**Primary Source Document Analysis—SOAPStone**

**S**ubject

• What is the topic or content?

• What is the main idea the source trying to convey?

**O**ccasion or form

• In what time and place was the piece created?

• What were the circumstances that led to the creation of the document?

• What is the form or type of document—diary, government report, speech, fiction, photo or painting, etc.?

• How does the occasion or form affect the meaning of the piece or our interpretation of its reliability and validity?

**A**udience

• Who is the intended audience for this document?

• How does that affect our interpretation of the document?

**P**urpose

• What is the reason behind this document’s existence?

• Why was it created—to inform, persuade, frighten, delight, deceive, etc.?

**S**peaker

• Who is the author, creator, or speaker? Gender? Occupation? Social class or rank? Nationality or ethnicity? Religion? Level of education?

**Tone**

• What does the author’s tone or diction indicate about the author’s attitude?

**Primary Source Document Analysis—APPARTS- Q**

**A**uthor

• Who created the document?

• What do you know about the author?

• What is the author’s point of view—what is his/her/its view derived from or based on?

• Gender? Class?

• Occupation?

• Is the author a reliable commentator on the topic? Why?

**P**lace and time

• Where and when was the document produced? Contemporary to the event or not? Primary source?

• How might this affect its meaning?

**P**rior knowledge

• What do you know about the time, context, event / movement the document is about?

**A**udience

• For whom was the document intended—so what?

• What is the type of document: journal, pamphlet, diary, article, etc? How might that affect the reliability of the document?

**R**eason

• Why was the source created? Why in the time it was created?

**T**he Main Idea: the message

• What point is the source trying to convey? What are you persuaded to believe?

• How is that conveyed (wording, rhetorical style, tone of source)

• Type of document: what about its reliability on the topic?

• Relationship to the topic being read about

**S**ignificance

• Why is this source important? Why is this document important to the topic or question?

• Why do we still read this source today?

**Q**uestions

• What questions do you have about the document? / author?

• What other types of documents might improve your understanding of the topic?

• What confidence do you have in the completeness and reliability of the source?

**Advanced AP Analysis**

**Presuppositions**

• What are the underlying assumptions or suppositions in this argument? How are they similar to or different from our own? (e.g. assumptions about gender)

• What assumptions or values do we bring to the text? For example, our values of equality under the law might shape our interpretation of Hammurabi’s Code.

**Multiple Perspectives**

• How would other people from different countries, classes, genders, etc. view the document or situation? For example, compare the Declarations of the Rights of Man and Citizen with The Declarations of the Rights of Woman and Citizen and the Seneca Falls platform, or the Aztecs and the Spaniards reports on “la noche triste.”

**Reliability, Credibility, Objectivity**

• How reliable is the source? What facts or interpretations can be cross-checked against known or trusted sources?

• Is the author consistently honest within the source? Are there gaps or unexplained lapses?

• Tone is important. Is the author irate, indignant, sarcastic, ironic, etc.?

• Is the author objective in his/her views? Personal? Polemic?

• Does the author have a personal stake in the issue or is he/she neutral?

• What are the author’s credentials—does he/she have the expertise or first-hand knowledge to be a reliable source on this subject?