

## PETERHOUSE VELLACOTT HISTORY PRIZE – HOW TO ENTER

Write an essay of between 2,000 and 4,000 words on one of the following topics. Include a bibliography and, if necessary, a webography. Essays may be hand-written (if clearly legible) or word-processed. Please use A4 paper and only write on one side of each page you use. Please remember to keep a copy of your essay as submitted essays cannot be returned. It is unfortunately not possible to provide feedback on the essays submitted.

All entrants must submit a completed application form and cover sheet with their essay. Essays should be sent in an A4 envelope *ensuring the right postage has been used* to:

### ESSAY PRIZE

Peterhouse Admissions Office  
Trumpington Street  
Cambridge  
CB2 1RD

The deadline is **20<sup>th</sup> March 2015**. Faxes and email attachments will not be accepted. Further information about how to enter can be found below. Good luck!

### Vellacott History Prize Questions 2015

1. When and why did democracy emerge in Classical Athens?
2. Which of Herodotus and Thucydides is more deserving of the title 'The Father of History'?
3. Why did the empire conquered by Alexander the Great break apart so quickly?
4. Was there a 'Roman Revolution' at the end of the Republic?
5. 'If a man were called to fix the period in the history of the world, during which the condition of the human race was most happy and prosperous, he would, without hesitation, name that which elapsed from the death of Domitian to the accession of Commodus.' (EDWARD GIBBON). Discuss.
6. What were the political implications for 'barbarians' of conversion to Christianity?
7. To what extent did England or the English emerge in any period before 1066?
8. In what senses was the Carolingian Empire an empire?
9. Was there ever a 'European economy' in the early middle ages?
10. Was there a 'Norman achievement' in England after 1066?
11. What should we understand by the term 'papal power' with reference to the period between c.1050 and c.1300?
12. Why did the Byzantine Empire survive for so long?
13. To what extent and why did population growth occur in the centuries prior to the Black Death?
14. How can we most profitably study women in later medieval Europe?
15. Is the growth of the state a useful framework in which to explore later medieval political history? You may confine your answer to one country if you wish.
16. What can we learn from the vernacular literature of the Middle Ages?
17. Should we be more surprised by the violence or by the tranquillity of later medieval England?
18. Was there a relationship between architecture and politics in the Italian Renaissance?
19. Was there anything distinctive about the northern European Renaissance?
20. Discuss the impact on European culture in the period 1450-1650 of one of gunpowder, the printing press, or the nautical needle [compass].
21. Was the Reformation ever a popular movement?

22. Why was female kingship controversial in the sixteenth century?
23. Account for the growth of one of these cities: Tenochtitlán before 1500, London before 1600, or Hamburg before 1700.
24. What happened to the market for art in the Netherlands in the period 1650-1750?
25. How did horses transform culture, EITHER in North America OR in Africa, after 1600?
26. Who benefitted from the French Revolution?
27. Account for the continuing influence of the Classics in European intellectual life after 1750.
28. Did the distribution of natural resources account for the pattern of industrialisation in Europe before 1900?
29. To what extent did African political and economic interests shape the Atlantic slave trade?
30. Why did Prussia, rather than any other state, serve as the driving force behind the unification of Germany in the nineteenth century?
31. How important was Islam to political processes, EITHER in nineteenth-century North Africa, OR in the twentieth-century Middle East?
32. Account for the growth of trade unions in nineteenth-century Europe.
33. Could slavery have been ended without imperialism?
34. To what extent was tribalism a colonial invention?
35. Was ethnicity a stumbling block in the creation of nationalism in the twentieth century? If so, why?
36. 'The most significant scientific advance of the twentieth century was not the atomic bomb, but penicillin'. Discuss.
37. Are debt and democracy inextricably linked?
38. 'The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles' (KARL MARX). Discuss.
39. 'The collapse of the Soviet Union was the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the century' (VLADIMIR PUTIN). Discuss.
40. Analyse the factors leading to the end of Apartheid.

Competitors are advised that the main focus of the essay should **not** be material previously or currently being studied by the entrant as part of their sixth form studies. The entrant may refer to topics that will be studied in future so long as, at the time of the closing date, the entrant has received no formal tuition on the topic in question. All entries must be accompanied by a signed statement from their Head of Sixth Form or Head of History confirming that the essay is the entrant's own work and that the main focus of the essay is not something which s/he has hitherto studied in the sixth form classroom. Please remember a maximum of **two entries per school or college per competition** is requested.

## Application form for the Peterhouse Essay Prizes 2015 (Vellacott, Kelvin and Thomas Campion)

Please complete this form clearly in BLOCK CAPITALS and return to us by **20<sup>th</sup> March 2015**.  
Please paperclip the form to your essay, ensuring that you also include your **name** and the **essay question number** at the top of the front page of your essay.

1. I am entering the:  
VELLACOTT HISTORY / KELVIN SCIENCE / THOMAS CAMPION ENGLISH essay competition  
*(please delete as applicable)*
2. Which essay number and title have you chosen (please remember to mark this on your essay)?
  
3. Name:
4. Sex: M/F
5. Date of Birth:
6. Home Address:
  
7. Home Tel:
8. Mobile:
9. Email (ESSENTIAL, so please print clearly):
10. A) School Name:  
B) School Address:
  
11. School Year (e.g. Year 12):
12. A) Name of Head of Sixth Form/Department named on Essay Cover Sheet:  
B) His/her email address:
13. If you go to University, what subject are you likely to apply for?

*Thanks for your entry!*

## COVER SHEET

### SECTION TO BE COMPLETED BY ENTRANT

Name of Entrant [PLEASE PRINT]:

Email Address of Entrant:

Name and Address of School or College:

Essay Question Chosen:

I certify that the attached essay is my own work, that all quotations and citations (including those from the worldwide web) are fully acknowledged, and that the essay is within the word limit.

Signature:

Date:

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### SECTION TO BE COMPLETED BY HEAD OF SIXTH FORM OR HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Name of Teacher [PLEASE PRINT]:

Email Address of Teacher:

I certify that the attached essay is the entrant's own work and that the main focus of the essay is not material which has hitherto been studied by the entrant in the sixth form classroom.

Signature:

Date:

Once completed, this form, application form and essay should be sent in an A4 envelope to the following address by **20<sup>th</sup> March 2015**:

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