

Useful Terminology

US History Part III—Civics Essay Guide

This guide will assist you in completing the Part III Civics essay for NYS Regents exam in United States History & Government.

The basic idea behind writing an essay is to improve your writing skills with each draft and subsequent essay. The historian skills you have been utilizing all year are necessary to understand and complete this part of the exam and are located under **Useful Terminology** in the column to the right.

There are some Main Components of your essay that are required:

- ◆ **Using Four (4) or More Documents.** Note: Some documents may have multiple parts and be used twice or more as long as the information discussed is different.
- ◆ Including an Introduction, One (1) Long Body Paragraphs, and a Conclusion
- ◆ Including Historical Context/Circumstances for All Four (4) documents
- ◆ Including Outside Information throughout all paragraphs. More information than what is listed in the documents.

TASK

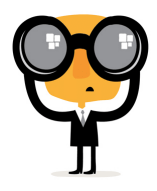
- ◆ *Identify and Describe the **Historical Circumstances** surrounding this Constitutional or Civic issue.*
- ◆ Explain efforts by **Individuals, Groups, and/or Governments** to address this Constitutional or Civic Issue
- ◆ Discuss the extent to which the efforts were successful. *In other words; was the efforts successful or unsuccessful.*

Working with Documents

Step #1: Throughout the Year/Before Exam; Have an awareness of Constitutional or Civic Issues you could identify in the docs.

Step #2: Read each document and for each:

- a) Answer the DBQ (Question) using the evidence in the document to for a paraphrased response. Answer the question directly. Do not give any other background or information except what the question is asking for.



- b) **Identify and Write** minimum of two (2) potential Constitutional or Civic issues the margin by each document. You must be specific.
- c) You will need evidence from at least **four (4) documents**. *The more evidence you find and include the better your discussion will be.*

Constitutional Issue

What is a Constitutional Issue? It is any issue that primarily goes against or in favor of the U.S. Constitution. The easiest place to look for this is Bill of Rights, which is the first 10 Amendments. The 1st thru 6th Amendments are most likely to have issues protected by them or an issue against them.

Civic Issue

What is a Civic Issue? It is any issue the public believes the government should either be involved in or not involved in. The issue is most likely not stated in the U.S. Constitution. Implied not stated, such as the General Welfare clause. What specifically is the government's role in promoting the General Welfare? Or what does Equal Protection under the 14th Amendment mean?

Historical Circumstances

What are Historical Circumstances? This is what LED TO the Constitutional or Civic Issue. What came before? How did the problem become a Constitutional or Civil issue?

Continuity or Change Over Time

What is Continuity? It is how this Constitutional or Civic Issue has remained the same or continues to this day.

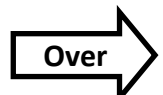
Change Over Time is how this Constitutional or Civic Issue has changed either positively or negatively or both. Changed from negative to positive.

Success or Unsuccessful

Was there any **success** in achieving the goal(s) for the Constitutional or Civic issue by an individual (person), or a group, or the government?

Some Constitutional Issues Could Be:	Some Civic Issues Could Be:
Freedom of Speech including hate speech	To possess drugs such as marijuana
Freedom of Religion including healthcare mandates	To have an abortion
Right to Assemble (Protest) / Petition your Gov't	To have a place to live
Right to Bare Arms (Own a firearm/gun)	To have healthcare/medical care
Right to have a Speedy Trial	To be employed
Government's responsibility to protect it's citizens	To be free from violence / hate

Was achieving the goal(s) for the Constitutional or Civic issue **unsuccessful** by the individual (person), or a group, or the government?





This Civic Literacy essay is based on the accompanying documents. The question is designed to test your ability to work with historical documents. Some of these documents have been edited for the purpose of this question. As you analyze the documents, consider the source of each document and any point of view that may be presented in the document. Keep in mind that the language and images used in a document may reflect the historical context of the time in which it was created.

Writing Your Essay

Introduction / Essay Paragraph #1

Step 1: Identify the Constitutional or Civic Issue you have seen in at least four (4) documents

Step 2: Explain the Constitutional or Civic Issue. *The Constitutional/Civic Issue of _____ can best be defined as _____.*

Step 3: Identify which documents you have chosen. *The Constitutional/Civic Issue of _____ can best be seen in _____ (doc#), _____ (doc#), and _____ (doc#).*

Step 4: Explain how an Individual(s)/Group(s)/the Government was **Successful** —OR— **Unsuccessful** in achieving their goal(s) for the Constitutional/Civic Issue. *The Constitutional/Civic Issue of _____ can be measured in two (2) ways, whether the goal by individual(s)/Group(s)/the Government was a success or unsuccessful.*

Note: You should start at the 1st doc chosen, and then 2nd doc, 3rd, and 4th doc in chronological order. This is a parachute and overview of the events that you have chosen. Tell the story, not by using the words in the documents but the story around the docs. Use evidence from the documents and add specific outside information as you are writing. One piece of outside information should be added for each document as a minimum.

Body Paragraph / Essay Paragraph #2

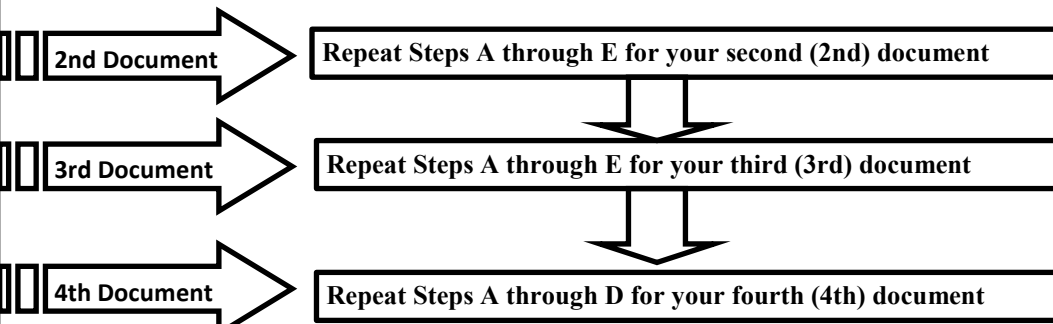
Step A: Work with the document you have chosen for the Constitutional or Civic Issue. The document will explain an event related to the issue.

Step B: Explain the Historical Circumstances that LED TO or surrounds the Constitutional or Civic Issue identified by you in the document. This is accomplished by using the “Why?” in the 5W’s for the event. Use as many sentences as needed to explain the “Why?” This should be outside information since the document will usually not say what led to the event since it is part of the task in first bulleted prompt. *The historical circumstances that led to _____ (Constitutional or Civic Issue) is/was/has been because/since _____.*

Step C: Answer the question: What was the **Effort** made by an individual/group(s)/the government to address (assist in solving) the Constitutional or Civic Issue based on the **Point-of-View** expressed in the document. Use the evidence from the document to explain the specific **Effort** and **Point-of-View**. Use some outside information to give your evidence some historical context. You might want to use some of the 5W’s (Who, Where, When, What Happened). *Major/Some/No effort was made by _____ individual/group/government to address the issue of _____ as evident by the _____ (evidence from the document).*

Step D: Answer the question: Was the **Effort** made by an individual/group(s)/the government to address (assist in solving) the Constitutional or Civic **Successful** or **Unsuccessful**? Use the evidence from the document to explain how Successful or Unsuccessful the Effort was/ Use some outside information to give your evidence some historical context. You might want to use some of the 5W’s here (Who, Where, When, What happened). *The effort made was successful/unsuccessful as evident by the _____ (evidence from the document).*

Step E: Use a **Transition Sentence Starter**. Tie the Constitutional or Civic Issue to the next document. *Another effort to address the _____ Constitutional or Civic Issue has been/was/is _____.*



- Outside Information must be added to every paragraph.
- Use HAPPY for analysis of docs for Historical Context and Point-of-View for your Body Paragraph.
- Use PERSIA for categorizing docs for the Conclusion Paragraph.

Conclusion / Essay Paragraph #3

Step #1: Create a closing sentence with a political, economic, religious, social, intellectual, or area (geographic) or PERSIA categorization evaluation. The _____ (political/economic/religious/social/intellectual/geographic) consequences of _____ Constitutional or Civic Issue) has impacted many people since _____ (how does it impact people).

Step #2: Restate the Constitutional or Civic Issue and add whether the **Effort** by individual(s)/Group(s)/the Government was **Successful** or **Unsuccessful**. *The Constitutional or Civic Issue of _____ and the efforts made by _____ (individual/group/the government) were/was/are/has been _____ (successful/unsuccessful) because/since _____ (reason for the success).*