**Document Analysis Practice – Gilded Age 1**

William Graham Sumner, social scientist, *The Challenge of Facts*, 1882

“Competition therefore is the law of nature. Nature is entirely neutral; she submits to him who most energetically and resolutely assails her. She grants her rewards to the fittest; therefore, without regard to other considerations of any kind… Such is the system of nature. If we do not like it and if we try to amend it, there is one way in which we can do it. We take from the better and give to the worse… Let it be understood that we cannot go outside this alternative: liberty, inequality, survival of the fittest; not-liberty, equality, survival of the unfittest. The former carries society forward and favors all its best members; the latter carries society downward and favors all its worst members.”

**Part 1: HAPPY**

Historical Context –

Audience –

Purpose –

Point of View –

Why is this important? –

**Part 2: Write 2-3 sentences in which you summarize the document and incorporate two of the following: historical context, author’s POV, purpose, or audience.**

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**Document Analysis Practice – Gilded Age 2**

Samuel Gompers, Letter to Judge Peter Grosscup, “Labor in Industrial Society,” 1894

“You evidently have observed the growth of corporate wealth and influence. You recognize that wealth, in order to become more highly productive, is concentrated into fewer hands, and controlled by representatives and directors, and yet you sing the old siren song that the workingman should depend entirely upon his own ‘individual effort.’

“The school of laissez-faire, of which you seem to be a pronounced advocate, has produced great men in advocating the theory of each for himself and his Satanic majesty taking the hindermost, but the most pronounced advocates of your school of thought in economics have, when practically put to the test, been compelled to admit that combination and organizations of the toiling masses are essential both to prevent the deterioration and to secure an improvement in the condition of the wage earners.”

**Part 1: HAPPY**

Historical Context –

Audience –

Purpose –

Point of View –

Why is this important? –

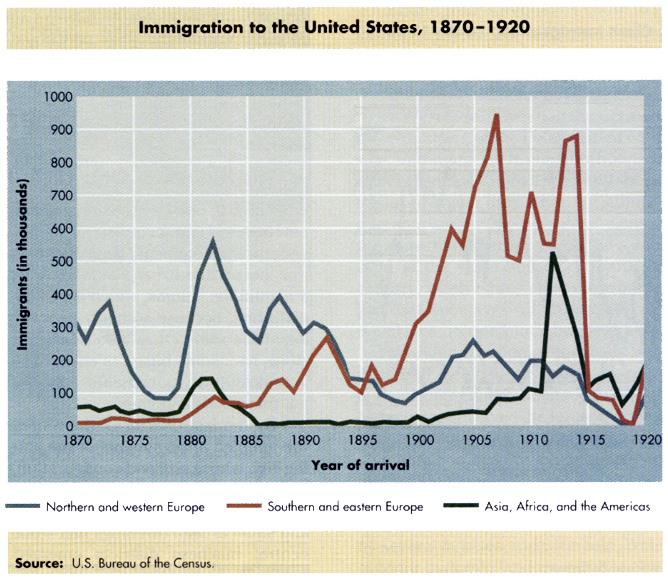
**Part 2: Write 2-3 sentences in which you summarize the document and incorporate two of the following: historical context, author’s POV, purpose, or audience.**

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**Document Analysis Practice – Gilded Age 3**

US Bureau of the Census. *Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1970*.



**Part 1: HAPPY**

Historical Context –

Audience –

Purpose –

Point of View –

Why is this important? –

**Part 2: Write 2-3 sentences in which you summarize the document and incorporate two of the following: historical context, author’s POV, purpose, or audience.**

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**Document Analysis Practice – Gilded Age 4**

Jacob A. Riis, journalist, *How the Other Half Lives*, 1890

“Today, three-fourth of its [New York’s] people live in tenements… If it shall appear that the sufferings and the sins of the ‘other half,’ and the evil they breed, are but as a just punishment upon the community that gave it no other choice, it will be because that is the truth… In the tenements all the influences make for evil; because they are the hotbeds of the epidemics that carry death to rich and poor alike; the nurseries of pauperism and crime that fill our jails and police courts; that throw off a scum of forty thousand human wrecks to the island asylums and workhouses year by year; that turned out in the last eight years around half million beggars to prey upon our charities; that maintain a standing army of ten thousand tramps with all that that implies; because above all, they touch the family life with deadly moral contagion…”

**Part 1: HAPPY**

Historical Context –

Audience –

Purpose –

Point of View –

Why is this important? –

**Part 2: Write 2-3 sentences in which you summarize the document and incorporate two of the following: historical context, author’s POV, purpose, or audience.**

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**Document Analysis – Gilded Age 5**

Booker T. Washington, Speech at Cotton States and International Exposition, Atlanta, September 18, 1895

“The wisest among my race understand that the agitation of questions of social equality is the extremist of folly, and that progress is the enjoyment of all privileges that will come to us must be the result of severe and constant struggle rather than of artificial forcing. No race that has anything to contribute to the markets of the world is long in any degree ostracized. It is important and right that all privileges of the law be ours, but it is vastly more important that we be prepared for the exercises of these privileges. The opportunity to earn a dollar in a factory just now is worth infinitely more than the opportunity to spend a dollar in an opera house.”

**Part 1: HAPPY**

Historical Context –

Audience –

Purpose –

Point of View –

Why is this important? –

**Part 2: Write 2-3 sentences in which you summarize the document and incorporate two of the following: historical context, author’s POV, purpose, or audience.**

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**Document Analysis – Gilded Age 6**

William McElroy, journalist, “An Old War Horse to a Young Politician,” published anonymously in the *Atlantic Monthly,* 1880

“My Dear Nephew,

“Never allow yourself to lose sight of that fact that politics, and not poker, is our great American game. If this could be beaten into the heads of some presumably well-meaning but glaringly unpractical people, we should hear less idiotic talk about reform in connection with politics. Nobody ever dreams of organizing a reform movement in poker…

“Mr. Lincoln, a very estimable and justly popular, but in some respects an impractical man, formulated widely different error regard to politics. He held that ours is a government of the people, by the people, for the people. I maintain, on the contrary, that it is government of politicians, by politicians, for politicians. If your political career is to be a success, you must understand and respect this distinction with a difference.”

**Part 1: HAPPY**

Historical Context –

Audience –

Purpose –

Point of View –

Why is this important? –

**Part 2: Write 2-3 sentences in which you summarize the document and incorporate two of the following: historical context, author’s POV, purpose, or audience.**

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**Document Analysis – Gilded Age 7**

The Niagara Movement, Declaration of Principles, 1905

**Progress:** The members of the conference, known as the Niagara Movement, assembled in annual meeting at Buffalo, July 11th, 12th and 13th, 1905, congratulate the Negro-Americans on certain undoubted evidences of progress in the last decade, particularly the increase of intelligence, the buying of property, the checking of crime, the uplift in home life, the advance in literature and art, and the demonstration of constructive and executive ability in the conduct of great religious, economic and educational institutions.

**Suffrage:** At the same time, we believe that this class of American citizens should protest emphatically and continually against the curtailment of their political rights. We believe in manhood suffrage; we believe that no man is so good, intelligent or wealthy as to be entrusted wholly with the welfare of his neighbor.

**Civil Liberty:** We believe also in protest against the curtailment of our civil rights. All American citizens have the right to equal treatment in places of public entertainment according to their behavior and deserts.

**Economic Opportunity:** We especially complain against the denial of equal opportunities to us in economic life; in the rural districts of the South this amounts to peonage and virtual slavery; all over the South it tends to crush labor and small business enterprises; and everywhere American prejudice, helped often by iniquitous laws, is making it more difficult for Negro-Americans to earn a decent living.

**Education:** Common school education should be free to all American children and compulsory. High school training should be adequately provided for all, and college training should be the monopoly of no class or race in any section of our common country. We believe that, in defense of our own institutions, the United States should aid common school education, particularly in the South, and we especially recommend concerted agitation to this end. We urge an increase in public high school facilities in the South, where the Negro-Americans are almost wholly without such provisions. We favor well-equipped trade and technical schools for the training of artisans, and the need of adequate and liberal endowment for a few institutions of higher education must be patent to sincere well-wishers of the race.

**Courts:** We demand upright judges in courts, juries selected without discrimination on account of color and the same measure of punishment and the same efforts at reformation for black as for white offenders. We need orphanages and farm schools for dependent children, juvenile reformatories fox delinquents, and the abolition of the dehumanizing convict-lease system.

**Public Opinion:** We note with alarm the evident retrogression in this land of sound public opinion on the subject of manhood rights, republican government and human brotherhood, arid we pray God that this nation will not degenerate into a mob of boasters and oppressors, but rather will return to the faith of the fathers, that all men were created free and equal, with certain unalienable rights. …

**Part 1: HAPPY**

Historical Context –

Audience –

Purpose –

Point of View –

Why is this important? –

**Part 2: Write 2-3 sentences in which you summarize the document and incorporate two of the following: historical context, author’s POV, purpose, or audience.**

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