

What to Look for in a Good Historical Essay

1. Planning

- A. Introduction - explains point of view and/or argument, captures reader's interest
- B. Development - evidence and arguments presented in a logical and effective manner
- C. Conclusion - summarizes position, impacts the reader

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2. Reading and Research Skills

- A. An adequate **number** and **variety** of sources was consulted
- B. Essay shows an appreciation of the interpretation of each source
- C. Sources are used effectively in support of the thesis statement
- D. Sources are adequately cited
- E. The format used for citations is correct
- F. There is an adequate, correctly formatted bibliography
- G. The Bibliography is annotated when required

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3. Informational Skills

- A. Exhibits a correct understanding of chronology and geography
- B. Includes specific evidence concerning individuals and events
- C. Information is used to support the thesis put forward
- D. All important information has been considered

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4. Writing Skills

- A. Correctness: spelling, grammar, punctuation
- B. Vocabulary: correct, appropriate, effective usage
- C. Coherence: correct sentence structure, paragraphing, transitions
- D. Style: shows originality, has impact, lucid
- E. Overall: impresses as suitable for publication

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5. Interpretive Skills

- A. Thesis is clearly stated at the outset
- B. Thesis is clearly supported as the essay develops
- C. Theses is clearly stated in the conclusion as proved
- D. Evidence is evaluated appropriately
- E. Details are effectively synthesized into generalizations
- F. Judgments are based on evidence
- G. Originality and creativity are shown
- H. Counter arguments are presented when suitable
- I. Shows empathy and an appreciation that "history" is about real people living in real time
- J. Connections are made to other historical periods, other scholarly disciplines, current issues and trends

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