A DBQ essay interprets and uses a variety of sources to answer a question or prompt. The task of a DBQ essay requires students to write based on the facts presented within the documents rather than what might be in the history textbooks or prior knowledge. Using sources to respond to a question or prompt allows students to be fully engaged in the topic and to “do history”. This process allows students to think like historians by gathering facts from the sources provided and by analyzing and organizing them into a well-written DBQ essay that responds to a prompt. Students are required to think critically by interpreting and developing meaning and using the sources as evidence rather than just restating a textbook’s interpretation. These essays support the development of history-social science analysis skills, as well as content knowledge. They focus on critical thinking skills and ask students to make comparisons, draw analogies, apply knowledge to the given data, and require students to utilize historical analysis. DBQs require students to take positions on issues or problems and support their conclusions. They also prompt students to look at issues from multiple perspectives. A good DBQ essay demonstrates that the students can use the documents to answer the prompt by making a claim with proper grouping of documents, interpret, and analyze the documents. Then, students must be able to determine the point-of-view of each document. Finally, the student should be able to identify additional sources that would help answer the question.

Strategies for teaching DBQ writing

This lesson uses a focus textbook passage, two primary source analysis graphic organizers (6Cs and the middle school version), and an activity that helps determine point of view. Next you will find the rubric, prompt, and sample student work samples to show a variety of finished products. At the end is an additional example of a DBQ prompt and sources based on globalization. Each strategy is summarized with instructions in the first two pages of each section.
The Six C’s of Primary Source Analysis is a tool developed by the University of California, Irvine History Project that allows students to gain the confidence and ability to analyze a single primary source through a step-by-step process.

Instructions:

Through the utilization of a template, teachers can teach students the analytical skills necessary to engage them in a thoughtful analysis of a primary source. This strategy encourages students to slow down the process by which information is received so that they can more easily analyze what they are seeing and thus, hopefully, to begin reading images with a critical eye. We call this the “Six C’s of Primary Source Analysis”: Content, Citation, Context, Connection, Communication, and Conclusion. Three versions of this template are included: the first is the original document that provides a step-by-step process of primary source analysis, the second centers on the citation as an entry point to develop analysis, and the third is a scaled-down version that can be used in middle school classrooms.

The Six C’s of Primary Source Analysis template begins with students identifying the content of the source, the first C. By focusing on the content as the first step, students approach the source as objective observers. The second C is the citation, which provides students with the background information to locate the source in its proper context, the third C. The teacher often needs to provide students with the information necessary for them to complete these two portions of the analysis. The fourth C is Connections, a place where students can brainstorm some ideas of how this source reminds them of other things they have learned. The fifth C is communication and supports students to analyze the message of the source as well as consider the bias or the author’s point-of-view. After considering all of the C’s, students are able to reach a conclusion about the primary source.

Determining Point of View- Reliability when analyzing a source (Long Version)

These questions encourage students to interrogate the author’s point of view in a given document.

Instructions:

In teaching and reading the work of history students, teachers recognized that while many understood that an author’s perspective could influence the author’s opinions and observations, students often have difficulty distinguishing which factors were most important to shaping that perspective. Occasionally, students wrote that because an author had a clear perspective nothing they wrote could be trusted. The intention is to move students toward a more nuanced analysis of primary sources so the sources can serve as an opportunity for students to develop historical thinking. In reading sources, historians make very rapid assessments of what contextual elements are critical to understanding the author’s perspective and which are irrelevant or unimportant. This exercise for students breaks down the many factors a historian considers—often in a matter of minutes—when first presented with a source. By slowing down this process, and asking students to work through the questions that historians consider, we hope that students will internalize this process and eventually be able to translate this not only to other historical sources, but to texts outside the classroom as well.

Because reading and interpreting primary sources is such a critical skill in early historical training, the exercise will aid students in two ways: 1) understanding that all humans are shaped, to lesser and greater degrees, by their surroundings; and 2) learning to select which information is most critical in understanding the author’s viewpoint on a given topic. This analysis will help students focus, so that they are better able to respond to the essential question guiding the lesson.

continued on the next page!
Determining Point of View- Reliability when analyzing a source (Long Version) cont.

Students who are first learning to articulate what has colored or shaped a writer’s views (in some cases so severely that the writers actually got their facts wrong) will believe that the presence of stereotypes, mistakes, or strong opinions invalidates a source and makes it historically useless. They are looking for “objectivity.” In fact, historians often find such sources fascinating and useful because a writer’s opinions and mistakes tell us a great deal about the intellectual, social, and cultural world in which the writer lived. This exercise is a first step in helping students to understand that all primary sources have perspective and that one of the critical tasks of the historian is to understand and contextualize a source’s perspective for others.

***This worksheet builds on “The Six Cs of Primary Source Analysis,” a tool developed by Nicole Gilbertson and David Johnson at the University of California, Irvine History Project, to aid students in primary source analysis. For this worksheet, we rely on four Cs: Citation, Context, Communication, and Conclusions.

Determining Point of View- Reliability when analyzing a source Short Version

*These questions encourage students to interrogate the author’s point of view in a given document.*

**Instructions:**

1. Cut out each set of questions and distribute to each student or to a group. First, the teachers should model for students the process of asking and then answering each of these questions using an image or text excerpt. Be specific in referencing details from the source to answer the question. Then, have students practice and share out in whole group setting to review and validate student samples.
2. Students can use this to dissect the point of view component within the 6 C’s and provide specifics according to the writing rubric.
Rubrics & Student Work

Rubrics are a great way to effectively lay out the required expectations for good writing. Rubrics provide consistency in grading, explicit expectations for students, opens the dialogue between teachers and students, and finally they lead to less time spent grading.

Instructions:

1. First, identify the rubric. Then, review by carefully explaining the different components with the students.

   Explain the columns, rows and vocabulary. Provide examples of acceptable thesis statement and analysis statements.

   **Thesis:** There is continuity in how the European’s maintained political authority over Latin America over time, however over time the native people rebelled and called for greater political control of themselves and their country.

   **Point of View:** In several cases, the point of view regarding colonization in this area has been viewed negatively, as natives are depicted continuously being under the tyrannical invasion of other countries.

   **Analysis Statements:** The documents show that there has been little change over time concerning political authority because in each image the Europeans held the dominant position. For example, in Document 1 the supervisor is the Monk and is strictly enforcing the woman’s work and in Document 2 the people are arming themselves with weapons and are fighting back.

2. Identify anchor samples. Select three samples that represent high, medium, and low.

3. Next instruct each students to read and assign the samples a score based on the rubric- one at a time.

4. Each person shares their score with the group.

5. The group leader records the scores on butcher paper, so readers see score discrepancies and similarities.

6. The group leader calls on the readers to explain their rationale for their scores starting with discrepancies.

7. Students may need to reread and regrade.

8. Decide on score that everyone is comfortable with.
In order to address the standards, students will carefully read the Imperialism in Latin America excerpt and analyze the two accompanying sources to develop historical background the imperialism in the 1600s and the 1900s. The teacher may use the HSI activity, 6Cs (middle or high school version), and/or point of view activities (long and short versions) to support the analysis of the documents and Document-Based Question writing. After scaffolding has been completed, students will review the rubric and outline structure and complete a Document-Based Question paragraph.

Imperialism in Latin America with primary sources

In the 1400s competition for trade and control over resources in Asia existed in Europe. Many explorers sailed in search of an alternative trade route to Asia and its riches. Spain’s, Christopher Columbus never reached Asia, but instead discovered an island in the Caribbean. This marked the beginning of Imperialism in the Atlantic World. Soon after, many other explorers desired claims in the Americas. Spain sent over several explorers to make claims and expand their empire. Its Hernando Cortes reached Mexico, and the explorers who followed him were known as conquistadors. By conquering the Aztecs, Spain now had access to vast land filled with rich deposits of gold and silver. However, in obtaining these riches, the native people were often treated cruelly and were considered the lowest in society. This conquest allowed the Spanish to greatly enrich their empire, causing them to leave a mark on the cultures of North and South America that exists today.

1. What caused imperialism in Latin America?
2. What was Christopher Columbus responsible for?
3. Why was Mexico valuable?
After the Enlightenment and the successful American Revolution and French Revolution, ideas about who should control government were introduced in Latin America. Ideas of liberty, equality, and democratic rule found their way across the seas to colonies. At this time, Latin American society was divided into different groups: peninsulares were European born and could hold high office in Spanish colonial government. Creoles were born in Latin American but had European descent. The creoles could not hold high political positions, but they were able to hold high position in the Spanish colonial army. Together, these groups controlled land, wealth and power in the Spanish colonies. At the bottom were Indians and people of mixed blood, mestizos and mulattos, who held no power or wealth. With the help of creole Simon Bolivar, Jose De San Martin, and Padre Miguel Hidalgo, much of Latin America won independence from Spain by the 1820s.

1. What events caused political revolutions in Latin America?

2. Which two groups were the highest in Latin American colonial society?

3. Which two groups were at the bottom of society?

However, even after achieving independence, Latin America struggled to maintain political and economic stability. In Mexico, democracy began in 1920s. After WWI and the Great Depression, America and Great Britain began to dominate Latin America’s economy. Impoverished Indians and peasants caused many people to criticize capitalism and to feel the interference from outsiders was a threat and return to imperialism. This period is called Neo-Imperialism. In order to repair the poor relations and maintain markets for export and import with Latin America, the United States created the Good Neighbor Policy, which allowed Mexican migration into the United States. Hollywood also adopted singing and dancing sensation from Latin America, Carmen Miranda, to promote more positive images of Latin America.

1. What was Neo-Imperialism?

2. Why did the citizens of Latin America think it was occurring?

From 1934-1940, leaders tried to improve life for peasants and workers by passing labor laws and land reforms. The Mexican oil industry became nationalized, and foreign oil companies were kicked out. After WWII, even though the Mexican economy rapidly developed, Mexico continued to struggle with severe economic problems causing many Mexicans to be unemployed and desperate for survival. The government owed huge foreign debts, which forced it to spend money on interest payments. Many citizens called for economic and political change. Then, in the 1970s, huge new oil and natural gas reserves were discovered in Mexico. The economy became dependent on oil and gas exports. In 1981, world oil prices fell, cutting Mexico’s oil and gas revenues in half. Mexico went into an economic decline.

1. Describe Mexico’s economic status in the 1930s-40s.

2. Why was Mexico’s economy suffering in the 1930s-40s and how did the poor economy influence the people?

In 2000, Vicente Fox became president and had ambitious plans for Mexico. He advocated reforming the police, rooting out political corruption, ending the rebellion in Chiapas, and opening up Mexico’s economy to free-market forces. Fox also argued that the United States should legalize the status of millions of illegal Mexican immigrant workers in the United States. In the wake of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, any such agreement appeared remote. However, in 2002, citizens who lived abroad, a great many of whom lived in the United States voted. In the meantime, Mexico’s democracy continued to strengthen.

1. Describe Fox’s plan to improve Mexico’s economy.

2. What is the economic and political status of current Mexican citizens?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence Letter</th>
<th>Evidence Description (write down what you see)</th>
<th>Facts Determined from the Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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What does your evidence prove about the historical scene in question?  
(Write down 6 things you can prove with your evidence.)

1. __________________________________________ Evidence_
2. __________________________________________ Evidence_
3. __________________________________________ Evidence_
4. __________________________________________ Evidence_
5. __________________________________________ Evidence_
6. __________________________________________ Evidence_
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question about the Historic Scene</th>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What crime(s) was committed?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Who committed the crimes? (perpetrators)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Who were the victims in the crime scene and why?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Where did the crime take place?</td>
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<tr>
<td>When did the crime happen? (time/date?)</td>
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<tr>
<td>How was the crime committed?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Why- What were the motives or reasons that these crimes were committed?</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Question about the Historical Event</th>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What crime(s) was committed?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Who committed the crimes? (perpetrators)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Who were the victims in the crime scene and why?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Where did the crime take place?</td>
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<tr>
<td>When did the crime happen? (time/date?)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>How was the crime committed?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Why- What were the motives or reasons that these crimes were committed?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Why was the crime significant? (i.e. What did the event lead to? What were the consequences?)</td>
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</table>
THE 6 C’S of PRIMARY SOURCE ANALYSIS

**CONTENT**
Main Idea
*Describe in detail what you see.*

**CITATION**
Author/Creator
*When was this created?*

**CONTEXT**
What is going on in the world, the country, the region, or the locality when this was created?

**CONNECTIONS**
Prior Knowledge
*Link the primary source to other things that you already know or have learned about.*

**COMMUNICATION**
Point-of-view or bias
*Is this source reliable?*

**CONCLUSIONS**
How does the primary source contribute to our understanding of history?

What questions do you have about this source?
What other sources might you need to gain a deeper understandings of the topic?
The 6 C’s of Primary Source Analysis

Name: ____________________
Per: __________

CONTENT

COMMUNICATION

CONTEXT

CONNECTIONS

CITATION

Conclusions:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
HISTORICAL SOURCE ANALYSIS

CONTENT
What is it talking about?

CONNECTIONS
How does this connect to what you already know?

COMMUNICATIONS
How does this express bias or point of view?

CONCLUSIONS
How can we now answer the essential question?

ESSENTIAL QUESTION:

TYPE OF SOURCE:
Primary Source Analysis of Perspective and Point-of-View

Citation:
Information on author

Name of author__________________________________________________________
Nationality or state affiliation_______________________________________________
Ethnicity_______________________________________________________________
Gender_________________________________________________________________
Social status and age _____________________________________________________
Profession and educational background_______________________________________
Religious affiliation and dominant intellectual beliefs_____________________________
______________________________________________________________________
Any other personal information that seems relevant to the narrative (such as sexual
orientation, health conditions, marital status, legal status, etc.)
______________________________________________________________________

Context:
Time of writing__________________________________________________________
Language of writing_______________________________________________________
Purpose of writing________________________________________________________
What other events are you aware of that occurred in the same time or same place (they
do not need to be directly relevant)__________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________

Communication:
Purpose and Content
Is the narrative written in first-person or third person?___________________________
What does this choice tell you?______________________________________________
What is the theme/main topic of the writing?___________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
What does the theme tell us about the author’s interests, feelings, or views?______
______________________________________________________________________
What is the author’s thesis/argument?________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
What kind of imagery and examples does the author use to support her/his thesis?____
______________________________________________________________________

Audience
Who is the intended audience?______________________________________________
In what geographic location and type of publication was the piece published? How widely
was it distributed?________________________________________________________
Do you know how the work was received (was it popular, unread, debated, etc.)?_____  
Why would the author’s argument matter to her/his audience at this particular time?___
______________________________________________________________________
Conclusion:
Your teacher has chosen this primary source because she/he believes it will further your understanding of a current topic you are studying in class. What are you currently studying?
______________________________________________________________________

Which pieces of information above do you feel are most relevant to the topic you are currently studying in class? Is that information new to you or does it further support information you have already learned?
______________________________________________________________________

Now, go back over this worksheet and star the pieces of information that you feel most inform the author’s views on the topic/theme of the piece. Please list them below and provide evidence (quotations from the reading) that you believe illustrates how that characteristic or experience has shaped or influenced the author’s views.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information</th>
<th>Evidence to Support</th>
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<tbody>
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How does this source help you to answer the essential question your teacher has posed?
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
Using Point of View & Reliability with a source

A strategy to help students identify point of view and reliability when analyzing a source.

**Point of View**

Who might the author be?
Why did the author create this source?
Is the author’s message positive or negative? why?
What does the author want us (the reader) to think or feel?
Does this appear to be a reliable source?

The author’s point of view is…

**Point of View**

Who might the author be?
Why did the author create this source?
Is the author’s message positive or negative? why?
What does the author want us (the reader) to think or feel?
Does this appear to be a reliable source?

The author’s point of view is…
Questions to think about prior to creating prompts for document based questions.

1. Where did you find the source?
2. What standard is addressed in this lesson?
3. What is the learning objective of the lesson? Why am I using the primary source—how does the source support content knowledge and skill acquisition?
4. Does the primary source allow my students to answer the essential question for the unit of study?
5. Is the primary source representative of the period under study?
6. What portions of the primary source may present language difficulties for students? How will you address these difficulties? (glossary, pre-reading vocabulary exercise, group work, class discussion)
7. Possible ways to formulate a question:
   Create a question that asks students to describe the components or categories of analysis of the primary source.
   Formulate a question that will allow students to connect the source to previous knowledge from a prior lesson or a question that links or clarifies a topic under study.
   Ask students a question that allows them to analyze the source and explain why the source is important for the topic under study.
   (This may be a variation of the essential unit question)

Most important: Be explicit about what you want students to do in their essay!

* an additional example DBQ question is at the end of this section.
Rubric

Sample Grading The rubric can be used for a 15 point grading system or other modification.

Paragraph Writing:
15 Points
15-14 Points A Advanced 10-9 Points D Basic
13-12 Points B Advanced 8-0 Points F Below Basic
11 Points C Proficient

Model Paragraph Writing
1) Topic Sentence- discuss the category and how it connects to the topic/thesis
2) Evidence- explains the main idea and how it connects to the category
3) Analysis- explains why evidence is important to the category.
4) Evidence- explains the main idea and how it connects to the category.
5) Analysis- explains why it is important to the category.
6) Point of View- what is the author trying to express to the reader, make the reader feel? Is it reliable? Advanced
7) Additional Sources? How can we understand the story better by learning from additional sources? What other documents do you want to use?
Writing Prompt:

Using the sources, describe and analyze how political authority over the people in Latin America has changed over time.

Document 1

Document 2

Diego Rivera’s *Imperialism* was one in a series of paintings on the United States and offered a visual critique of U.S. neocolonialism in Latin America.
Sample 1: To begin, political authority in Latin America has always resided among outside forces. In most cases, natives were at the bottom of the political authority chain, as seen in various documents (doc 1). Europeans were usually in charge and also maltreated the natives into harsh labor (doc 1). As the years went by, natives were still under the threat of outside colonization but resistance from the natives was now more present (doc 2). In several cases, the point of view regarding colonization in this area has been negative, as natives are depicted as continuously being under the tyrannical invasion of outer countries. In analysis, the documents show that not much has changed over time concerning political authority.

Sample 2: First, the Latin Americans were treated cruelly and were considered the lowest in society. (Doc 1). As shown in (Doc 1) the native is being mistreated by having her hair pulled. After a while the Latin Americans eagerness for freedom began to show when the natives began to rebel with weapons (Doc 2). Through Document 1 Poma wanted to show the mistreatment of the Latin Americans. Finally, political authority over the Latin Americans has changed a bit over time.
Sample Three:
In the beginning it seemed that Latin America was completely politically controlled by the Europeans. They had arrive to first gain new lands and natural resources this change Latin America. This was a complete change for the natives shown in Doc 1 were a European is pulling the hair of a native. This shows that once they arrive they quickly made themselves rulers of the land. Referring again to doc 1 where it show the European standing above checking the natives as well as her carrying for her child. The Europeans want the native to work but still assume the role of a woman. As time went on little has seemed to change politically. After WWII they seemed to be politically controlled by America and Great Britain. Within these pictures the basic message seems to be Latin America is always under someone. This seems to be reflected or both of these photos and Latin America is still trying to change.
Writing Response One:

To begin, political authority in Latin America has always resided among outside forces. In most cases, natives were at the bottom of the political authority chain, as seen in various documents (doc 1). Europeans were usually in charge and also maltreated the natives into harsh labor (doc 1). As the years went by, natives were still under the threat of outside colonization but resistance from the natives was now more present (doc 2). In several cases, the point of view regarding colonization in this area has been negative, as natives are depicted as continuously being under the tyrannical invasion of outer countries. In analysis, the documents show that not much has changed over time concerning political authority.
Writing Response Two:

First, the Latin Americans were treated cruelly and were considered the lowest in society. (Doc 1). As shown in (Doc 1) the native is being mistreated by having her hair pulled. After a while the Latin Americans eagerness for freedom began to show when the natives began to rebel with weapons (Doc 2). Through Document 1 Poma wanted to show the mistreatment of the Latin Americans.

Finally, political authority over the Latin Americans has changed a bit over time.

RUBRIC FOR ANALYSIS OF PRIMARY SOURCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing Trait</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Minimal Requirement</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Response to the Prompt</td>
<td></td>
<td>Simple, inappropriate, or incorrect response to the prompt</td>
<td>Adequate response to the prompt, elaborating the response with sufficient examples and explanation</td>
<td>Thoughtful response to the prompt, elaborating the response with appropriate examples and sensible reasoning</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension of the text or primary source document</td>
<td></td>
<td>Enhances the primary source, the drive some vague or erroneous points or meaning from the text</td>
<td>Constructs some meaning from the text or artifact</td>
<td>Finds multiple sources of meaning in the text or artifact</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical Point of View: A position or bias of the source is situated in the context of the document; considers the social or cultural setting</td>
<td></td>
<td>Shows little or no understanding of historical perspectives. One subpoint addressed</td>
<td>Demonstrates some understanding of historical perspectives. Two subpoints addressed</td>
<td>Demonstrates a well-developed sense of historical perspectives. All subpoints addressed</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of Evidence</td>
<td></td>
<td>No real claims made or use of evidence in the paragraph</td>
<td>Clauses of evidence that support the theme</td>
<td>Strong use of evidence to support the theme</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paragraph structure</td>
<td></td>
<td>Drifts entirely off topic or contains no analysis or no conclusion</td>
<td>Refines a topic sentence or conclusion and two or three themes of analysis</td>
<td>Paragraph has a topic and concluding sentence, multiple elaborate sentences</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: 10
Writing Response Three:

In the beginning it seemed that Latin America was completely politically controlled by the Europeans. They had arrive to first gain new lands and natural resources this change Latin America. This was a complete change for the natives shown in Doc 1 were a European is pulling the hair of a native. This shows that once they arrive they quickly made themselves rulers of the land. Referring again to doc 1 where it show the European standing above checking the natives as well as her carrying for her child. The Europeans want the native to work but still assume the role of a woman. As time went on little has seemed to change politically. After WWII they seemed to be politically controlled by America and Great Britain. Within these pictures the basic message seems to be Latin America is always under someone. This seems to be reflected or both of these photos and Latin America is still trying to change.
Globalization Document Based Question

**Question:** Based on the following documents, analyze the effects of globalization on culture and economics in the third world. What additional document(s) would you need to evaluate the extent of positive and negative responses to globalization in the third world?

**Historical Background:** Globalization can be described in broad terms as a process that makes something worldwide in its reach or operation. Currently, globalization is most often used in reference to the spread of diffusion of economic or cultural influences. There are many arguments for such as the promotion of world peace, raising the standard of living and creating jobs in emerging countries. There are also arguments against globalization such as the benefits help developed nations, jobs are taken away from developed countries and erodes local cultures.

**Document 1**

A citizen of Kuwait lugs a television through streets filled with European and U.S. consumer products.

**Document 3**

Smokestacks in Siberia releasing carbon dioxide emissions into the atmosphere.
Residents of Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam travel beneath advertisements for various international companies.

People celebrate in Tiananmen Square after Beijing won the bid for the 2008 Olympics games.