

## Step Five: The Analytical Essay

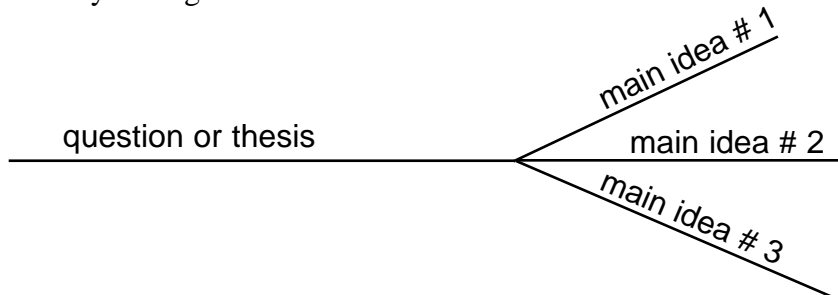
**Readiness:** Among the many strengths of the DBQ exercise is that it is a great vehicle for teaching students how to write a well-organized analytical essay. Each World DBQ question lends itself to creating an essay that is focused, structured, and efficient – precisely the kind of writing students will be asked to produce in college and in the professional workplace. For the student who has given little thought to college, this is a time to discover it is within reach.

If an essay is intended as the culminating experience of the DBQ exercise, let students know this from the outset. Any notes taken while reading the Background Essay or examining the documents become raw material for the student essay. Also, students should know that the analytical categories they establish while examining the documents can easily become the structural elements of their essays, i.e. the topics of their body paragraphs.

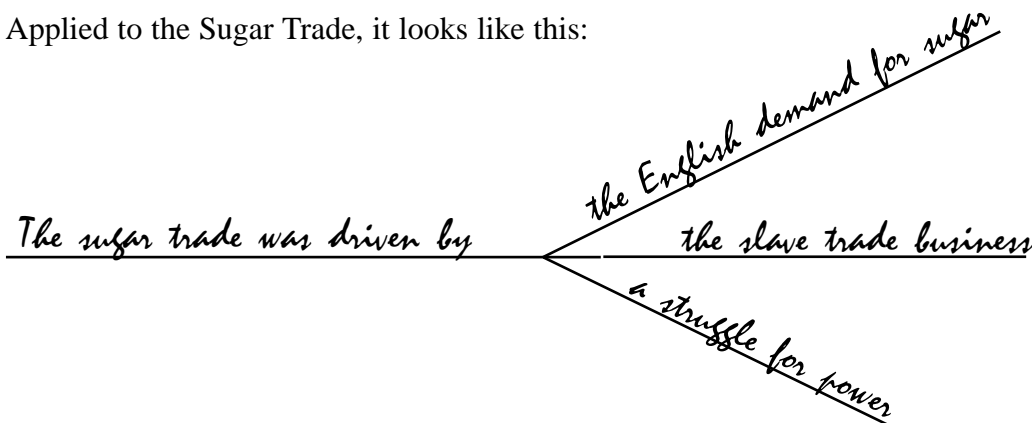
**Organizing an Essay:** Depending on the level of student writing ability, you may want to provide students with one or both of these simple frameworks for organizing their essays:

### *Organizing Device #1: The Chickenfoot*

The simplicity of the Chickenfoot is its strength and has carried at least one person we know all the way through law school.



Applied to the Sugar Trade, it looks like this:



After filling out the Chickenfoot, students may find it helpful to convert their framework into a single sentence. Thus, “The Sugar Trade was driven primarily by three factors – England’s sweet tooth, a lucrative slave trade, and the desire for international power.” This assures that the reasons (toes) address the issue (leg).

The Chickenfoot helps students develop a clear thesis and a structure for developing that thesis. What the Chickenfoot does not do is provide any supporting detail.