**EXTENDED ESSAY GUIDE YK PAO HISTORY \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Introduction

History is the most common subject selected for an EE. It is tough to fail a history EE, but at the same time, it is not often that students can produce a good essay. History can also be a controversial area to study, and some topics are sensitive. Remember that it is your job to understand and account for historical actions and trends, not pass judgment. The role of the academic is to remain impartial and present others views fairly, even if they disagree with them. It is up to the reader to make their own judgement; it is your job to provide them with the most balanced and well-researched paper possible to ensure readers views are informed by evidence. Be aware that you are not going to get an answer to your question; you are merely offering your perception – which hopefully will be well informed, to allow you to offer something insightful.

Sources

You will probably find you will end up having a plethora of different sources, which can make it a challenge to piece them together to form a cohesive whole. The mass of information you will process is why Noodle Tools or Zotero is so crucial in taking notes and filling out your thoughts so that when you come back to write the essay, you can remember what you were thinking at the time. If you find a helpful source, immediately put its details in Noodle Tools so that you can return to it later. The best essays will have a mixture of primary and secondary sources. The balance will once again depend on your question. There is no one way of approaching

Possible Sources

* Books
* Journal articles
* Advice/Guide books
* Pamphlets/libels
* Podcasts/Documentaries
* Literature
* State Papers
* Philosophical Works
* Plays/Movies
* Diplomatic Transmissions
* Travel Guides
* Speeches
* Minutes
* Personal interviews
* Statistical reports
* PhD and master thesis
* Newspapers

At this level of history, only academic sources are acceptable. Do not consult websites or any work that does not contain references. If your question involves an understanding of the culture of a particular era or place, then you may have to get creative in how you demonstrate this. When writing your essay, you must justify what these sources are adding while at the same time recognising potential issues with their use. A source does not have to be impartial to be important or valuable; you just need to ensure you understand the author's motivation. It is important to remember that you cannot get an A if you do not demonstrate how social and cultural contexts and biases can affect understanding of historical issues. Just because an author holds particular views does not mean what they have produced is incorrect; it is generally just a case of them potentially excluding some other equally valuable ideas. It is also critical to recognise how you may lack partiality – this is a good thing to address in your reflections.

The credibility of all sources must be questioned, but it is vital that you first understand the purpose of the source. If the source does not address what you wish it to, it is not the source's fault; you need to find a more appropriate source. If you are going to attack the credibility of another author, then that is a big deal and should not be undertaken lightly. You need to have significant amounts of evidence to question another's facts or interpretation of events. Don't fall into the trap of thinking that being evaluative means being critical. With your inexperience in the subject, it is unlikely that you will find anything too egregious yourself; it is more likely that you will use others critiques of sources.

It is essential that you first build a solid theoretical framework. There should be credible academic sources to give you an understanding of the significant ideas in your field. Once you have this theoretical understanding, you can move into the other sources to answer your particular question. You have to identify the major theorists whose ideas will underpin your research. Journal articles are generally more helpful than books in this regard. When you are reading an article, pay close attention to other scholars or ideas mentioned and check the citations to give you further clues on sources to consult.

Approach

Remember that this is your project, and you need to be in control of it. You need to find the right balance between being proactive and confident but also checking in with your supervisor. Also, do not become overly reliant on your supervisor to guide you in what to do so that you lose your initiative. Be proactive, creative and hungry to find the information you need; think of yourself as a journalist trying to give the complete picture about your chosen issue. The key to being a good researcher is not to be aimless. Set yourself a time for your research and the area you wish to focus on when you begin.

An example of a manageable goal is:

I am going to spend two hours collating primary source documents

or

I am going to read the chapter on the role of women within the family in J.A. Sharpe's *Social History of Early Modern England*

You will have to do a lot of reading; there is no way to avoid it. The number of sources required depends on the question. Sometimes there are large amounts of existing material on your particular question, at others, you may have to read widely. Typically university students will use about 1% of what they read to produce an essay. As an EE is usually 15 pages, you should have aimed to read 1500 pages of material.

If you want to be a successful academic, you have to get used to processing large amounts of material. Break it up into manageable chunks. There may be an article or a book chapter that you want to read; don't break away until you have finished. Perseverance helps you process the information better and take pride in meeting your goals. You cannot be successful without discipline and organisation.



A crowd of people at a beach

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

* Jstor and Ebsco
* Shanghai Library (you do

require a 1000rmb deposit)

* Google Books
* Amazon, Kobo and iBook's
* If you find an eBook or a journal

article, but you can't access it,

then see Mr Spence and he

should be able to access it

through his University.

* <http://gen.lib.rus.ec/> (this is

probably not legal, so try to

use only if there are no other

alternatives available to you).

* Look at the history courses at universities – they will often have very useful reading lists that will point you in the right direction.

Well before you start writing, you should have a structure laid out of what you will cover. You should make sure you have shown your supervisor by the time of your second meeting.

Writing the Extended Essay

It is necessary to explain the academic worth of the question. In essays where students received an A grade, they did this at the start. You should aim to clearly define what you are trying to test as simply as possible. In my masters, my first chapter seeks to question the accepted reason for Robert Carr's rise to prominence being his fall at the Accession Day tilt of 1607. So far, I am up to 16,000 words answering this. It is better to take a simple idea and dig deep than overcomplicate what you are attempting to do. You should aim for non-judgmental simplicity before explaining why this is significant and how you have researched the paper.

The first two sections of every student's essay should be the Significance and the Methodology. Somewhat confusingly, despite it being called the Extended Essay, the IB does not want you to structure it like a typical essay you would have written in class or will produce in college. Think of it as an INVESTIGATION rather than an essay. The IB does not want you to put your conclusions into the introduction, instead save this until the end for your evaluation. The significance is why you explicitly lay out why your question is of academic interest, and very importantly, you clearly define the parameters of your question. History is a big subject, so you need to clearly explain to the marker what you will be addressing in your question, along with what you have not deemed appropriate. It is often best to begin your essay with an anecdote taken from the primary sources. Injecting a story captures the readers interest and shows you have consulted archival material.

Then you lay out your methodology; this is where you explain the sources that you relied on and why they were selected. It may also be an appropriate place to reveal what sources you decided to discard and why. You can also call this your historiography. Often students struggle with this section, but it is worth as much as the depth of your research. Many students find this section difficult because they have failed to gain a command of the literature that surrounds the topic. You have to demonstrate that you have recognised the key and consulted the preeminent theorists in your area. You need to show some evaluation of who you have consulted and who you chose not to include. They are looking for a demonstration that you thought about what sources you were going to use, that you just didn't type some topics into Google and use whatever appeared first.

*An example of a positive appraisal of a source:*

While English scholars of the Jacobean Court are in a period of hesitancy, their northern counterparts are noticeably more confident. Jenny Wormald's 1983 article "James VI and I: Two Kings or One" challenged the orthodox view that James I was unsuccessful in England. She argues that James was a capable ruler of Scotland, but English hostility and bureaucratic inefficiency stymied his political program south of the border. Her work was so originally logical that it transformed prevailing attitudes towards James and the accepted methodology in researching his reigns.

*‘*

*An example of a negative appraisal of a source:*

Works dedicated exclusively to Robert Carr's role within the Jacobean courts are not exhaustive. In his 1982 master's thesis, Kenneth Coomber laments that the most significant work on Carr is Peter R. Seddon's "small, unsatisfactory article", "Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset," which he finds is too concerned describing the factional struggles of 1611-1615 than providing a study of Carr (citation is here). Coomber is exhaustive in explaining Carr's accrual and management of patronage opportunities but is guilty of the same criticisms he levelled at Seddon when evaluating his political career.

Content

History writing is difficult. Make sure you give yourself plenty of time to write your essay. You will need to have at least a couple of weeks of pure proofreading. You may have to reconstruct a sentence or a paragraph several times. Make sure you take your work to the writing centre. Start writing before you have finished your research, as you can do them concurrently.

Students worry that as they do not take history, they will struggle to get key concepts into their essays. As long as your research was sufficient, the terminology and concepts should occur organically in the writing process. Missing ideas will be identified when your draft is marked if they are lacking.

The primary reason that students do not achieve good marks is that their essay is descriptive rather than evaluative. You must be sure to build an argument rather than describe a topic. A bad evaluative essay will get a higher mark than a good descriptive essay. You should avoid a question where you will have to spend a lot of time explaining the context to the reader. Being evaluative does not mean you describe your issues or viewpoints and then, at the end, have a conclusion where you weigh up the arguments. These types of essays will not get an A. You need to constantly test and question information as you go through; there is very little in history that will not be open to interpretation. Of course, some background has to be provided, and it is often difficult to pitch it at the right level - between over-explaining or not providing adequate context. You can correct these things after the draft has been submitted.

One of the keys to getting a good grade is remembering the essentials of good writing. One of the major mistakes that students make at this school is to try and mask a lack of understanding by using overly academic language. An artificially created vocabulary is very frustrating to the reader, as the quality of the ideas often lags. Leading academics will present their ideas using the most accessible language possible. Another standard error in an essay of this length is to forget the rules of paragraph construction. Each paragraph should be constructed the same way you would with any other paper, with a clear topic sentence supported by evidence building upon previous sections. Using the correct paragraph structure (as I have done with this paragraph) gives your writing authority and flow, which will add to your credibility.

Other traps to avoid in your writing:



* Passive Voice.
* Changing tense
* Inconsistency in using quotation marks or

italics for titles

* Repetitive or unclear phrasing.
* Using 'This'
* Not being clear in your meaning,

definitions or requiring the reader to decipher

your meaning.

* Failing to clarify who people are, e.g.,

saying Biden, instead of US President

Joe Biden or Chomsky rather than leftist

political theorist Noam Chomsky.

* Contradictory statements.
* A lack of a clear progression.
* Being too reliant on a small number of sources.

Citations

Remember that citations are a sign of strength and not weakness. At this stage of your academic career, there should be little that does not have a good background in other research. Citations are used for the following things:

1. A direct quote (these should be used minimally from secondary sources.)

2. Facts and figures

3. Any idea that is not your own

* Any citation system is acceptable; the school uses MLA, which is sufficient. I prefer Chicago Turabian for the humanities. At this level of history, as long as you are consistent and clear where you have got your information, that is fine.
* Use citations frequently; the difference between your and others' ideas should be undeniable. Sometimes two different authors will state the same thing; in this case, cite them both as it gives your writing greater credibility.
* It is no issue to use Chinese sources so long as they are translated in your citations and bibliography. You should put the full Mandarin version under the English translation in the bibliography.
* If you are citing an author inside a larger volume, it should be done like this:

Robert Shepherd, "Sexual Rumours in English Politics: The Case of Elizabeth I and James I" in *Desire and Discipline: Sex and Sexuality in the Premodern West*. ed Jacqueline Murray and Konrad Eisenbichler (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1996) 134-336.

* Citations do not contribute towards the word limit, but any additional information contained as a footnote or an endnote will. Therefore it is probably best not to waste words with explanations in your citations but to offer further suggestions like the example below:

For works that unambiguously reject the view that James relationship with Carr was sexual, see Alan Bray, "Homosexuality and the Signs of Male Friendship in Elizabethan England." *History Workshop* 29 (Spring 1990)

Bibliography

A bibliography is to help the reader authenticate what you have written and provide clues for future study. It is crucial to make this as accessible as possible. Your bibliography should be divided up by medium and follow the format below. You should aim to be as specific as possible, what version you are using of any source.

The bibliography does not count towards the word limit. If a work does not have an identifiable author, it should be listed as anonymous. I would question the need to have unknown secondary sources in an essay. Noodle Tools will prepare a bibliography for you in the correct format if you are using it properly. You can enter the ISBN of any book into Noodle Tools, and it will generate all the details correctly.

*Books*

Elyot, Sir Thomas. *The boke named The Governor devised by Sir Thomas Elyot, knight*. Compiled by Foster Watson. 1531. Reprint, London: J.M. Dent & Co., 1907. Digital file.

Note how the details are provided to enable the reader to identify the work you have used.

*Journals*

Goodare, Julian. "The Debts of James VI of Scotland." *The Economic History Review.* *62*, no. 4 (November 2009): 926-52. Digital file.

*Website*

Lawson, Robert. Sir Andrew Kerr (1570-1633). Last modified 2011.

Accessed July 6, 2020. <https://clankerr.co.uk>

Note that you do not need to put the entire URL. It actually makes it more challenging to find the source.

*Thesis*

Duncan, Owen Lowe, Jr. "The Political Career of Sir Henry Neville: An Elizabethan Gentleman at the Court of James I." Doctoral thesis, Ohio State University, 1974.

*Interview*

Bishop, Mark. Interview and translation by author. Shanghai: February 24 2021. https://ykpaoschoolmy.sharepoint.com/personal/steven\_spence\_ykpaoschool\_cn/\_layouts/15/onedrive.aspx

Other Formatting Rules

* There is a maximum of 4000 words. I do say that with the draft, that you should write the essay that you want to write, even if it is too long. It is easier for me as a marker to identify what is extraneous than it is for you to add a lot of information in just a few weeks after.
* There is no need to have any illustrations, graphs, maps or other extraneous data within a History essay. Your writing should be of a standard to convey visual material to the reader. If you feel strongly that some information will add to your essay, you can appendix it. This is to go after the bibliography; the examiner does not have to read it.
* The only font to be used is Size 12, Times New Roman spaced at 1.5.
* There must be a title page. It should have the title you have given your essay and then your research question. It should also be clearly labelled which is which. It also needs to be clear that it is a Global Politics essay and your word count.
* Nothing is allowed that identifies the school, you or your supervisor.
* There needs to be a detailed contents page, and all pages should be numbered.

Reflections

These should be an easy way to pick up marks, as what is required is relatively straightforward. I like to divide up the reflections like this:

* First: What were the issues with selecting a question and initial issues encountered when beginning research.
* Second: Lessons learnt and thoughts about undertaking research for a paper of this size.
* Third/Viva Voce: Overall feelings after writing the essay.

The critical thing with the reflections is honesty and demonstrating your personality. The most important thing is that they are authentic representations of how you felt as you moved through the process; it is not a list of what you did or conveying advice that your supervisor gave you. Unsurprisingly, your tone should be reflective; you should not be exalting your success at triumphing over adversity. It is an excellent opportunity to identify the issues that may exist in your essay, which will earn back credit from the marker.