

Peterhouse Vellacott History Prize 2019

Writing your essay

Write an essay of between 2,000 and 4,000 words including footnotes and appendices on one of the following questions. Include a bibliography and ensure all sources are referenced. **Essays must be submitted as a PDF** via the online form. Please ensure that the pages in your essay are numbered and that your name and school appears clearly on the first page. Please also **name the PDF file in the following format: Prize-Question number-Surname-Initial e.g. Vellacott-2-Smith-F.pdf.**

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 verified by a 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 they have hitherto studied in the sixth form classroom.

How to submit

A maximum of **two entries** per competition per school can be accepted, except by prior arrangement with your school. All entries must be approved by a teacher, so make sure your History teacher and Head of Department know you are entering and you have the relevant email address to hand when you create your account. Once essays are uploaded to our system, it is not possible to make changes – please ensure you are happy with your work before pressing 'submit'. It is unfortunately not possible to provide feedback on essays.

The deadline for you to submit your essay is 16:00 GMT on **Monday 25th March 2019**. Essays which are not submitted by this time will not be considered under any circumstances. Your teacher will then receive emails from Peterhouse asking them to confirm that you are eligible and that the work complies with our guidelines, as listed in this document and on our website. They must do this by 16:00 GMT on **Monday 1st April 2019** – please inform them of this. Essays which have not been approved by a teacher will not be considered. For this reason, submission by post, fax or email will only be accepted in exceptional circumstances, and only by prior arrangement.

Please direct any questions to essayprize@pet.cam.ac.uk.

Prizes

Each competition has a prize pool of £750. Winners will be contacted by post - please make sure your postal address and other contact details are entered correctly!



Vellacott History Prize Questions 2019

1. Was Rome's transition from republic to monarchy a revolution?
2. What was the importance of rings in ancient Rome?
3. Were the Germanic invasions a cataclysm for the Western Roman Empire?
4. Can we trust Procopius?
5. What claim does Charlemagne have to the accolade 'Father of Europe'?
6. What difference did the Norman Conquest make to the governance of England?
7. Why did uniformity of religious belief matter so much to the medieval authorities?
8. 'Later medieval kings were like modern drinks-dispensers: when they didn't give you what you wanted, you simply kicked them until they did.'
Do you agree?
9. How interconnected was the later medieval European economy?
10. What should we mean when talking about the later medieval 'state'?
11. How global was the Renaissance?
12. How did people read in the sixteenth century?
13. Was there an early modern 'republic of letters'?
14. Was the early modern period a golden age of imposture?
15. What was the relationship of towns to countryside in early modern Europe?
16. Did the early modern period witness the emergence of a new category of "race"?
17. To what extent was EITHER early modern London OR early modern Constantinople a cosmopolitan city?
18. Was there an "educational revolution" in early modern England?
19. Why were western scholars more interested in Arabic than Turkish in the seventeenth century?
20. 'You must not break treaties except for important reasons'. Frederick the Great, 1752. Comment.
21. What can responses to the Lisbon earthquake (1755) tell us about the changing relationship between religion and society?



22. Did religious factionalism advance or hinder reform in the nineteenth century?
23. Why did imperialism fail?
24. Discuss how and why understandings of economic inequality changed during EITHER the eighteenth OR nineteenth OR twentieth century.
25. What were the effects of mass literacy OR mass entertainment on social relations in the nineteenth OR twentieth century?
26. How and why did popular ideas of the state change in the twentieth century?
27. How international was the Bolshevik Revolution?
28. Was there a 'fascist international'?
29. Was Nationalism a project of the left or the right?
30. Was Henry Luce right to say that freedom needs a greater living space than tyranny?
31. Was the Marshall Plan about more than the reconstruction of Europe?
32. Is Cowling still relevant to political historians?
33. Was the Iraq war lost at home?
34. Account for the rise of 'identity politics'.
35. Is Brexit a case of imperial nostalgia or of imperial amnesia?
36. What is 'global' about global history?
37. Discuss the effect of technological developments on the operation of political ideas in EITHER modern America OR modern Africa OR modern Europe.
38. Why is the writing of modern British history so Anglo-centric?
39. What are the chief problems with trying to read EITHER objects OR film as historical sources?
40. Is 'class' still a useful category of historical analysis?
41. Should historians embrace or resist 'presentism'?
42. Should academic historians set aside their personal political inclinations?
43. Why do historians need to pay attention to patriarchy?
44. Does microhistory matter?



45. Does humanitarian intervention have a history?
46. 'All history is the history of thought.' What did Collingwood mean by this?
47. How can handwriting be used as a historical source?