Orders Under Scrutiny

A historical argument built from multiple sources

USH.P.4.1.A "Compose informative essays and written products, developing a thesis, citing and incorporating evidence from multiple sources and maintaining an organized, formal structure."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the thesis, circle the names of sources, and number the evidence details in the order the writer uses them to build the argument.

What the Orders Did Not Say

(1) In 1942, notices posted along the West Coast told families of Japanese ancestry to leave their homes. The orders looked official, but their language did not explain what these families would lose. Comparing wartime documents with later government findings shows that Japanese American incarceration was not a necessary security measure, but a policy shaped by racial prejudice. Executive Order 9066, signed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in February 1942, authorized military commanders to exclude people from designated areas. The order did not name Japanese Americans. That omission matters: a reader must compare the order with evidence of how its authority was used.

(2) The exclusion notices put that broad authority into practice. Civilian Exclusion Order No. 34, issued in May 1942, instructed people of Japanese ancestry in a part of San Francisco to report for removal. Its instructions applied to families, not just people accused of wrongdoing. According to the National Archives, about 120,000 people of Japanese ancestry were incarcerated during World War II; roughly two-thirds were United States citizens. The notice therefore helps explain what the executive order's neutral wording concealed: ancestry determined who would be forced to leave. The figures show the policy's reach, including citizens with constitutional rights.

(3) Later evidence challenged the wartime rationale. In *Personal Justice Denied* (1983), the federal Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians concluded that the incarceration had not been justified by military necessity. It identified "race prejudice, war hysteria, and a failure of political leadership" as key causes. Congress then passed the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, which apologized for the government's actions and provided payments to eligible survivors. These sources do different jobs: the 1942 orders document what officials required, while the commission evaluates why it happened. Together, they support a conclusion that a wartime claim of security can be tested against later evidence.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Which sentence states the passage's thesis? Explain why it is a claim rather than just a topic.

2. How does the writer use Civilian Exclusion Order No. 34 to add meaning to Executive Order 9066?

3. What does the National Archives evidence add to the writer's argument that the exclusion notice alone does not show?

4. How does the final paragraph move from evidence to a conclusion? Name the roles of the commission's report and the Civil Liberties Act.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write one formal paragraph arguing which is more useful for judging a government policy: its instructions at the time or a later investigation. State your own thesis, use evidence from two named sources in the passage, explain how each source supports your claim, and end with a concluding sentence.

ANSWER KEY

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HIGH SCHOOL · USH.P.4.1.A

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the thesis, circle the names of sources, and number the evidence details in the order the writer uses them to build the argument. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Which sentence states the passage's thesis? Explain why it is a claim rather than just a topic.	**The sentence beginning "Comparing wartime documents with later government findings" is the thesis. It makes a debatable claim about the causes of incarceration rather than merely naming the event.**
2	How does the writer use Civilian Exclusion Order No. 34 to add meaning to Executive Order 9066?	**Executive Order 9066 authorized exclusion without naming Japanese Americans. Civilian Exclusion Order No. 34 shows that this authority was used to remove people of Japanese ancestry.**
3	What does the National Archives evidence add to the writer's argument that the exclusion notice alone does not show?	**The National Archives figures show the policy's scale and that roughly two-thirds of those incarcerated were United States citizens.**
4	How does the final paragraph move from evidence to a conclusion? Name the roles of the commission's report and the Civil Liberties Act.	**The commission's report evaluates the causes of incarceration and rejects military necessity. The Civil Liberties Act shows a later official response through an apology and payments. Together, they support the conclusion that wartime security claims can be tested against later evidence.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Later investigations are more useful for judging a government policy than its original instructions, although both kinds of evidence matter. Executive Order 9066 gave military commanders authority to exclude people from designated areas but did not name Japanese Americans. By itself, the order does not show who would be affected. The Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians concluded in *Personal Justice Denied* (1983) that incarceration was not justified by military necessity. Because the commission assessed the policy's causes rather than merely recording its legal authority, its findings support a stronger judgment of the policy.

Accept either position in Part 3 if the paragraph states a clear thesis, accurately attributes evidence to two named sources, explains how both support the claim, and maintains a formal structure.