

WRITING DEVELOPMENT

RULE #1: If anything I say on this page conflicts with what your teachers have told you, I am wrong, and they are right.

The Mormons Move West

12. Explaining II – exemplification

Assessment objective AO1 – “knowledge and understanding” – is built into EVERY markscheme, so you have no alternative – you need to put some facts or quotes into your answers. And if you want to earn marks from that knowledge, it needs to be RELEVANT to the question asked.

So – when you cite a fact or a quote – ask yourself: does this prove the point I am trying to make? You need what I am going to call ‘proving information’.

Imagine you are answering the question: ‘Why did the Mormons move west?’ and are writing about the reason: ‘Because they were being persecuted for their religion’.

Consider the following facts about the Mormons:

- (1) “Politicians feared that the Mormons would take over the government and law courts.”
- (2) “Brigham Young told President Polk the Mormons had decided to leave.”
- (3) “Mobs drove the Missouri Mormons out of Jackson County.”

Choose which of the three facts you would use as proving information to support the idea that they were moving ‘because they were being persecuted’, and why would you choose that fact?

The answer is (3). You are trying to give an example which proves that persecution caused the Mormons to decide to move west. Fact (1) explains why the Mormons were persecuted, not why they moved. Fact (2) proves THAT they moved. But it is fact (3) that proves that persecution was the motivation to move.

1. Imagine you are answering the question: ‘How were the Mormons able to survive the journey to Salt Lake Valley?’ and are writing about the reason: ‘Because pioneer groups prepared the way’.

Which of the following three facts are you going to use, and why?

- A violent Mormon militia called the Danites looted from the ‘Gentiles’.
- ‘Winter Quarters’ was established on land granted to them at the Missouri River.
- Gentile attacks forced them to set off early, in February 1846.

2. Find RELEVANT ‘proving information’ to support the following arguments:

- The Mormons were sometimes the cause of their own persecution.
- The Mormons were trying to find a place that no one else wanted.
- Some of the Mormons beliefs scandalised American society.
- One reason they moved West was to shun the Gentiles.
- Brigham Young was accepted as leader by most of the Mormons.
- Brigham Young’s authority was a major factor for the success of their trek to Salt Lake City.
- The Mormons’ community spirit was a major factor for the success of their trek to Salt Lake City.
- The Mormons’ religious beliefs were a major factor for the success of their trek to Salt Lake City.