

What is Document-Based Question?

- The primary purpose of the document-based essay question is to evaluate a student's ability to create and support an answer using historical evidence.
- "There is no single 'correct' answer." Depending on the students' ability to interpret the document and construct an argument, a variety of responses are possible!

Why Use Document-Based Questions?

- Complete authentic tasks as individuals or team
- Differentiate, using a variety of critical thinking and writing skills
- Utilize primary and secondary sources:
 - Charts, graphs, maps, images
 - Short narrative passages or quotes
 - Excerpts from interviews, speeches
- Practice Historical Thinking Skills

Why Use Document-Based Questions?

- Students use evidence to support an argument or thesis that they have developed.
- Use the documents to teach these skills
- Teaching students to evaluate and use different kinds of evidence is a real-world skill.
- There are awesome DBQs available for most world history themes.

Differentiate the Content

- Select only those documents from the DBQ that you think are necessary for the task.
- Highlight, copy and paste the document into a word processor so you can edit the length or vocabulary.
- If there seem to be too many documents, let students choose which ones they want to work with.

Differentiate the Process

- Use cooperative groups and assign them various tasks
 - Assign different groups a specific category of analysis i.e. political, social or economic causes.
 - Give each group a copy of the DBQ (single sided copies) and have them cut up and glue documents onto newsprint into different categories.
 - Group members could take turns annotating the documents (how does this document relate to our main idea?)

Differentiate the Process

- As a whole group, demonstrate how to use a document as evidence:
 - "In a 1945 speech, Mao Zedong explained that..."
- Group thesis and body paragraph writing on newsprint
 - Have students create a gallery of their products.
 - Provide students with a rubric to critique each others' or their own work.

Differentiate the Product

- There is no law governing how to use a document-based question.
- Be willing to modify the question, the requirements or the rubric for the needs of your students.
- Tree Map assignment: What does this document mean and what category would you place it (i.e. social, economic, demographic, political effects of the Black Death)?

Differentiate the Product

- Chunk the DBQ into different tasks:
 - Have students create their own thinking maps (i.e. tree map, double-bubble map) to plan a potential essay.
 - Once a thinking map is completed, students are ready to write a thesis paragraph that answers the question and introduces their main ideas or arguments.
 - A body paragraph that analyzes one part of the question (i.e. what were the negative effects or the political motives...)

Differentiate the Product

- Assign students research projects in which they locate additional documents or update the information in the DBQ (i.e. “where are they or what are they doing now?”)
- Give students the opportunity to explain why certain authors wrote with a particular “point of view” or identify their bias.

Differentiate the Product

- Turn your test-takers into test-makers!
- Have student practice writing a multiple choice question using a document as a stimulus.
- Using DBQ Essays as a summative assessments can be much easier to grade than the standard “*tell me everything you know about this topic*” essay

Historical Thinking Skills

- Chronological Thinking:
 - Reconstruct patterns of historical succession and duration;
 - Explain historical continuity and change.
- Historical Comprehension:
 - Identify the author or source of the historical document or narrative and assess its credibility
 - Utilize visual, mathematical, and quantitative data.

Historical Thinking Skills

- Historical Analysis and Interpretation:
 - Compare and contrast differing sets of ideas
 - Consider multiple perspectives
- Historical Research Capabilities
 - Identify the gaps in the available records, marshal contextual knowledge and perspectives of the time and place
 - Support interpretations with historical evidence.