

# Databases

Databases are a way of prepping brilliant Issue Essays without having to come up with brilliant ideas during your test.

A Database is a store of test-friendly and user-friendly examples that are test ready!

Creating Databases:

Choose a Topic:

Why did it happen?

Exactly what happened?

Who was involved?

What were the results?

Why was it important?

Example:

Choose a Topic: *the American Revolutionary War*

Why did it happen? *The Americans felt they weren't getting represented in British government, even though they were getting taxed. "Taxation without representation"*

Exactly what happened? *After numerous protests (Boston Tea Party) the Americans declared war. The fighting occurred on American soil, with the Americans fighting using techniques learned from the Native Americans.*

Who was involved? *George Washington, King George, Paul Revere, Betsy Ross, John Hancock*

What were the results? *The Americans were freed from British rule and founded the USA, wrote the Constitution and installed Democracy.*

Why was it important? *It was the first time the large British Empire had been overthrown, the only war fought on American soil, led to separation of church and state, led to French Revolution.*

Hints:

- Limit each answer to two to three lines of type. No one idea should take up more than one line of type (anything more won't fit into your essay). This allows you to choose one part of your database for your essay.
- Choose topics you are already familiar with. This will make them much, much easier to use on test day. It will also allow you to tailor the example to the topic at hand rather than force it to fit.
- Find examples that cover as many of the prompt categories as possible: advertising/media, business, education, government, history, politics, science/technology and sociology.
- Feel free to seed your databases with strong phrases to use in future essays. For example, an American history based database could include "taxation without representation", "manifest destiny" and "protestant work ethic".
- Practice writing essays with your databases next to you! Do at least three essays before test day without your databases, but before that this is the best way to practice!
- Go from memory about something you already know! You don't have to be perfect; right-ish is good enough!

Examples that have worked well in the past:

(all of these contain at least half the topics mentioned in the 'prompt categories list' above.)

- *Memoirs of a Geisha*
- Steve Prefontaine (yes, you can get all you need from watching the movie!)
- The Civil Rights Movement

A consideration is that you can make database pairs, that are closely related. Using examples from a database pair will create automatic depth and unity in your essay.

- American Revolution / Civil War
- The Simpsons / South Park
- Batman / Superman

All of the above topics are from essays written by former Kaplan students. All of the above topics were in essays that scored a 6!!!!