**General Information on the DBQ**  
  
The required DBQ differs from the standard essays in its emphasis on your ability to analyze and synthesize historical data and assess verbal, quantitative, or pictorial materials as historical evidence. Like the standard essays, however, the DBQ is judged on its thesis and argument.   
  
Although confined to no single format, the documents are unlikely to be the familiar classics (such as the Emancipation Proclamation or the Declaration of Independence), but their authors may be major historical figures. The documents vary in length and are chosen to illustrate the interactions and complexities of the historical process. They may include charts, graphs, cartoons, and pictures, as well as written materials. The DBQ typically requires students to relate the documents to a historical period or theme and thus to focus on major periods and issues. For this reason, outside knowledge -- information gained from materials other than the documents -- is very important and must be incorporated into your essay if the highest scores are to be earned.

**Note:** The DBQ Essay for AP US History has changed since these essays were on the AP Exam. It requires you to use **ALL** of the documents and use the documents as evidential support for your thesis (therefore, analyzing how the document supports your key points is important).

**Note:** The DBQ Essay also requires you to bring in outside information. Higher scores are earned ***only by essays that both cite key pieces from the documents AND draw on outside knowledge of the period***. The student who simply describes the contents of the documents and fails to place them into historical perspective will receive a low score on the DBQ essay.  
  
**Note:** You MUST NOT use the phrase - "In Document 2, it says...." Rather, use the name of the author or speaker, or the title of the document when incorporating the documents.

**Note:** DON’T directly quote from the documents. ***REFERENCE*** the documents!  
  
Each essay (LEQ or DBQ) targets one of 4 skills: Periodization, Causation, CCOT, and Comparison.   
  
The following is a definition of what you can/should do for the Historical thinking skill "Causation": Compare causes and/or effects, including between short-term and long-term effects. Analyze and evaluate the interaction of multiple causes and/or effects. Assess historical contingency by distinguishing among coincidence, causation, and correlation, as well as critiquing existing interpretations of cause and effect.

The following is a definition of what you can/should do for the Historical Thinking Skills "CCOT":  Analyze and evaluate historical patterns of continuity and change over time. Connect patterns of continuity and change over time to larger historical processes or themes.  
  
**In your DBQ, YOU MUST:**  
*In your response you should do the following.*  
*·    State a relevant thesis that directly addresses all parts of the question.*  
*·    Support the thesis or a relevant argument with evidence from all of the documents.*  
*·    Incorporate analysis of all of the documents into your argument.*  
*·****Focus your analysis of each document on at least one of the following: intended audience, purpose, historical context, and/or point of view (HIPPO)***  
*·****Support your argument with analysis of historical examples outside the documents (OUTSIDE INFORMATION)***  
*·    Connect historical phenomena relevant to your argument to broader events or processes (OUTSIDE OF THE TIME PERIOD )=* ***Synthesize*** *the elements above into a persuasive essay.*  
  
  
  
  
**\*\*For AP World Alum\*\*:** The DBQ Essay does not require the grouping of documents. It does, like every other essay, require you to create categories of analysis (that focus on addressing the task) to focus each paragraph on. Therefore, you may find that in order to maximize how many documents you use, grouping the documents in the preparation phase may help you to develop those categories of analysis.