**APPARTS** is designed to get students to focus on key elements of the document and to evaluate the relative importance of these elements in affecting the reliability of this document. Those elements are:

* **Author**: Students should look closely at who authored the piece. What do they know about the author that would affect the reliability of the document? Are they aware of any bias the author might possess which would color the account? In AP World and AP European history, point-of-view factors heavily in the grading of the DBQ.
* **Place and Time**: When and where was the source produced, and how might this affect the meaning of the document? If time and place is not given in the source, are there clues within the document as to the time and place of origin?
* **Prior Knowledge**: Based on the author and time and place of the source, what additional knowledge can a student trigger from this document? An example might be a document from John C. Calhoun which doesn’t mention nullification. A student might know that John C. Calhoun authored the South Carolina Exposition and Protest which espoused the compact theory of government and the possibility of nullification. A political cartoon might have drawings of an elephant and donkey. Can the student determine what those symbols represent?
* **Audience**: Who was the source created for, and how might this affect the reliability of the document? Would we anticipate that Richard Nixon would say the same things to his advisors in the Oval Office concerning the Watergate break-in that he would in a radio address to the American people? Why would Franklin Roosevelt say, "Your boys are not going to be sent to any foreign wars?"
* **Reason**: Why was this document produced at the time and place it was? Prior knowledge, time and place, author, audience all factor in to a student being able to determine reason. Why would Andrew Jackson says, "John Marshall has made his decision, now let him enforce it" in 1832? Why would Joseph Keppler draw the anti-immigration restriction cartoon "Looking Backward" in 1893?
* **Main Idea**: What is the point the document is trying to make? It is essential that students be able to synthesize the information in the source and express it in a single sentence, rather than simply paraphrasing or directly quoting the document.
* **Significance**: On the Advanced Placement exam, students are always asked to examine documents relative to a specific question. In the **Significance** component of APPARTS, students must ask themselves the question, "How and why does this document support my thesis?" The AP Vertical Teams Guide suggests that students ask themselves, "So what?"