

NAME:

DATE:

CLASS:

DBQ FOCUS: The Mongol Empire



Document-Based Question Format

Directions: The following question is based on the accompanying Documents (The documents have been edited for the purpose of this exercise.) This question is designed to test your ability to work with and understand historical documents.

Write a response that:

- Has a relevant **thesis** and **supports that thesis with evidence** from the documents.
- Cites evidence from included source perspectives.
- Analyzes the documents by grouping them in as many appropriate ways as possible. Does not simply summarize the documents individually.
- Takes into account both the sources of the documents and the author's points of view.

Question

How did the Mongols accomplish the conquest of such a large territory within such a short period of time?

Document 1

Source: The Secret History of the Mongols, 13th Century, Mongol Oral Traditions

After this in the Year of the Sheep Chingis* Khan set out to fight the people of Cathay (the Chin Empire in north China). First he took the city of Fu-chou then marching through the Wild Fox Pass he took Hsuan-te-fu. From here he sent out an army under Jebe's command to take the fortress at Chu-yung Kuan. When Jebe arrived he saw the Chu-yung Kuan was well defended, so he said: "I'll trick them and make them come out in the open. I'll pretend to retreat and when they come out I'll attack them." So Jebe retreated and the Cathayan* army cried: "Let's go after them!" They poured out of their fortifications until the valleys and mountainsides were full of their soldiers. Jebe retreated to Sondi-i-wu Ridge and there he turned his army around to attack as the enemy rushed towards him in waves. The Cathayan army was beaten and close behind Jebe's forces. Chingis Khan, commanding the great Middle Army, attacked as well, forcing the Cathayan army to retreat, killing the finest and most courageous soldiers of Cathay, the Jurchin and Khara Khitan fighters, slaughtering them along the side of Chu-yung Kuan so that their bodies lay piled up like rotten logs.

*Chingis Khan is an alternate spelling for Genghis Khan

*Cathay is another name for China

Student Analysis

Document 2

Source: The Chronicles of Novgorod, 1016-1417, written by anonymous monks Novgorod near Russia.

[In 1238] foreigners called Tartars* came in countless numbers, like locusts, into the land of the Ryazan, and on first coming they halted at the river Nukhla, and took it, and halted in camp there. And thence they sent their emissaries to the Knyazes of Ryasan, a sorceress and two men with her, demanding from them one-tenth of everything: of men and Knyazes and horses – of everything one tenth.... And the Knyazes said to them: "Only when none of us remain, then all will be yours.".... And the Knyazes of Ryazan sent to Yuri of Volodimir asking for help, or himself to come. But Yuri neither went himself nor listened to the request of the Knyazes of Ryasan, but himself wished to make war separately. But it was too late to oppose the wrath of God.... And then the pagan foreigners surrounded Ryazan and fenced it in with a stockade. And the Tartars took the town on December 21, and they had advanced against it on the 16th of the same month. They likewise killed the Knyaz and the Knyaginya, and men, women, and children, monks, nuns and priests, some by fire, some by sword, and violated nuns, priests' wives, good women and girls in the presence of their mothers and sisters.... And who, brethren, would not lament over this, among those of us alive when they suffered this bitter and violent death? And we, indeed, having seen it, were terrified and wept with sighing day and night over our sins...

*Tartars was the Russian name for the Mongols.

Student Analysis

Document 3

Source: Travels, Marco Polo, a European adventurer and travel writer, written in 1298 based on his travels from 1274 to 1290.

Their arms are bows, iron maces, and in some instances, spears; but the first is the weapon at which they are the most expert, being accustomed, from children, to employ it in their sports. They wear defensive armor made from buffalo and hides of other beasts, dried by the fire, and thus rendered extremely hard and strong. They are brave in battle, almost to desperation, setting little value upon their lives, and exposing themselves without hesitation to all manner of danger. Their disposition is cruel.

They are capable of supporting every kind of privation, and when there is a necessity for it, can live for a month on the milk of their mares, and upon such wild animals as they may chance to catch. Their horses are fed upon grass alone, and do not require barley or other grain. The men are trained to remain on horseback during two days and two nights, without dismounting.... No people on earth can surpass them in fortitude under difficulties, nor show greater patience under wants of every kind. They are most obedient to their chiefs, and are maintained at small expense.

Student Analysis

Document 4

Source: Persian History of Chinggis Khan, Juvaini, prior to his appointment as governor of Baghdad in 1259 by the Mongols.

The reviewing and mustering of the army has been so arranged that they have abolished the registry of inspection and dismissed the officials and clerks. For they have divided all the people into companies of ten, appointing one of the ten to be the commander of the nine others; while from among each ten commanders one has been given the title of 'commander of the hundred,' all the hundred having been placed under his command. And so it is with each thousand men and so also with each ten thousand, over whom they have appointed a commander whom they call 'commander of the tümen'. In accordance with this arrangement, if in an emergency any man or thing be required, they apply to the commanders of the tümin; who in turn apply to the commanders of the thousands, and so on down to the commanders of tens. There is a true equality in this; each man toils as much as the next, and no difference is made between them, no attention being paid to wealth or power. If there is a sudden call for soldiers an order is issued that so many thousand men must present themselves in such and such a place at such and such an hour of that day. And they arrive not a twinkling of an eye before or after the appointed hour.

Their obedience and submissiveness is such that if there be a commander of a hundred thousand between whom and the Khan there is a distance of sunrise and sunset, and if he but commit some fault, the Khan dispatches a single horseman to punish him after the manner prescribed: if his head has been demanded, he cuts it off, and if gold, he takes it from him.

Throughout the length and breadth of the land they established yams [rest stops], and made arrangements for the upkeep and expenses for each yam, assigning thereto a fixed number of men and beasts as well as food, drink, and other necessities. All this they shared out amongst the tümen, each two tümen having to supply one yam.

Student Analysis

Document 5

Source: A Report on Gender Relations, William of Rubruck, a Franciscan friar who visited the Mongols in 1250's on behalf of the King of France.

One woman will drive twenty or thirty wagons, since the terrain is level.... It is the women's task to drive the wagons, to load the dwellings on them and to unload again, to milk the cows, to make butter and grut [curds or cheese], and to dress the skins and stitch them together, which they do with a thread made from sinew.

The men make bows and arrows, manufacture stirrups and bits, fashion saddles, construct the dwellings and the wagons, tend the horses and mares, churn the comas [that is, the mare's milk], produce the skins in which it is stored, and tend and load the camels.

Student Analysis

Document 6

Source: History of the Mongols, Rashid al-Din, Mongol high official, written after 1241.

During the seven years (between 1235 and 1241) Ogedei (the son of Chinggis Khan) enjoyed life and amused himself. He moved from summer to winter camp and visa versa, serene and happy, and took permanent delight in beautiful women and moonfaced enchantresses.

At every opportunity, he allowed his sublime thoughts to overflow lavishly into the most just and charitable of good deeds, into the eradication of injustice and enmity, into the development of cities and districts, as well as into the construction of various buildings. He never neglected any measure designed to strengthen the framework of peace, and to lay the foundation of prosperity.

Student Analysis

Document 7

Source: Anonymous eyewitness account, translated by Urgunge Onon, 1993.

That summer Chinggis Khan pitched his camp on the Snowy mountain. He sent soldiers out against those of the Tangqut people who had rebelled against him.... The whole tribe was completely wiped out. Then he showed favor to Bo'orchy and Mugal, saying: "Take what you want, until you can carry no more.... Make their fine sons follow behind you, holding your falcons. Bring up their daughters to arrange your wives' skirts."

Student Analysis

Document 8

Source: Letter from Pope Innocent IV to the Great Khan, 1245.

It is not without cause that we are driven to express in strong terms our amazement that you, according to what we have heard, have invaded many countries belonging both to Christians and to others and are laying waste in a horrible desolation, and with a fury still unabated you do not cease from breaking the bonds of natural ties, sparing neither sex nor age, you rage against all indiscriminately with the sword of chastisement.

Student Analysis

Document 9

Source: Letter from Great Khan to Pope Innocent IV

Student Analysis

Those of whom you speak showed themselves highly presumptuous and slew our envoys. Therefore, in accordance with the commands of the Eternal Heaven the inhabitants of the aforesaid countries have been slain and annihilated. If not by the command of Heaven, how can anyone slay or conquer out of his own strength?

Thanks to the power of the Eternal Heaven, all lands have been given to us from sunrise to sunset. How could anyone act other than in accordance with the commands of Heaven? Now your own upright heart must tell you: "We will become subject to you, and will place our powers at your disposal." You in person, at the head of the monarchs, all of you, without exception, must come to tender us service and pay us homage, then only will we recognize your submission. But if you do not obey the commands of Heaven, and run counter to our orders, we shall know that you are our foe.

**Generic Core-Scoring Guide for AP World History
Document-Based Question**

Basic Core: Competence	Points	Historical Thinking Skills Assessed
1. Has acceptable thesis.	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Argumentation ➤ Depending on the topic of the question: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical Causation • Comparison • Patterns of Continuity and Change Over Time
2. Addresses all of the documents and demonstrates understanding of all or all but one.	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Use of Historical Evidence
3. Supports thesis with appropriate evidence from all or all but one document. [Supports thesis with appropriate evidence from all but two documents.]	2 (1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Argumentation ➤ Depending on the topic of the question: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical Causation • Comparison • Patterns of Continuity and Change Over Time
4. Analyzes point of view in at least two documents.	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Use of Historical Evidence
5. Analyzes documents by grouping them in two or three ways, depending on the question.	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Argumentation ➤ Use of Historical Evidence ➤ Depending on the topic of the question: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical Causation • Comparison • Patterns of Continuity and Change Over Time
6. Identifies and explains the need for one type of appropriate additional document or source.	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Argumentation ➤ Use of Historical Evidence
Subtotal	7	Essay as a whole: Synthesis
Expanded Core: Excellence	Points	Historical Thinking Skills Assessed
Expands beyond basic core of 1–7 points. A student must earn 7 points in the basic core area before earning points in the expanded core area. Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Has a clear, analytical, and comprehensive thesis. ➤ Shows careful and insightful analysis of the documents. ➤ Uses documents persuasively as evidence. ➤ Analyzes point of view in most or all documents. ➤ Analyzes the documents in additional ways—groupings, comparisons, syntheses. ➤ Brings in relevant “outside” historical content. ➤ Explains why additional types of document(s) or sources are needed. 	0–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Same skills as noted in basic core ➤ Other historical thinking skills may be demonstrated depending on the question and the documents
Subtotal	2	
TOTAL	9	

TOTAL POINTS BASIC CORE	
TOTAL POINTS EXPANDED CORE	
TOTAL POINTS EARNED	
FINAL GRADE	

RUBRIC	PERCENT	POINTS
9	100	50
8	95	48
7	90	45
6	85	43
5	80	40
4	75	38
3	70	35
2	65	33
1	60	30
0	0	0

Comments: