



Preparing for an Essay Test

Guidelines:

1. If you are given a restricted time and place for the exam, arrive on time or early. Plan to spend most of the class time responding to the exam.

2. Though they sound similar, essay test responses and the essay assignments asked of you in many of your classes have both similarities and differences:

exams or assignments that allow you to select the best answer from a list of possibilities).

Common characteristics of essay assignments:

1. A multi-paragraph response, ranging from a page to much more than a page in length
2. Development of one point or thesis using examples (specifics) to support the statements made.
3. Predictable format: introduction, body of supporting paragraphs, and conclusion.
4. Freedom at times for the writer to decide what the essay will be about

Essay exams vary in length and style, depending on teacher, class, and purpose of the assignment:

1. The range of options in terms of response length on essay exams:
 - a sentence or two to define or explain a term, event, or individual
 - a paragraph allowing writer to focus on a concept or question asked and develop that idea with some examples, i.e. specifics
 - an essay response, comparable in form, focus and development to essay assignments described above
2. A very limited choice on most essay exams:
 - In other words, if required to answer all the questions on an exam, you must comply or be graded accordingly.

the answer given.

3. Getting started: first read through and/or listen carefully to any directions given for an examination assignment.

with a multiple paragraph response needed for each question?

it is well written.

. Do you need to respond to each one?

