

# Exam Review Package.

Here are the command words that are commonly used for essay questions:

1. **Explain.** This is a straightforward command word that is asking you to make clear the reasons for a situation, or the reasons why a series of events occurred.
2. **Support.** When asked to do this, you are being directed to give points in favour of a certain position. With this type of essay, the thesis is basically given to you in the question and you are just asked to support the thesis.
3. **Analyze.** Here you are being asked to examine the topic by considering and discussing each part or section of the topic.
4. **Compare.** When asked to do this, it is generally assumed that you will both compare and contrast the topic. Your task is to give similarities and differences for the topic being discussed.
5. **To what extent?** If these words are used as the command words in a topic, it is assumed that there are two positions possible on the topic. You are expected to weigh the strength of the two sides, and come to a conclusion about which side presents the stronger argument.
6. **Evaluate.** In this situation, you are being asked to make a judgment between two positions or arguments. You are being asked to weigh the arguments on both sides of the question, and come to a conclusion about which side presents the stronger position. In this way, it is similar to the "To what extent" question.
7. **Assess.** Here you are being asked to estimate the value of something. So you have to make a judgment and then use facts to prove your case. It is similar to "to what extent?"
8. **Discuss.** Here you must present the various points of view or ways of looking at a particular topic.
9. **Describe.** You must give a detailed description or account of an event, situation or topic.

What you are being asked to do when these words come up in a question.

← preparing (planning)  
actually helps!

The best way to prepare a response to an essay question is to go through several steps.

- ① First, **read** the question carefully to determine what the question is really asking.
- ② Second, **box** in the command word, and ensure you understand what it is requiring you to do. Underline key words in the topic to help you with this.
- ③ Third, **create a chart** on the planning page of the test, and fill in examples of information that you could use in answering the question. Remember to keep these points brief.

**Note:** The organizational and planning page is probably the single most important page in the whole exam. If you construct a good organizational model on this page, you will probably write very good essays.

### Sample Charts

The type of chart you choose to use will depend on the type of essay question. You will certainly be asked to write on one history question. With a history question, it is likely that you could create a chronology. For example, if you were asked to explain Canada's immigration policy in the period 1914 to 2000, then your chart could look like the example below.

1914	
↑ ↓	
1945	
↑ ↓	
2000	

If you are asked to look at a historical topic through the period 1914–2000 (this is the time frame you are expected to know in Social Studies 11), put in a 1945 dividing line, and make sure that you put in events that happened between 1914–1945 and 1945–2000. By dividing your organizational model into two time periods you will ensure that you will have provided evidence from throughout the 1914–2000 period. You now have two large boxes. Fill these boxes with brief notes that you can elaborate on when you write the essay. If the essay question uses the command term, “To what extent”, or “Evaluate” or “Assess” then you know that there will be arguments for and against. For example, if the essay topic were:

**“The most important influence on Canadian government policy during the twentieth century was the United States.” Assess the truth of this statement making reference to events throughout the time period 1914–2000.**

then your organization model could look like this:

	For	Against
1914 ↕ 1945	1	2
1945 ↕ 2000	3	4

Now you would have four boxes to fill. In box 1 you would put in events between 1914–1945 that support the statement. In box 2 you would include events between 1914–1945 that do not support the statement. In box 3 you would include events between 1945–2000 that support the statement. In box 4 you would include events between 1945–2000 that do not support the statement. If the essay topic is a more narrow historical topic, then you will need to set up your planning page differently. For example, if the essay topic were:

**Assess how much Canada changed as a result of the First World War.**

then you would need to consider categories that you could use on your planning page. An easy-to-remember word to remind you of the categories is:

**SPERM-G**

This stands for Social, Political, Economic, Religious, Military and Geographical. Probably not all of these categories will apply to your topic, but some will.

Let's assume that you decide that Social, Political, and Economic aspects are applicable to this essay topic. Then, your planning page will look like this:

Social Results
Political Results
Economic Results

*notice the key word in the question. Refer to the 1st page...*

*This section applies more to the History portion of the course.*

The same idea holds true if you are given an essay topic that is about the environment.

If the essay topic is:

To what extent is global warming a problem for Canadian?

A chart, like the following will help you answer this type of question.

*Key  
term.*

Pro, Positive	Con, Negative

The key words, "to what extent", tell you that you have to look at both sides of the issue. This chart will help you do that in a quick and easy manner. Having two columns one pro or positive and the other con or negative allows you to brainstorm arguments on both sides of the question.

- Now spend a few minutes filling in both sides of the chart.
- If you do this, it will help organize your argument and your essay, therefore increasing your chances of getting a better mark.
- After completing the chart, decide what your thesis statement will be. The notes in your chart will show you which side pro or con has the stronger argument.
- Now you are ready to write your essay. Start with an introduction that includes the thesis statement, present all your arguments, then conclude with a summary that refers back to the thesis.

Here are six sample essay topics that also have a key for you to review.

### Sample Essay Topics With Keys

1. **Between 1914 and 1931, Canada evolved from colonial status to independent nationhood. Describe this evolution and assess the accuracy of this statement.**

You are being asked to do two things here. First, describe the evolution between 1914 and 1931. Your planning page should consist of a chronology of events between 1914 and 1931 that led to Canada's independence. 1914 is the year that the First World War started and 1931 is the year in which the Statute of Westminster was passed. The events that occurred between these two dates led to Canada's autonomy. This is a common essay topic for Social Studies 11, so you should be sure that you have a good understanding of these events.

The second thing you are being asked to do is evaluate whether or not this statement is accurate. So, you will need to look at Canada's status in 1931, after the Statute of Westminster had been passed, and decide whether or not the statement is completely accurate.

## **SECTION 5: WRITTEN RESPONSE—POSSIBLE ESSAY QUESTIONS**

A very important part of the Social Studies exam is to write two short essays from the four themes of the course. Each essay will be worth 12 marks. Therefore, 24 marks out of a total of 79 will be from the essay section. We have listed the four themes below, together with some topics that could be developed from each theme. These topics are included here, just to give you an idea of what they may be like. You may wish to use them as practice essay questions to see how well you remember the information from the course. This section of the guide will also give you hints on how to organize information for the various topics. You will notice as you read through these topics that some are on a broad topic. For example.

### **The effects of Global Warming on Canada**

Some topics are from a more narrow perspective. For example:

**Describe the “first past the post” election system as it is used in Canadian federal elections, and evaluate the fairness of this system.**

**OR**

**To what extent is the term “Roaring ‘20s” an appropriate description of Canada during the decade 1919–1929?**

**YOU WILL NEED TO BE PREPARED FOR BOTH TYPES OF TOPICS,  
BUT THERE IS NO GUARANTEE THAT ANY OF THE SPECIFIC EXAM  
QUESTIONS ABOVE WILL APPEAR ON THE EXAM.**

- Evaluate to what extent Canada has helped the UN achieve its goals since 1945.
- To what extent did Canada help the Allies achieve victory during the Second World War?



## 2. Politics and Government

### Study Topics

- The legislative process, how laws are made
- Elections and the electoral process in Canada
- The citizens' influence on public policy
- Impact of the Charter of Rights on Canadian society

### Suggested Essay Questions

- Explain carefully how a bill becomes a law in the Canadian parliamentary system.
- Describe how the Charter of Rights and Freedoms has had an impact on Canadian society.
- The concept of human rights has taken on great importance in Canada through the twentieth century. Evaluate this statement.
- The Supreme Court of Canada has a critical role in shaping Canadian society. Justify this statement.
- Describe the Canadian election system from the time an election is called until the end of the election day.

With your current knowledge you could answer one part of this by talking about the creation of the Charter of Rights.



# LIST OF TERMS FOR *Government*

1. Democracy
2. Suffrage
3. Communism
4. Capitalism
5. Fascism
6. Governor General
7. Head of State
8. Head of Government
9. Parliament
10. Riding
11. Member of Parliament
12. House of Commons
13. Senate
14. Executive branch
15. Legislative branch
16. Cabinet
17. Direct democracy
18. Representative democracy
19. Constitutional monarchy
20. Federal system
21. Prime Minister
22. Vote of non-confidence
23. Caucus
24. Deputy Minister
25. Backbencher
26. Party whip
27. Speaker of the House
28. Mace
29. Shadow Cabinet
30. Public servants
31. Sergeant-at-Arms
32. Leader of the Opposition
33. Question period
34. Patronage
35. Supreme Court
36. Legislative Assembly
37. Lieutenant-Governor
38. Mayor
39. Councilors
40. By-laws
41. Band Council
42. Chief
43. Constitution
44. British North America Act
45. Constitution Act 1867
46. Statute of Westminster
47. Patriation
48. Party platform
49. Official party status
50. Universal franchise
51. Chief Electoral Officer
52. Polling Stations
53. Regionalism
54. Majority Government
55. Minority Government
56. Coalition Government
57. First-past-the-post system
58. Popular vote
59. Proportional Representation
60. Preferential ballot
61. Interest groups
62. Civil disobedience
63. Judicial branch
64. Rule of Law
65. Common law system
66. Civil code system
67. Canadian Criminal Code
68. Civil law
69. Provincial Court
70. Supreme Court of British Columbia
71. Court of Appeal
72. Probation
73. Parole
74. Rehabilitation
75. Restorative Justice
76. Young Offenders Act
77. Young Criminal Justice Act
78. Universal Declaration of Human Rights
79. Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms
80. Notwithstanding Clause
81. Convention on the Rights of the Child
82. B.C. Human Rights Code
83. B.C. Human Rights Commission