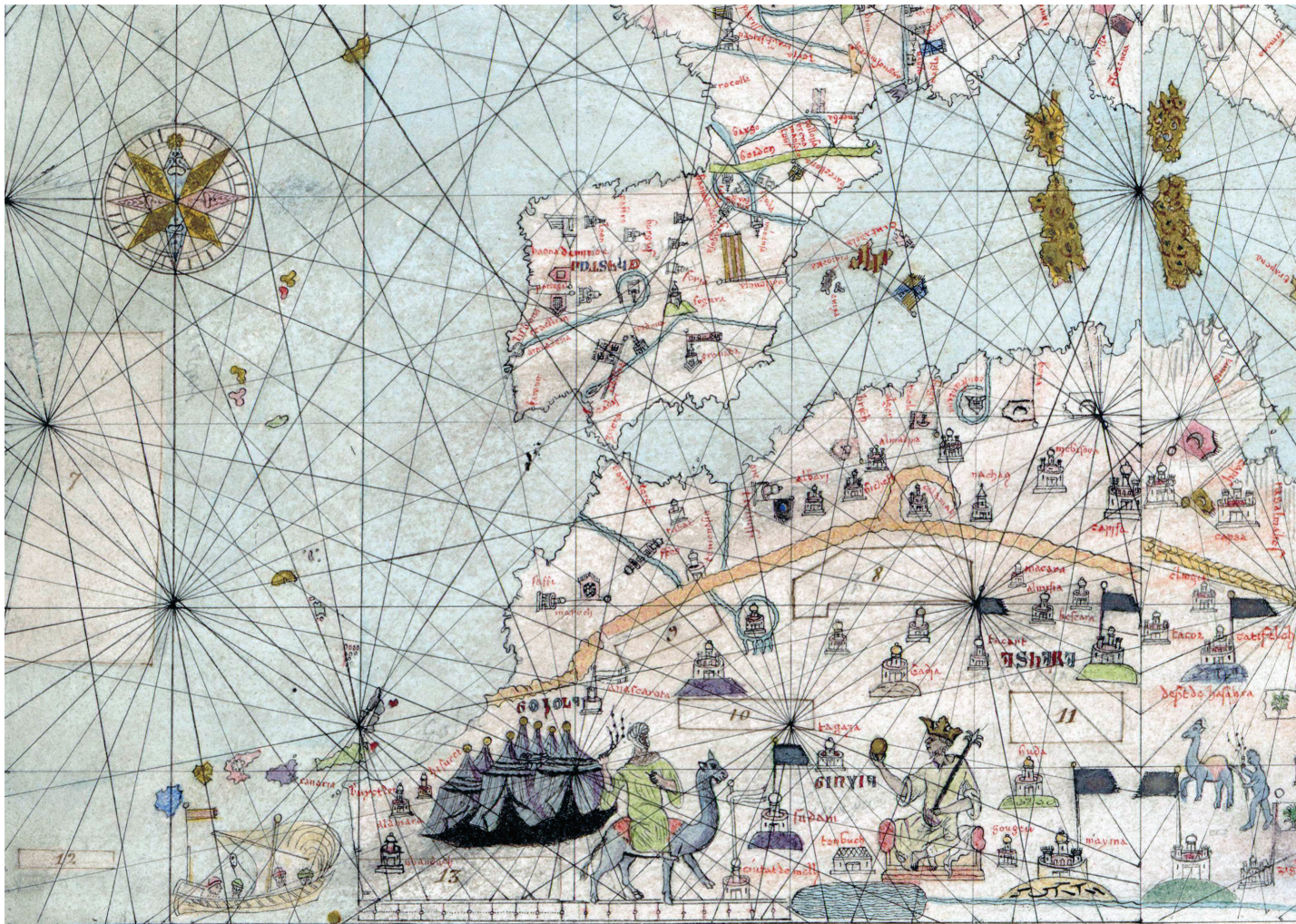
Document 4

The Inca Empire constructed an extensive network of roads and walls, expanded and enhanced in the 1400s, to connect the empire for purposes of trade, transportation, military fortification, and cultural connections. This image shows a street scene in the 1950s in Cuzco, Peru, where walls from these Inca projects, built without the use of cement, are still standing. **Source:** The walls of this street in Cuzco, Peru, were built by the ancient Incas. The stones are not cemented together, but are nevertheless perfectly aligned. © Getty Images / George Pickow.



Document 5

This is detail from the *Catalan Atlas*, Sheet 6 showing the Western Sahara, and attributed to Abraham Cresques (1325–1387), a Jewish cartographer of Majorca (in present-day Spain). The detail focuses on Mansu Musa (c. 1280–c. 1337), ruler of the Mali Empire, and the extensive text in Catalan includes this reference to the crowned figure: “This black gentleman is Mansa Musa ... This king is the richest and noblest gentleman in all the region on account of the abundance of gold that is obtained from his land.” **Source:** Detail from the [Catalan Atlas attributed to Abraham Cresques](#), 1375. Bibliothèque Nationale de France, public domain.



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Document 6

This passage is from the *History of the Ming*, composed during the Qing Dynasty (1644–1911). **Source:** Hirth, F. *China and the Roman Orient: Researches into their Ancient and Mediæval Relations as Represented in Old Chinese Records*. Shanghai & Hong Kong: Kelly & Walsh, 1885 (66–67).

“... Although We are not equal in wisdom to our ancient rulers whose virtue was recognized all over the universe, We cannot but let the world know Our intention to maintain peace within the four seas. It is on this ground alone that We have issued this Manifesto.” And he again ordered the ambassador Pu-la and others to be provided with credentials and presents of silk for transmission to that country, who thereafter sent an embassy with tribute. But this embassy was, in the sequel, not repeated until during the ... period [A.D. 1573–1620] a native from the great western ocean [The Jesuit scholar, Matteo Ricci (1552–1610)] came to the capital who said that the Lord of Heaven, Ye-su [Jesus], was born in Ju-te-a [Judea] which is identical with the old country of Ta-ts’in [Roman Empire]; that this country is known in the historical books to have existed since the creation of the world for the last 6,000 years; that it is beyond dispute the sacred ground of history and the origin of all worldly affairs; that it should be considered as the country where the Lord of Heaven created the human race. This account looks somewhat exaggerated and should not be trusted. As regards the abundance of produce and other precious articles found in this country, accounts will be found in former annals.

Document 7

This second source from Ibn Battuta (1304–1369) is an excerpt recounting his visit to Mogadishu in present-day Somalia. **Source:** Ibn Battuta. *Travels in Asia and Africa 1325–1354*. Translated by H.A.R. Gibb. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., 1929 (110–12).

When a vessel reaches the port, it is met by sumbuqs, which are small boats, in each of which are a number of young men, each carrying a covered dish containing food. He presents this to one of the merchants on the ship saying “This is my guest,” and all the others do the same. Each merchant on disembarking goes only to the house of the young man who is his host, except those who have made frequent journeys to the town and know its people well; these live where they please. The host then sells his goods for him and buys for him, and if anyone buys anything from him at too low a price, or sells to him in the absence of his host, the sale is regarded by them as invalid. This practice is of great advantage to them. ...

We stayed there [in Mogadishu] three days, food being brought to us three times a day, and on the fourth, a Friday, the qadi [an Islamic magistrate or judge] and one of the wazirs [vizier, high-ranking minister] brought me a set of garments. We then went to the mosque and prayed behind the [sultan’s] screen. When the Shaykh [sultan] came out I greeted him and he bade me welcome. He put on his sandals, ordering the qadi and myself to do the same, and set out for his palace on foot. All the other people walked barefooted. Over his head were carried four canopies of coloured silk, each surmounted by a golden bird. After the palace ceremonies were over, all those present saluted and retired.

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Question Parsing Tool

Directions: Follow the steps to parse the prompt you are presented with. Use the key at the bottom to help you with the historical reasoning process and composition questions.

1. **Prompt:**

2. Rewrite the prompt in your own words:

3. **Periodization:** What is the time period you are being asked to consider? Write out the years if you are given something in terms of century (for example, twentieth century = 1900s).

4. **Location:** What areas of the world are included in this prompt?

5. **Topic:** What is the main topic being asked about in this prompt?

6. **AP Theme:** What AP theme is the prompt asking you to address as part of your response? Please explain your reasoning. PIECES is a helpful reminder for the AP themes.

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7. **Historical reasoning process:** What historical reasoning process is this prompt asking you to engage in? Provide justification for why you chose the one you did.

8. **Composition:** What is the prompt stem asking you to do as part of your response? Remember the prompt stem is usually a verb.

Key

Historical Reasoning Process	Words/Phrases to Look For
Causation	Cause, effect, led to, lead to, emergence, resulted, bring about, give rise to, be the cause of, result in, produce, generate, spawn, precipitate, prompt, induce, promote, foster, provoke, trigger
Comparison	Similarities, differences, compare, contrast, set side-by-side, juxtapose, differentiate, liken, equate
CCOT	Continuities, changes, continuation, persistence, consistent, over time, two points in time
Prompt Stem Examples	What It's Asking in Simpler Language
To what extent	Weigh, evaluate, assess
Evaluate, assess	How much—needs a quantitative answer/thesis/claim (Note: A quantitative answer is one that includes an amount or a number. For example: a lot, a little)
Analyze, develop	Describe and explain
Argue, argument	Make a claim