

Teacher's Answer Key

To the Teacher: The activities for this lesson ask students to choose among several alternatives, explain those choices, and use them in discussions or in writing a DBQ essay. There are correct and incorrect choices, at least in the first two activities. However, the goal is to use the choices to help students better understand the thesis statement. Therefore, along with the correct answers listed here, we also suggest certain ideas to stress in order to help students learn from the activities.

Activity 1

Matching Statements to Descriptions

- A-1
- B-3
- C-2
- D-4

This exercise has two key aims: To help students see the difference between a thesis statement and other kinds of statements. And to help students see how a more specific and complex thesis statement can actually simplify their task – by limiting the thesis to the DBQ, to the documents they must work with, and to their background knowledge of the specific topic.

Activity 2

Matching Statements to Descriptions

- A-4
- B-1
- C-5
- D-3
- E-2

In this matching exercise, students can learn much from the descriptions themselves. Your discussion should expand on these descriptions. For example:

A-4: Thesis Statement 4 fails to address both parts of the DBQ. It says nothing about public attitudes toward the anarchists. Answering only a part of the DBQ or answering another question entirely is one of the most common mistakes students make in writing DBQ essays.

B-1: Thesis Statement 1 also fails to address both parts of the DBQ. In addition, it makes a claim about conditions in Chicago that cannot be confirmed by the sources and that is not relevant to either part of the DBQ.

C-5: Thesis Statement 5 is both too vague (about the anarchists' views) and too specific in using a single primary source instead of stating an overall claim or hypothesis. Students should be advised to leave specific references to sources out of the thesis statement entirely. The sources provide evidence to back the thesis statement up, and should be referenced in the body's paragraphs instead.

D-3 and E-2: Thesis Statements 2 and 3 are both effective even though they reach opposite conclusions. Varying interpretations and answers to a DBQ are acceptable; there is no one right answer. What matters is to carefully craft the thesis statement to meet the three criteria in the instructions for this activity. You might also ask students to outline an essay using the elements in each of these two thesis statements: the anarchists' beliefs, conditions in Chicago in the 1880s, and the impact of these two factors on public attitudes.

Activity 3

This activity is open-ended. Discussion of the choices students make should explore how each primary source document might or might not contribute to backing up the thesis statement. Your goal should be to have students see how the thesis statement can guide them in arranging sources and making decisions about how best to use them in the essay. You could have students use these notes to engage in a more detailed discussion of the topic, or you could ask students to use them in writing a brief essay answering the DBQ for this lesson.

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