Document Based Question ("DBQ")
What is a DBQ?

On the AP Exam, the Document Based Question is:

1. An evaluation of your ability to formulate and support an answer based on evidence from the documents.

2. A determination of your ability to analyze primary source documents including analysis of the point of view of the author of the primary source.

3. A measurement of your ability to determine similarities and differences among a number of primary sources.

4. An assessment of your ability to identify a missing “voice” or source based on your reading of the documents or primary sources.
Primary Source Analysis

Partner Question:

What is a primary source?
Examples of Primary Sources
Primary Source Analysis

The purpose of analyzing primary sources in AP World History is:

– To “act” like “real” historians
– To gather evidence on which to base an argument
– To understand historical trends and points of view
DBQ Essay – How do I write it?

1. Carefully read the essay prompt as well as any historical background information you are given.
2. Read and analyze the documents carefully.
3. Respond to the essay prompt based on the evidence you find in the documents.
4. Group documents based on content and/or different points of view.
5. Write a clear thesis that addresses the essay prompt.
6. Identify a “missing” perspective/voice/source based on missing evidence and/or point of view.
DBQ Essentials

1. Thesis – answers the question with the groups you have created.
   1. Always find 3 groups from the documents.
   2. Answer the question with your groups.

2. Group your Documents
   1. Read and understand the documents (7)
   2. All the documents must be used and interpreted.
   3. Group them into your 3 groups (document can be used in two groups – doesn’t have to be)
   4. NEVER EVER, EVER, EVER, EVER, EVER have a group of 1 doc.

3. Understand your documents
   1. Basic description of what the author/doc means
      1. 1-2 sentences of summary
4. Use evidence of ALL DOCUMENTS to establish your point(s) from the thesis.
   1. Must answer to the thesis of your paper!
5. Point of View (POV)
   1. Figure out WHY the author or document has this opinion or point of view.
      - it’s not just because of a job title or simple ideas
      - you need depth to explain POV
6. What would be the “missing” document?
   1. Who is not heard from, or who would we want to hear from to get a more balanced or fair opinion?
      - Look for who is left out.
Analyze the role that different classes played in the development of the government of the Roman Republic.
Clerick del Agostakos (48 BCE). Conquered slave in the Roman Republic. Excerpt from a letter to his family in Greece.

“Though many have power in this land, we slaves lack any semblance of acknowledgement. Even the common farmer I work for is able to congregate in the Foro Romano and discuss the topics of the Republic while we toil the fields as property. If not for being conquered during battle I too could be home with you, my family, and enjoying the treasures of citizenship thanks to the Great Julius Caesar. But alas my fate has promised me a life of misery. With time I hope to buy my freedom, but ‘til that day, please carry on without me and express my devotion to our children.”
Hannibal Castro (304 BCE). Carthaginian trader writing of his travels to the city of Rome.

“An amazingly wondrous place this Latium. It holds a style and organization like nothing I have experienced in my travels. Its streets are alive with the sounds of arguments and cordial conversation over politics. Not just royals, but men of all affairs! Though I wish I could partake in the conversations, my opinions are not requested due to my status. ‘Your affairs are not our affairs’ I am told in the markets, and so I sell my wares and return to my ship. One can hope that Carthage will one day function as Rome, though history and time do not favor my wishes.
Romano Delorio (461 BCE). Roman farmer in the northern Italy. Excerpt from a conversation with his wife.

These patricians of Rome are incredulous! They feel that they have all the power even over other citizens due to their ancestry! Rules don’t apply to them, taxes are lessened, and we pay the brunt! Our vote so minimal and we need a group to vocalize our needs to we get no voice at all. If not for our assemblies and tribunes we would be nothing to the Republic.
“Our movements have been minimal lately as we prepare to attack the barbarians of the North. Word has spread of possible candidates for our new Consul. Though I would prefer others, I felt that Constantius will favor the Romans well if elected. I too hope one day to be able to serve proudly as Consul, but know I am many years away from requirements needed. For now I will continue my role as protector of Rome both physically and as a proud member of the Centuriate Assembly.”
Brutus Magnamus, Roman Senator (397 BCE). Excerpt from a speech on the Senate floor.

“I say to you my fellow Senators; let not the wary opinions of the common deter you in what is best for Rome. It is we that have the power, nay the responsibility, to our forefathers who founded this great land before us to keep it great. We shall continue to hold power and decide what is best for Rome as we are the ones truly qualified to do so. So again I say to you brothers, disregard the complaining voice of the farmer or artisan and make the decision that will benefit us, and the rest of Rome!”
Consul Flavius (389 BCE). Excerpt from a letter to the Senate regarding changes to the rules on citizenship of the Republic.

“Gentlemen, fear not the changes being proposed to increase citizenship as it will have no bearing on your power or status. Decisions such as this provide financial assistance that may not be personally needed, but is needed to sustain our armies to the North and on the seas. While many of you have expressed numerous concerns over the possibilities of weakness in the Senate, I assure you that this will not negatively impact any of us and will keep our role as primary lawmakers intact. “
The Roman Senate

During many years of the Roman Republic (509-44 BCE), members of the Roman Senate (about 300 men) served for life. They usually came from the oldest Roman families and inherited their seats.

The Senate had primary responsibilities for foreign relations, including selecting ambassadors, making treaties, and creating alliances. They were responsible for war policy, and for the control of public lands. The Senate also tried cases of treason and conspiracy.

Though it started as an advisory body to Roman kings, by the third century BCE, the Senate had full governing power in Rome.