PRSMS
Document Analysis Learning
Using a school-wide
document based question.

Name:________________________________________
S.S. Teacher:__________________________________
Grade: __6__

Document Score: ________
Essay Score: ____________
DOCUMENT-BASED QUESTION

How have the cultures and accomplishments of Ancient River Valley Civilizations influenced modern society?

This question is based on the accompanying documents. It is designed to test your ability to work with historical documents. Some of these documents have been edited for the purposes of the question. As you analyze the documents, take into account the source of each document and any point of view that may be presented in the document.

Historical Context:

Around 3500 B.C. in southwestern Asia the first of the River Valley Civilizations began. The ancient River Valley Civilizations of Egypt, China, and Mesopotamia all made key contributions to future societies.

Directions:

The task below is based on documents 1 through 12. This task is designed to test your ability to work with the information provided by various types of documents. Look at each document and answer the question or questions after each document. Use your answers to the questions to help you write your essay.

There are several steps to forming an educated opinion.

1. In Social Studies, read the Background Information. It gives an overview of Ancient River Valley cultures.
2. Quickly skim through the documents to get a sense for what they are about.
3. Read the documents slowly. For each, use the margins to record:
   a. What or who is the source? Is it primary or secondary?
   b. What is the main idea (or main ideas) in the document?
4. Organize the documents into categories by noting the type of effect in the upper left corner of the document.
5. Prioritize your ideas. What is the most important contribution? What is second?
6. Explain your priorities. Why is one more important than another?
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Essay Planning Worksheet
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Hook Activity: Writing with Egyptian Hieroglyphs

Directions: Use the Egyptian Hieroglyph key above to write/draw your name below. Color if there is time.
# Part A: Background Information

## Four Early River Valley Civilizations (~3000 B.C.E.)


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Civilization</th>
<th>Geographical Factors</th>
<th>Accomplishments</th>
<th>Miscellaneous</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nile River Valley</strong> (present-day Egypt)</td>
<td>The Nile River provided predictable floods and a stable food source. The River flows northward and empties into the Mediterranean but the winds blow south. This enabled travelers to move north or south along the river, which promoted trade and unity in Ancient Egypt. Deserts and seas surround the valley and offered some protection from invasion.</td>
<td>Hieroglyphics Wrote on sheets of dried papyrus plant. Used geometry to survey fields and build canals as well as pyramids as tombs for the pharaohs. Knew astronomy and produced a calendar of 365 days.</td>
<td>Rigid class structure with the pharaoh at the top, followed by priests, artisans, farmers, and slaves. Polytheistic religion and a belief in life after death.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tigris-Euphrates River Valley</strong> (present-day Iraq)</td>
<td>The floods provided fertile soil and a stable food supply. The floods of the Tigris-Euphrates rivers were unpredictable and as a result the Sumerians believed that their gods were angry gods. The valley was surrounded by deserts and hills but they were relatively easy to cross and so the peoples of this region were constantly conquered and re-conquered.</td>
<td>Developed a system of writing called Cuneiform, which were wedge-shaped characters pressed into clay tablets. Built ziggurats and arches with sun-dried clay bricks. Developed the wheel and algebra. Hammurabi’s Code was constructed by the Babylonians and was an early form of written laws (an eye for an eye).</td>
<td>Practiced polytheism. Had no conception of a heaven or salvation for the deceased.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civilization</td>
<td>Geographical Factors</td>
<td>Accomplishments</td>
<td>Micellaneous</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yellow River Valley</strong></td>
<td>Flooding of the Yellow River provided fertile, yellow soil and a stable food supply.</td>
<td>Developed a 360 day calendar based on the moon (priests added days when needed).</td>
<td>Dynastic cycle and Mandate of Heaven (new rulers receive the favor of heaven).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(present-day China)</td>
<td>The Chinese were surrounded by mountains and the Gobi desert and as a result were very isolated from other civilizations and cultures.</td>
<td>Predicted eclipses and kept a written history.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Because of this isolation, the Chinese developed an ethnocentric mode of thinking.</td>
<td>Early written language consisted of pictograms.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Indus River Valley</strong></td>
<td>The Indus River and monsoons provided a food supply.</td>
<td>Developed a written language of pictograms.</td>
<td>Practiced animism before Hinduism and Buddhism take hold.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(present-day India)</td>
<td>Monsoons were unpredictable and led to famine or floods and destruction.</td>
<td>Constructed a water system, public baths, and hospitals.</td>
<td>The Aryans conquer the valley.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The valley is bordered by the Himalayas and the Hindu Kush to the north; however the Khyber Pass allowed for entry into the region and invasion.</td>
<td></td>
<td>They bring the Vedic religion and the beginnings of the caste system.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Part B**

**Short-Answer Questions**

Directions: Analyze the documents and answer completely the short-answer questions that follow each document in the space provided.
Cuneiform

Note: Sumerians created the cuneiform script over 5000 years ago. It was the world's first written language. Sumerians invented this writing system to keep track of business dealings because they traded with people who lived in lands that were hundreds and even thousands of miles away. Writing was a giant leap forward in the development of civilization. People kept records and new ideas could now be passed easily from generation to generation. Cuneiform was written on clay tablets, and then baked hard in a kiln.

1. What was cuneiform and who invented it?

2. Describe three ways the Sumerians made use of cuneiform.

3. How was cuneiform an important part of Ancient Sumerian society? Why do you think communication without written language would be more difficult today?
Note: In 1754 B.C.E., Hammurabi conquered and united all the cities of Mesopotamia under his rule. Although he was a brutal warrior, his greatest achievement was his code of laws, which he had engraved on a towering stone monument. Hammurabi’s Code was not the first, but it was the most complete set of laws that has survived. It is important because it created a set of rules that helped to govern a civilization while trying to protect people even if they had little political power. It called for different punishments based on the class of the lawbreaker and the victim of the crime. In the Code, punishments often fit the crime by demanding an “eye for an eye” or a “tooth for a tooth”. The following are three of the 282 laws in the Code of Hammurabi.

Source: Code of Hammurabi 1754 B.C.E.

229. If a builder build a house for some one, and does not construct it properly, and the house which he built falls in and kills its owner, then that builder shall be put to death.

230. If it kill the son of the owner the son of that builder shall be put to death.

231. If it kills a slave of the owner, then he shall pay slave for slave to the owner of the house.

1. What was the purpose for the creation of Hammurabi’s Code?

2. What similarities or differences do you see between this ancient code of law and laws of today?
Note: Egyptian kings in the Old Kingdom are best known for the huge structures they built, pyramids. These large stone buildings served as houses or tombs for the dead kings. In order to build pyramids the Egyptians needed to learn the specialized skills of mathematics, geometry, engineering, and architecture.

1. Why were the pyramids built? Does society still do this today?

2. What specialized skills were needed to build the pyramids?

3. Explain how these skills are still used today in construction?
1. How was hieroglyphics different from cuneiform?

2. Describe the Egyptian invention that made keeping records in hieroglyphics easier. What is today’s equivalent?
Note: A portion of the papyrus of Ani from the Egyptian new kingdom, around 1200 BC. This is the most elaborate of the surviving Egyptian "Books of the Dead," which were a collection of spells to enhance the well-being of the deceased with whom the papyrus was buried.

Source: Photo of original courtesy of Barry Powell, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

RETURNING TO SEE HIS HOME

The night sun rests in the lap of a bear, dreaming in the northern sky. A half-moon, I shine above the legs. I come forth from the edge of heaven. I climb to the deepest pit of the sky and rest awhile above cooling rocks, above houses in the cities and people who sleep warm nights on the roofs under a half-moon, dreaming. Oh, I am weak and feeble at the sight of my children sleeping. Oh, I am weak with wonder to see my dark wife dreaming, her hair unbraided and perfumed, falling across her eyes and in her red, red mouth and around her firm, brown shoulders. I am weak and feeble, gliding in cloudless dark. Forgetful of the teeth and tongues of snakes, I rest above my homeland dreaming.

Below are my house and cattle. I grow a little stronger. My beams of light are arrows which wound the night and drive it back. I am the eye of a sleeping lion who dreams of stalking the fields with his mate. I am the eye of a resurrected man come home to kiss his wife. I am a half-moon, high in the darkness, a cup of light spilling dreams from the sky. I must move on to the furthest edge of heaven. The wheat in my fields has sprung up in straight rows. I am a half-moon in the night, keeping watch. I must move on.

1. What was the purpose for the Book of the Dead?

2. Explain what you think is the meaning of the prayer.

3. What traditions or beliefs might you equate this with in today’s society?
Confucianism

Note: Confucius was a famous sage and social philosopher of China whose teachings have deeply influenced East Asia for 2400 years. Confucius wrote down his philosophy, which explained how people should live their lives. Confucianism teaches that each person should accept his or her role in society. Confucianism became the basis for order and respect and was central in governing China. The relationships and teachings of Confucius were studied for “civil service” exams. Chinese citizens in hopes of scoring well and getting a good paying job in the Chinese government took these exams.

Source: The Five Classics by Confucius

Central to Confucius' teaching are relationships and social roles. There are five great relationships:

1. Kindness in the father and obedience in the son
2. Kindness in the older brother and respect by the younger brother
3. Good behavior by the husband and respect by the wife
4. Gentle respect by seniors and admiration and respect for them by young people
5. Generosity by rulers and loyalty to the ruler by their subjects

If these attitudes are practiced there will be harmony among all.

1. What is Confucianism?

2. What did Confucius teach was the proper relationship between rules and their subjects?

3. How is Confucianism still prevalent in modern society? How do you think American society could benefit from the teachings of Confucius?
1. What were three of the most important inventions of early Chinese civilization?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

2. How did China use these inventions to help it develop wealth and prosperity?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

3. How did the Silk Road help to create advances throughout the world?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
1. Based on the image, state one advance that occurred as the Mesopotamian culture developed a stable food supply.

2. What is meant by stable food supply? How did it help to build civilizations in the past and nations of today?
The Buddha is reported to have exhorted [urged] his monks to “go and travel around for the welfare of the multitudes, for the happiness of the multitudes, out of sympathy for the world, for the benefit, welfare, and happiness of gods and humans. No two should go in the same direction.” Although this last admonition [caution] seems not to have been heeded [obeyed], it is true that Buddhist “missions” were not large and well-organized movements, and instead often took the form of itinerant monks (or groups of monks) traveling by land and sea in the company of traders and royal emissaries. According to traditional accounts, the first foreign mission was to the island of Sri Lanka, and was led by the son of Asoka. . . .

1. According to this excerpt from “Buddhism in Practice,” how did Buddhism spread from its place of origin in ancient India to other parts of Asia?

2. In today’s world how are ideas spread?
The months of mid-summer are advantageous for weeding. Weeds can fertilize the fields and improve the land. Modern farmers, ignorant of these principles, throw the weeds away. They do not know that, if mixed with soil and buried deep under the roots of rice seedlings, the weeds will eventually decay and the soil will be enriched; the harvest, as a result will be abundant and of superior quality.

1. What purpose did legend say the weeds would serve?

2. How do you think this idea is utilized in the growing of vegetation today?
1. Identify one way in which animals affected the way people lived in the Stone Age.

[Blank space for answer]

2. As the interaction with animals became more sophisticated, what advances were made?

[Blank space for answer]
Document 12 (Math): Sumerian Mathematics
Source: http://www.storyofmathematics.com/sumerian.html

Note: It has been conjectured that Babylonian advances in mathematics were probably facilitated by the fact that 60 has many divisors (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 12, 15, 20, 30 and 60 - in fact, 60 is the smallest integer divisible by all integers from 1 to 6), and the continued modern-day usage of 60 seconds in a minute, 60 minutes in an hour, and 360 (60 x 6) degrees in a circle, are all testaments to the ancient Babylonian system. It is for similar reasons that 12 (which has factors of 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6) has been such a popular multiple historically (e.g. 12 months, 12 inches, 12 pence, 2 x 12 hours, etc.).

Babylonian Clay tablets from c. 2100 BC showing a problem concerning the area of an irregular shape

1. What can you tell about Sumerian mathematics from examining the tablets?

2. How was contemporary society likely influenced by Summerians?
Categorizing through buckets (analytical categories or clusters)

Group the documents into buckets, by deciding the underlying commonality. This will provide the basis for organizing your essay.
DBQ Essay Outline — Working Title:

Introduction
Grabber/Hook
Background/Context

Restate question explaining specific vocabulary.
Thesis and road map (your position/claim and main points — chicken foot)

Counterclaim (optional)

Body #1
Thesis (claim) for bucket #1
Evidence (proof): supporting detail with reference to specific document(s)

Argument (example): connecting evidence to the thesis

Body #2
Thesis (claim) for bucket #2
Evidence (proof): supporting detail with reference to specific document(s)

Argument (example): connecting evidence to the thesis

Body #3
Thesis (claim) for bucket #3
Evidence (proof): supporting detail with reference to specific document(s)

Argument (example): connecting evidence to the thesis

Conclusion
Statement of main idea. Read YOUR essay and summarize the ideas in 2-3 sentences.
Clinch your argument.
# Document Based Question Self-Scoring Guide (3 Bucket Essay)

**Score Scale 0-21 points**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basic Core</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Expanded Core</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total Possible Points</td>
<td>Self-Score</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Introduction</strong></td>
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<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilizes a hook/grabber</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Incorporates background knowledge</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has acceptable thesis with road map</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Body Paragraphs</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyzes and organizes documents in at least 3 groups</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Uses documents (in Mini-Q)</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uses majority of documents (in DBQ)</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Analyzes point of view or bias (if possible in DBQ)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Document Reference citations (DOC A)</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>1st Body Paragraph</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relates claim statement to the thesis</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides evidence taken directly from documents</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Makes an inference and/or argument that explains the evidence taken from the document</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2nd Body Paragraph</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Relates claim statement to the thesis</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provides evidence taken directly from documents</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Makes an inference and/or argument that explains the evidence taken from the document</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>3rd Body Paragraph</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relates claim statement to the thesis</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Conclusion</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Restates thesis</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Clinches argument</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Conventions</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Grammar, spelling &amp; neatness</td>
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<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples:
- Has a clear, analytical and comprehensive thesis
- Addresses all parts of the question thoroughly
- Uses all or almost all of the documents (DBQ)
- Shows understanding of nuances in documents
- Analyzes point of view in four or more documents
- Analyzes documents in other ways with additional groupings
- Brings extensive and relevant “outside” historical information
- States a counter-argument (however statement)

Adapted from Lake County Schools DBQ Self-Score Sheet