

## COMMON PROBLEMS IN DBQs

1. Relying on the documents to organize your essay
  - organize according to the question not the documents
  - begin organizing your essay without looking at the documents
2. Restating "Historical Context" as your thesis statement
  - make sure they are your own words
3. Lacking Outside Information
4. Using irrelevant outside information
  - the information must be relevant to the question
5. Poorly organized
  - \*New Idea = New Paragraph
  - this will enhance your argument because it will be clearer and more focused
6. No analysis of the documents
  - explain how the document ties into your argument
  - in other words explain why the document supports your argument
7. Forgetting to answer all parts of the question
  - be sure to address every task that is presented
8. Conclusion lacks proper summation
  - you must include the main points/aspects from your arguments
  - this usually consists of the topic sentences from each of your paragraphs
9. No background information in introduction
  - set the scene
  - be creative and make the essay your own

10. Using the same document more than once still only counts once
  - each document counts only once regardless of how many times you use it
  
11. "In this essay I will discuss ..."  
"I believe that ..."
  - it is obvious that you believe it because you are writing it so leave it out
  
12. Not using enough documents
  - you need to use the prescribed # of documents
  
13. Assuming the reader knows what you know
  - people may be reading this who don't know you and don't spend class time with you
  
14. "In Document 1, ..."  
"Document 2 says ..."  
"According to Document 3 ..."
  - Cite the author/cartoonist/source instead of above examples
  - place (DOC 1) at end of the sentence in which it is used  
EX) In the New York Times article, ... . (DOC 1)
  
15. Nonexistent or vague topic sentences at the beginning of body paragraphs
  - be sure to have proper direction at the start of each paragraph
  
16. Lack of transition between paragraphs
  - a well-written essay will flow smoothly from start to finish