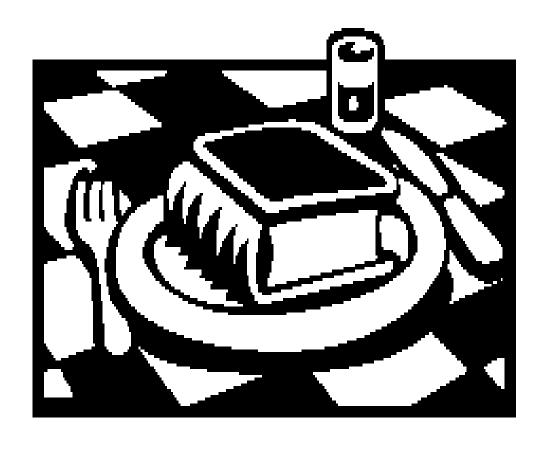
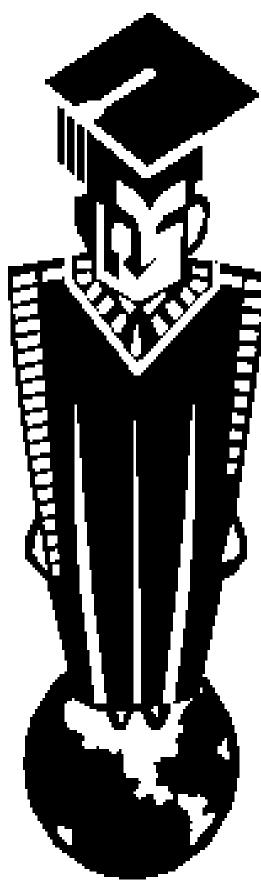
# ENGLISH FINAL EXAMS REVIEWING & SURVIVING

SCOTT FINDLEY



## DEBUNKING THE ENGLISH FINAL EXAM MYTH



Provincial examination creates a sense of dread; students fear exams and what they anticipate as a horrible experience.

Unlike some other exams, the English final is not an exam that requires a great deal of memorization (yet you still need to know your assigned terms), but instead, requires the application of skills that have been learned throughout the semester.

Due toits unique approach, this exam can either the easiest or the most difficult of all finals. Like any exam it all depends on how prepared you are.

Students often mistake the English final exam for being easy simply because there is no required or in-depth memorization. Students usually review some poetry terms and expect to achieve a mark similar to their in-class grade.

While some students who choose not to prepare do achieve an acceptable mark, the student who takes the time to truly prepare and practice for the English final exam will *always* do better 99% of the time.

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# GETTING THROUGH IT ALIVE

So, how do you do well on the English final exam?

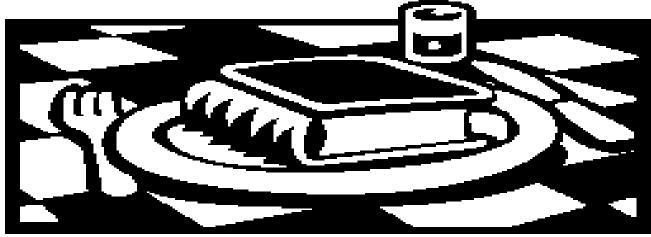
imply put, you should practice writing past final exam. Writing past exams is the quickest and easiest way to learn the layout of the exam and help you to make decisions on how you will actually write it. Many students make the mistake of neither practising with old exams nor planning their attack for the actual exam.

You should assess your personal strengths and weaknesses on the different sections of past exams and then plan which sections you will work on and in what specific order.

You should also practice writing the exams in the same amount of time that is actually allotted to you — it's better to know whether you can finish the exam in three hours beforehand than to realize it on the day of the exam.

Write as many of the past exams as you can. The more exposure you have to different exams the better prepared you will be for anything that is thrown at you.

Finally, work on practising the exam in the same circumstances as you will eventually be writing: use a desk with lots of light, a firm chair, no distractions, have all your materials ready, and then begin and continue to write the exam for the whole time without a break. While it may seem tough at first, it will train you for the real thing



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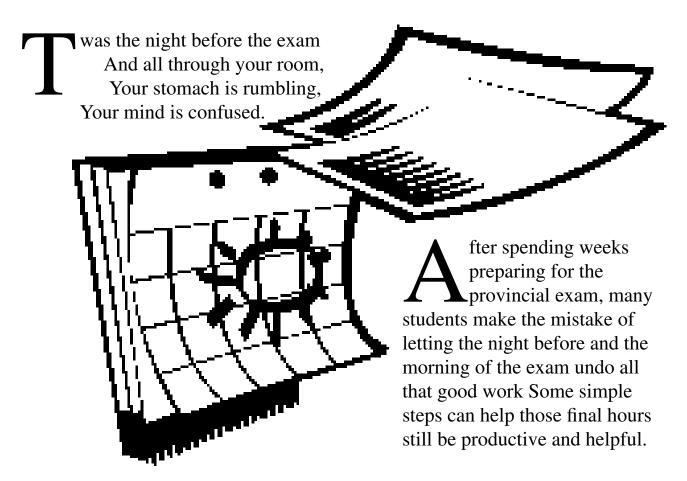
### **AESTHETICS**

- Give it a title
- Don't use the prompt as the first sentence: Equality is very important....
- Develop consistent characters
- Avoid use of conventional 5 paragraph essay
- Be descriptive but not over-descriptive
- Avoid profanity and vulgarity
- Make sure it's easy to read
- Try to take an interesting perspective if you are dealing with an issue
- Try to use poetic devices and figurative language (metaphor, simile, etc)
- Try to avoid using your first idea
- Avoid wishy-washy phrasing (I think..., Almost everyone..., Sometimes people...)

### GRAMMATICAL/MECHANICAL

- Multiparagraph
- Spelling
- Varied use of language and diction
- Consistent tense (past, present, etc)
- Proper use of poetic devices and figurative language
- Don't misquote
- Parallelism and balancing
- Proofread your paper and make corrections
- Plan out your essay and the points you wish to deal with
- Maintain point of view (First, Third, or Omniscient)
- Don't overwrite your idea
- Avoid common sayings and cliches
- Avoid common speech and familiarity in your writing

# THE NIGHT BEFORE & MORNING OF E-DAY



It may seem common-sense, but the night before the exam it is important to get a good night's sleep. Don't simply go to bed at 6 pm and expect to sleep: eat a good meal, try to relax, avoid studying, gather up your writing materials and picture identification and put it by the door, and go to bed no later than 10 pm if you can.

In the morning get up at least 2 hours before the exam. Eat breakfast and avoid drinking too much coffee or tea — you don't want to be spending all your time in the washroom.

Grab your writing materials and identification. Arrive at least 30 minutes early for the exam. If you are taking a bus, ensure that if you miss your bus there is still another one that can get you to the exam on time. If you arrive more than 30 minutes late after the exam begins you will not be allowed to write it.

When you arrive at the exam, find your seat, get registered, and relax; if you're ready, the exam won't be easy, but at least you'll be ready to do the best you can knowing that you are ready for anything that can be thrown at you.