

TIPS FOR THE FINAL

Preparation is so important. Don't hope to skim through the books and your notes in the exam. If you have brief notes for the answers, it'll make the exam so much easier. Students with good notes usually get the best grades.

If you haven't read the texts by now, read them before the exam. This includes the texts in the workbook

Read the instructions carefully and in their entirety. Do not miss out on a good grade by answer too many or too few questions.

Consider jotting down a brief outline before beginning to answer each question. This will not only allow some "thinking-time" but if you know what you need to write, you can make sure you phrase it as briefly as possible and minimize writing. This could benefit your writing hand!

Avoid slang, cursing or being too "chatty" in your answer.

PART I

For each topic, prepare an 8–10 item list of important points, i.e. when, where, who, what, why, that you can refer to in the exam. You can then just slot them into your answer. In particular, be prepared to:

Place the event or person in question in their time, i.e. give us either dates (specific or general)

Note the consequences of an event or person

Read and answer each question carefully and in its entirety. It is remarkable how many students write a great answer to the first half of the question and then ignore a second part.

Try and keep your answer brief but full of information. It doesn't need to be an essay but one sentence will not be enough.

PART II

For each source, prepare an 8–10 item list of important points, i.e. Who wrote it? When did they write it? What was the historical context in which it was written? What were the motives of the author?

Avoid value judgments based on your own philosophies. Yes, everyone in modern day USA agrees that slavery is bad but did the people in the texts think so? Try and look at how the authors felt about the issues. This is a history not an opinion paper.

Avoid modern analogies.

Timing

The final allows more time, but don't forget to allow enough time anyway.

Don't rush. There is no bonus for finishing first! In fact, we consistently note a correlation between time spent and the grade.

After you've finished, take the time to read through your answers, making corrections and adding information where necessary.

I do not mark down for poor spelling or grammar, but it does make me tetchy. Try to keep mistakes to a minimum. In particular, avoid misspelling names that are in the questions or in your handouts.

Please use pen. Pencil is very messy and quickly become unreadable.