Identify the author’s argument in response to the historical question.
- Which side is the author on?
- How would the author respond to the historical question?

Read each paragraph and ask about the author’s main idea.
- What is the author describing in this paragraph?
- What is the main idea of this paragraph?
- Does this main idea relate to the historical question? How?

Examine the author’s ★ reliability★.
- Who wrote this document and what judgments can we make about him/her?
  ★ - Why did s/he write this document? **Clues:** ★ Type of document ★ audience ★ and ★ occasion for writing★

Judge: Write 1 reason to doubt the author or 1 reason to trust the author.

Assess the influence of context.←
- How might → place ← have influenced the writing of this document? **Clue:** Compare document location to location of events.
- What else was going on at → this time ← in history? **Clue:** Identify → historical events ← and compare to when documents were written.

Judge: Given what else was going on at this time/place, write why the author’s argument does/doesn’t make sense.

Determine the quality of the author’s facts and examples.
- What facts or examples does the author give to support his/her argument?
- How do facts or examples support the author’s argument?
- Where do the facts or examples come from?
- Which facts or examples are most persuasive?

Judge: Write why the author’s facts and examples are/are not convincing.