

Social Studies Exemplar Tasks

Calculating the Costs: Atomic Bombs in 1945 (9th/10th) Task Template 2 - Argumentation

Was the United States justified in dropping the atomic bomb on Japan in August 1945? After reading primary and secondary sources, write an essay in which you address the question and argue whether President Truman made the correct decision to end World War II through the use of the atomic bomb in 1945. Support your position with evidence from the text(s).

D 1 Be sure to address and refute competing views.

Line Item Veto: 11th/12th Task Template 2 - Argumentation

Should the president of the United States have the power of the line-item veto? After reading informational texts and articles, write an editorial in which you address the question and argue for or against the merits of the line-item veto. Support your position with evidence from the text(s).

- **D 1** Be sure to acknowledge competing views.

Task Template 1 - Argumentation

The Johnstown Flood of 1889 6th-8th Task Template 1 - Argumentation

What caused the Johnstown Flood of 1889? After researching secondary and primary source texts on the Johnstown Flood of 1889, write an article for the Pennsylvania Heritage magazine in which you argue the primary cause(s) of the flood. Support your position with evidence from your research.

What is the Enduring Legacy of the Emancipation Proclamation (6th-8th) Task Template 5 - Argumentation

After researching primary and secondary source documents on the Emancipation Proclamation, write an essay in which you discuss the Emancipation Proclamation as a war measure and evaluate its lasting legacy in American history. Support your position with evidence from your research.

Reagan in Moscow (11th-12th) Task Template 21 - Informational or Explanatory

How did President Reagan craft an address that conveyed his perspective on key issues and suited the rhetorical situation of speaking at Moscow State University? After reading President Reagan's speech, write an essay in which you analyze how the speech conveys President Reagan's perspective to the people of the Soviet Union, providing examples to clarify your analysis.

Rich Enough to Give Us All a Farm: The Homestead Act of 1862 (9th-10th)Task

Template 16 - Informational

How did Charles Ingalls become a landowner? After reading The Homestead Act of 1862, the Ingalls homestead application, and selected secondary sources,)on The Homestead Act, write an essay in which you relate how the Homestead Act allowed people like the Ingalls' family to become farm owners.. Support your discussion with evidence from the text(s).

Government of the People (9th-10th)Task Template 4 - Argumentation

What is a "government of the people"? After reading (our excerpt from) "Funeral Oration" and the "Gettysburg Address" , write a fully developed essay in which you compare the speeches and argue which leader Pericles or Lincoln delivers the most rhetorically compelling definition of democracy. Support your position with evidence from the text(s).

Alexander the Great: How Great Was Alexander as a Military Leader?

Task Template 2 – Argumentation (6th-8th)

From a historical perspective, how “great” was Alexander as a military commander? After reading a variety of informational and persuasive texts, write an essay in which you address the question and argue your position. Support your position with evidence from the text(s).

- **D 1** Be sure to (acknowledge; refute) competing views.
- **D 2** Give multiple example/s from past or current (events; issues) to illustrate and clarify your position.

America’s Burden? US Imperialism (1890-1909) 11th/12th Task Template 11 -

Informational or Explanatory

After researching the Beveridge-Hoar debate and other primary and secondary sources on American Imperialism during the late 19th and early 20th century, write an essay in which you define imperialism and explain impact of American Imperialism on the politics and economy of the United Sates during this time period. Support your discussion with evidence from your research.

- **D 3** What implications can you draw?

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- **D 1** Be sure to address and refute competing views.

Did Lincoln Free the Slaves? (A Module on the Emancipation Proclamation & the 13th Amendment) Task Template 19 - Informational or Explanatory (6th-8th)

After reading the Emancipation Proclamation and the 13th Amendment, write) in which you explain the necessity for a constitutional amendment to abolish slavery. Support your discussion with evidence from the text(s).

Economic Systems (11th-12th)Task Template 4 - Argumentation

What are the features of an ideal mixed economy? After reading informational texts, editorials, and an interactive infographic, write an essay for the school newspaper in which you compare the characteristics of market and command economies and argue what combination of characteristics would be most effective for the United States today. Support your position with evidence from the text(s).

- **D 1** Be sure to acknowledge competing views.
- **D 2** Give several example/s from past or current issues to illustrate and clarify your position.

Environmental Impact of Pollution in Mexico City 6th-8th Task Template 24 - Informational

After researching informational articles and environmental websites on pollution in Mexico City, write report in which you examine the cause(s) of air pollution and explain the effect(s) on the health and welfare of the citizens. Support your discussion with evidence from your research.

FDR's Case for War with Japan (11th-12th)Task Template 21 - Informational

In his famous speech after Pearl Harbor, how did President Roosevelt make his argument? After reading FDR's "Date That Will Live in Infamy" speech and selected writings about the surrounding events, write essay in which you analyze the speeches content and key omissions, providing examples to clarify your analysis.

Government of the People (9th-10th) Task Template 4 - Argumentation

What is a "government of the people"? After reading (our excerpt from) "Funeral Oration" and the "Gettysburg Address" , write a fully developed essay in which you compare the speeches and argue which leader Pericles or Lincoln delivers the most rhetorically compelling definition of democracy. Support your position with evidence from the text(s).

Heroes vs. Villains: Explorers of the New World (5th) Task Template 4-5.2 - Argumentation

Should your explorer be remembered as a hero or a villain? After reading several informational texts, write a letter to the Museum of Explorers Board in which you answer the question and explain your reasons as they relate to your explorer's expedition(s). Support your opinion with evidence from the text/s.

Individualism and Women's Rights (9th-10th) Task Template 21 - Informational or Explanatory

After reading Elizabeth Cady Stanton's "Solitude of Self", write an essay in which you analyze how Stanton uses individual solitude to justify equal treatment of women and men, providing examples to clarify your analysis.

Television in the 1950's and 1960's (11th-12th) Task Template 21 - Informational

How did television impact life in the 1950's and 1960's? After reading (informational texts), write (an essay) in which you analyze how television impacted American culture socially, economically, politically and diplomatically, providing examples to clarify your analysis.

- **D 3** What (conclusions; implications) can you draw?
- **D 8** Include (e.g. bibliography, citations, references, endnotes).

The British Industrial Revolution (10th) Task Template 2 - Argumentation

Were the achievements and growth of the Industrial Revolution Era worth the cost to society? After reading secondary and primary sources pertaining to the British Industrial Revolution, write an essay in which you address the question and argue one side of the issue. Support your position with evidence from the text(s).

The Case for Revolution (A Close Reading Module) Task Template 21 - Informational

What grievances led the Continental Congress to conclude that the North American colonies needed to throw off British rule and create their own government? After reading the Declaration of Independence and historical background materials, write an article in which you analyze how they show "a long train of abuses and usurpation, pursuing invariably the same Object [that] evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, providing examples to clarify your analysis.

The Johnstown Flood of 1889 (6th-8th) Task Template 1 - Argumentation

What caused the Johnstown Flood of 1889? After researching secondary and primary source texts on the Johnstown Flood of 1889, write an article for the Pennsylvania Heritage magazine in which you argue the primary cause(s) of the flood. Support your position with evidence from your research.

Three Religions, One Sacred Place (6th) Task Template 14 - Informational or Explanatory

How can one geographical location hold meaning for three different religions? After reading informational texts about Judaism, Islam, and Christianity, and texts about the Temple Mount/Haram Al-Sharif in Jerusalem, write an essay in which you describe the significance of this site to each of these religions and address the question. Support your discussion with evidence from the text(s).

What is the Enduring Legacy of the Emancipation Proclamation? Task Template 5 -

Argumentation

After researching primary and secondary source documents on the Emancipation Proclamation, write an essay in which you discuss the Emancipation Proclamation as a war measure and evaluate its lasting legacy in American history. Support your position with evidence from your research.

What is the Fourth of July to the Slave? Task Template 23 - Informational or Explanatory

What is the Fourth of July to Frederick Douglass? After reading excerpts from Douglass' speech, write an essay in which you compare his analysis of perspectives of free and enslaved Americans on Independence Day. Support your discussion with evidence from the text(s).

Winston Churchill's "Iron Curtain" 9th-12th Task Template 23 - Informational

According to Winston Churchill, how did the two sides of the "Iron Curtain" differ from one another? After reading Churchill's "Sinews of Peace" Speech, write an essay in which you compare the two sides separated by the "Iron Curtain". Support your discussion with evidence from the text(s).