

# The DBQ Project 6 Step Method

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| <b>Step 1: The Hook Exercise</b>                            | Engages students and orients them to the question.  |
| <b>Step 2: The Background Essay</b>                         | Further orients students to the question and provides essential context (time, place, story) that helps make sense of the documents.  |
| <b>Step 3: Understanding the Question and Pre-bucketing</b> | Helps students plan so they can target their investigation of the documents. Clarifying the question motivates students to start reading their sources to find answers.   |
| <b>Step 4: Analyzing the Documents</b>                      | It's like you're a detective! The documents provide clues and evidence students need to support their thesis or claim. They provide the knowledge and information students need to answer the question.                                     |
| <b>Step 5: Bucketing</b>                                    | Helps students get organized. Buckets become containers for evidence that students use to categorize or group evidence from the documents.  |
| <b>Step 6A: The Thrash-Out and Preparing to Write</b>       | Students prepare to write by debating or "thrashing-out" their answer to the question. Students practice using evidence from the documents to support and verbally validate their claims. They use what they learn to outline their essays. |
| <b>Step 6B: Writing the Essay</b>                           | Students write multi-paragraph, evidence-based essays using their documents, buckets, and outlines to support and explain their reasoning.  |

*The DBQ Project Method provides a framework of best practices that guides teachers and students to read smart, think straight, and write clearly.*

**The DBQ Project**

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## The DBQ Project's Habits of Document Analysis

| Habit                             | Explanation  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| <b>Prep the Document</b>          | In order to maintain a clear reading purpose, it's helpful to write the driving question at the top of each document.  |
| <b>Source the Document</b>        | Each document contains a source line. In order to effectively evaluate the information presented in the document (and not just take the document in at face value), students need to carefully consider the information provided in the source line. A couple things students should consider are: A) does this source/author appear to be reliable? Why/why not? B) can anything be gleaned about the author's point of view, their purpose or their intended audience? As students read the body of the document, they should consider how the author's PoV, purpose and audience affect what is being said. |
| <b>Backdrop the Document</b>      | Documents are created at a particular moment and in a particular environment. Thus, students should situate the documents in time and place. To start, they should identify any dates given in source line, note, or in the document itself. With this information, students need to consider what they already know about that time period. Students should also identify when the document was created in relationship to the events/issue under investigation.  |
| <b>Note the Note</b>              | Many of the documents contain "Notes". The purpose of these notes is to help students to better understand the significance of the document by giving additional contextual information about the setting or author. Sometimes key and tricky terms are also defined in the note.  |
| <b>Closely Read the Document</b>  | Students need to keep in mind their main purpose for reading the document – which usually is to solve a mystery or cast judgement on an issue. This type of reading requires students to dig deep and interrogate the document. Hence, they should be noting key details, asking critical questions of the document and author, and evaluating the accuracy and logic of the document.   |
| <b>Determine What's Important</b> | Keep in mind that the students' main purpose in reading the documents is to draw conclusions about the driving questions and then to marshal evidence to support their conclusions. Hence, students need to identify the sections in each document that shed the most light on the driving questions.  |
| <b>Use the Document</b>           | While the document (and all the students' thinking about the document) is fresh in their minds, students should begin to articulate how the document helps them answer the driving question. Thus, when they sit down to write their essay, they won't be starting from scratch.   |