

How to Reference the Documents in the DBQ Body Paragraphs

Most students fail to earn the document analysis points on the DBQ because they simply string together facts they pull from documents which results in story-telling. Never lose sight of your purpose: defending an argument/thesis!

Using documents as evidence requires showing understanding of the content and then applying that understanding to the defense of your argument. Ask yourself questions such as, “How does this document address my prompt?” and “What is this document saying?”

DO NOT quote the documents. Go Beyond the Obvious! GBO!

It is okay to have separate paragraph for each document, or you may group them.

You *cannot* group them in order to *generalize* any one step, however.

If you do group them, add a couple of sentences explaining how they corroborate or contradict each other. This will help you get the complex analysis point.

Step 1: Describe the document... GO BEYOND THE OBVIOUS AND DON'T QUOTE. You can say “Document 1...” or use the name of the document. Then... explain how it relates to the main topic of your essay. *Do this for every document, unless you are not targeting the use of six documents point.*

“Document #__ shows/explains... This document relates to _____ because...”
(Identify the number of the document you are describing and describe it GBO.) (Identify the main topic of your essay.) (Explain how or why it relates.)

Step 2: Use the HIPP strategy to analyze the documents. Choose 4 to thoroughly source, even though you only need three according to the rubric. Remember you only need *one* of the HIPP.*

Then... explain how or why the HIPP relates to your argument/thesis. (CLOSE THE LOOP)

GO BEYOND THE OBVIOUS, explain how it is evident (show the reader how you came to your analysis) and explain how or why it is relevant to the argument. **Tip: USE THE LINGO!**

“The _____ of document #__ was... because...”
(purpose/POV/audience/context) (Identify doc.) (Describe HIPP.) (Explain how/why the HIPP is evident.)

This is relevant to the argument that ... because...”
(Identify X or Y from your thesis or other relevant argument connected to it.) (Explain how or why the HIPP relates to your argument/thesis)

Step 3: Apply your analysis to your essay. *How does each document support your thesis or support an opposing view?*

To get this point you must use *at least six* of the seven documents AS EVIDENCE to support your X or Y. I recommend you use all seven in case you don't get credit for one.

Start with step 1 (description and explanation of how it relates to the topic), and then **CLOSE THE LOOP.**

If the document is one of the four you HIPPIed, then start with steps one and two, and then close the loop.

“Therefore, document #__ supports the argument that ... because....”
(Identify doc.) (State your X or Y from your thesis.) (Explain how or why it supports the argument.)

EXAMPLE of how to use the three steps to clearly and effectively target all three document points.

Document from the 2002 Released College Board Exam

Source: Fourth Annual Report, Society for the Reformation of Juvenile Delinquents in the City of New York, 1829.

We might feel a pride in the reflection, that our young country . . . was the first to adopt the penitentiary system of prison discipline, and the first to attempt to prevent the commission of crimes, by seeking out the youthful and unprotected, who were in the way of temptation, and by religious and moral instruction, by imparting to them useful knowledge, and by giving them industrious and orderly habits, rescuing them from vice and rendering them valuable members of society.

To confine these youthful criminals . . . where no, or scarcely any, distinction can be made between the young and old, or between the more and less vicious, where little can be learned but the ways of the wicked, and from whence they must be sent to encounter new wants, new temptations, and to commit new crimes, is to pursue a course, as little reconcilable with justice as humanity; yet, till the House of Refuge was established there was no alternative.

Revised Prompt/Causation:

Evaluate the extent to which Antebellum Era reforms expanded democratic ideals in the United States.

Step 1, Document Description:

Document #1 explains how prison reform for young people had a positive impact on society, because young criminals were nurtured as children rather than punished as adults. This relates to the topic of Antebellum reform movements, because it illustrates changes made in order to improve society.

Step 2, One HIPP:

The author's point of view in doc. #1 is that Christianity had effective solutions to societal problems. This is evident because the use of moral instruction is proposed as a tool to reform. This is relevant to the argument that reforms expanded democratic ideals, because the liberties of young people were being defended and valued more than they had been before.

Step 3, Supporting the Argument:

Therefore, doc. #1 supports the argument that reforms expanded democratic ideals to a large extent, because young people were provided instruction rather than simply punished for crimes which helped them become good citizens and future voters.

When using all three steps, it may seem redundant...

but keep in mind you will not be HIPPIng all of the documents,

and it is better to clearly target each skill rather than oversimplifying. ☺

Also remember that step 3, the second evidence point which requires successful usage of six documents, is a difficult and time-consuming point to get. Only target it if you are sure you can do it effectively (along with at least three other skill points) within one hour.