

# **DBQ Module:**

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# **Contextualization**

# Notes

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## Rubric Commentary

*To earn this point, the response must relate the topic of the prompt to broader historical events, developments, or processes that occur before, during, or continue after the time frame of the question. This point is not awarded for merely a phrase or reference.*

**0-1 points**

*Contextualization must be SPECIFIC*

*Must be RELEVANT to the prompt*

*Must be IMMEDIATE*

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## Examples of Contextualization

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Prompt  
(AP World)

*“Evaluate the extent to which the Portuguese transformed maritime trade in the Indian Ocean in the sixteenth century.”*

Contextualization that does NOT earn the point:

***“The Indian Ocean sea trade before 1500 has been described as a maritime equivalent of the overland Silk Roads.”***

NOTES: Good comparison, and it’s specific. But there are two problems. First it’s not ENOUGH to fully contextualize the argument. And second, there is no connection between the context and the argument.

Contextualization that DOES earn the point:

***“For centuries before the arrival of European merchants, the Indian Ocean had been the center of flourishing trade routes connecting India to East and Southeast Asia as well as with East Africa, Egypt, and Arabia. Portugal’s naval advances such as stronger ships, updated maps, borrowed instruments like the astrolabe, and improvements like the sternpost rudder allowed the Portuguese to engage in transoceanic trade.”***

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## Examples of Contextualization

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### Prompt (APUSH)

*“Evaluate the relative importance of different causes for the expanding role of the United States in the world in the period from 1865 to 1910.”*

Contextualization that does NOT earn the point:

**“Throughout all of American history, the debate over whether or not to create alliances with foreign countries continues to be prominent. Documents such as Washington’s Farewell Address or the Monroe Doctrine warned against these alliances. However, towards the end of the 1800’s, America began to engage in foreign countries through alliances or attempting to imperialize other nations.”**

NOTES: Does a good job in its specificity, but unfortunately the main use of evidence is the Monroe Doctrine, and that had nothing to do with the avoidance of alliances. This misses the point because of historical inaccuracy.

Contextualization that DOES earn the point:

**“In the aftermath of the war, internationally the world was changing, Europe was slicing up Africa, many countries started fighting for their independence, and the fight for influence and money ensued between the most powerful nations. During the time periods of 1865–1900, the US sought to keep up with Europe and expand its sphere of influence in the world under the leadership of Roosevelt, McKinley and other presidents.”**

## Examples of Contextualization

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Prompt  
(AP Euro)

*“Evaluate whether or not the Catholic Church in the 1600s was opposed to new ideas in science.”*

Contextualization that does NOT earn the point:

***“Prior to common knowledge, it was believed that the universe revolved around the Earth as stated in the Holy Scriptures. The Catholic Church promoted this idea for many years, however it is known that those who opposed the Church are punished.”***

NOTES: First of all, this does not provide enough evidence to qualify. Second, the evidence it DOES provide is too vague (geocentrism vs. heliocentrism) and also does not connect this evidence to the thesis.

Contextualization that DOES earn the point:

***“The Scientific Revolution began in the Seventeenth century. It consisted of using reasoning and observation to know the truth (René Descartes and Francis Bacon). As a result, scientists such as Nicholas Copernicus observed to find new truths. Scientists believed that the truth can never be given and can only be learnt by doubting and use of logic. Copernicus developed the heliocentric theory. This theory stated that the sun, not the earth, was the center of the Solar System. This contradicted from the geocentric view of the earth being the center while the sun, moon and planets orbited it. The geocentric view was accepted for centuries and was taught by the Catholic Church.”***