How Important was Peter Stuyvesant to the Success of New Amsterdam?

A Document Based Question (DBQ)
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A Document Based Question

Writing the Essay

Directions: Write a well-organized essay that includes an introduction, several paragraphs, and a conclusion. Use evidence from at least FOUR documents to support your essay. Support your response with relevant facts, examples, and details. Include additional outside information.

This essay question is based on the accompanying documents. It is designed to test your ability to work with historical documents. Some of these documents have been edited for the purposes of the question. As you analyze the documents, take into account the source of each document and any point of view that may be presented in the document or the Historical Context provided in the short-response documents.

Task:

Using information from the documents and your knowledge of social studies, answer the questions that follow each short-response document. Your answers to the questions will help you write the essay in which you will be asked to:

- Describe three problems Peter Stuyvesant encountered when he arrived in New Amsterdam
- Discuss the ways Peter Stuyvesant improved life in New Amsterdam for Dutch Colonists

Guidelines:

In your essay, be sure to:

- Develop all aspects of the task
- Incorporate information from at least FOUR documents
- Incorporate relevant outside information
- Support the theme with relevant facts, examples, and details (outside information)
- Use a logical and clear plan of organization, including an introduction and a conclusion that are beyond a restatement of the theme
New Amsterdam was located at the tip of Manhattan Island. It was part of the larger Dutch colony of New Netherland. New Netherland was established and controlled by the Dutch West India Company. The Dutch West India Company needed a strong leader who could run the colony. They hired Peter Stuyvesant as director-general [governor] of the colony of New Netherland in 1647.

1a) What was the name of the original Dutch colony settled along the Hudson River?
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

1b) What was the name of the original Dutch town that later became New York City?
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

1c) What Job was Peter Stuyvesant given in 1647?
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
Stuyvesant Encounters New Amsterdam

. . . When the new governor [Peter Stuyvesant] arrived in New Amsterdam in 1647 with his wife, his recently widowed sister, and her three children, he was horrified. Instead of streets of gold—as he expected—he saw mud. The walls of Fort Amsterdam were used as grazing fields for a couple of cows. Chickens made their nests under the mouths of the fort’s rusty cannons. Of the three windmills, one could no longer be used, while a second one had burned down. The houses were clumsily built of wood, with thatched roofs and wooden chimneys. The town’s outhouses were set directly on the street, creating unpleasant odors. Pigs wandered about at will, kept out of vegetable gardens only by rough stockades. The church was unfinished. There were 150 dwellings and one quarter of them were taverns. There was drunkenness and fighting in the streets, even on the Sabbath [day of worship], which was supposed to be a day of quiet and prayer. Stuyvesant had a lot

Source: Robert Quackenbush, Old Silver Leg Takes Over!, Prentice Hall, 1986 (adapted)

2) List three problems Peter Stuyvesant found when he arrived in New Amsterdam?

a) ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

b) ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

c) ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
3) What were two changes that Peter Stuyvesant made that helped New Amsterdam?

a) ________________________________________________
__________________________________________________
__________________________________________________

b) ________________________________________________
__________________________________________________
__________________________________________________
Document 4

Peter Stuyvesant Arrives (1647)

Peter Stuyvesant passed many laws to improve life in New Amsterdam. Fires were always a problem. He instructed the people to get rid of thatched roofs, wooden chimneys, and haystacks because they could cause fires. He appointed fire wardens to check to be sure the fire laws were being followed. Buckets were often filled with water and kept close by, as a means of putting out the fires. Stuyvesant enacted a tax of one beaver skin on each resident of New Amsterdam, as a means of paying for the buckets. This was how Peter Stuyvesant created the first fire department in America.

While Stuyvesant was Governor, the town built a hospital and a post office. A home was set up for orphans, and a separate school was built so that students did not have to go to classes in one of the taverns.

Image Source: http://www.ushistoryimages.com

4) Describe two ways that Peter Stuyvesant improved living conditions in town?

a) __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________

b) __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
Historical Context:

In 1653, war broke out between England and Holland [The Netherlands]. Stuyvesant met with his council to make plans to defend New Amsterdam. They agreed that repairs needed to be made to the fort. A wall was built along the northern edge of the town. The wall was made of wood. It was twelve feet high and had a sloping platform where guards could watch for enemies. Patrols of soldiers walked along the wall so often that they created a path. Today that path is known as Wall Street.

**Northern Fortified Wall (1653)**

5) What was one action Peter Stuyvesant and his council took to defend New Amsterdam after war broke out between England and Holland?

___________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

Image Source: NYPL Digital Gallery

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6) According to this document, what did Peter Stuyvesant do in 1658 to improve New Amsterdam?

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