



Quote Analysis

"The widespread damage of Europe should therefore have offered little surprise to [delegates to the Potsdam Conference]. Still, most of them had learned the destruction from the safety of their own headquarters... Seeing Berlin for themselves offered a distinctly different and altogether more immediate view of the shattered world they would no have to put back together. As they quickly realized, the challenges of reconstruction might be even more daunting than the challenges of the war itself..."

Michael Neiberg, *Potsdam: The End of World War II and the Remaking of Europe*, 2015.

Before jumping into a document-based question or a curated research paper, teachers can use the "Quote Analysis" strategy to help students practice reading and analyzing historical quotes. The method helps students engage deeply with primary and secondary sources. This strategy encourages critical thinking, historical inquiry, and text-based analysis. Here's how it works:

Step 1: Provide students with a quote from a primary or secondary source. Consider reading the quote with the students.

Step 2: Provide students with scaffolded questions about the quote to help them analyze the main meaning and significance. The scaffolded questions should be focused on the information found in the quote itself.

Step 3: Review and analyze the answers with the students.

Why Use This Strategy?

- Encourages Deep Thinking: Moves students beyond memorization to interpretation.
- Enhances Textual Analysis Skills: Strengthens literacy in a social studies context.
- Promotes Discussion: Sparks meaningful debates and discussions.
- Connects Past to Present: Helps students see history's relevance in today's world.

By consistently using this strategy, students develop critical thinking skills, historical empathy, and a deeper appreciation for primary sources.