

# Why is point of view (pov) important? essay sample



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

The crucial skill teachers and readers are looking for in a student's approach to documents is the awareness that documents are not statements of facts, but descriptions, interpretations, or opinions of events and developments made by particular people at particular places and times, and often for specific reasons. Too often, students write essays in which they take the documents at face value. Instead, students should be applying critical thinking skills to documents, evaluation whether they are likely to be accurate and complete, and in what ways the author of the document may be revealing bias.

How can students demonstrate awareness of POV?

The readers of AP European History DBQs look for POV in five distinct ways.

1. Attribution. This is the minimal approach to POV. When students cite the authors of the documents by name or position, they are indicating that they understand that this is a particular person's expression rather than a statement of fact. Students need to provide consistent attribution throughout their essays, meaning all or most documents should be attributed.

Attribution means using the name of the author of a document or something about the author given in the document.

Examples of attribution are:

- John Taylor, an English writer, said...
- A Dominican monk in Florence described...

2. Authorial point of view. Students show awareness that the gender, occupation, class, religion, nationality, political position, or ethnic identity of the author may well have influenced the views that are expressed.

For example:

- Baltasar Rusow, as a Lutheran pastor, was naturally upset by the celebration of a Saint's Day since Lutherans don't venerate saints.

3. Reliability and accuracy of source. Students critically examine a source for its reliability and accuracy by questioning whether the author of the document would be in a position to be accurate and /or would likely be telling the truth. The student can also evaluate the type of source, e. g. a letter or official report, showing an understanding that different types of sources vary in their probable reliability.

For example:

An outside observer may understand a religious festival if he is Catholic and visiting a Catholic country.

As a woman author she would be aware of how women were treated in society at that time.

4. Tone or intent of the author. Student is examining the text of a document to determine its tone (e. g., satire, irony, indirect political commentary) or the intent of the author. This may be particularly useful for visual documents.

For example:

- Brueghel painted The Battle between Carnival and Lent to warn the people

that their love of celebrating was overwhelming their religious observance of Lent.

5. Grouping of documents by author. When students group the documents by type of author, they are showing awareness that certain types of authors, by the very nature of being that type, will express similar views or consider events in a similar light. In the DBQ, there were three such groups of authors: government officials, clergy, and writers.

Is this stress on POV new?

No. Every DBQ has required students to address POV, and for many years this instruction has been emphasized in the directions for the DBQ. But its importance is more obvious now, because showing awareness of POV in an essay is required at least 3 times in the six basic core points.