



SOAPSTONES



A tool for document analysis in the
U.S. History Classroom

SPEAKER



Who is doing the writing?

How does the author's characteristics affect the message?

What traits might affect the reliability of the document? Does the author have a bias on the topic?

OCCASION



When and where was this written?

Was there anything important occurring during that time or place that might be reflected in the text?

How might when and where it was written affect the meaning?

AUDIENCE



Who will be listening or reading this text, and why?

How is the message tailored to match audience characteristics?

How might the composition of the audience affect the reliability of the document?

PURPOSE



Why was this written at this specific time and place?

What are people supposed to do or think after they read it?

Does the document describe, entertain, explain, or persuade?

SUBJECT



What is the text about?

What is the main idea or claim?

What are some important details?

TONE



What attitude does the author have?

What emotions are being expressed and how do they influence the audience?

What language or words are used to show the author's attitude?

SIGNIFICANCE



How or why does this document support your thesis?

How is this document connected to the larger themes of US History?

How does this document answer the "So what?" question?

