Handout 1:1 cont.

“The Falls of Greenville”
By T. Addison Richards for
Orion Magazine Vol. 3., No. 6
February 1844

Strategies for Analyzing Newspaper and Magazine Articles

What to look for when working with newspapers and magazines:

1. First scan the article or excerpt.
2. Notice the headlines, titles, headings, and captions in order to determine what the piece is about.
3. Carefully read the piece, keeping in mind the questions of *who? what? when? where?* and *why?*
4. Consider the main idea of the article and identify the facts or details that support its main idea.
5. Finally, determine the credibility of the information.

Understanding Document-Based Questions

What Are Document-Based Questions?

Although the phrases "document-based question" and "document-based essay" may sound complicated, they can easily be understood when they are broken into parts. A document is anything written or printed that provides facts or information, such as maps, letters, or photographs. A document-based question (DBQ) is a question that is about one or more of these written or printed source materials. Some document-based questions ask for specific information and can be answered in one or two sentences. Others require you to take information from several documents and to use this information in an extended piece of writing called an essay.

Documents

Documents are classified as either primary or secondary sources.

Primary sources: original documents from a particular time in the past
*photographs
*letters
*newspaper articles
*illustrations
*cartoons
*posters
*maps
*political documents

Secondary sources: documents that are not from the era that they are about
*graphs made from historical data
*articles based on facts from primary sources
*textbook

Types of Questions on DBQ Tests

A typical DBQ tests contains documents, scaffolding questions, and an essay question. A **scaffolding question** is one that asks for a specific piece of information from a document. A scaffolding question usually deals with a single document and can be answered in one or two short sentences. Answering these questions will help you to build up a store of information that can use to write an essay.

An **essay question** is one that requires a response containing more than one paragraph. To answer an essay question on a DBQ exam, you have to be able to draw information from several documents. You begin by coming up with a **thesis statement**—a single sentence that answers the essay question in a general way. You then use the information from the documents that supports your thesis statement.

Strategies for DBQ Tests

1. Read directions carefully
2. Read the historical background information to determine what you already know about the subject or time period
3. Read the task carefully, that tells you what the essay will be about, looking carefully for what you are supposed to do. DBQ tasks frequently include:
    a. Analyze: break something into parts, describe the parts, and show how the parts are related
    b. Compare: tell about the similarities between two things
    c. Contrast: tell about the differences between two things
    d. Describe: tell about something in detail
    e. Interpret: explain or describe the meaning or significance of something
    f. Support: provide evidence to back up or to prove your main idea

4. Carefully review the documents that are provided
5. When reviewing documents, keep in mind the "reporter questions"
    a. Who is pictured? Who wrote or created it? Whom is it about? Who was its original audience?
    b. What is the document about? What kind of document is it? What is the purpose of the document?
    c. When was the document produced?
    d. Where was the document produced?
    e. Why was the document made?
    f. How does the document relate to its time period?
6. Carefully note any titles or captions or accompanying notes.
7. While studying the documents, take notes about them on scratch paper
8. After studying the documents, answer each scaffolding question, using complete sentences. These answers will help you to gather information needed for the essay.
9. Now reread the essay question and on the scratch paper, write a one-sentence answer. This will be your thesis statement (main idea).
10. Provide evidence for your thesis by using the answers from the scaffolding questions.

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An eyewitness account is a document that is written or spoken by someone who saw or took part in an event. Diaries, journals, police reports, court transcripts and interviews are all eyewitness accounts.

When reading letters and eyewitness accounts, be careful to distinguish facts from opinions. Accounts of the same event written by two different people might be very different.

What to Look for in Letters and Eyewitness Accounts

1. Speaker: Is the source reliable? Is their description of the events tainted by bias? If so, to what extent?
2. Purpose: Why was it written? Was it intended to be private or shared with others?
3. Setting: When and when was it written?
4. Main Idea: What is it mostly about?
5. Details: What bits of information supports the main idea?

Helpful Hints for Working with Advertisements and Posters

When analyzing ads and posters, remember that they are created to convince people to buy or do something. Are they persuasive enough to accomplish what they are attempting to do? You decide.

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2. If there are pictures or illustrations, analyze them carefully using the techniques previously learned.
3. Study the text and the printing of the words. The heading should be in very large type. It's purpose is the grab the attention of the viewer.
4. Look for a slogan that is associated with the product or cause.
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When working with political cartoons, keep the following in mind.

1. Each image in a cartoon usually symbolizes something. Look for that symbolism.
2. Labels are often used to explain what the different images are representing. Carefully read each label.
3. Look for captions that explain what the cartoon is about.
4. Look for any speech used by the subjects in the cartoon.
5. Finally, determine the message, or opinion, of the artist. When the text and illustrations are considered together, what do they mean? Keep in mind these questions:
    a. "What issue is this cartoon about?"
    b. "What message is the cartoonist attempting to send?"

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1. Type and Purpose: What kind of document is it? What was it used for?
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2. Look for labels or keys that are used to interpret information contained within the graph.
3. Pay careful attention to every detail.
4. When working with bar graphs, be sure to identify the two different items, or variables, that are being displayed.
5. When working with maps, gather information from the scale, compass rose, and legend.
6. Remember to compare the parts to the whole when studying a pie chart.

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"Object Observation" is designed to encourage:

- closer looking skills, and reinforce the adage "the more you look, the more you will see";
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Observation and Recording

1. Ask students to focus on one image.

2. Using "*Worksheet: Object Observation",* ask students to individually record observations that are objective and subjective.

   "Objective" observations describe what is in the photograph, as perceived without distortion by personal feelings, prejudices or interpretations.

   "Subjective" descriptions can include personal judgments, interpretation, and feelings.

3. Finally, ask students to list 3 - 5 questions about the photograph.

Sharing Observations

Students take turns presenting their objective and then subjective observations. The group also compares and discusses their answered and unanswered questions, and considers the process for additional research (closer observation, seeking label copy, artistic statements, biographical information, etc.).

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Documents are classified as either primary or secondary sources.

Primary sources: original documents from a particular time in the past
*photographs
*letters
*newspaper articles
*illustrations
*cartoons
*posters
*maps
*political documents

Secondary sources: documents that are not from the era that they are about
*graphs made from historical data
*articles based on facts from primary sources
*textbook

Types of Questions on DBQ Tests

A typical DBQ tests contains documents, scaffolding questions, and an essay question. A **scaffolding question** is one that asks for a specific piece of information from a document. A scaffolding question usually deals with a single document and can be answered in one or two short sentences. Answering these questions will help you to build up a store of information that can use to write an essay.

An **essay question** is one that requires a response containing more than one paragraph. To answer an essay question on a DBQ exam, you have to be able to draw information from several documents. You begin by coming up with a **thesis statement**—a single sentence that answers the essay question in a general way. You then use the information from the documents that supports your thesis statement.

Strategies for DBQ Tests

1. Read directions carefully
2. Read the historical background information to determine what you already know about the subject or time period
3. Read the task carefully, that tells you what the essay will be about, looking carefully for what you are supposed to do. DBQ tasks frequently include:
    a. Analyze: break something into parts, describe the parts, and show how the parts are related
    b. Compare: tell about the similarities between two things
    c. Contrast: tell about the differences between two things
    d. Describe: tell about something in detail
    e. Interpret: explain or describe the meaning or significance of something
    f. Support: provide evidence to back up or to prove your main idea

4. Carefully review the documents that are provided
5. When reviewing documents, keep in mind the "reporter questions"
    a. Who is pictured? Who wrote or created it? Whom is it about? Who was its original audience?
    b. What is the document about? What kind of document is it? What is the purpose of the document?
    c. When was the document produced?
    d. Where was the document produced?
    e. Why was the document made?
    f. How does the document relate to its time period?
6. Carefully note any titles or captions or accompanying notes.
7. While studying the documents, take notes about them on scratch paper
8. After studying the documents, answer each scaffolding question, using complete sentences. These answers will help you to gather information needed for the essay.
9. Now reread the essay question and on the scratch paper, write a one-sentence answer. This will be your thesis statement (main idea).
10. Provide evidence for your thesis by using the answers from the scaffolding questions.

Strategies for Analyzing Letters and Eyewitness Accounts

Understanding Letters and Eyewitness Accounts

Most letters are private messages written from one person to another. Sometimes, however, people write letters meant to be published for a wide audience, such as letters to the editor of a newspaper. Historians are interested in letters because they reveal a lot about the values, beliefs, experiences, and feelings of people who lived in the past.

An eyewitness account is a document that is written or spoken by someone who saw or took part in an event. Diaries, journals, police reports, court transcripts and interviews are all eyewitness accounts.

When reading letters and eyewitness accounts, be careful to distinguish facts from opinions. Accounts of the same event written by two different people might be very different.

What to Look for in Letters and Eyewitness Accounts

1. Speaker: Is the source reliable? Is their description of the events tainted by bias? If so, to what extent?
2. Purpose: Why was it written? Was it intended to be private or shared with others?
3. Setting: When and when was it written?
4. Main Idea: What is it mostly about?
5. Details: What bits of information supports the main idea?

Helpful Hints for Working with Advertisements and Posters

When analyzing ads and posters, remember that they are created to convince people to buy or do something. Are they persuasive enough to accomplish what they are attempting to do? You decide.

1. Carefully examine the advertisement or poster and answer the "reporter questions" of *who? what? where? when? and why?.*
2. If there are pictures or illustrations, analyze them carefully using the techniques previously learned.
3. Study the text and the printing of the words. The heading should be in very large type. It's purpose is the grab the attention of the viewer.
4. Look for a slogan that is associated with the product or cause.
5. Consider the audience and purpose. For whom was it written and why?
6. Determine where and when it was produced.

Helpful Hints for Understanding Political Cartoons

A political cartoon is a humorous illustration that makes a point about a political event or issue. Usually, the artist exaggerates parts of the drawing to emphasize his or her opinion. Cartoons often contain symbols that represent certain ideas.

When working with political cartoons, keep the following in mind.

1. Each image in a cartoon usually symbolizes something. Look for that symbolism.
2. Labels are often used to explain what the different images are representing. Carefully read each label.
3. Look for captions that explain what the cartoon is about.
4. Look for any speech used by the subjects in the cartoon.
5. Finally, determine the message, or opinion, of the artist. When the text and illustrations are considered together, what do they mean? Keep in mind these questions:
    a. "What issue is this cartoon about?"
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Strategies for Analyzing Official Government Documents

Understanding Official Government Documents

Official government documents include all of the papers created by or filed with a government. Many of these are legal documents, ones that are binding in court. Some, such as speeches, are simply records of government activity. The following are the most common government documents:

1. ***Proclamation:*** an official statement issued by a ruler that has the effect of law
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6. ***Treaty:*** a document giving details of an official agreement between two or more governments
7. ***Will:*** a legal document prepared by or for an individual describing that individual's wishes with regard to the distribution of his or her estate (property and/or money) after their death

What to look for when working with official government documents:

1. Type and Purpose: What kind of document is it? What was it used for?
2. Main Idea: What is the document mostly about?
3. Supporting Facts: Is there information that supports the main idea?
4. Time Period: When was the document written? What do you know about that time period?

Strategies for Analyzing Informational Graphics

Informational graphics serve many different purposes and come in a variety of formats. Bar graphs, timelines, pie charts, maps…all are examples of informational graphics. When working with graphics, keep the following ideas in mind:

1. Study the title or caption to see what the graphic is about.
2. Look for labels or keys that are used to interpret information contained within the graph.
3. Pay careful attention to every detail.
4. When working with bar graphs, be sure to identify the two different items, or variables, that are being displayed.
5. When working with maps, gather information from the scale, compass rose, and legend.
6. Remember to compare the parts to the whole when studying a pie chart.

Objective Observation

"Object Observation" is an exercise that was developed by educators at the Brooklyn Museum of Art and refined by teachers at The New York City Museum School as a strategy for honing careful looking and gallery teaching skills. The exercise offers the opportunity to practically apply the theories of museum learning or the process of "passionate learning" embraced by museum professionals -- learning that is object-based and requires detailed observation, extensive research, analysis and synthesis of information, and the presentation of new information in a variety of formats.

"Object Observation" is designed to encourage:

- closer looking skills, and reinforce the adage "the more you look, the more you will see";
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Observation and Recording

1. Ask students to focus on one image.

2. Using "*Worksheet: Object Observation",* ask students to individually record observations that are objective and subjective.

   "Objective" observations describe what is in the photograph, as perceived without distortion by personal feelings, prejudices or interpretations.

   "Subjective" descriptions can include personal judgments, interpretation, and feelings.

3. Finally, ask students to list 3 - 5 questions about the photograph.

Sharing Observations

Students take turns presenting their objective and then subjective observations. The group also compares and discusses their answered and unanswered questions, and considers the process for additional research (closer observation, seeking label copy, artistic statements, biographical information, etc.).

Handout 1:1 cont.

“The Falls of Greenville”
By T. Addison Richards for
Orion Magazine Vol. 3., No. 6
February 1844

Strategies for Analyzing Newspaper and Magazine Articles

What to look for when working with newspapers and magazines:

1. First scan the article or excerpt.
2. Notice the headlines, titles, headings, and captions in order to determine what the piece is about.
3. Carefully read the piece, keeping in mind the questions of *who? what? when? where?* and *why?*
4. Consider the main idea of the article and identify the facts or details that support its main idea.
5. Finally, determine the credibility of the information.

Understanding Document-Based Questions

What Are Document-Based Questions?

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