

Maps in the News Comparative Study

Background: In “Reading Maps and Facing Threats”, de Blij speaks at length regarding the many ways maps can be “wrong”. While many of these reasons are intentional, he also argues that many maps we see every day do not follow best cartographic practice despite the lack of malicious intent. Of particular note to de Blij is the tendency of news agencies to rely on the use of artists for their maps, rather than people trained in cartographic standards.

Purpose: Your purpose in this assignment is to analyze and evaluate two different maps found within recent (after 1 September 2015) news stories, and to successfully argue why one map is superior to the other. You may use any means you’d like to make this argument (TODALSIGS, qualifications from de Blij such as intent, etc.).

Objective: Your objective is to craft a well-supported argument as to which of two maps is superior. Remember, any argument is valid IF IT IS SUPPORTED. This means you need to provide *evidence* to support your choice.

Methodology: You will research and choose two maps from a recent news story using publicly available news sources. A list of suggested sites is included in this document. You may choose any maps linked to any news story. However, be careful that your maps are not cartograms (see Ms. Chase if you aren’t sure), nor are they maps associated with a weather story. After you have chosen your maps, analyze each map using TODALSIGS and any other analytical unit you prefer (visually appealing, simplicity of design, etc). Then, you will create a well-crafted argument consisting of a thesis (your argument), at least five pieces of evidence (some from the map you have chosen as superior, and ALSO evidence as to why your inferior map doesn’t meet your standards). Analysis (commentary in Ms. Vestal speak) must also be present. Think to answer questions such as the following to help you analyze: *Why* does this map lack a source? *Why* is the map used outdated?

Product: Your final assignment submission will include a visual of the maps you are using. You may copy and paste your map into this document or physically cut and glue a map from a newspaper or news magazine. It does NOT need to be in color. You can print in the library or come see me during lunch if you do not have access to a printer. You will also need to have proper citations from both articles. You may use either MLA format, Chicago, or Turabian (we will discuss these in class briefly). Purdue University has an excellent citation website that I highly recommend: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/> You will also need to show evidence of analysis by completing the TODALSIGS chart and documenting any other means of analysis you choose to employ as a form of pre-writing. In addition, you will provide a well-developed written argument as to your choice of superior map. This will probably be in the range of 3-4 short paragraphs if you separate your introduction/thesis. If you include a summary you may wish to think about 4 paragraphs (intro, 2 body paragraphs, summary).

Scoring: This is a summative grade. You will be assessed on your final written product, as well as your evidence of analysis and citations. A rubric is attached. ALL submissions will be turned into me by Thursday 1 October, 2015 regardless of whether you have class with me that day. You may bring in hard copies at any time next week before 3:45pm Thursday, or you may email your submission to me by 11:59pm Thursday evening. NO LATE WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED FOR THIS ASSIGNMENT.

News Source Suggestions: The following is a list of suggested sources to consider. It is not exhaustive by any means, and you may find other places from which to get your maps. Many of these are considered more reliable than others. This is all okay. The goal is to get you to analyze maps, and sometimes less reliable sources provide a better means of analysis. As long as it is a relatively widely known news source, regardless of perceived bias, you will be fine. If you aren't sure, ask Ms. Chase (jchase3@houstonisd.org)!

The Washington Post

The New York Times

CNN

MSNBC

FoxNews

The BBC

The Guardian

The Atlantic Monthly

Time Magazine

US News and World Report

The Economist (Ms. Chase's favorite 😊)

Christian Science Monitor

The Houston Chronicle

NPR

The Wall Street Journal

The New Yorker

Bloomberg

Mother Jones

The Huffington Post

Name: _____ Date: _____ Pd: _____

Rubric

Citations	3	2	1	0
Map A	Citation is correct for use of style, style is consistent with Map B	Citation is mostly correct with 1-2 errors, style is consistent with Map B	Citation is incomplete or has more than 3 errors, , and/or style is inconsistent with Map B	No attempt at citations
Map B	Citation is correct for use of style	Citation is mostly correct with 1-2 errors, style is consistent with Map A	Citation is incomplete or has more than 3 errors, , and/or style is inconsistent with Map A	No attempt at citations

Citation Total _____

Evidence of Analysis	3	2	1	0
Map A	TODALSIGS used as well as one original unit of analysis (eg. visual appeal, effectiveness)	TODALSIGS used only	TODALSIGS used, not applied correctly	No evidence of analysis
Map B	TODALSIGS used as well as one original unit of analysis (eg. visual appeal, effectiveness)	TODALSIGS used only	TODALSIGS used, not applied correctly	No evidence of analysis

Evidence of Analysis Total _____

Image of Map	2	0
Map A	Map A is present	Map B is not present
Map B	Map B is present	Map B is not present

Image of Map Total _____

Written Argument	3	2	1	0
Thesis	well-developed, includes units of analysis, has clear choice of superior map	Units of analysis not clear, has clear choice of map	No units of analysis but includes choice of map	No thesis present or map choice indentifiable
Evidence	5 or more specific pieces of evidence present	4 specific pieces of evidence present	3 pieces of evidence present	2 or fewer pieces of evidence
Analysis	Strong analysis of why 3 or more pieces of evidence exist (eg. statement explaining why Map A or B has a title, etc.)	Analysis of why 2 or more pieces of evidence exists	Attempted, but unsuccessful analysis	No attempt of analysis
Grammar and Writing Conventions	Grammar and writing conventions (punctuations, syntax, etc) followed with 1-4 errors	Grammar and writing conventions (punctuations, syntax, etc) followed with 5-9 errors	Grammar and writing conventions (punctuations, syntax, etc) followed with 10+ errors	Persistent grammar and writing issues so prevalent as to provide numerous distractions

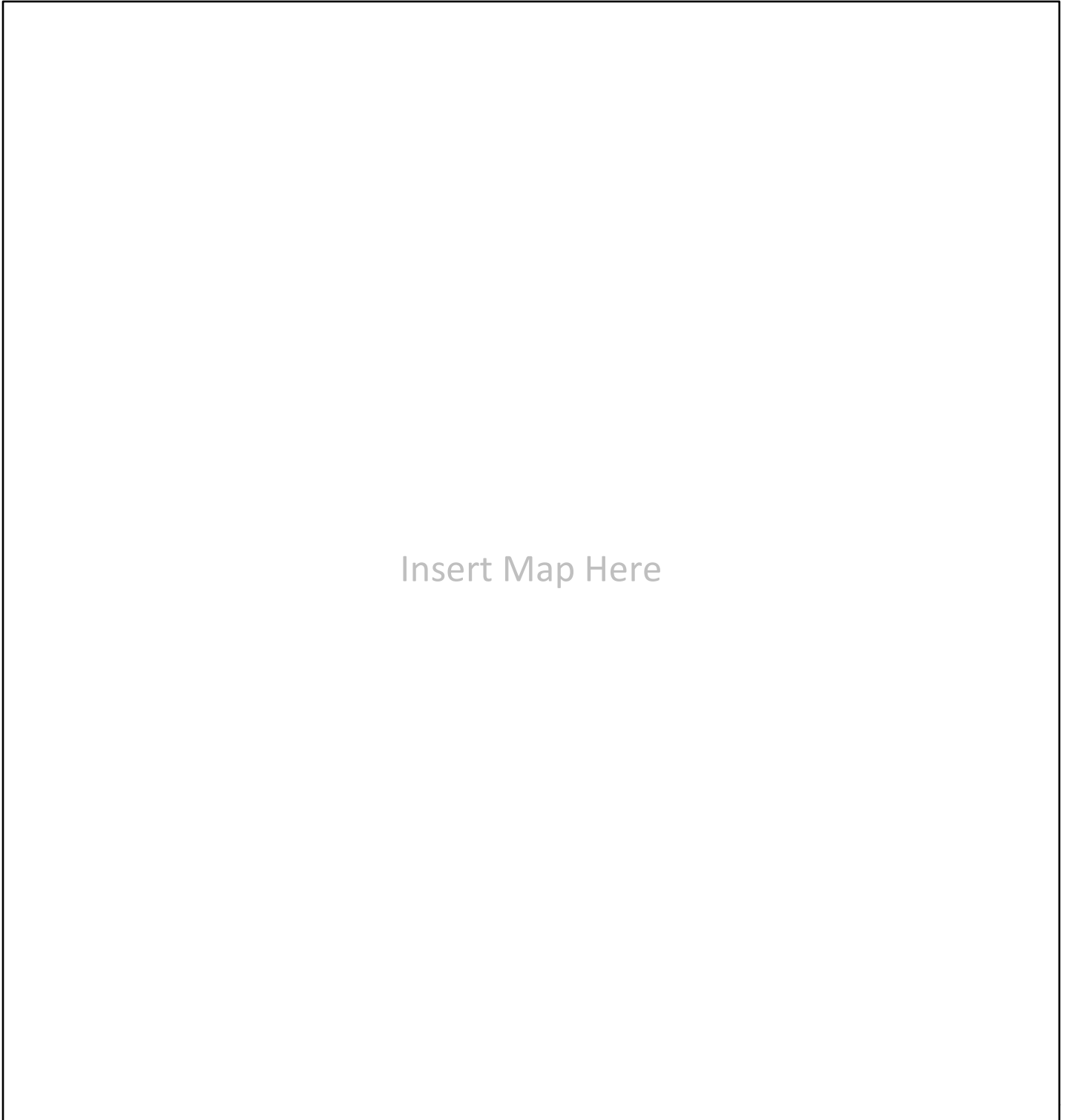
Written Argument Total _____

Total Pts _____ (26 pts possible) Percent Grade _____

Name: _____ Date: _____ Pd: _____

Map 1

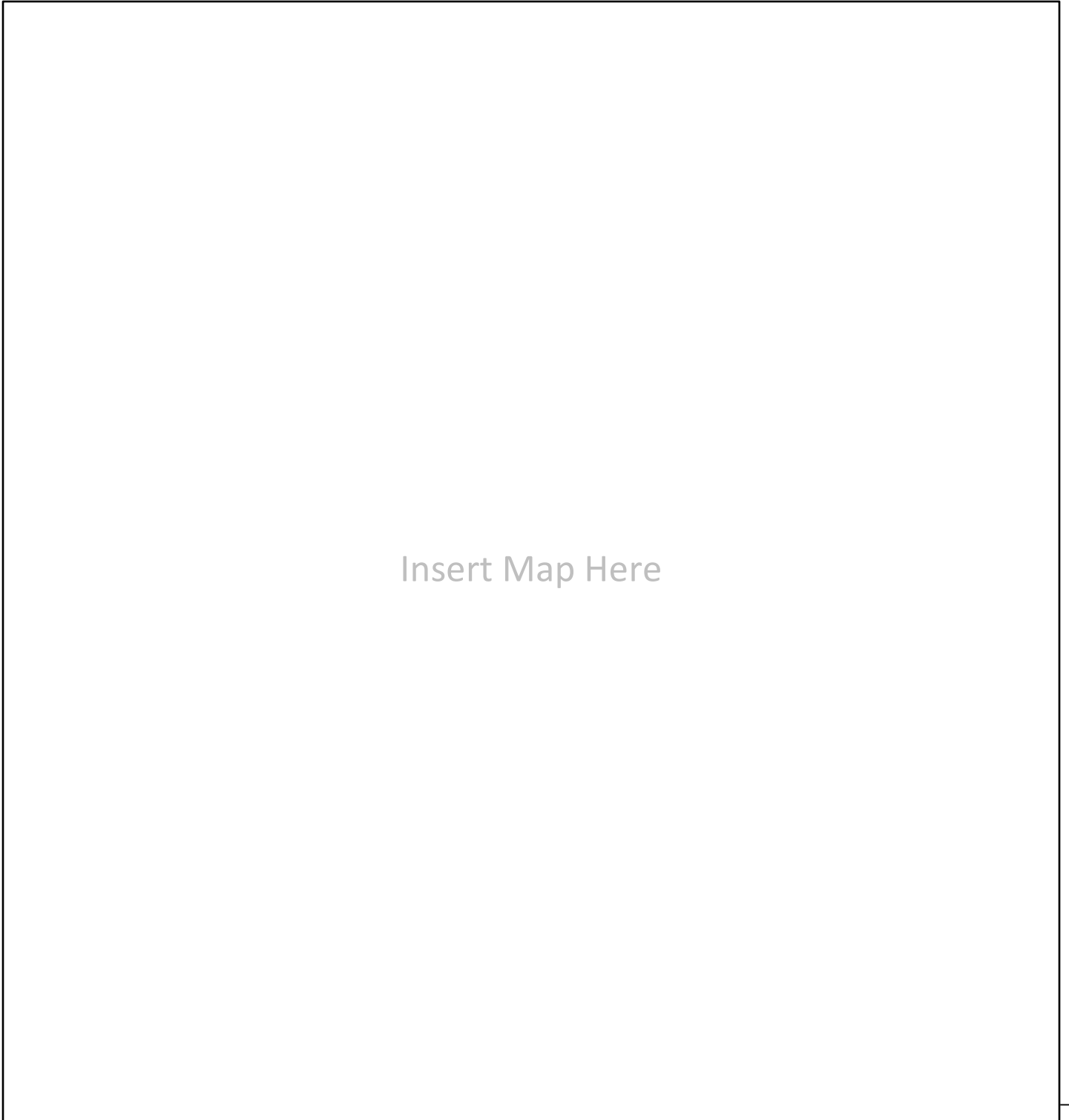
Source (citation)



Name: _____ Date: _____ Pd: _____

Map 2

Source (citation)



Name: _____ Date: _____ Pd: _____

Evidence of Analysis

Use this page to show evidence of the ways in which you analyzed your sources...

	Map 1 Description	Map 2 Description
T		
O		
D		
A		
L		
S		
I		
G		
S		

Name: _____ Date: _____ Pd: _____

Evidence of Analysis, continued.

Did you use any other units of analysis (you don't have to, you can use TODALSIGS alone)? Did you analyze maps based on their visual appeal? Effectiveness at illustrating an idea? You can use your OWN units of analysis if you can defend them in your argument. Describe your unit/units of analysis here and your thought process as you used them.

Units of Analysis	Map 1 Description	Map 2 Description

Name: _____ Date: _____ Pd: _____

Written Argument

Your written argument should include a thesis (which map is superior), at least 5 pieces of evidence, and strong analysis (commentary) of at least 3 of these pieces of evidence. A suggested outline of your writing is provided below based loosely on the AP World History writing rubric.

First Paragraph: Thesis statement, including units of analysis (how you are comparing the two)

Second Paragraph: 3 pieces of evidence to support superior map (probably three sentences)
2-3 sentences to analyze this evidence (commentary on why this evidence exists)

Third Paragraph: 2-3 pieces of evidence that provide reasons why second map is lacking
2-3 sentences to analyze possible reasons why this evidence exists

Fourth Paragraph (probably 1-2 sentences) summary

Show your prewriting here

SHOW YOUR PREWRITING HERE

