

DBQ Module:

Thesis

Notes

Rubric Commentary

Responds to the prompt with a historically defensible thesis/claim that establishes a line of reasoning. To earn this point, the thesis must make a claim that responds to the prompt rather than 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.

0-1 points

Thesis Formula

Despite [counterargument], because [evidence 1] and [evidence 2], [my argument].

(Continued on next page)

Examples of Theses

Prompt
(AP World)

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

Thesis that does NOT earn the point:

In the sixteenth century, the Portuguese became a major influence in the Indian Ocean trade, and completely transformed it.

NOTES: Makes an argument, but does not include specific historical evidence, which would help establish a line of reasoning.

Thesis that DOES earn the point:

“Although the arrival of the Portuguese was a very important change in Indian Ocean maritime trade in the sixteenth century, it did not completely transform the trade, as the Portuguese never extended their control beyond a few ports and had to compete with Indian merchants and regional states such as the Ottoman Empire and the Sultanate of Aceh.”

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.”

Thesis that does NOT earn the point:

“Different causes and events had a major importance in expanding the role of the US in the world.”

NOTES: Only a restatement of the prompt.

Thesis that DOES earn the point:

“While some historians may argue that the US desire to expand its role in the world was due to the fact that the US felt it was its duty to civilize nations and act as a global police, the most important reason for America expanding its role in the world can be attributed to its competition with Europe over global influence, its desire to expand its economy through trading opportunities, and the U.S. ideal of manifest destiny.”

(Continued on next page)

Examples of Theses

Prompt (AP Euro)

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

Thesis that does NOT earn the point:

“Although it is a commonly-held belief today that the Catholic Church is anti-science and doesn’t accept new ideas in history, this is a miscategorization of the Church’s beliefs at times.”

NOTES: Makes an argument, but does not include specific historical evidence, which would help establish a line of reasoning.

Thesis that DOES earn the point:

“Although there were individual members of the clergy who were willing to accept new ideas in science, the Church as an institution was generally opposed to these ideas because they contrasted traditional interpretation of scripture, traditional scientific thought, and common ideas in philosophy.”