

Steeger's DBQ Rubric - 2025

Table, 7 points

Steeger

Criteria Score definitions

Thesis Response	0	1
The thesis must make a clear claim that responds to the prompt, establishes a line of reasoning, and may be in the introduction or conclusion.	The thesis does not make a clear claim, fails to respond to the prompt, or does not establish a line of reasoning.	The thesis makes a clear claim that responds to the prompt, establishes a line of reasoning, and may be in the introduction or conclusion.

Contextualization	0	1
The response describes relevant historical context from before, during, or after the timeframe, includes two defined historical terms, and provides more than a passing phrase.	The response does not provide relevant historical context (within the time period), fails to include two defined historical terms, or provides only passing phrases or references	The response provides relevant historical context with two defined terms from the time period that are not used elsewhere in the essay.

Document Evidence	0	1	2
For at least THREE documents, the response explains	The response uses fewer than THREE	For at least THREE documents, the response accurately	For at least FOUR documents, the response accurately

HOW or WHY the document's point of view, purpose, historical situation, or audience is relevant to an argument using the I.C.E. formula (Identify the source, Cite evidence, Explain significance).	documents or fails to accurately describe document content., or identifies sourcing elements without explaining their relevance to an argument.	describes the content and uses it to address the topic of the prompt. The response uses the I.C.E. formula to explain how or why the document's point of view, purpose, historical situation, or audience is relevant to an argument.	describes the content and uses it to support a clear argument that responds to the prompt. documents and uses this content to support an argument in response to the prompt by summarizing each document, citing relevant historical evidence, and explaining why it is significant to the thesis.
---	---	---	--

Document Sourcing/Analysis	0	1
For at least FOUR documents, explains HOW or WHY the document's point of view, purpose, historical situation, and/or audience supports an argument that responds to the prompt. Creative Approaches That Work: 1. Cross-Document Sourcing Comparisons 2. Evolution of Purpose Over Time 3. Situational Context Connections 4. Audience-Driven Content Analysis 5. Point of View as Strategic Choice	The response explains sourcing for FEWER than four documents, OR identifies the document's point of view, purpose, historical situation, or audience but fails to explain how or why it is relevant to an argument.	For at least FOUR documents, the response explains HOW or WHY the document's point of view, purpose, historical situation, or audience is relevant to an argument. The analysis must include why the document is significant and how it relates to the thesis.

Outside Evidence	0	1
Uses at least one relevant additional piece of specific	The response FAILS to provide relevant,	The response provides specific historical evidence

historical evidence (beyond that found in the documents) relevant to an argument in response to the prompt. The evidence must be from the specified time period, accurately described with more than a phrase or reference, and clearly connected to support an argument that addresses the prompt. It should be connected back to the thesis statement.	specific outside evidence that supports the argument, or only provides a brief mention without explanation. Also could be wrong time period OR evidence was used in other area of the essay.	from the time period (beyond the documents) that is relevant to the thesis and different from contextualization or sourcing evidence. The author could make the transition statement "One piece of outside evidence ..."
--	--	--

Complex Understanding	0	1
Demonstrates sophisticated historical thinking that goes beyond simple analysis by showing nuanced understanding of the historical development through advanced argumentation and/or strategic use of evidence.	The response does not demonstrate complex understanding or only mentions complexity without proper explanation.	The response demonstrates complex understanding through ONE of the following approaches: Method 1: Multiple Perspectives/Themes Explains different viewpoints, causes and effects, or multiple themes that add nuance to the argument. Method 2: Advanced Document Use Either uses all 7 documents effectively to support the argument OR explains how 4+ documents' sourcing (point of view, purpose, audience, situation) supports the argument."