

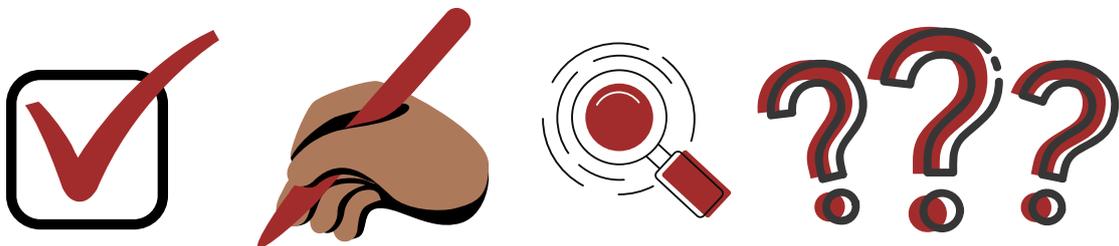


**South African History Online**  
towards a people's history

# History Skills Pack

Based on the CAPS curriculum

For an outline of the FET Curriculum Assessment Policy, click [here](#).



# Mark Allocation



## The Nine Historians Skills

Identified Skills	Applying Skills
Using Multiple Types of Sources	Use various sources, such as cartoons and diary extracts to analyse different perspectives of the past.
Extraction, Interpretation and Explanation	Analyse sources to select <b>relevant</b> information which answers the question. Interpret the sources with the contextual knowledge of what happened in the past. Explain the causes and consequences of events.
Evaluate Usefulness	Determine whether the source is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reliable: Does the source give you a true account of the past? What is the purpose of the source?</li><li>• Stereotyping: Do people have oversimplified ideas of the past?</li><li>• Subjective: Does it only give one perspective of the past, while ignoring other people's experiences?</li></ul> Substantiate why you find a source useful but also limited.
Multiple Perspectives	There are usually two sides of a story. Apply the A, B, C rule for a balanced view of the past by including: A = The first perspective B = The second perspective C = Combination of the two perspectives for a conclusion
Different Interpretations	Historians can analyse the same sources and come to different conclusions. Analyse these opinions and discuss whether you agree or disagree with the conclusions.
Evaluating and Debating	Develop opinions about historical events and people that is substantiated by facts and evidence.
Line of Argument	Introduce your argument at the beginning of the question, substantiate your argument with facts and conclude with an analysis of your argument.
Coherency and Chronology	Sequence relevant facts logically and chronologically. Facts should not be repeated, because of sequencing events in an achronological manner.
Heritage and Conservation	Analyse how the past is currently portrayed and celebrated. How will today's commemoration of the past impact the interpretation of historical facts?

Department of Basic Education: History National Curriculum Statement FET and Training

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**In your paper one exam you will have 3 sections:**

Section	Content
Section A	1. Visual Analysis 2. Textual Analysis
Section B	Sourced Based Questions (material booklet)
Section C	Source Based Essay

## Question Levels

Source Based Questions	
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Levels	Level 1 – Easy Questions (30 % of test) Level 2 – Source Questions (40 % of test) Level 3 – Application Questions (30% of test)

### Level One

The first level includes the easiest questions, which amount to 30% in the test paper. Students are asked to either define concepts they have already been taught in class or to read a source and only extract the answer from the piece they have read. The students' marks are given based on providing a proper definition or identifying the relevant answer to the question.



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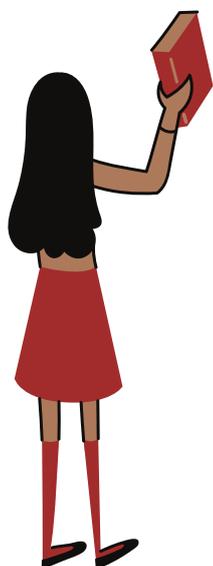


## Level Two

Level two source-based questions require more insight from the students and make up 40% of the source-based section. They need to be able to interpret, explain and analyse the sources given in the test. These questions will ask students to explain the causes or consequences of specific events in history. It is vital that students focus on the sources given in the test and not only reiterate facts discussed in class. Students should only use the facts in class as background information that gives them context to the sources given in the test. The answer needs to be relevant to the sources given.

## Level Three

The remaining 30% of the source-based questions consist of level three source-based questions, which is more challenging than the first two levels. Students need to learn how to compare sources given, interpret and evaluate sources, and determine whether a source is reliable, bias useful or limited. Students will receive marks if they give a relevant answer that is substantiated by a valid argument. Students are asked to interact with the sources and think critically.



### Usually teachers can ask questions, such as:

- "To what extent is this source useful?"
- "To what is this source reliable?"

It is vital that a student takes a stance when answering these questions. They need to highlight both the shortcomings of the source and yet credit the information the source.

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## Essay Writing

Essay Writing	
Mark Allocation	50 marks
Criteria	Introduction Body Mark Guideline & Line of Argument

*TIP: Students will also be asked to write an essay consisting of 50 marks in the exams. It is vital that students use the correct layout when writing an essay, which will contain introduction, a body and a conclusion. Before a student starts to answer their essay, it is vital that they first grasp the question being asked. If students write irrelevant statements or indicate that they do not understand the question by making a wrong statement, they will be penalized.*

## Introduction

The moment the student starts writing an introduction, they need to highlight the specific question the teacher is asking. Then they need to select relevant information they will discuss throughout the essay that addresses the question being asked. This will indicate to the teacher that the student grasped the question and know how to approach the question.



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## Body

In the body, the student also needs to be able to select **relevant facts** and sequence facts that it reads chronologically. Students will be penalized if they constantly repeat facts, because of not reasonably sequencing events.

Students will also be penalized if they write **irrelevant** facts that do not answer the question. For example, students should refrain from explaining consequences of a historical event if the question focuses on the causes.

The text should also be **coherent** and **balanced**. Students need to make a clear argument and try to give a balanced perspective of the past by analysing the pros and cons of past events. For example, if students are asked to analyse Stalin's Five-Year Plans they need to be able to focus on the humanitarian costs as well as the economic achievements. Towards the end of their essay they can then argue whether the "**means justifies the cause**". In other words, students need to determine whether extreme measures to achieve a specific goal is worth it in the end. The students argument needs to be **substantiated by evidence** and **facts**. This will enable students to give a **balanced** view of historical events.



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## Mark Guideline

Teachers mark students based on the **general impression** of their essay. They do not mark per fact given. Teachers do not want students to study the facts and simply rewrite it on paper. Students should have an argument which they introduce in their introduction and then substantiate throughout their essay till they have written their conclusion.

This is what teachers call "**line of argument**", which means that the argument needs to be prevalent from the start to the end of the paper. This also means that students will be marked by linking different historical events, causes or consequences that substantiate their argument. Students' arguments need to be original, addressing the question at hand and clearly indicating that they can critically analyse historical events. Students' **opinions** and the **evidence used to substantiate** their opinions are ultimately what differentiates a student struggling to pass from an A-candidate.

It is possible for all struggling students to become A-candidates if they know how teachers allocate marks in exams. Teachers need to identify whether students have developed these specific skills when marking papers. Unfortunately, if students do not know what skills they need to have in exams, because they do not understand how marks are allocated, they will never be able to excel in History.



**TIP:** Incorporate the question asked in exams by rephrasing it in your introduction paragraph.

# References

1. The Department of Basic Education: History National Curriculum Statement FET and Training Phase Grades 10-12.  
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