



Exam Skills: Clue Words

Clue Words in Exam Questions

In exams (especially essay exams), every question contains a clue word. Clue words are the words that are used to indicate the angle you should take when answering the question. Clue words tell you exactly what to do in your essays, so they are extremely important in essay exams. An essay exam is like a mental game in which the professors (who write the exams) tell you what they want. To play the game successfully you need to be aware of the precise meanings of the clue words in the questions. Once you have found the clue words and worked out exactly what they mean, you can answer the questions as clearly as possible. For example:

Compare the goals of liberal and socialist feminism

The clue word in this question is **compare**



Interpret