

# DBQ AS A PRACTICE EXAM FOR THE AP US HISTORY EXAM



GRADES 10-12

## OVERVIEW

Students will have 60 minutes to read and analyze 8 primary source documents and answer a practice prompt for the AP US History exam.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

- \* Interpret and analyze primary source documents and images
- \* Synthesize information found in primary sources with existing knowledge of the Revolutionary War period
- \* Construct a well-structured essay
- \* Support claims using evidence from primary sources
- \* Cite sources using MLA format

## INTRODUCTION

Students should have background knowledge of Benedict Arnold and the early Revolutionary War period for context. Using the attached documents as well as existing knowledge of the American Revolution, students will write a practice essay that addresses the perception of historical figure, Benedict Arnold. Students should ground their argument within the context of the dominant narrative and use MLA format to cite the sources referenced in their claims.

## STUDENT STANDARDS

**Theme:** American and National Identity

**Historical Thinking Skill 6:**  
Develop an Argument

- \* **6.A** Make a historically defensible claim
- \* **6.B** Support an argument using specific and relevant evidence
- \* **6.C** Use historical reasoning to explain relationships among pieces of evidence

### COMMON CORE:

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.1**  
Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.2** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.



## MATERIALS

- \* Documents A - H (attached)
- \* Student Handout with Rubric

## ACTIVITY

Students will write a practice DBQ essay using the following prompt.

**Directions:** The following question requires you, in sixty minutes, to construct a well structured and supported essay that integrates your interpretation of Documents A-H and your personal knowledge of the Revolutionary War period. Cite evidence from the documents using MLA format.

**Prompt:** Although Benedict Arnold is remembered by most as simply a traitor to our country, his involvement in the Revolution 1775-77 suggests a more complex narrative. What is Arnold's rightful place in our collective memory of the war for independence?

## ASSESSMENT RUBIC

### The 8-9 Essay:

- \* Contains a well-developed thesis that clearly addresses the question
- \* Effective analysis of the documents and outside knowledge is evident
- \* Effective use of documents
- \* Supports thesis with substantial and relevant outside information (outside knowledge goes beyond the documents)
- \* Is clearly organized and well-written
- \* May contain minor errors

## STUDENT STANDARDS

### CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.3

Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.

### CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-

**12.8** Evaluate an author's premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.

### CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-

**12.9** Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.



## STUDENT STANDARDS

### C3 FRAMEWORK:

**D2.His.3.9-12** Use questions generated about individuals and groups to assess how the significance of their actions changes over time and is shaped by the historical context.

**D2.His.8.9-12** Analyze how current interpretations of the past are limited by the extent to which available historical sources represent perspectives of people at the time.

**D2.His.16.9-12** Integrate evidence from multiple relevant historical sources and interpretations into a reasoned argument about the past.

### The 5-7 Essay:

- \* Contains a thesis which addresses the question
- \* Some analysis of the documents and outside knowledge is present
- \* Uses some documents effectively
- \* Supports thesis with some outside information
- \* Shows evidence of acceptable organization and writing; language errors do not interfere with the comprehension of the essay
- \* May contain errors that do not seriously detract from the quality of the essay

### The 2-4 Essay:

- \* Contains a limited, confused and/or poorly developed thesis
- \* Deals with the question in a general manner; simplistic explanation or answers only one part of the question
- \* "Laundry list of documents"; quotes or briefly cites some documents
- \* Contains little outside information or information that is generally inaccurate or irrelevant
- \* Has problems in organization
- \* May contain errors

### The 0-1 Essay:

- \* Contains no thesis or a thesis which does not address the question
- \* Exhibits inadequate or inaccurate understanding of the question
- \* Contains little or no understanding of the documents or ignores them completely
- \* Is so poorly organized or written that it inhibits understanding
- \* Contains numerous errors, both major and minor
- \* Is completely off topic or left blank