**Document Based Questions or DBQs**

**Inquiry in Social Studies**

DBQs are used primarily in AP history classes, but the format and purpose lends itself nicely to the work of writing in the content area connected to the CCSS in History, Science, and Technical Subjects. The document based question (DBQ) is designed to enable students to work like historians, analyzing and synthesizing evidence from a variety of sources and media. Students are evaluated on their ability to interpret such factors as purpose, source, bias, date and place of origin, tone, etc. In order to receive a satisfactory rubric based score, students must establish and prove a thesis through accurate and sophisticated utilization of the available documents.

The DBQ usually consists of two parts.

In the first part, students are required to answer a key question on each document. This generally involves interpreting the main idea or point of view expressed in the document.

This section is "scaffolded" to the second part in which the student writes an essay using the documents to respond to a specific question. In this second part, students are asked to utilize all the sources, plus their understanding of history to respond to a question

Click on the following to see sample DBQs from Vermont Department of Education Social Studies Inquiry:

[Child Labor](http://vtsocialstudiesinquirycollaborative.pbworks.com/f/Child%2BLabor.pdf)

[Civil Rights Movement](http://vtsocialstudiesinquirycollaborative.pbworks.com/f/Civil%2BRights%2BMovement.pdf)

[Civil War](http://vtsocialstudiesinquirycollaborative.pbworks.com/f/Civil%2BWar_Grade%2B5.pdf) (Grade 5)

[Colonial](http://vtsocialstudiesinquirycollaborative.pbworks.com/f/Colonial_Grade%2B4.pdf) (Grade 4)

[Communities](http://vtsocialstudiesinquirycollaborative.pbworks.com/f/Communities_Grade%2B3.pdf) (Grade 3)

[Eastern Religion](http://vtsocialstudiesinquirycollaborative.pbworks.com/f/Eastern%2BReligion_Grade%2B6.pdf) (Grade 6)