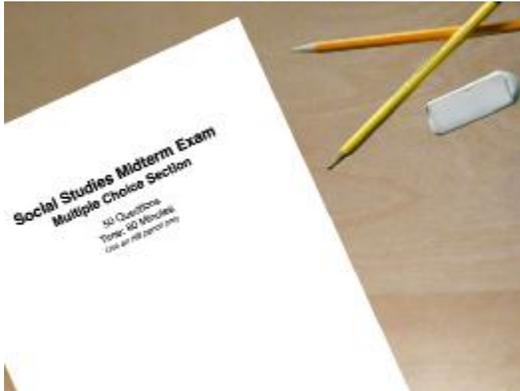


Writing Multiple-Choice Exams



Some of the Module Challenges you undertake in this course will have a multiple-choice test as a component, as will your Social Studies 30 Diploma Examination. Having a strategy for taking multiple-choice exams can ease exam anxiety and improve your score.

Consider the following tips for writing multiple-choice exams.

- Make sure you have all the required materials to write the exam. Scrambling to borrow a pencil or an eraser at the last minute will leave you stressed as you begin the exam.
- Before starting the exam, read the instructions carefully. Follow the instructions exactly. Something as simple as failing to record your answers as directed can have a big effect on your test results.
- Note the time allowed for taking the exam.
- Before you start, briefly flip through the exam to get a feel for the number of readings, charts, and diagrams the exam contains. Knowing what's ahead will help you budget your time more effectively.
- Once you begin the exam, approach each question in the following way:
 - Carefully read the entire stem of the question. Do not skip ahead to view the answers. You may even wish to cover the answers so they do not distract you.
 - If presented with a source, such as a reading, cartoon, chart, or diagram, skim the questions before you go over the source. This way, you will have some sense of what you're looking for in the source before you spend too much time on it.
 - Don't forget to look at the credit line for each source item provided. Credit lines often contain valuable information, such as the title of the document the source was excerpted from, the date of publication, or

the author's name. Sometimes these clues make the difference in terms of understanding the perspective expressed in a source.

- Remember, some questions ask you to choose the best response out of a number of answers that may be at least partially correct. Pay particular attention to boldface terms, such as most likely or most often, which may appear in the question. These boldfaced terms often indicate this type of question.

- When you have finished reading the question stem, try to predict the correct answer.

- Uncover the answers. Read each answer carefully.

- As you review the possible responses, eliminate those you know for certain to be wrong. You can put an "x" beside eliminated answers in the question booklet if you wish.

- After you have reviewed all of the responses, if you find an answer that corresponds to what you had predicted, and you have eliminated the incorrect answers, mark the correct response on the answer sheet.

- If you can't determine the correct answer, take the following steps:
 - Make your best educated guess and mark your response on the answer sheet.
 - Don't leave the answer blank with the intention of coming back to it. You may run out of time. Making an educated guess regarding the answer gives you at least some chance of getting it right; a blank answer eliminates any chance of scoring a point. Leaving answers blank on a computer-scored answer sheet also increases the potential for you to record subsequent responses in the wrong space. It is better to mark a guess and keep a good eraser handy in case you change your mind later on.
 - In the question booklet, put a star beside any questions you want to return to if you have time. This will include questions on which you were unsure or on which you took your best guess. If time permits at the end of the exam, you can revisit the starred questions and change your responses if a correct answer suddenly dawns on you.
 - Don't simply choose "C" if you don't know the answer. Instead, use what you know to make your best educated guess.
- Don't spend too much time pondering any one question. Keep an eye on the clock. If the answer doesn't come to you in a reasonable amount of time, mark your best guess, put a star beside the question in the question booklet, and move on to the next question. Questions that follow later may actually jog your memory or provide information that helps you identify the correct answer for a "starred" question that

initially stumped you.

- Don't make a snap decision or select an answer simply because you recognize it as something you have taken in the course. Take time to read carefully, consider the alternatives, and choose the response that makes the most sense.
- Don't look for some kind of pattern in the answers. The creators of exams generally do not devote much thought to how the answers appear when penciled in on a computer scoring sheet. You shouldn't either.

More Information

Alberta Education provides additional advice regarding the types of multiple-choice questions that appear on Diploma Examinations. Download the [Diploma Exam Guide](#) and review this information.