

TIPS FOR THE MIDTERM

In Advance

Preparation is so important. Do not 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.

You will NOT be allowed to use a computer during the exam. Please print out ALL NOTES that you may require.

You should bring either a bluebook or standard size ruled paper

For each topic, prepare an 8–10 point 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 during the exam.

During the Exam

Read the 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.

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

Don't forget to note the CONSEQUENCES of an event or person if the question asks for it.

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.

Avoid modern analogies.

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

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

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.

Timing

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.