

AP History Rubrics

Introductory notes:

- Except where otherwise noted, each point of the rubric is earned independently. For instance, a student could earn a point for evidence beyond the documents without earning a point for thesis/claim.
- Accuracy: The components of this rubric each require that students demonstrate historically defensible content knowledge. Given the timed nature of the exam, a response may contain errors that do not detract from its overall quality, as long as the historical content used to advance the argument is accurate.
- Clarity: Exam essays should be considered first drafts and thus may contain grammatical errors. Those errors will not be counted against a student unless they obscure the successful demonstration of the content knowledge, skills, and reasoning processes described in the rubrics.

AP History DBQ Rubric (7 points)

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	Decision Rules
A. THESIS/CLAIM (0–1 pt)	1 pt. Responds to the prompt with a historically defensible thesis/claim that establishes a line of reasoning.	<i>To earn this point, the thesis must make a claim that responds to the prompt rather than restating or rephrasing the prompt. The thesis must consist of one or more sentences located in one place, either in the introduction or the conclusion.</i>
B. CONTEXTUALIZATION (0–1 pt)	1 pt. Describes a broader historical context relevant to the prompt.	<i>To earn this point, the response must describe broader historical events, developments, or processes that occur before, during, or continue after the time frame of the prompt that are relevant to the topic. This point is not awarded for merely a phrase or reference.</i>

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Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	Decision Rules
C. EVIDENCE (0–3 pts)	Evidence From the Documents 1 pt. Uses the content of at least three documents to address the topic of the prompt. OR 2 pts. Supports an argument in response to the prompt using at least four documents.	<i>To earn one point, the response must accurately describe — rather than simply quote — the content from at least three of the documents.</i> <i>To earn two points, the response must accurately describe — rather than simply quote — the content from at least four documents. In addition, the response must use the content of the four documents to support an argument in response to the prompt.</i>
	Evidence Beyond the Documents 1 pt. Uses at least one additional piece of specific historical evidence (beyond that found in the documents) relevant to an argument in response to the prompt.	<i>To earn this point, the response must describe the evidence and must use more than a phrase or reference. This additional piece of evidence must be different from the evidence used to earn the point for contextualization.</i>

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Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	Decision Rules
D. ANALYSIS AND REASONING (0–2 pts)	1 pt. For at least two documents, explains how or why the document's point of view, purpose, historical situation, and/or audience is relevant to an argument.	<p><i>To earn this point, the response must explain how or why (rather than simply identifying) the document's point of view, purpose, historical situation, or audience is relevant to an argument about the prompt for each of the two documents sourced.</i></p>
	1 pt. Demonstrates a complex understanding of the historical development that is the focus of the prompt through sophisticated argumentation and/or effective use of evidence.	<p><i>A response may demonstrate a complex understanding through sophisticated argumentation that is relevant to the prompt. This may be done in a variety of ways, such as:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Explaining multiple themes or perspectives to explore complexity or nuance; OR</i> ▪ <i>Explaining multiple causes or effects, multiple similarities or differences, or multiple continuities or changes; OR</i> ▪ <i>Explaining both cause and effect, both similarity and difference, or both continuity and change; OR</i> ▪ <i>Explaining relevant and insightful connections within and across periods or geographical areas. These connections should clearly relate to an argument that responds to the prompt.</i> <p><i>A response may demonstrate a complex understanding through effective use of evidence relevant to an argument that addresses the prompt. This may be done in a variety of ways, such as:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Effectively using seven documents to support an argument that responds to the prompt; OR</i> ▪ <i>Explaining how the point of view, purpose, historical situation, and/or audience of at least four documents supports an argument that responds to the prompt; OR</i> ▪ <i>Using documents and evidence beyond the documents effectively to demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of different perspectives relevant to the prompt.</i> <p><i>This complex understanding must be part of the argument and may be demonstrated in any part of the response.</i></p> <p><i>While it is not necessary for this complex understanding to be woven throughout the response, it must be more than merely a phrase or reference.</i></p>