



Social Studies Virtual Learning

DBQ Writing

May 6, 2020



AP European History

Lesson: May 6, 2020

Objective/Learning Target: The student will be able to write an effective thesis with contextual information.

As you know, the AP test (next week) is a single, 5-document DBQ. This week, we will work on writing a DBQ using the same skills we've covered over the last month. Each day will cover a different part of the writing, but it will all be based around a single DBQ, going from prewriting to finished product.

These lessons will feel like a review, and they should.

Warm Up

What are some of the aspects of a good thesis in historical writing?

Where should your thesis go?

Warm Up

Here is the College Board's definition of a good thesis:

Responds to the prompt with a historically defensible thesis/claim that establishes a line of reasoning.

The thesis must make a claim that responds to the prompt, rather than merely restating or rephrasing the prompt. The thesis must consist of one or more sentences located in one place, either in the introduction or the conclusion.

I've always put mine in the introduction (as do most writers).

Lesson/Activity

Today we will practice writing a quality thesis and providing historical context for the [DBQ we have been working on all week](#): *Analyze the extent to which Otto von Bismarck's government represented a change in the nature of conservative ideology.*

Lesson/Activity

Firstly, you can't just restate the thesis. "Otto von Bismarck's government represented a change in the nature of conservative ideology." The prompt isn't asking *if* it represented a change, it's asking *how much* of a change did it represent.

"Otto von Bismarck's government represented a substantial change" or "Otto von Bismarck's government represented a minor shift" are at least staking a claim.

The thesis I will be using in my example is: "Otto von Bismarck's government, while traditionally conservative in many ways, saw the need to adapt to modern issues."

Lesson/Activity

Once I've looked through the evidence available and thought about my thesis, I need to lay out some context for the essay. Since my thesis revolves around the modern nature of Bismarck's government, I will brainstorm some historical context on what traditional conservatism (using Klemens von Metternich as an example) looked like:

- Anti-nationalism
- Authoritarian
- Agrarian

Lesson/Activity

I also want to brainstorm some examples of conservatism and liberalism in Europe:

- James II of England (conservative) vs. William of Orange (liberal)
- Napoleon Bonaparte (liberal...kind of) vs. Klemens von Metternich (conservative)
- Agrarian (conservative) vs. Industrialized (liberal)

Practice

Think about the thesis you would write in response to the documents and go through a similar brainstorming process. What historical context can you give that will help lay the groundwork for your thesis and essay?

Once you've done your brainstorming, write your intro paragraph using your context and ending with your thesis. See my example on the following slide. Tomorrow we will work on writing an evidence-based paragraph.

Lesson/Activity

Using the contextual information, here is my intro paragraph:

“Traditional, pre-Industrial European conservatism has a history several centuries long. It dealt heavily in hierarchies, both in its feudal governments and structured churches. It was absolutist by nature, with rulers that resisted sharing power. James II of England was a traditional conservative while his successor--William of Orange--brought with him a liberal constitution. Conservatism opposed nationalism as a threat to large, multi-ethnic empires. Napoleon spread liberalizing ideas throughout Europe--liberte, egalite, fraternite--while Klemens von Metternich lashed back, suppressing those ideas. The Industrial Revolution brought many changes to Europe, among them the changes from a traditionally agrarian society to a continent of urbanizing factory workers. ***In this changing landscape, Otto von Bismarck’s government--though traditionally conservative in many ways--saw the need to adapt to modern issues.***”