

HMH Social Studies

# United States History

Document-Based Investigations Teach Students to **Think Critically**



# Promote Inquiry and Active Learning with HMH Social Studies

Inquiry is at the center of learning, challenging and preparing students for college and career. That is why you will find Document-Based Investigations in **EVERY** lesson.

## Document-Based Investigations:

- Support active inquiry and ask students to think critically as they read
- Encourage students to analyze primary sources like a historian
- Culminate with evidence-based writing tasks at the end of each module



Students focus on inquiry, critical thinking, close reading, and writing as they work with a variety of historical, visual, and video sources including:

- Art
- Articles
- Artifacts
- Chronicles
- Documents
- Letters
- Manuscripts
- Maps
- Newspapers/  
Pamphlets
- Passages  
from Novels
- Photographs
- Poems
- Political  
Cartoons
- Portraits
- Quotes
- Speeches
- Supreme  
Court Cases

HISTORICAL SOURCE

### Chinese Miners

Chinese miners faced discrimination. They often worked claims that others had abandoned. In the photo, Anglo and Chinese miners work together in Auburn Ravine in 1852.



Analyze

What evidence can you find in this source?

HISTORICAL SOURCE

### Plantation Burial

The English artist John Antrobus painted this work in 1860. Antrobus lived in the United States for about eight years. *Plantation Burial* was part of a series of paintings he planned to create about life in rural Louisiana.



Need help with visuals?

Analyze Visuals

What seems to be the artist's attitude toward the mourners? Provide evidence for your conclusion.

HISTORICAL SOURCE

### Ben Franklin and His Son Choose Sides

When Ben Franklin's son William was a child, he helped his father experiment with lightning. But by the time William had grown and the Revolution started, the two men viewed the conflict differently. They exchanged letters on the subject. In a letter to his father, William Franklin expressed his opinion that all British laws governing the American colonies should be obeyed unless legal action was taken to repeal them. He also said it was the responsibility of executive members of government to enforce these laws. Benjamin Franklin had a very different opinion about the laws that the British Parliament made for the colonies.



"I am indeed of the opinion, that the parliament has no right to make any law whatever, binding on the colonies . . . I know your sentiments differ from mine on these subjects. You are a thorough government man, which I do not wonder at, nor do I aim at converting you. I only wish you to act uprightly and steadily."

—Benjamin Franklin  
*The Private Correspondence of Benjamin Franklin*

Need help with primary sources?

Analyze Sources

How did the two men view the British government differently?

# Investigation continued

Document-Based Investigations build to end-of-module DBI performance tasks.



## Westward Expansion

Wagon trains carried hundreds of thousands of settlers across the Great Plains.

### Essential Question

Was the United States truly destined to expand west in the 1800s?

In the 1800s hundreds of thousands of settlers crossed the Great Plains in wagon trains, headed west. They went to explore and claim new lands, start new lives, and establish farms and communities. Over time, some Americans came to believe it was the destiny of the United States to expand west and acquire more land for its growing population. But was it?

As you read this module, look for evidence of key events in the westward expansion of the United States. Note the key people, decisions, circumstances, and turning points that resulted in the expansion of U.S. territory in the west. When you are done, you may be assigned to write a short essay answering the Essential Question for this module.

## Essential Question–Writing

In this module you've learned about what changes occurred in the American West during the 19th century. Now it's your turn to demonstrate your understanding of the module content by writing an essay.

Was the United States truly destined to expand west in the 1800s?

Write a persuasive essay answering this question. Your essay should include key people, events, and turning points in the westward expansion of the country. Be sure to cite evidence to support your position and organize your essay into an introduction, body, and conclusion.

**Essential Questions** spark curiosity, guide instruction, and ask students to apply knowledge through writing tasks.

## Lesson 1, Module 11

DOCUMENT-BASED INVESTIGATION HISTORICAL SOURCE

### Meriwether Lewis's Journal Entry

While traveling across the Great Plains, Meriwether Lewis marveled at the richness of the land.

"The shortness . . . of grass gave the plain the appearance throughout its whole extent of beautiful bowling-green in fine order . . . this scenery, already rich, pleasing and beautiful was still farther heightened by immense herds of Buffaloe, deer Elk and Antelopes which we saw in every direction feeding on the hills and plains. I do not think I exaggerate when I estimate the number of Buffalo which could be compre[hend]ed at one view to amount to 3000."

— quoted in *Original Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition*,  
edited by Reuben Bold Theraites

Need help with primary sources? 

### Analyze Sources

What did Lewis find so impressive about the Great Plains?

### Analyze Sources

What did Lewis find so impressive about the Great Plains?

Save to myNotebook

# Investigation continued

## Lesson 2, Module 11

DOCUMENT-BASED INVESTIGATION HISTORICAL SOURCE

### A Wild West Dime Novel

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the dime novel was required reading for many Americans who were fascinated by the Wild West. The dime novel pictured here tells of the adventures of Stella, the girl range rider.



Hotspots



Need help with visuals?

### Analyze Visuals

Based on its cover, do you think this novel more likely illustrates a myth or reality of the Wild West? Why?

## Lesson 3, Module 11

### DOCUMENT-BASED INVESTIGATION: HISTORICAL SOURCE

#### Battle of the Little Bighorn

Art historians have identified about 1,000 paintings and drawings of the Battle of the Little Bighorn.

This painting was published in 1889 by Kurz & Allison, a company known for its large prints of important battles in American history.



#### Analyze Visuals

How are these images different in style and subject matter? Why do you think they differ?

#### Analyze Visuals

The first image is Western in style and portrays Custer and his soldiers as the focal point making a heroic stand. The second image is based on a traditional Native American style and places more emphasis on the Indians. Each one is viewing the incident from a different perspective, but both are attempting to justify and even glorify their own role in the event.



Using the slider bar, students can scroll back and forth to compare historical perspectives.

Each lesson DBI provides students **immediate feedback** when answering an analytical question.

# Investigation continued

## Lesson 4, Module 11

DOCUMENT-BASED INVESTIGATION HISTORICAL SOURCE

### Letter from the Plains, 1863

In a letter to her family in Norway, immigrant Gro Svendsen describes her new life as a farmer on the plains of Iowa.

"I remember I used to wonder when I heard that it would be impossible to keep the milk here as we did at home. Now I have learned that it is indeed impossible because of the heat here in the summertime . . . It's difficult, too, to preserve the butter. One must pour brine [salt water] over it or salt it. The thunderstorms are so violent that one might think it was the end of the world . . . Quite often the lightning strikes down both cattle and people, damages property, and splinters sturdy oak trees into many pieces."

—Gro Svendsen

from *Frontier Mother: The Letters of Gro Svendsen*

Need help with primary sources? 

Analyze Sources

### Analyze Sources

What might be some of the differences between Norway and Svendsen's new home in Iowa?

## Drop-down arrows

offer additional support for students who struggle with analysis of primary sources.

Need help with primary sources? 

## Analyze Primary Sources

Primary sources are materials written or made by people who took part in or witnessed historical events. Letters, diaries, speeches, newspaper articles, photographs, autobiographies, and legal documents are all examples of primary sources. When you analyze primary sources, you interpret them to understand what they reveal about history. All primary sources include a point of view because they were written or created by one person or group. Historians compare primary sources to understand events from multiple points of view.

Use these strategies to analyze primary sources.

Historical Source

**September 17, 1804, Great Plains** <sup>1</sup>

While traveling across the Great Plains, Meriwether Lewis marveled at the richness of the land.

*"The shortness . . . of grass gave the plain the appearance throughout its whole extent of beautiful bowling-green in fine order . . . this scenery, already rich, pleasing, and beautiful was still farther heightened by immense herds of Buffalo, deer Elk and Antelopes which we saw in every direction feeding on the hills and plains. I do not think I exaggerate when I estimate the number of Buffalo which could be comprehended at one view to amount to 3000."*

—Meriwether Lewis, quoted in *Original Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition*, edited by Reuben Bold Theriot

Analyze Historical Sources  
What did Lewis find so impressive about the Great Plains?

<sup>2</sup>

<sup>3</sup>

<sup>4</sup>

- 1 Identify the topic and title.**  
This will help you understand what the document is about.
- 2 Identify the author or creator of the source and the date it was created.**  
Think about how the author's point of view and audience might have influenced the information contained in the source.
- 3 Carefully read the passage to understand the main points.**  
What historical event is being described? Distinguish between facts and the author's opinions. Note any special punctuation. Ellipses indicate that words or sentences have been removed from the original source. Brackets indicate words that were not in the original.
- 4 Place the source in historical context.**  
Analyze the significance of the information contained in the source. What does it teach us about the historical event? Is it important? Is it credible? How does it contribute to the historical record and a complete understanding of the event?

# Promote Inquiry and Active Learning with Cumulative End-of-Module DBI

## Document-Based Investigation: Part 1, Module 11

Students are provided the opportunity to review each Document-Based Investigation and strengthen their answers to prepare for the Performance Task in Part 2.

### Document-Based Investigation

#### Part 1: Short Answer

In this module, you have analyzed several sources. Review your answers to the questions you have already seen, and answer any questions that you haven't already completed.

### Essential Question–Writing

In this module you've learned about what changes occurred in the American West during the 19th century. Now it's your turn to demonstrate your understanding of the module content by writing an essay.

**Was the United States truly destined to expand west in the 1800s?**

Write a persuasive essay answering this question. Your essay should include key people, events, and turning points in the westward expansion of the country. Be sure to cite evidence to support your position and organize your essay into an introduction, body, and conclusion.

## Revisit Essential Question–End-of-Module Writing

Students are asked to demonstrate their understanding of the module content by answering the Essential Question.

## Document-Based Investigation

### Part 2: Write a Compare and Contrast Essay

#### Historical Context

Beginning in the 1830s, the United States was transformed by westward expansion. Through treaties and warfare, the nation greatly increased its size and acquired valuable resources. Yet settlers often had to endure harsh conditions, and their arrival brought them into conflict with Native Americans.

#### Task

Almost as soon as settlement began, the West became a popular subject in memoirs, literature, and art. But portrayals of the West often strayed from the facts. Write an essay in which you compare and contrast the myths and reality of westward expansion.

Complete the following steps as you plan and compose your essay.

1. Review your notes and sources before you start writing.
2. Use at least *three* of the sources in Part 1, and develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen text evidence from the documents.
3. Cite specific text evidence from each of the sources in your response.
4. Plan your essay so that it includes an introduction, several body paragraphs, and a concluding paragraph.
5. Organize your essay in a clear and logical way that highlights comparisons and contrasts.
6. Write a conclusion that sums up your ideas and supports the information you present.

## Document-Based Investigation: Part 2, Module 11

Performance Tasks ask students to analyze and draw evidence from several relevant sources.

#### Task

Almost as soon as settlement began, the West became a popular subject in memoirs, literature, and art. But portrayals of the West often strayed from the facts. Write an essay in which you compare and contrast the myths and reality of westward expansion.

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# HMH Social Studies



## Uncover the Connections

For more information and to review online materials, visit  
[hmhco.com/hmh-social-studies](http://hmhco.com/hmh-social-studies).



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