



Making Notecards

The purpose of notecards, or any other learning aid, is to gain a familiarity with the subject and keep it fresh over a long period of time. History is a subject, not unlike foreign language, which must be relearned and used in order to be understood.

Do not memorize. Memorization will not be helpful on the exam. Create connections with notecards. Develop a facility with their use.

Students who do well on notecards, keep up with them, take them seriously, and consistently study with them do well on the AP exam.

Steps

1. Make notecards from a list provided by the text, or on your own. Cards can be 3x5, 4x6, or any other size, although I recommend 3x5. They should be uniform.
2. The front of the card should have the concept or phrase, where in the text it came from (chapter and page), and any additional connecting device, such as a theme or thread.
3. The back of the card should have a complete thought that corresponds to the concept or phrase on the front that a) defines, b) lists significance, and c) analyzes the significance. Concepts should also include an example. Look for General Significance and Historical Significance
4. While studying with the stack, make three piles:
 - a. Cards you immediately recognize and can immediately answer
 - b. Cards you recognize eventually and can eventually answer
 - c. Cards you do not recognize
5. Reshuffle groups b and c, and start over again. The idea is to get all cards into group a. When that is completed, move on to another set of cards.
6. Do not use the notecards for more than 15 minutes at a time. Take a break and do something completely different for another 30 minutes and then come back to the cards. Eat, drink, walk to the bathroom, do different homework, or even watch some TV or listen to the radio or read.

