

History Subject Specific Guide

Question	Notes
I. Overview 1. Areas of interest? 2. Outcome of the research 3. What kind of questions should be created? What kind of questions should not be created?	
II. Choice of Topic a. What criteria does the extended essay have? What should your EE do/not do?	● Focus on the human past ● Be worthy of study ● Lend itself to an investigation
III. Examples of Topics a. What are some characteristics of the “Good” topics? Of the “bad topics”? b. What is one way IB recommends choosing a topic? (hint: “key concepts”)	
IV. Treatment of the Topic a. Can I write an EE on the history of Rap Music? b. What criteria must we keep in mind when writing the research question? c. “Students who use both primary and	

secondary sources for their research will find it easier to achieve the highest marks.” SUPPORT THIS statement with evidence from the SSG.	
V. Critical Analysis and evaluation a. How can you show good critical analysis and evaluation according to the IB?	
VI. The essay’s argument a. In other words... what type of argument should you have?	
VII. “double dipping” a. What does this mean?	

REFLECTION

Choose 1.

1. What was the most surprising or impactful realization you had as you reviewed the history SSG? Does this realization make you more or less likely to write an EE in history? Why?
2. Consider the 6 key concepts in the Diploma Programme history course:
 - causation
 - consequence
 - change
 - continuity
 - significance
 - perspectives

Which key concept sounds appealing to you to explore? How would you approach the research within your concept?

Key concepts for DP history unpacked

The DP history course is focused on six key concepts: causation, consequence, change, continuity, significance and perspectives. In their efforts to place thinking at the centre of historical understanding, researchers in history education have highlighted the role that concepts such as these play in helping to shape our thinking about history (Seixas and Morton 2013). **These concepts help students to think critically about historical issues; helping students to identify and solve problems, make decisions, and form judgments about past claims, actors and issues.** These concepts are also extremely useful to history teachers as a tool for helping to craft creative lessons and assessment activities that avoid passive content delivery, and that provide opportunities for students to build on their prior knowledge and to think deeply about historical issues and events.

Change The study of history involves investigation of the extent to which people and events bring about change. Discussion of the concept of change can encourage sophisticated discussions such as encouraging students to think about, and look for, change where some claim none exists, or using evidence to challenge orthodox theories and assumptions about people and events that it is claimed led to significant change. Students' questions and judgments about historical change should be based on deep understanding of content and on comparison of the situation before and after the events under examination.

Continuity While historical study often focuses on moments of significant change, students should also be aware that some change is slow, and that throughout history there is also significant continuity. Students can demonstrate deep historical knowledge and understanding by, for example, showing awareness that there are times when there has been considerable continuity in the midst of great historical change. Alternatively, students may question and assess whether a change in political leadership, for example, brought about a change in foreign policy, or whether it was more accurately mirroring policies of previous governments.

Causation Effective historical thinkers recognize that many claims made about the past seek to more thoroughly explain and understand how a certain set of circumstances originated. Deep historical understanding is demonstrated where students recognize that most historical events are caused by an interplay of diverse and multiple causes that require students to make evidence-based judgments about

which causes were more important or significant, or which causes were within the scope of individuals to direct and which were not.

Consequence History is the understanding of how forces in the past have shaped future people and societies. Students demonstrate competency as historical thinkers where they understand and can explain how significant events and people have had both short-term and long-lasting effects. Students use evidence and interpretations of those people and events to make comparisons between different points in time, and to make judgments about the extent to which those forces produced long-lasting and important consequences.

Significance History is not simply the record of all events that have happened in the past. Instead, history is the record that has been preserved through evidence or traces of the past, and/or the aspects that someone has consciously decided to record and communicate. Students should be encouraged to ask questions about why something may have been recorded or included in a historical narrative. Similarly, they should be encouraged to think about who or what has been excluded from historical narratives, and for what reasons. Additionally, students' questions should encourage them to think about, and assess, the relative importance of events, people, groups or developments, and whether the evidence supports the claims that others make about their significance.

Perspectives IB students should be aware of how history is sometimes used or abused to retell and promote a grand

narrative of history, a narrowly focused national mythology that ignores other perspectives, or to elevate a single perspective to a position of predominance. Students are encouraged to challenge and critique multiple perspectives of the past, and to compare them and corroborate them with historical evidence. Students should recognize that for every event recorded in the past, there may be multiple contrasting or differing perspectives. Using primary-source accounts and historians' interpretations, students may also investigate and compare how people, including specific groups such as minorities or women, may have experienced events differently in the past. In this way there are particularly strong links between exploring multiple perspectives and the development of international-mindedness.