**DBQ ESSAY PROCESS**

**STEP 1**

**COMPLEX SENTENCE writing:** all identifications should be done in this manner

**Term**+ identification phrase + interpretive commentary = analytical (complex) sentence.

*Example:* The Stamp Act, a tax on legal documents during the colonial era, united the colonies in protest against British policy.

**STEP 2**

**a) READ the QUESTION:** write it over *verbatim* then highlight or underline the key terms.

Four points to deconstruct an essay question:

* Subject
* Mode (What are you asked to do with the subject? For ex., compare, explain, evaluate…)
* Time Period (how long?)
* Targeted Historical Thinking Skill

**b) REPHRASE** in one sentence what the question is asking. Include information from Step 2a.

**c) BRAINSTORM** factual evidence that would answer the question (Use nouns - be specific).

(*You will get more credit on your DBQ if you include “outside information,”—that is, information that is not included in the documents provided for analysis. This is the time to consider what outside information you can add to the discussion. Make sure you explain HOW this additional information links to your thesis.)*

**STEP 3**

1. **COMPLETE** the **Primary Source Analysis Sheet** to help better understand the information each document has relevant to the question. You can use SOAPSTone, APPARTY, or this:

**b) WRITE** events, names, concepts next to each document in the DBQ as the idea comes to mind…in other words – what ideas are triggered in your mind as your read each document? *– this evidence will be used as CONTEXTUALIZATION*

**STEP 4**

**a)** Write a working ***COMPLEX* THESIS STATEMENT** that will directly address the question. The thesis should focus on the **targeted** **historical thinking skill** that is being assessed and, if possible, show there is more than one side to the question.

**b)** Write a short paragraph explaining how you would approach PROVING your thesis.

**c) SUB-TOPICS:** break down the essay into two to four sub-topics; three is average.

**d)** Write **SUB-THESES:** use the sub-topics to create analytical *sub-thesis statements*. Each one

should be a direct answer to the question. You might think of these as topic sentences for your paragraphs.

**STEP 5**

**a)** Write an **INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPH** that will include *some* background information, a *time frame reference*, a thesis, and categories (sub-topics).

**b) REVISE** your COMPLEX THESIS (if needed).

**STEP 6**

a) Group **FACTS and DOCUMENTS** (from brainstorming) by sub-theses. [You may not use all.]

**STEP 7**

1. Write the **FIRST DRAFT**
2. In your CONCLUSION, make sure you add a synthesis point. Use this mnemonic to remember different options for adding synthesis:

**S**ame as: Connect your topic to another time period or geographic area with a similar circumstance.

**Y**es, but: Add an appropriate extension of the stated thesis or argument (an “except” paragraph).

**N**ew Information: Add an *additional appropriate category* of analysis besides what is required by the question, or draw on appropriate ideas and methods from different fields of inquiry.

**STEP 8**

Read, revise, proofread!