

The Document Based Question

The Formula

The Question

- Based on the following documents:
 - How barbaric were the “Barbarians”?

The Thesis Paragraph

- **DO NOT** simply rephrase the question
- But **DO** give the time period
- Thesis **MUST** categorize the documents in AT LEAST two ways.
- Again, **DO NOT** simply rephrase the question

The Thesis Paragraph

- From the years 1260 to 1300 the Mongol empire exhibited clear signs of a sophisticated society, not the characteristics of “Barbarians” as they were often called. The empire contained an advanced and organized military, a moral code, and contributed greatly to world society.

Body Paragraph #1

- **Topic Sentence for Category #1**
- **State first document supporting Category 1 and author**
 - Provide Evidence from Document
- **Second document supporting Category 1**
 - Evidence from Document
- **Third document supporting Category 1**
 - Evidence from Document
- **Etc...**
- **At least ONE POV per paragraph**

Evidence

- Specific information from document
 - Pull 1-2 specific pieces of information from each document
- Try to include 1-3 pieces of OUTSIDE information in your essay
 - Example from Document 8:
 - Marco Polo was a Venetian traveler/ historian
 - Spent 17 years in the service of Kublai Khan
 - Was sent on many government “missions” throughout the countryside.

Point of View

- DO NOT say the word 'biased'
 - You are not analyzing the credibility of the source, you are analyzing WHY they thought the way they did
- You can describe how the author is feeling, what his or her motives were, what they are hoping to communicate or accomplish, etc...
- Use phrases like
 - *He probably made this conclusion because...*
 - *Her opinion was influenced by...*
 - *The author could have been motivated by*
 - *She may have wanted to convince readers of...*

Body Paragraph #1

- **Topic Sentence for Category #1**
- **State first document and author supporting Category 1**
 - Provide Evidence from Document
 - Provide POV of Document
- **Second document and author supporting Category 1**
 - Evidence from Document
 - POV of Document
- **Third document and author supporting Category 1**
 - Evidence from Document
 - POV of Document
- **Etc...**

Body Paragraph #1

The Mongols were a sophisticated empire characterized by an organized and efficient military. There are maps that illustrate the vast size of the Mongol empire (doc 1). Between 1260-1300 the empire covered a land area of approximately 4, 860,000 square miles. This vast empire was conquered using an organized army with advanced weaponry. A European emissary John of Piano Carpini documents the organization of the empire (doc 2). He explains that the army is organized by tens and that is commanded with discipline. Since John of Piano Carpini was an emissary for Pope Innocent IV and from Europe he may have been surprised to find such an advanced organization within the Mongol army in Central Asia. John of Piano Carpini illustrates in his book *History of the Mongols* that the Mongol army used impressive tactics and advanced weaponry to conquer and expand their empire (doc 3). The Mongol army used dummies to confuse the enemy and enlarge the size of their army. They also used catapults and Greek fire, borrowed from the Byzantine Empire, to destroy enemy armies.

*underlined = outside info

Additional Document

- The document should be from someone who realistically could have produced that document
 - (a peasant women could not have written a letter because most were illiterate)
- Tell what TYPE of document you would like to see
 - Journal
 - Letter
 - Chart
 - Interview (useful if you want to include a document from someone who was most likely illiterate)
 - Etc...

Additional Document

- Explain what perspective this document would add OR explain what it would help readers to better understand.
 - *An interview with a Mongolian would have been useful in understanding the viewpoint of a Mongolian of their own society. A Mongolian may have different insight on than a European on the Mongolian empire.*
 - Make sure you do NOT use first person!!!!
 - Bad Example: ~~“I would like to see a letter written by”~~
 - Good Example: *A letter from a merchant would be useful in helping readers to understand...*

Conclusion Paragraph

- From the years 1260 to 1300 the Mongol empire exhibited clear signs of a sophisticated society, not the characteristics of “Barbarians” as they were often called. The empire contained an advanced and organized military, a moral code, and contributed greatly to world society. *An interview with a Mongolian would have been useful in understanding the viewpoint of a Mongolian of their own society. A Mongolian may have different insight on than a European on the Mongolian empire.*