

Common Terms Used on Exam Questions

Do these words look familiar? Have you seen them on tests before? Use these terms when creating summary questions from your lecture notes and readings.

Agree, Disagree	Take a definite stand; state an opinion on the question on an issue or statement contained in the question. Explain persuasively, and in some detail, why you agree or disagree.
Analyze	Break down a topic into its parts and discuss the relationships that exist between the whole (topic) and the parts. Be specific.
Compare, Contrast	Show, in detail, the similarities, the differences, or the similarities and the differences between the two topics stated in the question.
Define	Give the exact meaning of a word, phrase or concept. Be specific; use details and give examples.
Describe, Discuss	Explain, in detail, what the question asks about the topic. Provide all the pertinent information you can about the topic, using examples to illustrate your statements.
Evaluate	Make a judgment on the topic in question based on the information at hand and your own values and experiences.
Explain	Examine the topic in question based on the information at hand and your own values and experiences.
Identify	Mention the two or three most important facts about a person or subject area. Watch for directions that ask you to identify and explain briefly. These require more than a few facts.
Illustrate	Provide five concrete examples to clarify or explain a general statement.
Outline	Organize the main points and give supporting statements or details.
Prove	Through support and/or illustration, show why the statement is correct. Use persuasion, logic and reason.
Summarize	Give an overview of the subject.
Trace	Describe the steps or process that brought some event to pass.

Mock Exam Worksheet

Directions: Generate exam questions using your text, lecture notes, key word diagrams, question charts, and Learning New Terms glossary for this class. Your questions should be in the same format as the tests for the class (i.e. multiple choice, true/false, essay, etc.). You want it to model an actual test that your professor would write for that class. When you are finished, take the mock exam as you would the actual test, at a desk without any notes, etc. See how you do!

