The IB Extended Essay

DRAMARAMA?

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No, It’s Not Rocket Science

"It’s time we face reality, my friends. ... We’re not exactly rocket scientists."

Planning and research makes the process a lot easier!!

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What’s The Point Of The Seminar?

Help you understand the EE process
Point out some common mistakes
Allow you to raise your concerns
Answer your questions
What is the IB EE?

FORMAL, ACADEMIC ESSAY of approx. 4,000 words in which something is INVESTIGATED or explored

There is a CONCLUSION

Sources are documented (BIBLIOGRAPHY)

The whole process is PRESENTED (essay)

Students who wish to gain the IB Diploma must complete and pass the IB EE

Benefits - academic and personal
Benefits of the EE

Independent thinking

Learn research skills

Introduction to academic work – analysis and argument

Develop critical thinking skills

Develop essay writing skills

Learn to handle a major assignment

Work on an area you might study at university

Learn to work with a Supervisor – at university you will work with a Tutor

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Responsibilities of the Student

Observe the regulations. Read the ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Find a Supervisor and liaise regularly with him/her!!! – be proactive

Choose a topic

Think carefully about the Research Question (RQ)

Plan how and where you will find information for your essay
BIG HINT – Go to the LIBRARY!!

Acknowledge all sources of information

Meet deadlines
NB!!!! - From November 2016

Schools will be required to upload all IB EEs

Candidate name and number should NOT appear on any of the pages of the EE including the title page

Formatting – Arial font, size 12, double spaced, numbered pages

Saved as - .doc .docx .pdf .rtf

File size – no more than 10MB

Diagrams, maps and tables – digitally produced where possible

Source: IBO Coordinator’s Notes Sept 2015

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Responsibilities of the Supervisor

• The supervisor is required to make a judgment about whether or not to allow you to proceed with the RQ based on whether it meets appropriate legal and ethical standards …

• … for a variety of reasons … the supervisor may advise against pursuing the proposed RQ. In such cases you should follow this advice…
Responsibilities of the Supervisor

Provide **guidance** on undertaking research

Help the student formulate a well-focused research question

**NB**

Students may receive comments on the **first** draft of the **completed** essay but **repeated** re-drafting with further input from the Supervisor is not allowed. The Supervisor is permitted to answer questions and offer advice but **not to read more than one draft of the completed essay** before the final version is submitted for **authentication** by the Supervisor and assessment by the IB.
Personal Exploration of the Topic
Topic Areas

There are many topic (subject) areas for you to choose from.

Look at the IB Handbook.

Familiarise yourself with the specific requirements for your topic.

**NB** Students who do not study a particular subject (eg History) are STRONGLY ADVISED not to do their EE in that subject (eg History).
Formulate A Research Question

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Start formulating your research question (RQ) by following your own interests. What’s your favourite subject?

Remember, you will spend a lot of time researching and writing your EE. If it does not interest you now, it will certainly become very difficult to write about it later on!!

What is it you would like to know about your topic area or what issue or question would you like to answer through your research?

Choose an area that is capable of research. For example, there is a lot of information available on World War One. However, even the historian Alison Weir found it difficult to find information for her biography of Katherine Swynford, Duchess of Lancaster.

Avoid areas that are ‘over done’ eg WWII or unsuitable eg serial killers
The RQ

Avoid “trivial” or “superficial” EEs – IBO recommendation

Finalise the RQ only after **thorough consultation** with your supervisor

Source: O’Farrell, F. Extended Essay. IB Prepared. IBO. 2010 p14, 18

One further piece of advice – the more background you have in a subject the better chance you have of writing a good EE

“Choosing to write the extended essay in a subject that is NOT being studied as part of the Diploma Programme often leads to lower marks”

IBO Handbook
The RQ (3)

Ask yourself what sort of information will I need to answer my RQ and is this information easily available in the library?

The RQ should be short and clear. It should be jargon free.

These very simple ‘power questions’ are very effective

**Who** – who did it?

**What** – what was noteworthy about it? What’s its relevance/importance?

**Where** – where did it happen? Could it have happened elsewhere?

**Why** – why did it happen or why did s/he do it?

**When** – when did it happen?
The RQ – Things To Avoid

Examiners’ reports mention these should be avoided at all costs.

Students should not work with a research question that is too broad or too vague, too narrow, too difficult or inappropriate.

For example ‘Does Globalisation affect Turkey?’

Limit your variables.

“Was the decline of population growth in Brazil the result of government policies?”

is much easier RQ to understand and for you to answer than

“Was the decline in population growth in Brazil related more to sex education, the distribution of birth control, or resource depletion?”

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### Formulating a Good RQ

Move from the GENERAL (Broad) to the SPECIFIC (Focused)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic – English Topic A</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Religion in Literature</td>
<td>Waaay too broad!!!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion in 19\textsuperscript{th} Century Literature</td>
<td>Still too broad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion in the works of the Brontes</td>
<td>Better. Moving in the right direction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion in the works of Charlotte Bronte</td>
<td>She wrote a lot!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlotte Bronte’s views on Religion in Villette and Jane Eyre</td>
<td>Almost there</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In what way does CB reveal her attitudes to religion in Villette and Jane Eyre?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A thesis statement in the Introduction to your EE declares what you intend to prove with your research

A good thesis statement will:

- Propose an arguable point; it takes a stand
- Is specific and focused
- Provides the examiner with a map to guide him/her through your work
- Anticipates and refutes counterarguments
A good thesis statement will help you focus your search for information.

This essay aims at evaluating **why** and **how** the labelling of the 1932-33 Ukrainian famine as genocide has been used for political ends.

* 50 Excellent Extended Essays ‘How Has Genocide As It Pertains to the 1932-33 Ukrainian famine been Used as a political tool?’ – Miss Ryan’s emphasis
“Questions & Hypotheses”

Geography Students

Hypothesis = Thesis Statement

For practical help look at David Holmes’ article in

Geography Review Vol. 23 No. 4 April 2010 pp31-33

Focuses on the scientific method and models and using hypotheses

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Research

Many of you have not written an academic essay before so have a look at these

50 IB EEs that have scored an A grade in 17 topic areas

Excellent history essays written by students. Check out introductions, conclusions and bibliographies

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Sources of Information

To Research is to **INVESTIGATE FULLY** using a **WIDE VARIETY** of resources

**What data might you need to answer your RQ?**

Library Catalogue – Oliver

Books and ebooks – Project Gutenberg out of copyright = out of date????

Newspapers (eg The Irish Times, a newspaper of record)  The Irish Times Archive is available online

Magazines/Journals - find a specialist journal in your subject area.  Check out what’s available in the library

Encyclopedia (eg World Book Online Enc.) Available here and at home

Internet (use a good search engine)  Be wary of Wikipedia.  Try Google Scholar.  There should not be an over-reliance on web-based sources

Databases (EBSCO)  Ask Miss Ryan for a demonstration

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Sources of Information (2)

8. Previous IB EEs are filed chronologically in the IB Section of the Library.

9. Subject Gateways eg [www.intute.ac.uk](http://www.intute.ac.uk) (closed July 2011 so use cautiously). [www.britac.ac.uk/portal](http://www.britac.ac.uk/portal); [www.history.ac.uk](http://www.history.ac.uk) et al.


8. Societies, groups, companies, organizations active in your subject area.


10. University or College Library – apply for a reader’s ticket.

The Library, St. Andrew’s College.
http://search.ebscohost.com
User name = ebsco                  Password = standrews

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EBSCO

EBSCO - internet based databases accessible at school and at home.

Advanced Placement Source

*History Reference Center* - full text of more than 120 history journals, plus documents, biographies, photos and maps, and 80 hours of historical video.

*Literary Reference Center* - contains information from over 1,000 books, literary encyclopedias and reference works and hundreds of literary journals. It contains detailed information on the most studied authors and their works.

*Science Reference Center* - contains full text for nearly 640 science encyclopedias, reference books, periodicals, etc. Topics covered include: biology, chemistry, earth & space science, environmental science, health & medicine, history of science, life science, physics, science & society, science as inquiry, scientists, technology and wildlife.

**ASK MISS RYAN FOR A TUTORIAL**

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Interviews – The Protocol

Do your homework—know why you want to contact this specific person before contacting them.

Contact the individual first to let them know you are interested in interviewing them and why. Letters or emails are all acceptable ways of initiating contact. You may not get a response to your first query.

Learn all you can about this person and her/his field before the interview—you want to be sure to ask intelligent questions.

Set an appointment which meets their schedule. Remember they are obliging you by sharing their time and knowledge.
Interviews – The Protocol

Send them a prepared list of questions **beforehand** to give them time to consider their replies — but feel free to ask follow up questions.

Take careful notes—if you want to record the interview, you must ask permission first.

Ask questions that require more than a “Yes” or “No” response.

Ask the who, what, where, when, why, and how questions.

Thank them for their time and send them a thank you note. Let them know the results of your research.

Source: http://library.devry.edu/pdfs/Information_Literacy_Module_2.pdf

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Background Reading

Start the research process by reading a general encyclopedia article on your subject area.

Useful source – World Book Online Encyclopedia

Available in school

Available at home on – www.heinemannworldbook.co.uk

User Name – standr

Password - rugbyrules
Your reading has a purpose!

Read purposefully - what answers do you want from your reading/research?

Make efficient use of your time – skim/scan. Where’s the main idea? What’s really relevant to your research? Use the index. Be ruthless!!

However, technical and closely written text may require 2/3 readings

Evaluate and be critical of the arguments presented in the text

- what are they? List them. If you can’t read the source again
- are they consistent or contradictory?
- are they relevant (even if you don’t agree with them)?
- is there bias (political, religious, ideological)?
- are the underlying assumptions valid?
- are conclusions supported by evidence eg statistics
Communicate Your Ideas

I used to hate writing assignments, but now I enjoy them.

I realized that the purpose of writing is to inflate weak ideas, obscure poor reasoning, and inhibit clarity.

With a little practice, writing can be an intimidating and impenetrable fog! Want to see my book report?

"The dynamics of interbeing and monological imperatives in Dick and Jane: a study in psychic transrelational gender modes."

Academia, here I come.

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# Essay Writing Resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>International Baccalaureate Organisation</th>
<th><strong>50 Excellent Extended Essays</strong></th>
<th>808.84</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>McGinty, Sarah Myers</td>
<td>The College Application Essay</td>
<td>378.1616</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50 Successful Harvard Application Essays</td>
<td>378.1616</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storey, William Kelleher</td>
<td>Writing History: A Guide For Students</td>
<td>907.2</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Studying History: A practical guide to successful essay-writing, seminars, assignments and exams.</td>
<td>907.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnson, Robert</td>
<td>A Short Guide to Writing About Film</td>
<td>808.066791</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corrigan, Timothy</td>
<td>+ 50 More Excellent Extended Essays</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
Essay Writing Resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Shelf No.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abbott, Mary</td>
<td>History Skills - a Student's Handbook</td>
<td>907.127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matheson, Ian</td>
<td>Passing Higher History Skills for Success</td>
<td>907.127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O'Neill, Declan</td>
<td>Essay Writing and Unprescribed Prose</td>
<td>420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berry, Ralph</td>
<td>The Research Project</td>
<td>425</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IB Prepared: Extended Essay

These and others are available in the Library

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Essay Examples

http://bhs-ib-ee.wikispaces.com/Essay+Exemplars

Previous IB EE are in the Library
The IBO 50 Excellent Extended Essays (DVD)
It is ESSENTIAL that you consult this magazine on a REGULAR basis!!!

Students should read –

Top-level Skills
Robin Bunce
Modern History Review Vol. 17 No. 4
April 2015
Primary & Secondary Sources

**Primary sources** – diaries, government documents, legal transcripts, Eyewitness accounts and oral histories. They are resources created at the time concerned

**Secondary sources** – interpret primary sources. They are not based on personal involvement in the event. Usually they are books and articles which interpret the events you are researching.
Problem Areas – The Introduction

Sets the context of the essay

It should contain the RQ – you will lose marks if it is not there

Tells why the topic is worthy of investigation

Shows how the topic relates to existing knowledge on the subject

Have a look at the 50 Excellent Essays DVD for guidance

There is no excuse not to gain the full 2 points
I decided to examine the role of one of the most important documents in the Affair, namely Zola’s open letter to the President of the Republic, “J’Accuse”. This document exemplifies the power and persuasiveness of the press and its ability to turn the tide of public opinion. Hence, the research question emerges: What role did “J’Accuse” play in the Dreyfus Affair and more specifically in Dreyfus’ acquittal?

Source: 50 Excellent Extended Essays
Problem Areas – The Essay

There are 16 points available, 4 for each of the following sections

**Investigation** – range, imaginativeness and appropriateness of resources, the planning and structuring of your research process

**Knowledge & Understanding** – what can be expected from a High School student, must show the place of the topic in the subject discipline, may need to comment on experts’ different opinions

**Argument** – there should be a logical flow of ideas

**Analysis/Evaluation**

You will be marked on each of these four criteria

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Problem Areas – The Argument

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Problem Areas – The Argument

**MAJOR CRITICISM** from the IB examiners

**STUDENTS FAIL TO PUT FORWARD AN ARGUMENT IN THEIR EE**

To earn good marks you **MUST** provide an argument relating to your research topic – **analyse** and **interpret** your data

Are there theoretical framework/tools/techniques in your subject area that you can use to analyse/interpret your research?

**No contribution by the student** – the EE is a compilation of information from various sources

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Your Purpose

“Remember your purpose is to convince the reader (Examiner) that the conclusions you draw regarding the research question are well founded and are supported by the evidence you have gathered and presented. So clearly, research question, data, evidence and/or information must be linked in a convincing way to the conclusion”.

You must do the “linking” and not leave it up to the reader to “see” the connections or relevance of what you have written”

Source: O’Farrell, Finbar. Extended Essay p59

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Find The Argument!

Use your critical thinking skills to identify the argument. Apply the skills you learned in TOK and your IA

What is the author’s position: what does the text want you to do, think, accept or believe?

Look for the reasons that are used to support conclusions

Are they valid, logical etc.?
How Do I Go About Structuring My Argument?

The basic structure of an argument goes something like this.

You take a **position**, have an **opinion**, consider something to be true/false.

Your present reasons, **evidence** or information to support your position.

You draw a **conclusion** from the reasons, evidence or information.

Source: O'Farrell, F. Extended Essay. IB Prepared. IBO 2010 p31

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A successful approach would look like this:

Tell the reader (examiner) what you intend to prove. Do this by presenting, explaining and putting the RQ into context.

Present and explain the evidence to support your case:

1. Quotations from a text
2. Opinions of other authors you have read
3. Historical documents/accounts of events
4. Data collected through experimentation/fieldwork
5. Results of surveys/questionnaires

**Draw conclusions** referring back to the evident you have presented.
State What You Intend to Prove

Taken from an essay on business ethics

“This essay will first describe what business ethics is and secondly, will consider whether this concept really is important. It will argue that business ethics is indeed a real and major issue in both the study and practice of business.”

Source: Godfrey, J. How To Use Your Reading In Your Essays. Palgrave Study Skills. Palgrave Macmillan. 2009

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Show The Evidence Supporting Your Argument

Taken from an essay on business ethics

“Opponents of the concept of ethics in business include those who claim that making a profit is the only responsibility a business has to society (Friedman, 1970, cited in Fisher and Lovell, 2003). Others such as Wolf (2008) share this view, and Prindl and Prodham (1994) suggest that ‘Finance as practiced in the professions and in industry is seen as a value-neutral positive discipline promoting efficiency…… Carr (1968) uses the analogy of a poker game to argue ….”.

Source: Godfrey, J. How To Use Your Reading In Your Essays. Palgrave Study Skills. Palgrave Macmillan. 2009

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Draw A Conclusion From The Evidence

Taken from an essay on business ethics

“It is of course true that most businesses cannot succeed without being profitable. However, this does not necessarily exclude ethical behaviour and although Carr’s view seems persuasive, there are two strong opposing arguments which are even more so”.

Source: Godfrey, J. How To Use Your Reading In Your Essays. Palgrave Study Skills. Palgrave Macmillan. 2009

The student has presented his argument using his sources!!

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Contribution by the Student

Show your awareness of DIFFERENT VIEWS and what they mean (TOK)

Have a look at contributions made by other students …

Research showed the true breakthrough for the Dreyfusards was …..

The Dreyfus Affair is still a relevant topic, easily connected and applicable to recent events

In the time after independence Rwanda never managed to transcend the colonial legacy. The author will therefore, argue that the Rwandan genocide in 1994 to a great extent was a result of the colonial legacy

Source: 50 Excellent Extended Essays
The Library, St. Andrew's College
Problem Areas – Evaluation by the IBO

May 2003 Report:

“Many candidates tend to accept sources unquestioningly, not least the internet ones. As usual, this was the weakest area in most candidates’ essays ……….. There is little direct recognition of different interpretations and/or commentary on historical sources, whether in the body of the essay, information in footnotes or annotated bibliographies.”

What does this mean???

Evaluate sources for origin, purpose, value and limitations - OPVL

Have a look at the Library Blog for guidance on how to evaluate print and internet sources of information

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Problem Areas – The Abstract

The Abstract is the “Executive Summary” of your EE – an overview.

It is one of the last things you will write.

It should contain the RQ, the scope of the investigation and the conclusion.

It allows the examiner to quickly understand the process, content and conclusion of your EE.

Not more than 300 words.

There is no excuse not to gain maximum points on this.

Have a look at the 50 Excellent Extended Essays DVDs for guidance.

Ask Miss Ryan for her handout ‘What is an Abstract and How To Write One’

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The ‘P’ Word

According to www.dictionary.com, plagiarism is using a portion or piece of work that has been copied from someone else and presenting it as your own work.

YOU are responsible for knowing about plagiarism and how to avoid it!!!

Others’ work includes ideas, research, graphics, computer programmes and music. It may consist of writing, charts, pictures, diagrams, websites and includes sentences and phrases.

Sources include books magazines, newspapers, websites, plays, films, photos, paintings and textbooks.

Have a look at the Library Blog on SACnet for guidance

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Problem Areas - Bibliography

You must document **ALL** sources of information used to create your EE

Pick one methodology and stick to it – Harvard, MLA etc

Bibliography creating tools are available on the internet

Palgrave Study Skills: Cite Them Right - 2 loan copies and one reference copy are available in the Library
Should I Use Appendices?

Appendices must be used **sparingly**

**Examiners are not required to read appendices** so material essential to the essay must be in the body of the EE

World Studies IB EE candidates are still encouraged to produce a Researcher’s reflection space (RSS) and this should be included as an appendix

Source: IBO Coordinator’s Notes Sept 2015

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Problem Areas - Presentation

This is a ‘no brainer’ with 4 points for the taking – but many students ‘give away’ these points through lack of attention to detail.

A clear, attractive, accurate and appropriate layout will create a good impression.

Title Page
Contents page
Page numbers
Illustrations – if relevant
Quotes – if relevant. Beware of ‘over-quoting’
Footnotes
Bibliography
Appendices

GET THOSE 4 POINTS!!!
Present Your Conclusions
Problem Areas – The Conclusion

Should clearly relate to the RQ

Should be consistent with the findings/evidence

**NB** - Should not simply be a restatement of the content

Ask yourself did you answer your RQ?

Did you get the results you expected? If not, why not?

Should not suddenly present material that is not in the body of the essay

Have a look at the ‘50 Excellent Extended Essays’ DVD for guidance

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What Does The Interview Involve?

Short interview between Student and Supervisor lasting 10-15 minutes

Concludes the IBEE process

It’s a discussion which examines the successes/difficulties in the IBEE process

Helps the Supervisor’s report – Yellow Sheet
Possible Viva Voce Questions

What have you learned from your IB EE?

Why did you choose this subject?

What were the objectives of the project? Were they achieved?

How did you go about doing your research?

What did not work/you found difficult to accomplish?

If you were to start again, is there anything you would like to change?

What were the best features of your project?

What further research would you liked to have conducted, and why?
In assessing Criterion K (holistic judgment) examiners will take into account any information given in the report about intellectual initiative, insight or persistence in the face of difficulties.
Marking Your EE

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Marking Your EE

Or how can I get a good grade???

Have a focused RQ

Answer the RQ

Use good quality sources of information

Evaluate, interpret and criticise

Argue!!!

Present your conclusion(s)

Ensure you meet all criteria listed in ‘Assessment Criteria’ in the IB Handbook (available on SACnet)

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