**APPENDIX IV**

**KEY WORD LEXICON FOR WRITTEN-RESPONSE QUESTIONS IN HISTORY 12**

Students frequently lose marks on written-response items by not addressing the question given. Most questions contain a key-word or command term. The following list will help students to read, analyze, and respond to written-response questions more effectively.

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| **AGREE OR DISAGREE** | Support or refute a statement; give the positive **or** negative features; express an informed opinion one way or the other; list the advantages for **or** against. In today’s world, dominated by science and technology, education in the humanities has little meaning. Agree or disagree with this statement. |
| **ANALYZE** | To divide a complex whole into its component parts. This process should involve not only breaking down the whole, but also showing the relationship between the various elements; e.g., Analyze the impact of Nazi racial theories upon Europe, 1933-1945. |
| **ASSESS THE DEGREE/ TO WHAT EXTENT** | Command words such as these strongly suggest to the student that two schools of thought exist about a given subject. These questions often involve weighing the relative merit of conflicting points of view; e.g., negative vs. positive, strong vs. weak, fundamental vs. immediate. For example, assess the degree to which the foreign policies of Great Britain, France, and the United States encouraged the aggression which led to the Second World War. |
| **COMPARE/ COMPARE AND CONTRAST** | Give an estimate of the similarity and dissimilarity of one event or issue to another; give an estimate of the relationship between two things. |
| **CONTRAST** | Give an estimate of the difference between two things; e.g., Contrast the successes and failures od the League of Nations and the United Nations. See COMPARE. |
| **DEFINE** | Give the meaning of a word or concept and provide a relevant context. Students should be taught that it is inappropriate to repeat the word in question as part of the definition; e.g., *Collective security* is a group of countries *collectively* pursuing *security.* |
| **DESCRIBE** | Give a detailed account of a situation; e.g., Describe the conflicting interests of France and Germany prior to the Second World War. |
| **DISCUSS** | Present the various points of view as in a debate or argument. Points-of-view arising from the topic should be supported and/or challenged; e.g., “The first war explains the second and, in fact, caused it, insofar as one event causes another.” A.J.P. Taylor. Discuss this statement with reference to the causes of the Second World War. |

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| **EVALUATE** | Making a judgement which involves determining the value of a statement and/or assessing the relative significance of that idea; e.g., Most conflict in the twentieth century has been the result of the clash between totalitarianism and democratic ideologies. Evaluate this statement. |
| **EXPLAIN** | Make plain or intelligible the relationship which is asked for; e.g., Explain the similarities between. . . , or Explain the differences between . . . . In history, this term is most often applied to the cause/effect relationship, which means making clear the cause, origin, or reason for something; e.g., Explain how Hitler lost the Second World War. |
| **GIVE THE SIGNIFICANCE OF** | Present information which determines the importance of an event or issue. Quite often used to show causation; e.g., What was the significance of the War Guilt Clause in the Treaty of Versailles? |
| **IDENTIFY** | Clearly establish the identity of something based on an understood set of considerations; recognize the unique qualities of something and state the criteria used to identify it. Often used in conjunction with EXPLAIN; e.g., Identify and explain the key features of Roosevelt’s New Deal. |
| **JUSTIFY** | Defend or agree with a particular, predetermined point-of-view; give evidence, reasons, or examples; e.g., Justify the use of the atomic bomb by the United States against Japan in August, 1945. |
| **LIST** | Give a catalogue of names, ideas, or events which belong to a particular class of items; e.g., List three benefits the European Economic Community provides for its members. |
| **OUTLINE** | Give a description of only the main features; summarize the principal parts of a thing, idea, or event; e.g., Outline the main events of the summer of 1917 in Russia. |
| **SUMMARIZE** | Give an account of the main points.. This implies a degree of evaluation as the student weighs the relative merit of the more important versus the more trivial; e.g., Summarize the causes of the Second World War. |
| **SUPPORT/ REFUTE** | Give the points in favour of, or opposed to, a predetermined point of view or particular position; e.g., The State of Israel would not have survived without the support of the United States. Support or refute this statement. Also see AGREE/DISAGREE. While students should generally support or refute the given statement, their responses may include opposing points. |