

DBQ WRITING RUBRIC

	Advanced*	Proficient	Developing	Emerging
Thesis/Claim Make a historically defensible thesis or claim that establishes a clear line of reasoning and responds to the prompt.	The essay makes a specific and historically defensible claim that responds to the prompt and establishes a line of reasoning. The thesis must consist of one or more sentences, located in one of the following places: • Introduction • Conclusion	The essay makes a specific and historically defensible claim that addresses the prompt but does not establish a line of reasoning. The thesis must consist of one or more sentences, located in one of the following places: • Introduction • Conclusion	The essay makes a generic claim that addresses the prompt but lacks specificity and does not establish a line of reasoning. The thesis may be located some place other than the introduction or conclusion of the essay.	The essay merely restates or rephrases the prompt or makes no claim at all.
Contextualization Describe the broader historical context relevant to the prompt.	The essay describes a broader historical context relevant to the prompt. This must relate the topic of the prompt to broader historical events, developments, or processes that occur before, during, or continue after the time frame of the prompt. This requires more than merely a phrase or reference.	The essay describes a broader historical context, but it is not relevant to the prompt.	The essay does not describe a broader historical context but may mention a phrase or reference that alludes to a broader historical context.	The essay does not attempt to describe a broader historical context relevant to the prompt.
Evidence Use historical evidence that is relevant to both the argument and the prompt.	The essay must include all of the following: • Accurately describe, not simply quote, content from at least four documents. • Accurately describe at least one additional piece of evidence beyond the documents. All content described must be used to support an argument in response to the prompt.	The essay cites sufficient and appropriate evidence to support its claim, including using information from at least three documents to support an argument relevant to the prompt.	The essay cites evidence from three or more sources to address the topic of the prompt but does not use them in support of an argument relevant to the prompt.	The essay is unable to use a minimum of three sources to address the topic of the prompt. There is no attempt to establish a line of reasoning or argument relevant to the prompt. There is no attempt to add any evidence beyond that stated in the documents.
Analysis and Reasoning: Sourcing Explain how or why the source's historical situation, audience, purpose, and/or point of view is relevant to an argument being made.	For at least two sources, the essay explains how or why the source's historical situation, audience, purpose, and/or point of view is relevant to an argument being made.	For one source, the essay explains how or why the source's historical situation, audience, purpose, and/or point of view is relevant to an argument being made.	The essay successfully sources a document but fails to explain why it is relevant to the argument being made.	The essay does not source any documents, or simply makes a claim about "bias" or "reliability."

* Advanced criteria is aligned to what students need to earn points on the AP exam. If they received advanced rankings in each of the categories, then they would likely earn the equivalent of 7 points for their DBQ response.

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Analysis and Reasoning: Complexity Demonstrate a complex understanding of the historical event or process that is the focus of the prompt by using advanced argumentation and/or effective use of evidence.	The essay demonstrates a complex understanding of the historical development that is the focus of the prompt by using advanced argumentation and/or effective use of evidence to construct a response that fully addresses the prompt. Complexity can be demonstrated in a number of ways. - Explaining nuance of an issue by analyzing multiple themes or perspectives. - Explaining both similarity and difference, or change and continuity, or cause and effect, or explaining multiple similarities and differences, or changes and continuities, or causes and effects. - Explaining relevant and insightful connections within and across periods or geographic areas that relate directly to an argument that responds to the prompt. - Effectively using all seven documents or sourcing at least four documents to support an argument that responds to the prompt, or effectively using documents beyond those provided to demonstrate an advanced understanding of different perspectives related to the prompt. This understanding must be part of the argument, not merely a phrase or reference.	The essay attempts to demonstrate one or more of the criteria for complexity, but does not go far enough or make the necessary connections to the argument. Complexity can be demonstrated in a number of ways. - Explaining nuance of an issue by analyzing multiple themes or perspectives. - Explaining both similarity and difference, or change and continuity, or cause and effect, or explaining multiple similarities and differences, or changes and continuities, or causes and effects. - Explaining relevant and insightful connections within and across periods or geographic areas that relate directly to an argument that responds to the prompt. - Effectively using all seven documents or sourcing at least four documents to support an argument that responds to the prompt, or effectively using documents beyond those provided to demonstrate an advanced understanding of different perspectives related to the prompt. This understanding must be part of the argument, not merely a phrase or reference.	The essay may make a passing reference to one of the criteria for complexity but does not: - Make a valid historical argument. - Develop the reference into something more substantial. - Connect the findings to the prompt.	There is no attempt to develop the argument beyond what is stated in the prompt.

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Directions: Use this table to comment on the writing that you are evaluating.

	Advanced (4)	Proficient (3)	Developing (2)	Emerging (1)	Score
Thesis/Claim Make a historically defensible thesis or claim that establishes a clear line of reasoning and responds to the prompt.					
Contextualization Describe the broader historical context relevant to the prompt.					
Evidence Use historical evidence that is relevant to both the argument and the prompt.					
Analysis and Reasoning: Sourcing Explain how or why the source's historical situation, audience, purpose, and/or point of view is relevant to an argument being made.					
Analysis and Reasoning: Complexity Demonstrate a complex understanding of the historical event or process that is the focus of the prompt by using advanced argumentation and/or effective use of evidence.					
Total Score					