Question 1 — Document-Based Question

Analyze the factors that contributed to the instability of the Weimar Republic in the period 1918–1933.

BASIC CORE: 1 point each to a total of 6 points

1. Provides an appropriate, explicitly stated thesis that directly addresses all parts of the question. Thesis must not simply restate the question.
   The thesis must address at least two factors with some degree of specificity (beyond general categories) that relate to the prompt. The thesis must suggest a minimal level of analysis drawn from the context of the documents, though a student does not necessarily need to use the term “factor” or “instability” explicitly. The thesis need not appear in the first paragraph.

2. Discusses a majority of the documents individually and specifically.
   The student must use at least six documents — even if used incorrectly — by reference to anything in the box. Documents cannot be referenced collectively in order to get credit for this point (e.g., “Documents 2, 3 and 6 suggest”) unless the student goes on to discuss them individually.

3. Demonstrates understanding of the basic meaning of a majority of the documents (may misinterpret no more than one).
   The student must use six documents correctly and may not significantly misinterpret more than one document. A major misinterpretation is an incorrect analysis or one that leads to an inaccurate grouping or a false conclusion. A student cannot earn this point if credit was not awarded for point 2 (discusses a majority of the documents).

4. Supports the thesis with appropriate interpretations of a majority of the documents.
   A student must use at least six documents correctly, and the documents used in the body of the essay must provide support for the thesis. A student cannot earn this point if credit was not awarded for point 1 (appropriate thesis). A student also cannot earn this point if credit was not awarded for point 2 (discusses a majority of the documents).

5. Analyzes point of view or bias in at least three documents.
   The student must make a reasonable effort to explain why a particular source expresses the stated view by
   • relating authorial point of view to author’s place in society (motive, position, status, etc.); or
   • evaluating the reliability of the source; or
   • recognizing that different kinds of documents serve different purposes; or
   • analyzing the tone of the documents; must be well-developed.

Please note: 1) Attribution alone is not sufficient to earn credit for point of view.
   2) It is possible for students to discuss point of view collectively, but this counts for only point of view.
Question 1 — Document-Based Question (continued)

6. Analyzes documents by explicitly organizing them in at least three appropriate groups. A group must contain at least two documents that are used correctly and individually. Groupings and corresponding documents may include the following (not exclusive).

GROUPS
- Political parties: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11
- Pro-Republic: 1, 2, 4, 6
- Anti-Republic: 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11
- Communists: 3, 5
- Anti-Communist: 1, 4, 6, 8, 11
- Nazis: 7, 11
- Anti-Nazi: 4, 10
- Radical/resistance groups: 3, 5, 7, 8, 11
- Weak/inexperienced leadership: 6, 7, 8, 9
- Apathy toward democracy: 6, 8, 10
- Postwar bitterness: 8, 9, 11
- Economic: 3, 5, 10, 11
- Militarism: 3, 4, 5, 8, 11
- Prowar/Promilitary: 5, 7, 8, 11
- Antiwar/Antimilitary: 3, 4
- Writers: 4, 6, 8, 10
- Women: 2, 3

EXPANDED CORE
Expands beyond the basic core of 1–6. The basic score of 6 must be achieved before a student can earn expanded core points. Credit awarded in the expanded core should be based on holistic assessment of the essay. Factors to consider in holistic assessment may include:

- Presents a clear, analytical and comprehensive thesis.
- Uses all or almost all of the documents (10–11 documents).
- Uses the documents persuasively as evidence.
- Shows understanding of nuances of the documents.
- Analyzes point of view or bias in at least four documents cited in the essay.
- Analyzes the documents in additional ways (e.g., develops more groupings).
- Recognizes and develops change over time.
- Brings in relevant “outside” information.
A Closer Look at Point of View in Document-Based Questions

Examples of ACCEPTABLE point-of-view analysis

- Relating authorial point of view to author’s place in society
  - In typical Communist fashion, Zetkin espouses a Marxist party line in calling for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie.
  - As a woman, Marie Juchacz was likely to support the Republic because it enacted female suffrage.

- Evaluating the reliability of the source
  - Goebbels’ speech to members of his own party is likely to be an accurate reflection of Nazi goals.
  - Since Hitler was a master at propaganda and electoral campaigning, we cannot assume all he says is fact.

- Recognizing that different kinds of documents serve different purposes
  - Adolph Hitler, in a campaign speech, is attempting to win the support of business executives for his party in the 1932 election.

- Analyzing the tone of the documents
  - Zetkin embodied this hatred of capitalism in an editorial that exposed her bias against capitalism by means of inflammatory language designed to bring about the revolution depicted in Grosz’s political cartoon.

Examples of UNACCEPTABLE point-of-view analysis

- Failing to explain why the source is reliable
  - This document is reliable because it is an excerpt from Juchacz’s speech (Doc. 2).

- Failing to explain why the position of chancellor implies a bias.
  - Prince von Bülow was a chancellor and therefore he was biased (Doc. 9).

- Failing to explain why being a woman and a member of the National Assembly would necessarily lead her to take this stance.
  - Because Juchacz is a woman and a member of parliament, she is favorable toward the idea of wanting a new government (Doc. 2).

- Failing to explain what the Communist view is and why it should be dismissed.
  - As a Communist, Zetkin is obviously in favor of Communism and therefore her statements must be taken lightly (Doc. 3).

Assuming that all journalists are reliable sources.
  - Carl von Ossietzky, a dependable source, by profession of journalism, defends the Republic (Doc. 6).
Document 1: Ernst Troeltsch, Protestant theologian, leader of German Democratic Party, magazine article, “German Democracy,” 1918
Overnight we have become the most radical democracy in Europe. … It is the natural consequence of modern population density, combined with education, industrialization, war mobilization, and politicization. It fell solely to the terrible world war to deliver democracy to victory. But this introduced the danger that the development will not stop at democracy and a “dictatorship of the proletariat” will assume the form of terrorist domination (pro-Republic; anti-Communist).

Document 2: Marie Juchacz, Social Democratic Party representative, speech to National Assembly, 1919
My gentlemen and ladies! This is the first time that German women may speak as free and equal members in the parliament. The 1919 revolution overcame the old prejudices in Germany (pro-Republican).

The Weimar regime is really the bloody class terror of the bourgeoisie under the mask of democracy. Industrialists are striving for the class dictatorship of the bourgeoisie … which would be realized in the form of a monarchist power by means of the military apparatus. The only reliable guarantee of victory over monarchist militarism is the absolutely necessary development of the proletarian revolution — the arming of the workers, the disarmament of the well-to-do classes (anti-Republican; pro-Communist).

Document 4: Thomas Mann, novelist, “The German Republic,” speech to German university students, 1922
War is romantic, with a mystic and poetic element in it. … To save our nation from falling into disrepute, we must learn to understand that a warlike and brawling spirit is not essential to us. … War is a lie. … My aim is to win you to the side of the republic; to the side of what is called democracy … the republic is our fate. … The republic — still and always Germany! Democracy! (pro-Republican).

Document 5: George Grosz, artist, political cartoon from One Day We'll Get Even!, 1923
"Arise you wretched of the earth!” Phrase from the Communist Party anthem, the “Internationale” (pro-Communist; anti-Republican).

It is not the nationalists and the monarchists who represent the real danger but the absence of substantive content and ideas in the concept of the German republic. Our republic is not yet an object of mass consciousness. Around this state, lacking any ideas and with an eternally guilty conscience, there are grouped a couple of so-called constitutional parties, likewise lacking an idea and with no better conscience (pro-Republic).

Document 7: Joseph Goebbels, National Socialist Party member of the Reichstag, propagandist speech to Nazi party, 1928
We are entering the Reichstag in order that we may arm ourselves with the weapons of democracy from its arsenal. We shall become members of the Reichstag in order that the Weimar ideology should itself help us to destroy it … to revolutionize the present state of affairs. We come as enemies! Like the wolf falling upon a herd of sheep, that is how we come (anti-Republican; pro-Nazi).
Document 8: Ernst von Salomon, writer and former member of a Free Corps unit, novel, *The Outlawed*, 1930
Where is Germany? Once it had been on the front line, but then the front fell apart. What do we now believe in? Nothing besides the possibility of action. We were a band of fighters drunk with all the passions of the world; full of lust, exultant in action. What we wanted we did not know. And what we knew we did not want (anti-Republic).

Document 9: Bernhard, Prince von Bülow, chancellor of Germany from 1900 to 1909, memoirs, 1931
In Berlin in November 1918 I witnessed the beginnings of revolution. The Social Democratic Party was unfit to govern. Most characteristic of the Social Democratic Party’s mentality was the speech from the Reichstag steps, delivered by Scheidemann: “The German people have won all along the line.” A stupid lie! No, alas, the German people had not “won” — it had been conquered, overpowered by a host of enemies, wretchedly misled politically, reduced by famine and stabbed in the back (anti-Republic).

Hitler’s instruction for National Socialist speakers include the provision that gatherings are to be held exclusively in the evenings. It is easier to work the crowd and stupefy it then than during the day. The majority are losing a bit of their courage because the enemy no longer appears to have any doubts. They do not find enough resistance in themselves against someone who employs the methods of war. The economy is collapsing more or less everywhere, but only in Germany does the process achieve its maximum effect on people’s spirits (anti-Nazi).

Document 11: Adolf Hitler, campaign speech, Industry Club, 1932
Gentlemen, where is the organization that can boast, as ours can, that it can summon at will 400,000 men into the street, men who are schooled to blind obedience and are ready to execute any order? And if the whole German nation today had the same faith in its vocation as these hundred thousands … Germany would stand in the eyes of the world otherwise than she stands now (pro-Nazi).
The instability of the Weimar Republic was caused by the radical differences of philosophy of the political parties that came into existence after the end of World War I. Many Germans celebrated the arrival of a representative government; others saw democracy and militarism as tools for continued oppression of the proletariat and therefore detestable; others still sought to improve their own power and therefore appreciated the convenient democratic means, or feared the lackluster message of the Democrats. As the economy in Germany continued to decline these tensions caused the fall of the Weimar Republic.

The introduction of democracy in Germany inspired the intellectuals and socially oppressed, as progress slowed, however, many became disillusioned by its lack of efficiency. The novelist Thomas Mann believed democracy was a tool that might allow Germans to step back from their centuries long fascination with war and accomplish reform through peaceful means. As a novelist Mann would be all to aware of the romantic depictions of war. His insistence, in spite of this was "mythic and poetic element" that war be abandoned should be taken seriously. Democracy allowed Marie Szechacz to address the National Assembly, overcoming previous oppression of women's rights politically. Women for the first time had the ability to "fully develop all of their potential." Democracy though positive in
most of its reform in Germany caused fear of too radical reform in many. Ernst Troeltsch, a Protestant theologian and the leader of the German Democratic Party, believed Democracy inevitable considering the advanced nature of German society and its high population. He feared, however, that too lenient a reform policy would lead to "the form of a 'dictatorship of the proletariat'." Troeltsch's position as party leader gives bias to his interpretation of the stability socialist revolution would allow or disallow. While Troeltsch may have feared this for creating political tension, its danger to the welfare of Germany may have been overstated. This fear of reform most likely led to the lack of vitality addressed by Carl von Ossietzky, a journalist for The Diary. Ossietzky calls the Weimar Republic "lacking my ideas and with an eternally guilty conscience. As a journalist, this piece for The Diary is most likely overly critical for the sake of popular reception, if it does, however, suggest a national discontent with the republic, white after years of meagitude. While some criticized the Democratic Party's inability to administer, some surely were glad that it could not further oppress them.

The working class of Germany saw democracy as a means of maintaining its status economic status quo. The majority of this proletariat sought ideological
salvation in the works of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels. Clara Zetkin, a Communist Party member of the Reichstag, believed the freedom granted to industrialists by Democracy would oppress the working class. It is surprising, however, that Zetkin is against militarism being not a socialist but a communist. This sentiment would help to set the socialist in a bad light to forthcoming Fascists. Zetkin fails to appreciate democracy’s permission of her being a member of the Reichstag. As the economy worsened, Communist ideology spread from radical politicians to artists, the mirror of social sentiment. George Grosz depicts a proletariat armed and promising vengeance against war profiteers and industrialists. The radical and violent nature allowed Fascists seeking personal power to exploit the fears of all classes of Germans and topple the Weimar Republic.

As socialism and Democracy clastled, the German populace went through a brief period of uncertainty followed by a delusional self-reassurance in the form of Nazi and Fascism. Writer Ernst von Salomon depicts Germany as a nation that believed in “nothing besides the possibility and feasibility of action.” Wanting what it did not know, and not wanting what it knew. This uncertainty and desire for action led to popular support of the National
Socialist party led by Joseph Goebbels and Adolph Hitler, an oppressive but highly effective organization. Joseph Goebbels, propagandist for the Nazi party, in a speech to the Nazi members speaks of exploiting the "Weimar ideology," i.e., democratic means to seize power. As Goebbels was assigned with the job of dissemination of the Nazi message his word can be taken as the final authority on the motivations of Hitler and the Nazi party. Without popular support the Nazi party might have been as useless as the Weimar Republic. Heinrich Mann, explains in The Diary the crafty methods of Nazi speakers used to manipulate the population. Nazi members exploited primarily dissatisfaction with the economy as a populist tool.

As World War I ended the German Empire was replaced with highly controversial Weimar Republic. Initially, popular sentiment supported the republic. Eventually, though as its leaders failed to reform the economy socialist sentiment grew. Fascist Nazi members dealt the death blow by exploiting socialist fear, a worsening economy, and psychological manipulation.
In the period following WW1 a democratic government known as the Weimar Republic came to power. This part was split up, and there were many different opinions on how much good they were doing for their country. The lack of confidence by the citizens, the introduction of quick dramatic change to Germany, and the emergence of the Socialist movements all contributed to the instability of the Weimar Republic.

Many citizens in Germany lacked confidence in the Weimar Republic and didn't trust their judgment. For example Clara Zetkin commented that the monarchy will take back over through military force over the Weimar (Doc 3). This document shows that people lack confidence in the Republic. Also document 6 says that the German Republic does not lead, but administer. This shows how the document says the German Republic didn't have good judgement and did not trust them to make decisions for the whole country. Even the Chancellor of Germany, Prince Bülow says that Weimar is doing the country no good, and had allowed Germany to be “stabbed in the back” (Doc 9). But being the Chancellor of Germany before the Weimar was established, he would have a sour taste for the German Republic, so document 9
Another reason for the Weimar's instability came through the many dramatic changes they brought to Germany too quickly. For example, giving women the right to be represented in Parliament was established in 1919. (Doc 2). Also, just becoming a democracy so quickly after losing WWI can cause instability. Document 1 quotes that if Germany didn't embrace democracy, it would "become a volcano of misery, likely to erupt into civil wars". This shows how quickly the entire country was thrown into democracy - how it isn't ready for that big of a change. However, the document could be biased due to the fact that it was written by a leader of the German Democratic Party.

The emergence of the socialist party also had an effect on the instability of the Weimar Republic. For example, Joseph Goebbels, a National Socialist Party member says "Weimar ideology itself help us to destroy it" (Doc 11). This statement clearly shows how the socialist party could contribute to instability of the Weimar. Adolf Hitler himself stated that if the Weimar leaders possessed the valiance, courage, and other qualities as his 400,000 SS men of...
the National Socialist movement then Germany would be above all the other nations. (Doc. II)

On the contrary, this document could easily be biased, because Hitler was the leader of the Socialist Party.

In conclusion, the Weimar Republic faced many challenges which contributed to its instability from 1918-1933. Things such as the lack of confidence in the Republic by its own citizens, the quick dramatic changes to the government and how it operated, and also the emergence of the Socialist Party.
The Weimar Republic, the government of Germany established after World War I, lasted from 1918 to 1933. The aftermath of the war, characterized by tremendous inflation and indemnities owed to the Allies, created a political instability that was the perfect environment for the rise of totalitarian regimes. The main factors that contributed to this instability were economic hardship and government incompetence, that facilitated the growth of political radicalism.

The Weimar Republic was born on unstable government, hastily formed in the wake of war as it was. The main issues it faced immediately after its institution was the state of the economy. Ravaged by war and forced to pay outrageous indemnities, Germany's finances were beyond destroyed. The government attempted to stimulate economy by printing more money, resulting in possibly the worst inflation modern history has witnessed. As Heinrich Mann declared, "The economy is collapsing more or less everywhere," contributing to the instability of the Weimar Republic.

In addition, many felt that the Social Democratic Party was "unfit to govern." Besides having been established with "overnight" suddenness, the government of the Weimar Republic was inexperienced. Germany under the First Reich had been a monarchy; the country had no experience as a "radical democracy" as Treitschke called it.

Poor decisions like the one to print more money to relieve the
depression characterize the mistake and incompetent Weimar Republic. On the other hand, the sudden democratic changes had positive consequences for groups like women, who for the first time shared political equality with men. These positive consequences, however, are outweighed by the political instability the suddenness of the Weimar Republic caused.

Economic hardship and shaky governmental administration create breeding grounds for political radicalism. The Communist party gained a huge amount of votes during the depression, putting the stability of Germany and a great deal of Europe at risk. However, a different sort of political radicalism beat out the Communist Party in the form of the National Socialist Party. With the basic intent to destroy the Weimar Republic, Adolf Hitler became chancellor of Germany, eventually resulting in the replacement of the Weimar Republic (Second Reich) with the Third Reich.

Weimar Republic’s instability was caused by factors that were direct results of World War I. Economic crises and a hastily-formed democracy led to the rise of Hitler’s totalitarian regime. The government of the Second Reich collapsed as a result of the conditions of its formations.
Overview

The purpose of the document-based question (DBQ) is to assess the degree to which students can analyze various types of historical documents in order to construct a meaningful analytical essay. This particular DBQ asked students to analyze factors leading to instability in the Weimar Republic from 1918 to 1933. Students were provided with 11 documents on which to base their responses. One of the documents was a political cartoon. Students’ essays were evaluated on the extent to which they met the requirements specified in the core scoring guidelines. Students who exceeded these requirements could then earn additional points in the expanded core, which was based on holistic assessment.

Sample: 1A
Score: 8

The thesis of this essay is well developed and identifies three factors leading to instability in the Weimar Republic from 1918 to 1933. The essay uses nine documents (documents 4, 2, 1, 6, 3, 5, 8, 7, 10). There are no misinterpretations, so the essay received credit for points 3 and 4 in the scoring guidelines. There are four valid point-of-view references (documents 4, 1, 6, 7) and one unsuccessful attempt (document 3). There are three acceptable groups. The essay earned expanded core points because of its higher-level analysis and persuasive point-of-view references. However, it does not bring in historical information and thus did not earn a higher score.

Sample: 1B
Score: 5

The thesis of this essay is acceptable because it identifies three factors leading to instability in the Weimar Republic from 1918 to 1933. The essay uses seven documents (documents 3, 6, 9, 2, 1, 7, 11). There are no misinterpretations and the thesis is adequately supported. The essay contains one acceptable point-of-view reference (document 9) and three acceptable groups.

Sample: 1C
Score: 1

The thesis of this essay is acceptable because it identifies three factors leading to instability in the Weimar Republic from 1918 to 1933. However, the essay uses only three documents (documents 10, 1, 2) and therefore did not earn credit for core points 2, 3 and 4. It provides no discussion of the point of view presented in the documents, and there is only one acceptable group.