

Writing essay exams

DO ✓	DON'T ✗
 <p>Do set some time aside to visualize a successful exam. Build up a positive image of yourself writing the exam. Imagine (eyes closed helps!) you are relaxed yet alert as you turn over the exam paper.</p>	 <p>Don't start writing without reading the exam questions fully. Ask yourself: What are the keywords in the question? What exactly does the question ask? (E.g., argue, explain, illustrate with examples?)</p>
 <p>Do examine your response to the prompt. Try to identify any personal beliefs or experiences that could inform your position. Can you use your lived experience to make your position more persuasive?</p>	 <p>Don't write a thesis statement without taking a position first. Your thesis should be a one-sentence answer to the exam question.</p>
 <p>Do a quick essay plan. Outline the key points you want to make to support your position and the order in which you want to make them. What are the reasons you have taken a certain position?</p>	 <p>Don't leave it up to your reader to guess! Keep your examples concise and related to your thesis. Always explain how an example supports your point.</p>
 <p>Do add a brief summary of what you were going to say if you run out of time. A few short sentences or a list-like format will show the reader where you were going!</p>	 <p>Don't underestimate the power of legible handwriting. You can only write as fast as you can write legibly (not beautifully, but legibly!) If your reader cannot understand your handwriting, they will guess!</p>
 <p>Do a self-assessment after the exam to move forward in the class and better prepare for next time. What can you learn from this exam? How did you feel? What can you improve? What did you do well?</p>	 <p>Don't compare your written work done under exam time to longer-term essay projects. Be kind to yourself and remember what the examiner is (and isn't) looking for.</p>



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