

Document-Based Question

Meaning, Evidence, POV, & Grouping

BASIC CORE Competence		EXPANDED CORE Excellence		
1.	Has acceptable thesis.	1	Expands beyond basic core of 1-7 points. A student must earn 7 points in the basic core area before earning points in the expanded core area. Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a clear, analytical, and comprehensive thesis. • Shows careful and insightful analysis of the documents.. • Uses documents • Analyzes point of view in most or all documents. • Analyzes the documents in additional ways - groupings, comparisons, synthesis. • Brings in relevant "outside" historical content. • Explains why additional types of document(s) or sources are needed. 	0-2
2.	Addresses all of the documents and demonstrates understanding of all or all but one.	1		
3.	Supports thesis with appropriate evidence from all or all but one document (Supports thesis with appropriate evidence from all but two documents) may change in instructions	2 (1)		
4.	Analyzes point of view in at least two documents.	1		
5.	Analyzes documents by grouping them in two or three ways, depending on the question.	1		
6.	Identifies and explains the need for one type of appropriate additional document or source.	1		
Subtotal		7	Subtotal	2
Total 9				

The primary purpose of the document-based essay question is not to test students' prior knowledge of subject matter, but rather to evaluate their ability to formulate and support an answer from documentary evidence. It is assumed students have taken the course and understand the broader world historical context. Documents are chosen on the basis of both the information they convey about the topic and the perspective that they offer on other documents used in the exercise. There is no single "correct" answer; instead, various approaches and responses are possible, depending on the students' ability to understand the documents and ultimately to judge their significance. The document-based question is an exercise in both analysis and synthesis. It requires that students first read and analyze the documents individually and then plan and construct an appropriate response to the essay question based on their interpretation of the documentary evidence as a whole. What is desired is a unified essay that integrates analysis of documents with treatment of the topic. In no case should documents simply be cited and summarized; reference to the documentary material must always be closely tied to the essay question. **There are no irrelevant or deliberately misleading documents.**