

Unit Three Overview

Geographic and Economic Change Shape the Nation

The resources provided in this unit support sustained instruction in how to answer a document based question (DBQ). Unlike previous advanced guides, discreet, 1 -2 day lessons are not provided. Instead, a variety of resources are provided to assist you when providing direct instruction and reinforcement over multiple days of the writing skills need for answering a DBQ. Two DBQs are provided that may be used to introduce and practice DBQ skills, and a third DBQ is provided as the addendum to the End of Unit Assessment for Unit Three. In addition, an independent project is included in the guide which integrates *Historical Thinking* and *Learning Skills*. The Independent Project requires students to use historical thinking skills to analyze current events through research.

The thinking, reading, and writing skills that are taught and reinforced in Unit Three build important habits that will be used throughout the course. They also reinforce the skills that were taught in of Advanced Grade Seven and the first semester of Advanced Grade Eight. The goal of Advanced Grade Eight is for students to be able to independently apply all the historical thinking skills introduced in Advanced Grades Six and Seven in preparation for advanced high school courses.

The chart below is taken from the Social Studies Skills Framework for Grade 8 (Advanced 8, Unit 1 Appendix). It shows which skills are suggested for instruction and reinforcement in Unit Three. Although writing DBQs and analyzing current events are the focus of the unit, the remaining skills may be integrated into instruction as appropriate.

Advanced Skills: Unit Three			
Historical Thinking	Source Analysis	Writing Focus	Learning Skill
<p><i>Identifying Patterns</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identifying patterns helps make sense of information connections, similarities, and differences exist across eras and circumstances <p><i>Analyzing Current Events</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identifying and formulating a position on an issue justifying a course of action on an issue evaluating the consequences of a course of action on an issue 	<p><i>Source Analysis Skills from 8.2</i></p> <p><i>Interpreting Statistics</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> interpret statistics in graphs and charts understand the, uses, limitations and misuse of statistics use statistical information to support a historical narrative 	<p><i>Writing DBQs</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> formulating a thesis statement supported by evidence defending a thesis statement in a multi-paragraph essay 	<p><i>Information Literacy</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> accessing information efficiently and effectively. evaluating information critically using information accurately and creatively for an issue

Historical Thinking Skills: Unit Three

Writing Document Based Questions and Analyzing Current Events are the thinking and writing skills selected for development in Unit Three. These skills are essential to introduce at this point in the year so that students have time to develop and fine tune their DBQ writing skills prior to taking the Advanced final exam for semester 2 of Grade 8 US History.

Why Teach Writing Document Based Questions?

The historical thinking skills taught in Advanced Grades 6-8 are essential to informed citizenship in today's world, but they are also skills back-mapped from advanced high school courses. The document based question (DBQ) is the written application of all historical thinking skills. Mastery of the DBQ is essential to success in Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses in high school. By writing document based questions, students use multiple historical thinking skills in an integrated fashion and:

- Formulate a thesis statement supported by evidence.
- Defend a thesis statement in a multi-paragraph essay.

Why Teach Analyzing Current Events?

By applying historical thinking skills to current events, students learn to approach current issues critically with an eye to problem solving. Through this, they will also learn to evaluate conflicting courses of action proposed today to address current issues. Students continue to practice the selection of relevant evidence to help them make reasonable judgments and develop sound arguments in their own communications. In Advanced Grade Eight US History, students will learn by:

- identifying and formulating a position on an issue.
- justifying a course of action on an issue.
- evaluating the consequences of a course of action on an issue.

By applying historical thinking skills to current events, students learn to approach current issues critically with an eye to problem solving.
