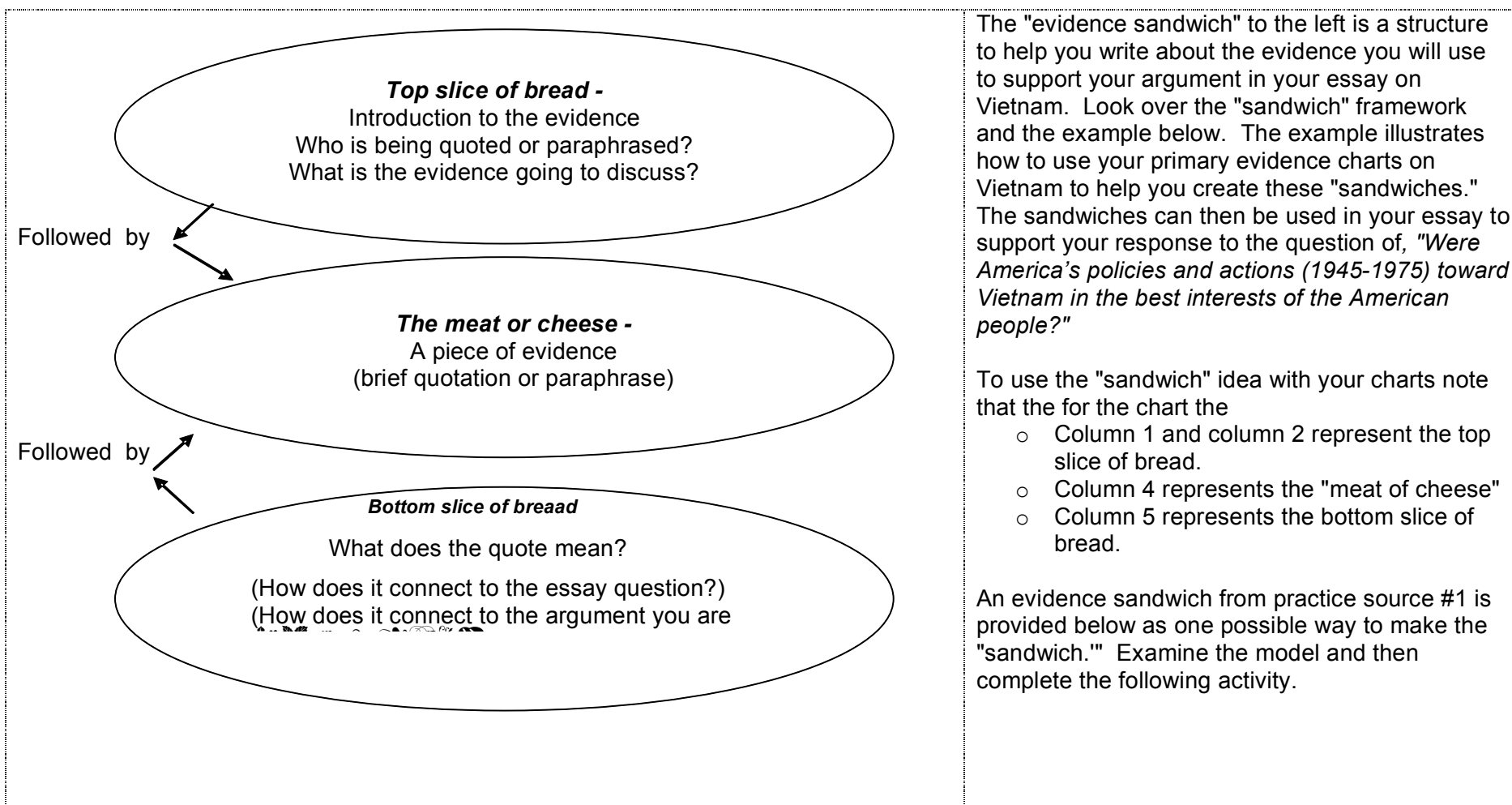


Preparing to Write the Vietnam Essay - Developing "Evidence Sandwiches"



* An "evidence sandwich" is a framework for helping students link their understanding of historical evidence to the development of the ability to write structured, written argument, Rob Phillips, Reflective Teaching of History, Continuum, 2002, pages 76 & 108.

Practice Document #	1. Author, Date, type of document (primary or secondary)	2. Summary – What is the main idea or point you get from examining this document(s)?	3. Does this document suggest that the war was “in the best interest of the American people?” Explain.	4. If applicable, Quote from the text that provides evidence how the author defines “in the best interest of the American people?”	5. How would you use this document to help you answer the assessment prompt? (either to support your position or as an idea you have to counter) Sample sentence starters include: <i>What this example demonstrates is...</i> <i>This quotation illustrates...</i> <i>This speaker/writer suggests...</i>
1	-Dean Rusk and Robert McNamara - report to President Kennedy -November 11, 1961	<i>The main point that Secretary of State Rusk and Secretary of Defense McNamara are trying to make is that if Vietnam became part of the Communist bloc, other nations in Southeast Asia would follow.</i>	<i>This article suggests that fighting against the Communists in Vietnam would be in the best interests of the American people.</i>	<i>“The loss of South Vietnam to Communism would involve the transfer of a nation 20 million people from the free world to the Communist bloc.”</i>	<i>This quote illustrates that in 1961 President Kennedy’s closest advisors believed that it was in the United States best interests to try and stop South Vietnam from becoming a communist nation.</i>

Possible evidence sandwich:

Late in 1961 President Kennedy received a report on South Vietnam from Dean Rusk and Robert McNamara, the report argued that, “The loss of South Vietnam to Communism would involve the transfer of a nation 20 million people from the free world to the Communist bloc.” This quote illustrates that President Kennedy’s closest advisors believed that it was in the United States best interests to try and stop South Vietnam from becoming a communist nation.

(I will use this quote to show how the “domino theory” was used to support going to war. I will counter this idea by presenting the argument that issue in Vietnam was not communism, but whether Vietnam could decide for itself what kind of government it would have.)

To Do:

Return to your evidence analysis charts on pages 7-9. Select four of the sources and, using the columns 1&2 (top slice of bread), column 4 (the meat or cheese), and column 5 (the bottom slice of bread), make an evidence sandwich that illustrates your understanding of what the quote means. Conclude with a statement of how you might use this to support your argument about whether U.S. policies and actions toward Vietnam were in the best interest of the American people.

Source #	Evidence Sandwich