Studying History in Year 12

This is a study guide for both ANCIENT and MODERN Histories for Year 12

1. Studying Methods



Make your goals CLEAR at the start of study sessions. These can be used for unit revision, practice responses, source memorisation, etc. This helps mentally but also in practice to compartmentalise your ideas.

Core Topics: This will be the first unit you learn about! Especially finishing your content at the end of Term 2, go back and revise this part because it will always be the most competitive section.

Content Revision: Make sure your methods stay consistent! Simply reading notes or writing a half-baked response will NOT suffice. **Blurting**, **Pomodoro**, and **flashcards** helped me revise for terms I didn't recognise or new concepts.

2. Expanding your Scope for Study



Top band students will always go slightly beyond content and memorise these concepts to take into any exam; this is not necessarily limited to Ancient or Modern history either!

- Judicial and correct usage of sources to evidence their point
  - Your sources cannot be name dropped or shoved in for the sake of having them; they **must** give reason to a point you are making.
  - "In Pompeii and Herculaneum, source X reveals y about z."
- Recognising the NESA verbs and correctly answering questions
  - To **analyse** is completely different than to **evaluate**, which is also different than to **discuss**. Adjust your responses accordingly.
- Go back to your **history fundamentals!** Remember why it is significant to use **primary/secondary** sources, and remember you are **not** just stating facts! Think about skills in analysing historicity, usefulness, etc.
- **Time your responses!** This is a massive skill in the HSC and requires time and effort. A 25 mark essay should take 45-55 minutes to write, **MAXIMUM**.

3. Common Pitfalls (What should I avoid?)



These are common mistakes I often seen students make. Avoid these traps because they may hinder your ability for successful studying/making the most of your time.

- You should NEVER remember entire essays. This is a massive mistake because the question is always going to be different. You should always be tailoring your facts.
- Avoid telling history. You are meant to be "doing" history based on what information you know. There are questions dedicated to this, and others for info-dumping.
- Your notes should properly reflect exactly what the syllabus asks for. Don't get tied into learning random things for the sake of some niche question
- **Keep your information tidy, clean and legible for later study.**

4. Classroom work and Initiative



Being scared or nervous to send your responses to people is normal! But at its core, the HSC is a game that people play as a cohort. You MUST be willing to boost your fellow students up, just as they are for you. Share sources, share responses, start dialogue!

- Remember that giving constructive feedback is a massive priority! Open communication and understanding why particular responses are better than others is a key skill come HSC time
- The beauty of it all is that responses will always improve the more you write, and it helps drive a healthy competitive edge that will ultimately improve class morale.
- Teach someone else something they **DID NOT** know before/are weak in!
- **GATEKEEPING IS THE ENEMY OF THE HSC!**

5. Resources to Use



Small section on possible resources that you can study/draw from that helped me during my HSC journey!

- Textbook excerpts provided from your teachers are excellent for secondary source quoting. Your information can be easily taken away from here!
- **MODERN NEWS SOURCES** can absolutely add to your information in these subjects, especially ancient! New findings and interpretations can be useful particularly in common modules; be proactive and stay up to date!
- Scholarly resources from **JSTOR** or **Google Scholar** can help with extra information that may add flair to your responses, provided you can remember/quote it
- I personally always made my way back to **the Stems** and their content; particularly the **slideshows** the teachers have on the topics.