

ASSESSMENT – UNIT 2 DBQ

Preparation

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

Purpose

This assessment will help prepare you for the document-based questions (DBQs) you will probably encounter on exams. 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better understanding of your skills development and overall progress related to constructing an argument, interpreting historical documents, and employing the historical thinking practices you are using in this course.

Process

Day 1

In this activity, you are 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 any additional knowledge you have) to respond to the prompt. Your responses will be written in essay format, and will usually be five or six paragraphs long.

This DBQ asks you to respond to the following prompt: *Analyze the most significant causes of the political revolutions of the long nineteenth century (c. 1750 to 1914 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 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 each of 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. If possible, also provide a source analysis for each document. 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.

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 Writing Rubric available to remind you of what's important to include in your essay. And don't forget to contextualize! In doing that, 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.

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Name:

Date:

Document 1

Source: Lefeuve, abbé. "Poverty Observed!: Journal of a Country Priest, 1709." World History Commons. <https://worldhistorycommons.org/poverty-observed-journal-country-priest>

The abbé Lefeuve was a village priest in France, who kept a journal of events in his parish. In 1709, a severe winter storm lasted for a number of weeks. Here, he recounts the problems experienced in his village.

The cold began to be felt at the end of October 1708 ... The wind shifted to the north, the rain that had been falling all day long turned into ice and snow ...

Finally, after three weeks of this cold, which increased continually, the thaw came. ...what remained of the produce of the earth, which could not resist the terrible nights that caused almost everything to die, so that it was scarcely possible to gather enough to provide for next year's seed. ...

It was hardly possible even for those who knew how, to find money, when there wasn't any. The number of poor people increased incredibly because the continuing rains of the previous year, 1708, had been very bad and had damaged the grain crops. ... The poor of the countryside were destitute of any aid, no longer possessing a cabbage or a leek in their gardens, so they crowded into the cities ...

But they were soon begrudged the only help they had. They were forced, by the threat of great penalties, to return to their homes, and there soon appeared the most beautiful edicts in the world to help them, which, however, served only to increase their misfortune. Each parish was supposed to feed its own poor; but for this it would have been necessary for the poor to feed the poor. So these lovely edicts were without effect, and the only way to help the poor, by decreasing the taxes with which they were burdened, was never put into practice. On the contrary, they were increased.

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Document 2

Source: Humphreys, R. A. and John Lynch. *The Origins of the Latin American Revolutions, 1808–1826*. New York: Knopf, 1965. Excerpts are edited for clarity and brevity

This is an excerpt of British merchant John Armitage's *History of Brazil*, published in 1836.

At the close of the last century, the population [of Brazil] ... [was comprised of] two-fifths Negro slaves. The majority of the free population were also a mixed race, derived jointly from African, Indian, and European origin; the white inhabitants being the only class as yet entrusted with political power. ...

Education had as yet made little progress among them. ... The histories of Greece and Rome, the *[Social Contract]* of Rousseau, and such few tray volumes of the writings of Voltaire and the Abbe Raynal as had escaped the vigilance of the authorities, were hitherto their only sources of information. ...

On the establishment of the independence of the United States of North America, a vague aspiration for the similar enfranchisement of Brazil was undoubtedly cherished there; but this feeling was long limited to such individuals as had become aware of the existing state of other countries ... public opinion could not at this period be said to have any existence.

During the year 1789, a conspiracy was formed by a few influential individuals ... [not to proclaim] an independent republic, [but to] ascertain what cooperation they were likely to meet with ... From a diminution in the product of the gold mines in this district, several of the individuals working them were in considerable arrear for taxes. These arrears the government in Lisbon had ordered to be paid up, but with little regard to the practicability of the demand. Much irritation had in consequence been excited. ...

A conspiracy, originating exclusively among the people of color, was also organized in Bahia during the year 1801. ... Their condition ... was wretched. ...

Name:

Date:

Document 3

Source: Griffitts, Hannah. “The Female Patriots. Addressed to the Daughters of Liberty in America, 1768.” *The Pennsylvania Chronicle*, 25 December 1769. Reprinted in Catherine La Courreye Blecki and Karin A. Wulf, eds. *Milcah Martha Moore’s Book: A Commonplace Book from Revolutionary America*. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997.

In this excerpt of her 1768 poem, Philadelphia Quaker Hannah Griffitts refers specifically to Lord George Grenville, the chancellor of the British Exchequer and author of the tax policy.

Since the Men, from a Party or fear of a Frown,
Are kept by a Sugar-Plumb, quietly down.
Supinely asleep—and deprived of their Sight,
Are stripped of their Freedom, and robbed of their Right;
If the Sons, so degenerate! the Blessing despise,
Let the Daughters of Liberty nobly arise;
And though we’ve no Voice, but a negative here.
The use of the Taxables, let us forbear:—
(Then Merchants import till your Stores are all full,
May the Buyers be few, and your Traffic be dull!)
Stand firmly resolved, and bid Grenville to see
That rather than Freedom we part with our Tea,
And well as we love the dear Draught when a-dry,
As American Patriots our Taste we deny— ...
Join mutual in this—and but small as it seems,
We may jostle a Grenville, and puzzle his Schemes;
But a Motive more worthy our Patriot-Pen,
Thus acting—we point out their Duty to Men;
And should the Bound-Pensioners tell us to hush,
We can throw back the Satire, by bidding them blush.

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Document 4

Source: Locke, John. *The Second Treatise of Civil Government*. Edited by Thomas P. Peardon. New York: The Liberal Arts Press, 1952. Excerpts are edited for clarity and brevity.

John Locke (1632–1704), an English philosopher, wrote the *Second Treatise of Civil Government* in 1690, in which he makes an argument for natural rights..

MEN being, as has been said, by nature all free, equal, and independent, no one can be put out of this estate and subjected to the political power of another without his own consent. The only way whereby any one divests himself of his natural liberty and puts on the bonds of civil society is by agreeing with other men to join and unite into a community for their comfortable, safe, and peaceable living one amongst another, in a secure enjoyment of their properties ...

The natural liberty of man is to be free from any superior power on earth, and not to be under the will or legislative authority of man, but to have only the law of nature for his rule. The liberty of man in society is to be under no other legislative power but that established by consent in the commonwealth ... Freedom then is not ... ‘a liberty for every one to do what he [wants], to live as he pleases, and not to be tied by any laws’; but freedom of men under government is to have a standing rule to live by, common to every one of that society and made by the legislative power erected in it, a liberty to follow my own will in all things where the rule prescribes not, and not to be subject to the inconstant, uncertain, unknown, arbitrary will of another man; as freedom of nature is to be under no other restraint but the law of nature.

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Document 5

Source: “The Code Noir (The Black Code).” Liberty, Equality, Fraternity: Exploring the French Revolution. <https://revolution.chnm.org/d/335/> Excerpts are edited for clarity and brevity.

The Code Noir was a 1685 decree under the French King Louis XIV which defined the conditions of slavery throughout the French colonial empire. Below is an excerpt from this decree.

Article XV. We forbid slaves from carrying any offensive weapons or large sticks, at the risk of being whipped and having the weapons confiscated. The weapons shall then belong to he who confiscated them. The sole exception shall be made for those who have been sent by their masters to hunt and who are carrying either a letter from their masters or his known mark.

Article XVI. We also forbid slaves who belong to different masters from gathering, either during the day or at night, under the pretext of a wedding or other excuse, either at one of the master’s houses or elsewhere, and especially not in major roads or isolated locations. They shall risk corporal punishment that shall not be less than the whip ... for frequent recidivists and in other aggravating circumstances, they may be punished with death. ... We enjoin all our subjects, even if they are not officers, to rush to the offenders, arrest them, and take them to prison, and that there be no decree against them. ...

Article XVIII. We forbid slaves from selling sugar cane, for whatever reason or occasion, even with the permission of their master. ...

Article XIX. We also forbid slaves from selling any type of commodities, even fruit, vegetables, firewood, herbs for cooking and animals either at the market, or at individual houses, without a letter or a known mark from their masters granting express permission.

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Document 6

Source: Nouzeilles, Gabriela and Graciela R. Montaldo. *The Argentina Reader: History, Culture, Politics*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002. Excerpts are edited for clarity and brevity.

Mariano Moreno (1778–1811) was an Argentine lawyer and politician who was a key figure in the first national government of Argentina that was created after the 1810 May Revolution. Below is a petition he wrote to the Spanish government in 1809 on behalf of Argentine landowners, expressing their demands.

Most Excellent Senor:

He, whom the workers and landowners of the rural areas of Banda Oriental and Occidental of the Rio de la Plata have empowered to confer with you about the expedient of opening up trade with England ... declares: ...

The landowners have a legitimate right to be represented in advising Your Excellency as to the means of reconciling the prosperity of the country with the needs of the treasury. We see the solution as removing the obstacles to trade. ...

They are justly persuaded that any profit gained from our land should immediately revert to its owners and cultivators. ...

... it is the duty of the government to provide for the people's needs. ...

The removal of obstacles to the import of foreign goods will have to be accompanied in equal measure by the removal of obstacles to the export of goods. Fortunately, the products of this province are highly desirable, [and] of ready availability. ... Our agriculture would be very rapidly stimulated if the doors to all exportable goods were open and the farmer could count on profitable sales. ...

If Your Excellency desires to promote our good, the route that leads to it is very simple: reason and the celebrated Adam Smith ... lead us to see that governments that want to provide for the general good should be limited to removing obstacles.

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Document 7

Source: Robinson, James Harvey and Charles A. Beard, eds. *Readings in Modern European History. Volume 1: The Eighteenth Century: The French Revolution and the Napoleonic Period*. Boston: Ginn & Company, 1908.

François-Marie Arouet (1694–1778), known by his pseudonym Voltaire, was a French writer and intellectual. This is a selection of his book *Philosophical Letters*, in which he reflected on his experience living in England between 1726 and 1729. It was first published in English in 1733 and then in French the following year.

There is no such thing here in England as the power enjoyed by the French lords to judge in all matters, civil and criminal; or their right or privilege of hunting in the grounds of a citizen, who at the same time is not permitted to fire a gun in his own field.

No one is exempted in [England] from paying certain taxes, because he is a nobleman or a priest. All imposts and taxes are fixed by the House of Commons, whose power is greater than that of the peers. ... When the bill has passed the lords and is signed by the king, then the whole nation pays, every man in proportion to his revenue or estate, not according to his title, which would be absurd. There is no such thing as an arbitrary subsidy or poll tax, but a real tax on the lands, the value of which was determined in the reign of the famous King William III.

The land tax continues still upon the same footing, though the revenue of the lands is increased. Thus no one is tyrannized over, and everyone is in comfortable circumstances. The feet of the peasants are not bruised by wooden shoes; they eat white bread, are well clothed, and are not afraid of increasing their stock of cattle, nor of tiling their houses, from any apprehensions that their taxes will be raised the year following.

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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 practice 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?

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

7. **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 Practice	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