**DBQ – Doing one very well… Updated 2015.**

Summary

1. What is the ESSENCE of the question?
2. What key terms need to be DEFINED?
3. Are the date PARAMETERS stated?
4. Do a DATA DUMP.
5. ANALYZE the documents (SOAPS). Always take POINT OF VIEW into account.
6. Write a clear THESIS that answers the question in one sentence.
7. Provide abundant and appropriate factual SUPPORT for your thesis.
8. Write a CONCLUSION.

The Question:

1. What is the essence of the question?
2. Is it a yes/no, “to what extent,” or “compare/contrast” question?

- It is almost never a yes/no question. They want you to dwell in the grey area like an historian.

1. Does it have more than one part?
2. Are there bullets provided?
3. Is there a choice of responses?

Date Parameters

1. Does the question state specific dates? What are they?
2. If not specific date parameters are given, set them yourself.
3. Think of the question in chronological context of the events and culture of the period. What came before/after?

**Sample Question:**

***Using the information from the evidence that follows as well as your knowledge of the period, to what extent did the presidency of Andrew Jackson bring about social, economic, and political revolution?***

What is the ESSENCE of the question, and what kind of judgment is it asking you to make?

1. “To what extent?” – did it or did it not? Or how much did it?
2. Parts to the question? – Answer each. Organize by each part? Your call.
3. Terms? *“Revolution”* - It is your job to define as part of your response.

There is not a right answer. It is up to you to determine what the word means.

Do a Data Dump

1. Use a data dump to organize information you know that may be relevant to the question.
2. Do this before you read the documents!
3. Next, read the documents and add a mini-data dump of new info that occurs to you next to each of the docs.
4. Organize your data dump into categories. (For this question – social, economic, political.)

ANALYZING THE DOCUMENTS

1. A document is not a fact, but a piece of evidence to interpret.
2. **POINT OF VIEW is crucial.**

- Why is this person writing this document this way? What are the intended results of the document?

1. Always ask: Does this document support or refute my thesis?

- Don’t ignore docs or evidence that go against the point you are making. Recognize the different points of view, but offer why your evidence outweighs the opposing perspective.

**How to Analyze documents:**

1. SOAPS

S = Subject: What is being discussed?

O = Occasion: What is the context of the events?

A = Audience: To whom is the message directed?

P = Purpose: What is the recommended action to the reader?

S = Speaker: What/who is the source? **(POV)**

1. POINT OF VIEW – (POV)

a. Ask: What it is about the source that made them say or write what is in the document?

b. Try to explicitly address POV in every document!

1. Authorial point of view:

- Show awareness that gender, occupation, class, religion, nationality, political position, or ethnic identity of the author may well have influenced the views that are expressed.

Be obvious… “Since the author is a woman her perspective…”

2. Reliability and accuracy of the source:

- Critically analyze a source for its reliability and accuracy by questioning whether the author of the document would be in a position to be accurate and/or would likely be telling the truth. Is the author biased?

Actually say “This doc may not be reliable because…”

3. Tone or intent of the author:

- In this case, you examine a document to determine its tone (satire, irony, indirect political commentary) or the intent of the author. This may be particularly useful for visual documents like political cartoons. Is it mocking the subject?

Say it! – “The POV of the cartoonists expresses…”

c. Use the words “Point of View.” Make it clear so the grader can’t miss it! It only takes one sentence to address POV… Examples below…

1. “One should approach this document with caution because the source…”

2. “The point of view expressed by (individual’s name) is of interest because…”

3. “The source of this document possesses a unique point of view because…”

4. “One should take into account the point of view of this source because…”

The Introduction:

1. Write a full introduction that introduces the time period, recognizes the question, and concludes with a thesis statement.
2. Be specific, clear, and concise.
3. Try this formula: X. However, A, B, and C. Therefore Y.

(X = a counter argument but for these three reasons (A, B, C) you have come to a different conclusion. This demonstrates you understand complexities in the question and documents and alternative perspectives immediately!)

1. Underline your thesis so that weary test readers don’t miss it!

The Body of the Essay

1. Use topic sentences
2. Provide abundant factual support (outside info) for your thesis.
3. Stay focused on the question – don’t just write down everything you know about the topic – keep it relevant.
4. Chronological sequence is more important than precise dates.
5. Try to use all of the documents.

The Conclusion

1. Restate your thesis
2. Review your main point
3. If can, make a connection to similar events/trends later in history.