

DOCUMENT-BASED QUESTION

Directions: This part of the booklet is designed to find out how well you think and write in social studies.

Historical Background: On November 7, 2000, many of the citizens of the United States cast their votes for a new president. The number of votes cast for both candidates, George Bush and Vice President Al Gore, was very close. The number of votes was so close that the name of the new president could not be officially announced on November 8th.

In this election, as in others, some U.S. citizens did not vote. They did not feel their vote was important.

The following documents are from newspapers from November 2000.

Task: Write an essay about why it is important for all citizens of the United States to vote in elections.

Before you write your essay, look at the documents labeled 1 through 4. Then complete the notes.

Document 1

8A · WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2000 · USA TODAY

The presidential race

In brief

Exit polls, returns illustrate tight race

The tightness of the presidential race was reflected in the final pre-election polls, the exit polls and the early returns Tuesday. Exit polls at 12:30 a.m. ET had Democrat Al Gore and Republican George W. Bush tied at 48%. Popular vote returns at 12:50 a.m. ET showed Bush 49%, Gore 48%. Bush had 39,595,430 votes; Gore 38,891,606.

Document 2



Source: USA Today Wednesday November 8, 2000 31A

Document 3



WHY VOTE?

Voting is the Foundation of Democracy

Voting is a way of making decisions. It's better than fighting and much less dangerous. You probably have voted many times - in school, in youth groups, in sports teams, even in your family. When you reach age 18, your voting power grows and you can join the millions of Americans making decisions for their community and even their country.

In a democracy, voting is the easiest and most direct way for the citizens to take part in their government. It's the way citizens let the government know what they think about the way the country is being run. The United States has more than 500,000 elected officials.

Source: NIE Buffalo Evening News Fall 2000

Document 4

Citizens. If this election has told us anything, it's that every vote really does count. And that's true beyond the presidential election.

Source: *Another vote come and gone; what did we learn?*
USA Today Wednesday November 8, 2000 31 A

PART A - NOTES

Give *three* reasons why it is important for all citizens to vote.

1 _____ (1)

2 _____ (1)

3 _____ (1)

PART B - ESSAY

Use the ideas you listed in Part A (Notes) to write an essay about why it is important for all citizens of the United States to vote in elections.

In your essay remember to give three reasons why citizens of the United States should vote in elections.

(Note to teachers: You may wish to give students a writing frame such as the one below.)

There are many reasons why it is important for all citizens of the United States to vote in elections. This essay will state three reasons.

The first reason is _____

The second reason is _____

The third reason is _____

In conclusion, it is very important for all U.S. citizens to vote.