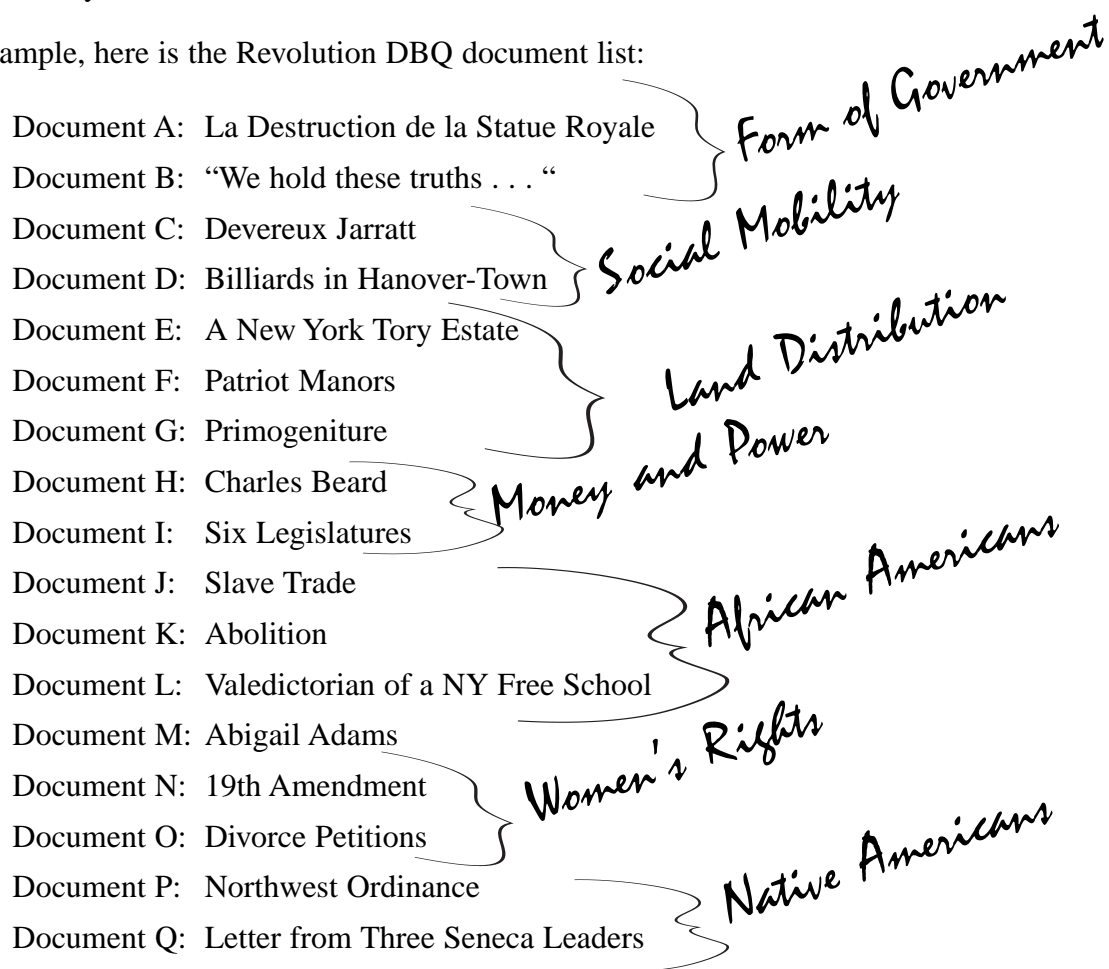


Clustering Documents in an Analytical Framework: After modeling the analysis of one or two documents, but before students begin to examine documents on their own, have students take five minutes to skim through the documents. Then, as a class, refer to the Student Guide Sheet to begin figuring out how the documents are organized. In the case of the Salem DBQ, students are looking for cause groupings. In the case of the Revolution DBQ, students are looking for classic areas of revolutionary change – government, land reform, and the status of women and minorities. Determining cause categories or change categories by skimming documents, then looking at a list of their headings isn't easy, but it creates a readiness for understanding the documents. We have had good luck with projecting the Student Guide Sheet document list on the overhead, then asking the class to help you bracket and label possible analytical clusters.

For example, here is the Revolution DBQ document list:



At this point you may want to ask someone in class to explain the meaning of the saying: “He can’t see the forest for the trees.” (He can’t understand the whole because he is too focused on each of the parts.) It is a problem, shared by many of us, that we get tangled up with the details and lose sight of the big picture. The DBQ exercise requires that we frequently step back from close examination of the individual documents to take another look at the question and the documents as a whole. Pressing the image, when you stand back and look at these “trees” from a distance, you may notice they can be organized into “groves” within that forest. These groves are, of course, the analytical categories.