

## DBQ RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Approach the DBQ as an essay question. In essence, start to construct a working outline **before** turning to examine the documents. This has the effect of approaching the question from previous knowledge, getting the outside information down on paper, and of constructing a thesis.
2. Structure your working outline along broad categories or categories that the question asks you to address. Next turn to the documents and place them within the working outline. Be sure to read the documents carefully for any clues provided in the publication date, source identification, type of publication, and point of view.
3. Often there is a chronological or thematic sequence to the documents. If so, locating this pattern makes your organization easier. For example, point and counter-point will often follow each other.
4. Remember DBQ is 50% outside information and 50% document use.
5. Use as many of the documents as accurately possible (no less than 5 for a decent grade). Also, identifying the documents is an excellent way to bring in outside information. For example, "William Lloyd Garrison, radical abolitionist and publisher of the *Liberator*, suggests..."
6. Indicate when using documents. Example (doc. A)
7. Use transition words to get from one point to another.
8. Do not lose track of the question or the thesis. You are not writing a history of the period, but you are answering a question about this period in U.S. history.
9. The DBQs that receive the highest scores are written from a comprehensive point of view (cover everything). In short, the questions are designed to encourage you to discuss in depth.
10. Use quotes from the documents but limit them to NO longer than 1 sentence, or better yet, a phrase. Use quotes sparingly but effectively. In addition, use the **terminology** of the period.
11. Focus on the time period the question asks you about. Most likely, your whole essay should revolve around that time period alone.
12. The basic skills of essay writing are needed. Make sure that the opening paragraph is more than just a restatement of the question. This is an excellent place to include some background material. Remember to include an effective conclusion.