How To Do A DBQ

(Document-Based Question)
What is a DBQ?

- A DBQ is an interpretive essay that presents an historical argument to a posed questions based on historical artifacts (aka “docs”).
# New DBQ Rubric Layout (2015)

## SEVEN POINTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Thesis</strong></td>
<td>2 Points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thesis Present</td>
<td>1 Point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thesis Excellent</td>
<td>1 Point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Documents</strong></td>
<td>2 Points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documents Used (6)</td>
<td>1 Point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documents Analyzed (4)</td>
<td>1 Point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outside Information</strong></td>
<td>2 Points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Context (The Forest)</td>
<td>1 Point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence (The Trees)</td>
<td>1 Point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Synthesis</strong></td>
<td>1 Point</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A D. B. Q. Is a lot
Like a Tasty Hamburger

...But not just any hamburger...
The "Top Bun" of your essay!

4-6 sentences

(NEW: 0-1 point out of 7)
The Introductory Paragraph

1. Establish TIME & PLACE.
2. Create a clear, THESIS STATEMENT.
3. Allude to the SUB-POINT or categories you will discuss to support your thesis statement 🍔 No “laundry list!”
4. Focus on the question at hand—do NOT begin with a “flowery” sentence!
Presents a thesis that makes a historically defensible claim and responds to all parts of the question (does more than re-state).

*** Must be located in the intro & conclusion
Develops and supports a cohesive argument that recognizes and accounts for historical complexity by explicitly illustrating relationships among historical evidence such as contradiction, corroboration, and/or

An excellent thesis sets the stage for a well-argued, thesis-driven essay.
Throughout the Middle Ages, the lives of many Europeans revolved around religion and that devotion was geared specifically towards the Roman Catholic Church. In the Sixteenth Century, Europe’s religious devotion began to change as a reform movement, known as the Reformation, started to develop. The underlying causes of the Reformation are many, but three major topics dominate the discussion. These issues include a major loss of faith by the European population during the Middle Ages, the hatred of corrupt Church money practices like “indulgences”, and a desire to see the power of the Catholic popes curtailed.
“Chickenfoot-ing”
“Chickenfoot-ing”

“underlying causes of the Reformation”

“an inadequate economy”

World War I

Unhappiness with the Czar’s rule at home
In 1917, Tsar Nicholas II of Imperial Russia was overthrown in a popular uprising led by the Bolsheviks and their leader Vladimir Lenin. Historians have long debated the causes of this revolution and have concluded that the uprising was a mix of both long running social and political problems that effected the Russian monarch in the most dramatic of ways and helps lead to their downfall. In particular, the issues of Russia’s inadequate economy, its continued involvement in failed foreign wars like World War I, and the general unhappiness with the absolute rule of the Tsars helps to prove this statement is a correct one.
“Chickenfoot-ing”

“What led to the overthrow of Czar Nicholas II”

“loss of faith”

“hatred of corrupt”

Limits on the power of the Catholic popes
The "Meat" Paragraphs

The "tasty" part of your essay!
8-12 sentences+ per paragraph
(NEW: 2-4 points out of 7)
The "Meat" Paragraphs

1. Identify your sub-topic or category in the first sentence that you plan to present.
2. Include the documents that are relevant to support the ideas in the paragraph.
3. Try to use most of the documents given [70%]
   - Min. of 6 docs w/ 4 used w/ historical analysis
4. Be sure to indicate Point-of-View (POV) / CAPs in the documents (more to come on this later...)
5. Bring in supportive outside information (Lecture, textbook readings / GRQs, etc.) This is critical!!
6. Explain why these documents were selected & important to your historical argument
USES the content of at least SIX of the documents to support the stated thesis or a relevant argument.
“Bucket Lists”

1. What are all the questions kept by this Mimi-Question?

2. Is there anything in the questions stored in this Du-Bowl?

3. Restate the questions stored so that you interpret them.
How Do I Know Which Documents to Use in My Response?
IV DOCUMENTS ANALYZED

EXPLAINS the significance of author’s POV, context, audience, and/or purpose (CAP) for at least FOUR documents.

If you apply POV from the old AP Euro exam to four documents, you’ve got it.
Questions to Ask Yourself About the Documents

1. Attribution → Who is this person?
2. Why might they be significant?
3. What is the point of view of the author?
4. How reliable and accurate is the source?
5. What is the tone or intent of the document author?
6. What other information does this document call to mind? Use all available clues.

Remember, docs. can be used in a variety of ways!
How did the perception of the doc’s author influence the views presented in the doc and their account?
What is the historical context of the doc?

(def. moods, attitudes, and/or conditions that existed in a certain historical period)

Who was the doc intended for?

What was the author’s purpose for writing this doc?

REMINDER: ALL OF THESE ELEMENTS SHOULD BE USED TO HELP SHOW HISTORICAL EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT YOUR THESIS STATEMENT
1. *Attribution*: cite the author by name, title, or position, if possible.

- Why is this person and document selected?
- How does it help me answer the question?
EXAMPLES:

John Tyler, an English writer, said: “...”

A Dominican monk in Florence described...
2. **Authorial Point of View:** you show awareness that the gender, occupation, class, religion, nationality, political position or ethnic identity of the author could influence his/her views.

- How does this apply to the question?
- Why has the author written what he/she has?
EXAMPLE:

Balthasar Rusow, a Lutheran pastor, was naturally upset by the celebration of a Saint’s Day, since Lutherans don’t venerate saints.
3. **Reliability and accuracy of each source referenced:** you examine a source for its reliability and accuracy by questioning if the author of the document would be in a position to be accurate.

🤔 How might this help you answer the question?
EXAMPLE:

Niccolo Machiavelli’s book on the political tactics of a Renaissance prince was probably accurate as he observed the behavior of the prince, Cesare Borgia, for many years.
4. **Tone or Intent of the Author:**

you examine the text of a document to determine its tone (satire, irony, indirect commentary, etc.) or the intent of the author. Especially useful for visual documents, like artwork or political cartoons.
In his great sculpture of “David,” Michelangelo wanted to convey the confidence, and even arrogance, of Renaissance Florence at the peak of its cultural influence in 16th Europe.
5. Grouping of Docs. by Author:
you show an awareness that certain types of authors, simply by their authorship, will express similar views when you group documents by type of author.
As Northern Renaissance humanists, Erasmus, Sir Thomas More, and Cervantes all poked fun at the foibles and scandals of late medieval society as well as of their own.
1. Baldassare Castiglione, in The Handbook of the Courtier, said: “……………….” (Doc. 8)

2. Erasmus of Rotterdam, a northern Christian humanist, agreed with... (Doc. 2)

3. The 19c historian, Jacob Burkhardt, felt that ……………… (Doc. 9)

**NEVER** begin with: In Document 3, .....  
THIS IS AN ESSAY ABOUT HISTORY! NOT DOCS!
V CONTEXTUALIZATION

Situates the argument by explaining the broader historical events, developments, or processes immediately relevant to the question.

NOTE: This must be more than a phrase or reference – use multiple sentences.
VI
EVIDENCE
BEYOND THE DOCUMENTS

Provides an example or additional piece of specific evidence beyond those found in the documents to support or qualify the argument.

Must be 1) distinct from evidence used to earn other points and 2) more than a mere phrase or reference.
The Concluding Paragraph

The “Bottom Bun” of your essay!
It holds it all together!
3-4 sentences
(NEW: 0-1 point out of 7)
The Concluding Paragraph

1. Start with a “concluding phrase.”
   - (“In conclusion, …) = most often used

2. Restate your thesis statement a bit differently.

3. Put your essay answer in a larger historical perspective.

   - End of some trend/movement/idea, etc.
   - Beginning of some trend/movement/idea, etc.
   - End of one & beginning of another.
   - Do NOT end on the note that this is the reason we are where we are today!
**Synthesis**

VII Extends the argument by explaining the connections between the argument and...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Historical</th>
<th>Thematic</th>
<th>Interdisciplinary</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A development in a different historical period, situation, era, or geographical area</td>
<td>A course theme and/or approach to history that is not the focus of the essay (political, social, etc.)</td>
<td>A different discipline or field of inquiry (such as econ, gov &amp; politics, art history, or anthropology)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** EURO & WORLD ONLY
Put It All Together And...
Ummm...Burger!

I Mean, "Dazzling" Essay