

**The Rosenberg Case – Could You Have Been An Impartial Juror?
Dave Klippel
Discovery Academy**

An 8th Grade Curriculum Document-Based Question Assessment

The Rosenberg Trial: Could You Have Been An Impartial Juror?



Overview: The American government built the world's first atomic bomb in 1945. The American government took strong precautions to stop this secret from falling into the hands of the USSR. Despite these attempts, the secret of the bomb-making process was stolen and provided to the Soviets. American citizens, Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, were among those charged with conspiracy to commit espionage against the United States. This DBQ asks the question, if you had lived at that time, could you have been an impartial juror at their trial.

The Documents:

Document A: The Morning Herald, Uniontown, PA, Friday, July 21, 1950.

Document B: George E. Kennan, The Long Telegram, 1946.

Document C: Senator Joseph McCarthy, "Speech at Wheeling, West Virginia", 1950.

Document D: Herblock political cartoon: "Fire!" 06/17/1949.

Document E: "How Communism Works" a pamphlet published in 1938.

Document F: Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *The Vital Center: The Politics of Freedom*. 1949.

Hook Exercise: American Ideals.

Directions: Ever since the latter half of the 19th century, some Americans have been fearful of anyone who did not embrace democratic ideals. Despite the American concept of Freedom of Speech, people with different political ideals such as communists, socialists, and anarchists, were often times treated with open hostility. This type of nationalism in some ways is still evident. Below is a newspaper article describing an actual clash. Take on the role of each person involved, and write a short explanation about why you took the action that you did.

Chicagoans Cheer Tar Who Shot Man:

Sailor Wounds Pageant Spectator Disrespectful to Flag.

Chicago, May 6—Disrespect for the American flag and a show of resentment toward the thousands who participated in a victory loan pageant here tonight may cost George Goddard his life. He was shot down by a sailor of the United States Navy when he did not stand and remove his hat while the band was playing the “Star-Spangled Banner.”

Goddard had a seat of vantage in the open amphitheater. When he failed to stand he was the most conspicuous figure among the throng. When he fell at the report of the “sailor’s” gun the crowd burst into cheers and hand-clapping. When Goddard failed to respond to the first strains of the national anthem Samuel Hagerman, sailor in the guard of honor, asked him to get up.

“What for?” demanded Goddard. “Hagerman touched him with his bayonet. “Get up. Off with your hat.” Goddard muttered and drew a pistol. With military precision Hagerman stepped back a pace and slipped a shell into his gun. Goddard started away. As the last notes of the anthem sounded the sailor commanded him to halt. Then he fired into the air. “Halt!” Goddard paid no attention. The sailor aimed and fired three times. Goddard fell wounded. Each shot found its mark.

When he [Goddard] was searched, an automatic pistol, in addition to the one he had drawn, was found. Another pistol and fifty cartridges were found in a bag he carried. He said he was a tinsmith, out of work. Papers showed he had been at Vancouver and Seattle and it was believed by the authorities he had come here for the [Communist] I.W.W. [International Workers of the World] convention.

Source: *Washington Post*, 7 May 1919, 2.

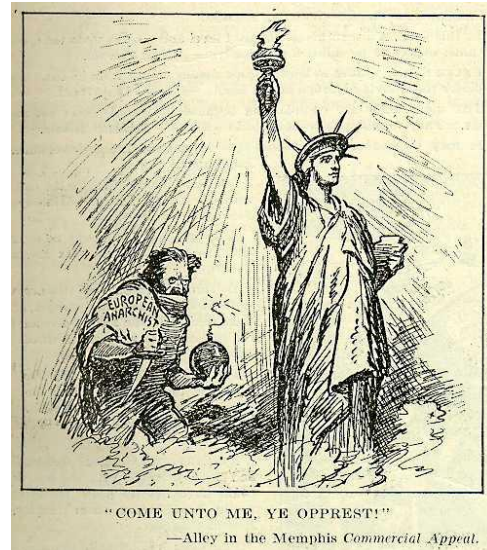
As George Goddard: Why did you refuse to stand up and take your hat off for the “Star Spangled Banner”?

As Samuel Hagerman: Why did you feel it necessary to make Mr. Goddard stand up for the “Star Spangled Banner”?

The Rosenberg Trial: Background Essay

During the Great Depression, the concept of Communism had gained some support in America. The Communist Party of the United States of America (CPSUSA), had 50,000 members. It gained popularity among labor unions and intellectuals. They believed that America's capitalistic democracy had caused hardship not only to Americans, but to people in other nations who were affected by the global impact of the economic collapse of the USA.

In response to this, the United States passed a law making membership in any organization that advocated the violent overthrow of the government of the United States illegal. While American fears about Communism became downplayed because of the alliance between the USA and the USSR during World War II, when the war ended, that alliance eroded, and Americans felt it was important to contain the spread of Communism across the globe.



Starting in the late 1940s several events alarmed the American public, including, the Soviet acquisition of the atomic bomb, China's civil war resulting in a turn to Communism in that nation, and the Korean War. America saw a sharp rise in fears that Communists had infiltrated our government, and were working from within to dismantle our nation. Americans were worried about the growing spread of Communist influence and oppression around the world.

In 1947, President Harry Truman signed Executive Order 9835, creating the Federal Employees Loyalty Program. The program created review boards to investigate federal employees and fire them if there were doubts as to their loyalty. The House Committee on Un-American Activities (HCUA), and the committees of Senator Joseph McCarthy began investigations into allegations against American Communists and their role in espionage, propaganda, and subversive activities in our nation. These aggressive investigations led to blacklisting, jailing, and deportation of suspected Communists.

The "Red Scare" affected everyday life in America. Our way of life was threatened by the nuclear arms race. Americans were in a panic. Children were taught duck and cover drills at school, to teach them how to react to a nuclear blast. Some parents built bomb shelters. Science fiction movies of the period used a theme of a sinister, inhuman enemy that was planning to infiltrate society and destroy it. It was during this time that the names of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg would become familiar to most Americans.

Julius Rosenberg was born to a family of Jewish immigrants in New York City on May 12, 1918. Julius eventually became a leader in the Young Communist League where during the Great Depression, in 1936, he met Ethel Greenglass. The couple was married three years later. He graduated from the City College of New York with a degree in electrical engineering in 1939 and joined the Army Signal Corps in 1940, where he worked on radar equipment.

Ethel Greenglass was born on September 28 1915, in New York City, also to a Jewish family. She was an aspiring actress and opera singer, but eventually took a secretarial job at a shipping company. She became involved in labor disputes and joined the Young Communist League, USA, where she met Julius. The Rosenbergs had two sons, Robert and Michael.

According to his former Soviet “handler”, Alexandre Feklisov, Julius Rosenberg was originally recruited by the KGB (the Soviet spy agency – equal to America’s CIA: The Central Intelligence Agency) on Labor Day 1942. Julius provided thousands of classified reports, and is said to have recruited sympathetic individuals to the KGB’s service.

According to Feklisov’s account, through Rosenberg he was supplied with thousands of documents from the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics including a complete set of design and production drawings for the Lockheed’s P-80 Shooting Star. Feklisov says he learned through Julius that his brother-in-law David Greenglass was working on the top-secret Manhattan Project (the development of the atomic bomb) at the Los Alamos National Laboratory. Feklisov used Julius to recruit David Greenglass.

The USSR and the U.S. became allies during World War II after Nazi Germany’s surprise attack on the Soviets in 1941, but the U.S. government was highly suspicious of Soviet leader Joseph Stalin’s long-term intentions. Therefore the Americans did not share information or seek assistance from the Soviet Union for the Manhattan Project. However, the Soviets were aware of the project as a result of espionage penetration of the U.S. government and made a number of attempts to infiltrate its operations.

After the war, the U.S. continued to protect its nuclear secrets, but the Soviet Union was able to produce its own atomic weapons by 1949. The West was shocked by the speed with which the Soviets were able to stage their first nuclear test, “Joe 1.” It was then discovered in January 1950 that a German refugee theoretical physicist working for the British mission in the Manhattan Project, Klaus Fuchs, had given key documents to the Russians throughout the war. Through Fuchs’ confession, U.S. and United Kingdom intelligence agents were able to make a case against his alleged courier, Harry Gold, who was arrested on May 23, 1950. A former machinist at Los Alamos, Sergeant David Greenglass also confessed to having passed secret information on to the USSR through Gold as well. Though he initially denied any involvement by his sister, Ethel Rosenberg, he claimed that her husband, Julius, had convinced his wife to recruit him while on a visit to him in Albuquerque, New Mexico in 1944 and that Julius had also passed secrets. Greenglass later changed his statement to indicate that his sister had aided her husband. The Rosenbergs were arrested and charged with conspiracy to commit espionage. These events were at the heart of icy diplomatic relations between the USSR and the United States during a period that came to be known as “The Cold War”.



Julius Rosenberg



Ethel Rosenberg

Background Essay Questions

1. Why did the U.S. pass a law outlawing membership in any group that advocated the violent overthrow of the American government?
2. If not stopped, what were Americans afraid that Communists would do to our country?
3. How did the U.S.S.R. know that America had developed an atomic bomb?
4. What did the HCUA investigate?

5. How did the alleged actions of the Rosenbergs contribute to the fears of Americans during this period?

6. Define or explain each of these terms:

a. The Great Depression

b. Communism

c. The Red Scare

d. The KGB

e. Espionage

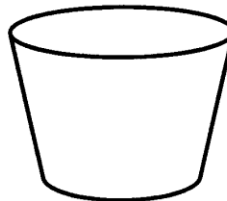
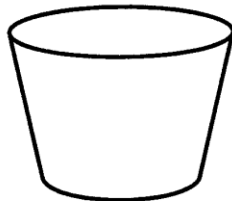
Understanding the Question and Pre-Bucketing

1. What is the analytical question asked by this DBQ?

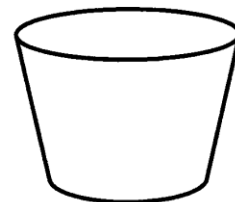
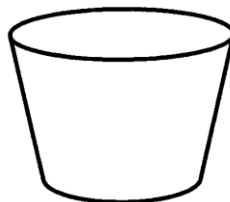
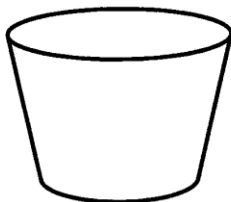
2. In this DBQ, what is the meaning of the word “impartial”?

3. Restate the question so that your interpretation of the word “impartial” is clearly understood.

Pre-Bucketing: Using any clues from the DBQ question and the document titles on the cover page, guess the analytical categories and label the buckets.



OR



Document A: The Morning Herald, Uniontown, PA, Friday, July 21, 1950.

**Spy Suspect Is Laughing
Rosenberg (Nabbed by FBI) Compares Federal Charges
To Children's Programs on Television**

New York, July 20 (AP) – Julius Rosenberg laughed off the government's spy charges against him here and compared them to a children's cowboy program on television. "There is not one iota of truth in the charges," the 32 year-old imprisoned engineer told his attorney, Emanuel H. Bloch.

Rosenberg, arrested by the FBI Monday night, is held in \$100,000 bail. He is charged with conspiracy to commit espionage. The government indicated it may not proceed against Rosenberg before a grand jury at once. It was understood additional arrests may be in the offing.

The FBI said Rosenberg recruited his brother-in-law, David Greenglass, into a Russian-backed spy ring that furnished atom bomb secrets to Soviet agents in 1945.

Cites Programs

Greenglass was arrested a month ago. Two other alleged members of the ring were arrested about the same time. The FBI said Rosenberg gave Greenglass half of a torn Jello box top. It was to be matched with the other half in the hands of another spy suspect as an identification signal. Bloch said Rosenberg "laughed out loud" at this cloak-and-dagger charge by the FBI. "He called it fantastic," the attorney said, "something like his kids hear over the television on the Lone Ranger program."

Bloch was asked if he thinks Greenglass might have put the finger on Rosenberg after his arrest. "If his brother-in-law talked, he must be crazy," the lawyer said. "Rosenberg told me there is not one iota of truth in the charges, and that he wants to meet his accusers face to face."

1. If you had read this article about Julius Rosenberg's arrest during the "Red Scare", what would be your first impression of him?
2. What does the reporter mean when he writes "...additional arrests may be in the offing."? Does this change your opinion of Julius Rosenberg?
3. What does Julius Rosenberg mean when he tells his lawyer that, "there is not one iota of truth in the charges,"?
4. How could you cite what you read in this document to support being an impartial juror?
5. How could you cite what you read in this document to support that you can't be an impartial juror?

Document B: George E. Kennan, The Long Telegram, 1946

George E. Kennan was a diplomat in the U.S. Embassy in Moscow (the capital of the Soviet Union). He was a leading expert on American relations with the USSR. Early in 1946 (shortly after the end of World War II), he sent an 8,000 word telegram to the Treasury Department. In this telegram, he outlined his warning about Soviet beliefs about America, and recommended a long-term policy of resistance by the United States toward Communist expansion, known as "containment." Below are excerpts from that telegram.

"At bottom of [the Soviet's] neurotic view of world affairs is traditional and instinctive Russian sense of insecurity... They have learned to seek security only in patient but deadly struggle for total destruction of rival power, never in compacts or compromises with it..."

"In summary, we have here a political force committed fanatically to the belief that with [the] US there can be no permanent [truce or peace], that it is desirable and necessary that the internal harmony of our society be disrupted, our traditional way of life be destroyed... [The] problem of how to cope with this force [is] undoubtedly [the] greatest task our diplomacy has ever faced and probably [the] greatest it will ever have to face."

Document Analysis

1. Do you believe that Kennan's opinion is an accurate reflection of how the Soviet Communists felt about the United States?
2. According to Kennan, what do the Soviets want to cause to happen to America?
3. What inferences about Soviet espionage in America, can you make based on Kennan's observations?
4. How could you cite what you read in this document to support being an impartial juror?
5. How could you cite what you read in this document to support that you can't be an impartial juror?

Document C: Senator Joseph McCarthy, “Speech at Wheeling, West Virginia”, 1950

When the junior Senator from Wisconsin spoke before the Ohio Country Women’s Republican Club in Wheeling, West Virginia in February 1950 he claimed to have a list of 205 communists who worked in the U.S. State Department, shaping American foreign policy. He repeated the speech with minor changes, and placed it in the congressional record. Though McCarthy’s numbers would fluctuate, the charges would propel him to the forefront of American politics.

“Today we are engaged in a final, all-out battle between communistic atheism and Christianity.... And, ladies and gentlemen, the chips are down — they are truly down...”

Six years ago... there was within the Soviet orbit 180 million people. Lined up on the anti-totalitarian side there were in the world at that time roughly 1.625 billion people. Today, only six years later, there are 800 million people under the absolute domination of Soviet Russia — an increase of over 400 percent. On our side the figure has shrunk to around 500 million. In other words, in less than six years the odds have changed from 9 to 1 in our favor to 8 to 5 against us. This indicates the swiftness of the tempo of communist victories and American defeats in the cold war. As one of our outstanding historical figures once said, ‘When a great democracy is destroyed, it will not be because of enemies from without, but rather because of enemies from within.’ ...”

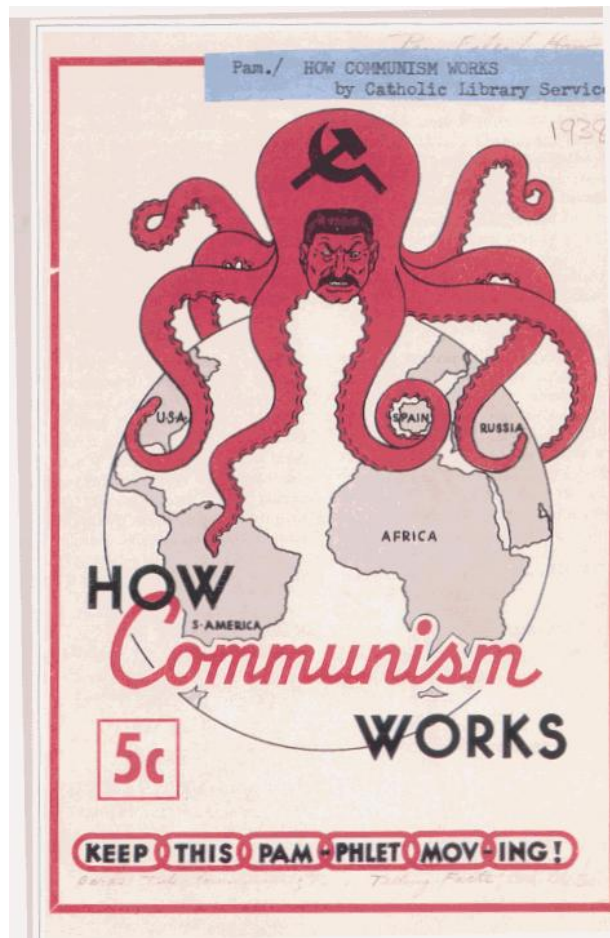
1. What is Senator McCarthy implying when he says “the chips are down — they are truly down...”
2. How does Senator McCarthy want his audience to feel about the Soviets?
3. What is Senator McCarthy implying when he talks about the shift in population of people who live under “absolute domination of Soviet Russia”?
4. What does Senator McCarthy’s speech do to fuel the fear of the “Red Scare”?
5. How could you cite what you read in this document to support being an impartial juror?
6. How could you cite what you read in this document to support that you can’t be an impartial juror?

Document D: Herblock political cartoon - 06/17/1949



1. Why do you think the artist labeled the man "hysteria"?
2. What is represented by Lady Liberty's torch?
3. Why would someone want to put out the lighted torch?
4. What is the artist trying to say to his audience?
5. How could you cite what you read in this document to support being an impartial juror?
6. How could you cite what you read in this document to support that you can't be an impartial juror?

Document E: How Communism Works - 1938



1. Who published this pamphlet”?
2. What is the artist implying by depicting Soviet leader Joseph Stalin as an octopus?
3. What areas of the globe is the octopus trying to capture in its tentacles?
4. What is the artist trying to say to his audience?
5. How could you cite what you read in this document to support being an impartial juror?
6. How could you cite what you read in this document to support that you can't be an impartial juror?

Document F: Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *The Vital Center: The Politics of Freedom* (1949)

Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. was a noted historian. He argued that in American politics there is a compromise between Communism and totalitarianism: liberalism. Liberalism emphasizes individual rights and equality of opportunity; a condition where all people have equal rights under the law. In his book, Schlesinger had the following to say about American Communists:

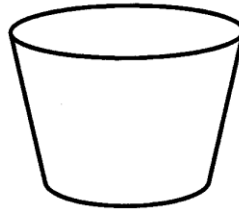
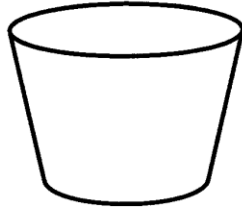
“Another objective [of the American Communists] is what the Communists call ‘mass organizations’—that is, groups of liberals organized for some [well meaning] purpose, and because of innocence, laziness and stupidity of most of the membership, [they are] perfectly designed for control by an alert minority [a manipulative leader].”

1. How does Schlesinger view the majority of liberals who decide to join the Communist party?
2. Why does Schlesinger say that these people can be easily manipulated?
3. In which category do you think Julius Rosenberg belonged—leader or follower? Explain your answer.
4. Do you agree or disagree with Schlesinger’s statement? Explain your answer.
5. How could you cite what you read in this document to support being an impartial juror?
6. How could you cite what you read in this document to support that you can’t be an impartial juror?

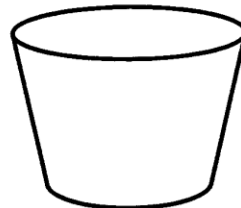
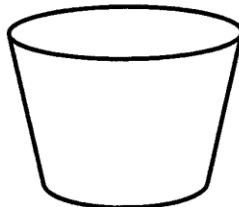
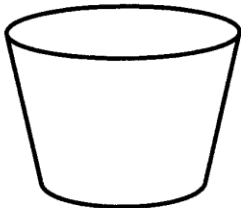
Bucketing – Getting Ready to Write

Bucketing

Look over all the documents and organize them into your final buckets. Write final bucket labels under each bucket and place the letters of the documents in the buckets where they belong. It is legal to put a document in more than one bucket.

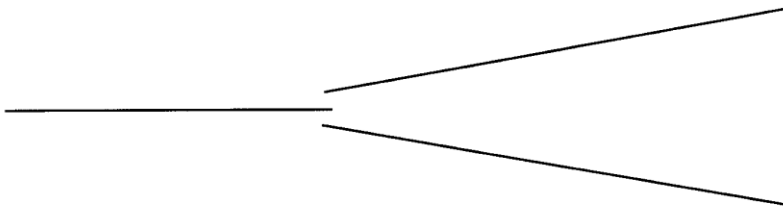


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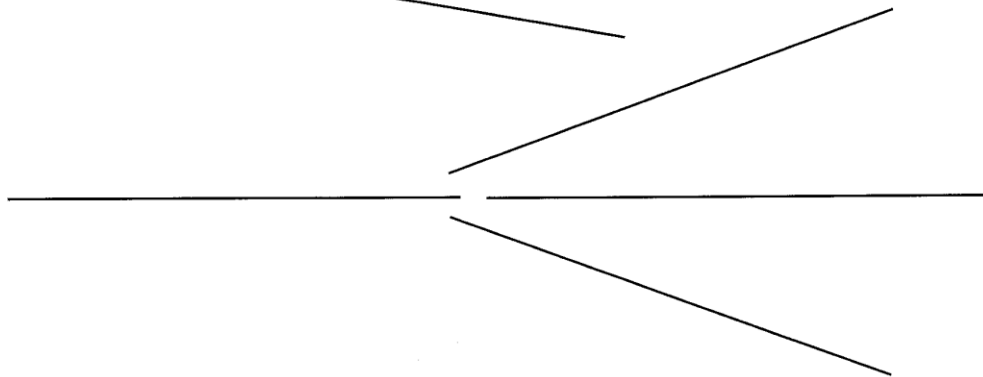


Thesis Development and Roadmap

On the chickenfoot below, write your thesis and your roadmap. Your thesis is always an opinion and answers the Mini-Q question. The roadmap is created from your bucket labels and lists the topic areas you will examine in order to prove your thesis.



OR



From Thesis to Essay Writing

Mini-Q Essay Outline Guide

Working Title

Paragraph #1

Grabber

Background

Stating the question with key terms defined

Thesis and roadmap

Paragraph #2

Baby Thesis for bucket one

Evidence: supporting detail from documents with document citation

Argument: connecting evidence to the thesis

Paragraph #3

Baby Thesis for bucket two

Evidence

Argument

Paragraph #4

Baby Thesis for bucket three

Evidence

Argument

Paragraph #5

Conclusion: Restatement of main idea along with possible insight or wrinkle

Works Cited

Hook Exercise: Chicagoans Cheer Tar Who Shot Man

Retrieved from: <http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/4981/>

Background Essay: The Red Scare

Retrieved from: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Red_Scare

Background Essay Graphic: European Anarchist

Retrieved from: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Red_Scare

Background Essay: Julius and Ethel Rosenberg

Retrieved from: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Julius_and_Ethel_Rosenberg

Background Essay: Photos of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg

Retrieved from: <http://www.fbi.gov/libref/historic/famcases/atom/atom.htm>

Document A: Spy Suspect is Laughing: The Morning Herald, Uniontown, PA 07/21/1950

Retrieved from: <http://newspaperarchives.com>

Document B: George E. Kennan, The Long Telegram, 1946

Retrieved from: <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/coldwar/documents/episode-1/kennan.htm>

Document C: Senator Joseph McCarthy, Speech at Wheeling, West Virginia, 1950

Retrieved from: <http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/6456/>

Document D: Herblock political cartoon, "Fire!", 06/17/1949

Retrieved from: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/herblock/5decades.htm>

Document E: How Communism Works – 1938 pamphlet

Retrieved from:

http://wpscms.pearsoncmg.com/wps/media/objects/1693/1733989/images/img_w066.html

Document F: Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. – The Vital Center: The Politics of Freedom, 1949

Retrieved from: <http://caho-test.cc.columbia.edu/ps/10131.html>

DBQ Graphics and Forms: Pre-Bucketing, Bucketing, Chickenfoot, and From Thesis to Writing outline Retrieved from: The DBQ Project. Mini-Qs in American History – Volume 1. Reproduced with permission.

DBQ Scoring Rubric

Criteria	20	17	15	10	5	0	Score
Thesis / answers question	Strong thesis – responds directly to the question.	Thesis stated – answers the question.	Addresses the question but has weak structure & focus.	Poor focus; fails to answer the question adequately.	Fails to address the question; confusing & unfocused.	No Thesis; no attempt to address the question.	
Use of documents / evidence	Uses documents completely & accurately; weighs the importance & validity of evidence.	Uses documents correctly; recognizes that all evidence is not equally valid.	Uses most documents correctly – simplistic analysis; does not always weigh the importance & validity of evidence.	Some documents used correctly; some only paraphrased or misunderstood; fails to recognize any difference in the validity of evidence.	Fails to use documents correctly; simply paraphrased or misunderstood.	Ignores or misuses the documents.	
Incorporates outside information	Cites considerable relevant information from outside learning.	Cites some relevant information from outside learning.	Includes little relevant information from outside learning.	Includes little information from outside learning – what is included is irrelevant.	Includes no relevant information from beyond the documents.	Includes no information from beyond the documents.	
Understanding of topic	Displays a thorough understanding of the topic & related issues.	Shows an understanding of the topic & related issues.	Shows basic, though simplistic, understanding of the topic & related issues.	Shows little understanding of the topic & related issues.	Shows almost no understanding of the topic or related issues.	Shows no understanding of the topic or related issues.	
Use of language	Well structured, well written; proper spelling, grammar, mechanics.	Clearly written & coherent; some minor errors in writing.	Weaker organization; some errors in writing detract from essay's meaning.	Poorly organized; many errors in standard English.	Disorganized; littered with errors in standard English.	Lacks any organization; little attempt made; blank paper.	
Total Score:							

Student who wrote the essay: _____

Instructor: _____

Instructors Comments:
