

**Study Strategies Guide to Accompany**

# **Cultural Anthropology**

**A Perspective on the Human Condition**

**Ninth Edition**

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## Introduction: To the Student

These study strategies are designed to help you learn the information in *Cultural Anthropology: A Perspective on the Human Condition*, Seventh Edition, and prepare for tests in the course. As you begin to study, ask yourself the following questions:

1. What is the extent of my background knowledge in anthropology?
2. What new information will I have to learn? How difficult is the information?
3. What will I have to do to learn the information? That is, what strategies will help me?
4. What types of tests will I have to take?

One of the keys to being a successful student is becoming an independent learner. Thinking about the answers to the questions above is an important step in this process. Another step is to know how and when to use different strategies that will help you learn and remember information. In addition, the affective component is important because you have to be motivated to try different strategies and incorporate personalized strategies into your study method.

The purpose of this guide is to help you become more aware of the way you learn and remember information and to encourage you to use the best strategies when studying. The order of the study skills segments works well in preparing you for this course, but it is certainly not the only way to use the segments. If you need help right away on a topic that's not covered until later in the guide, don't wait! The principles in the segments, although sometimes illustrated by material from a specific chapter, apply everywhere. Remember, this study guide is designed to benefit *you*!

We encourage you to form study groups if you can. Study groups are one of the most effective ways to learn material of any kind.

Remember, no one is born an anthropologist. Your instructor and the authors of your textbook began as you are beginning: sitting in an introductory class. They found the material and the approach really exciting intellectually, and they made the decision to continue in anthropology. Our hope is that you too will find that excitement. Good luck!

## **Chapter 1: Previewing, Reading, and Reviewing**

### **Getting Started**

Previewing a textbook is a good way to become familiar with the structure and content. First, read the preface to learn why the book was written. Second, read the table of contents to learn how the book's content is structured. Do you have problems concentrating on the information and remembering what you read? Is much of the information new to you? Do you think the course will be a real challenge? If so, try the preview-read-review method of studying.

### **Previewing**

Previewing a chapter will help you understand the focus and purpose. Complete the following three steps when previewing each chapter.

1. Go to the table of contents, note the title of the chapter, and read the outline of main headings.
2. Leaf through the chapter. Notice that key vocabulary terms appear in bold type, are defined in the margin, and are listed at the end of the chapter.
3. Read the summary. It recaps the chapter's main concepts and terms.

### **Reading**

Sometimes we find information interesting to read. Other times we dread reading because we think the information is dry and boring, or we're tired and have trouble concentrating. Try the following reading approach to overcome these problems and to increase your comprehension and retention.

Turn headings into questions, and think about what you know. New information can be easier to understand when you use your existing knowledge as a starting point. As you read, continue to ask questions using the new vocabulary you come across. After reading a section, stop and answer your questions.

### **Reviewing**

Are you usually thrilled and delighted to finish a chapter? Do you usually close the book and begin another project? To ensure that you understand the information and to help yourself remember it, try the following strategies.

1. If you underlined or took notes while you read, review what you underlined or wrote. Recite the ideas.
2. Sometimes a major section of the chapter is divided into parts. Ask yourself how these parts are related to one another and to the main heading. Recognizing relationships among ideas helps you understand information and do better on tests.

3. Review the list of key terms. For each one, you could write the page number, definition, and an example from the book.
4. Construct your own list of questions from each point in the chapter summary. Answering your questions will help you determine whether you have a grasp of the main concepts and important details.
5. On notecards, write key terms and page numbers on the front and the meanings plus examples on the back. Although you can download the key terms as flashcards on the companion website, writing the cards yourself can help you remember the terms and the definitions especially well. Review them until you can recite the information without having to look at the answers. Take the cards with you to review during the day. For example, do you ever have to wait in line? Have five minutes before an instructor starts class? Are you waiting for a friend at the library? Use this waiting time to review a few cards. You can also sort the cards by how well you know the words. Study with a friend and quiz each other on the vocabulary.

## Chapter 2: Taking Notes

### Notetaking Problems and Solutions

The majority of your test questions may come from the textbook; however, other questions will come from your notes. In addition, your instructor may expect you to include information from your notes when you write essay answers. Therefore, let's discuss taking notes from classroom lectures and discussions. Below are some common notetaking problems and possible solutions.

### Writing Down Information Quickly while Following the Lecture

“My instructor talks too fast. I have a horrible time writing all the information in my notes.”

#### *Possible Solutions*

1. Read the assignments before class so that you're familiar with the information. This mental preparation will make notetaking easier. When the majority of the information flying at you is new, it can be difficult to take notes fast enough. When you know some of the information, it is easier to take notes selectively, on the information you don't know.
2. Abbreviate words; for example, anth = anthropology, gen = generally, and Eng = England. When reviewing your notes after class, think about words that can be abbreviated.
3. Do the best you can with taking notes in class. After class, cross-check your notes with classmates' notes.
4. Make an appointment to talk with your instructor. Instructors are usually sensitive to students' comfort levels and will try to make the learning environment as positive as possible.

### Paying Attention in Class

“I daydream or fall asleep because I have a hard time paying attention. What can I do to improve my concentration in class?”

#### *Possible Solutions*

1. Often, boredom leads to daydreaming and falling asleep. So how can you create an interest in the course? One way is to make the class relevant to your life now or to your life in the future. How can an anthropological perspective help you if you're going into personnel management? Economics? Accounting? How can the material you are learning in class apply to current international crises or national controversies?

2. Ask questions and participate in the class discussions.
3. Plan to take lots of notes even if you don't need to. It's difficult to write and sleep at the same time. So write!
4. Every time you catch yourself drifting off, put a check mark on the top of your notes. Make a commitment to decrease the number of check marks you make during succeeding class hours.

### **Deciding What's Important to Note**

“I don't know what to write in my notes because I can't tell what information is important.”

#### *Possible Solutions*

1. Reading the assigned information before class may help you recognize the main concepts and relevant details.
2. After class, cross-check your notes with other students' to get an idea of what others think is important.
3. Make an appointment to talk with your instructor and discuss your notes. Ask the instructor to go over your notes with you to determine whether you are capturing the appropriate information.

### **Getting Information from Class Discussions**

“Our class is mostly discussion. It's lots of fun, but I don't have many notes, and now the instructor says that the test will be on the book and our notes.”

#### *Possible Solutions*

1. Try the best you can during class to take notes. After class, think about the discussion and write a summary.
  - What was the topic we discussed today?
  - What were the major points we discussed?
  - What were the relevant details and examples?

A record of what you discuss each day can be an effective supplement to your lecture notes.

2. Form a study group and make a list of the important topics, main ideas, details, and examples from class discussions. Try to predict test questions from this information.

## Chapter 3: Studying Effectively

### Finding the Right Study Strategies

Do you ever complain that even though you studied, you didn't do well on a test? Why did this happen? Have you thought about your learning style? You may not be using the best strategies or techniques to help you learn and remember information. Strategies that require active participation tend to be the most effective. Learning is an active process!

#### *Possible Solutions*

Monitor your comprehension and retention of information and decide which of the following strategies would be the most helpful to you:

1. Reading: If you have extensive background knowledge of the concepts discussed in this anthropology book, just reading the information may be enough. If much of the information is new to you, however, try the preview-read-review method (described in Chapter 1).
2. Notes: Using the main headings as an outline, take notes. Writing the information may help you remember it later.
3. Note cards: Use note cards for key terms and review them often.
4. Underlining or highlighting: As you read, underline or highlight important ideas and details. You could color-code as you underline; for example, underline main ideas in red and details and examples in another color. One disadvantage to underlining or highlighting is that some students have said they can underline or highlight and sleep at the same time; they don't really concentrate on what they are doing. Another disadvantage is that some students underline or highlight too much. Have you ever bought a used textbook and found whole pages underlined or highlighted? Be selective about the information you underline or highlight, and concentrate on the information.
5. Reviewing: Do this often—you may be surprised how quickly you forget information. Beginning to review three days before the test will not leave you adequate time to learn the information. Determine how often you need to review your notes and the information you have underlined. Students who review often say that taking tests is usually more comfortable as a result.
6. Reciting: Cover your notes and recite the information—out loud, if possible. Using more than one avenue of learning may be more effective for you (see, hear, write).
7. Study Groups: Discussing the information with someone else can add to your depth of understanding because you will learn from another perspective. What's more, studying with someone else can help motivate you.



## **Procrastinating**

Do you make plans to read your anthropology assignment but never get around to doing it? Do you leave yourself so little time to get your reading done that you just skim?

### *Possible Solutions*

1. Make a study schedule. The classes you like the least should come first on your schedule. Be realistic; don't underestimate the amount of time you need.
2. Study with a friend. This can increase your motivation.
3. Set definite, achievable goals; for example, plan to read five pages or write ten vocabulary cards.
4. Reward yourself when you have completed your goals.

## **Needing More Help**

Have you analyzed how you studied and what strategies helped you do well? Are there people who can help you?

### *Possible Solutions*

1. Instructor: See your instructor and discuss the upcoming test. What ideas can your instructor give you on learning the information in this book? What ideas does the instructor have on preparing for the test?
2. Tutors: Most colleges and universities have free tutoring services. Ask your instructor if the department provides tutoring. You could also check the college catalog or ask at your school's Counseling Center.

## Chapter 4: Asking Questions

### Improving Concentration and Comprehension

Textbook chapters can be so densely packed with information that it may be difficult to concentrate and to follow the flow of ideas. Asking your own questions as you read helps keep you focused on the information and helps you comprehend it. You can also use the authors' questions. This textbook is "reader friendly" because the authors often ask questions and then proceed to answer them. Keeping these questions in mind as you read can help you focus on the information and read actively.

### Improving Recall

After you have finished reading, the next essential step is to stop and answer your questions and the authors' questions. Stop and answer the authors' questions and your questions to ensure that you understand and recall the information.

Students who don't stop to answer their questions often complain that they don't remember the information. It's likely that these students did not focus their attention on what they were reading. We have all experienced situations in which we've read five pages but actually concentrated on only three. We just pronounced the words for pages four and five; our minds were focusing on other things.

Students who complain that they can't remember what they are reading should use the study strategy of asking questions, reading, and stopping to answer their questions. Some students may feel that this study strategy will take too much time. Any new behavior takes time, like fitting a new exercise program into a daily routine. However, once we are accustomed to doing something and the behavior becomes automatic, "time" does not seem to be such an issue—the behavior is just a normal part of our life.

### Preparing for Tests

Essay questions often require you to know the relationships among events, people, ideas, or things. Recognizing relationships is a higher-order thinking skill and can be a difficult task. However, when preparing for essay tests, an effective strategy is to ask questions that require you to not only recite the main ideas and facts but think and talk about the relationships among the ideas.

## Chapter 5: Visualizing Information

### **Drawing pictures**

Visualizing information may enhance your ability to understand and recall new material. The textbook includes numerous photos, tables, illustrations, and maps to help you visualize what you are reading, but there may be places where you wish the authors had included an image. See if you can draw one yourself.

When reading novels or short stories, it's usually easy to visualize what is happening. In the same manner, it's usually easy to visualize what is happening in the stories the authors use at the beginning of each chapter. Visualization may help you understand more difficult information by requiring you to focus on it; mental images may help you make the information more concrete.

### **Mapping**

Mapping is like outlining using a diagram. Some students prefer outlining, whereas some prefer mapping because it helps them visualize relationships among concepts.

### **Charting**

Some students prefer to summarize information in a chart instead of writing it out in a paragraph; seeing how the information is categorized helps them understand it more easily. When reviewing, they can visualize their chart more easily than they can visualize their paragraphs. Memory may be strengthened by coding information for storage in your mind by using several senses—listen to yourself read, write notes, make charts, and visualize what is happening.

## Chapter 6: Answering Fact and Application Questions

### Types of Questions

Tests commonly include both fact and application questions. **Fact questions** can be divided into main idea and detail questions and can usually be answered from information easily found in the text. You may remember information covered by main idea questions because of the structure of a chapter; that is, the title of the chapter indicates the main topic, the introduction describes the purpose or focus, and the headings signal the major and minor topics in the chapter. In addition, the main ideas appear in the summary. **Application questions** can be difficult because they require you to not only know the information but also apply it to new situations.

You may think, I know the information, I've memorized the definitions of the terms, and I can recall everything in my notes—I'm ready for the test. But how well do you know the information? Do you understand it? For explanation purposes, let's say there are three levels of knowing information. In Level One, you know the book's definition of a term and can recognize it on the test. In Level Two, you know the definition and examples used in the book and discussed in class by your instructor. You can explain the definition and examples in your own words to your classmates or study group members, which means you are beginning to understand the concept. In Level Three, you read a new situation and know that the new information is another example of the concept you just learned. Now you are beginning to master the concept and are ready for application questions.

### Test-Taking Analysis

Analyze your test-taking. When you miss questions, what type of question do you miss most often—fact or application? Why? Did you read too fast? Only skim the information? Did you read passively, without asking yourself questions as you read? Did you allow yourself too little time to read, review, and think about the information? Test-taking problems often occur when students think they know the information and then hit a wall when answering higher-level (application) questions. It takes time to develop a thorough understanding of new information; evaluate your background knowledge and decide how much time you need to schedule for reading, studying, thinking, and discussing the information with classmates.

### Tips For Studying Your Textbook

In Chapter 1, we discussed the preview-read-review method of studying. If you are not already using this method, consider using it for your next test. Then compare your comfort level for the two tests.

Preread a chapter to gain an understanding of the main ideas that will be discussed. Next, turn headings into questions, read, and stop to answer your questions. Finally, organize the information: reread what you underlined or took notes on. Test yourself and think about what questions your instructor may ask.

## **Tips for Studying Your Notes**

Notetaking will be easier if you read the assigned material before attending class. If you do not have time to read a chapter, at least preview it: read the headings, tables, figures, and summary. You will then be able to recognize the main ideas. Another effective notetaking strategy is reviewing your notes often. Reviewing notes as soon as possible after class and reviewing your entire set of notes often helps you keep the ideas fresh in your memory. Reviewing notes often means you won't need to cram, and you will be able to retrieve the information more easily when writing your test. Reviewing often can certainly help with fact questions. Additional notetaking strategies are cross-checking and discussing your notes with classmates. Have you ever cross-checked your notes and found that your classmate had more information from the lecture than you had? Two or more sets of notes can be more helpful than one set. Discussing the information with classmates is helpful because you'll hear it from another perspective. These other viewpoints can increase your depth of understanding and help you with application questions.

## Chapter 7: Taking Essay Exams

### Psyching Out The Professor: Or, What Is the Essay Really Supposed to Be About?

The breadth of an essay exam question may cause an inexperienced essay writer to panic—what can a professor be thinking to give a prompt such as “Discuss the relationship between kinship and biology”? A student may reason, “To answer this question correctly, I would need to write a whole book! But the professor knows I can only write a few paragraphs. So this must be a trick question. I’ve got to figure out what the professor is really after.”

Some questions do require you to keep your wits about you. But in general, the fear of broad essay questions, and the conviction that professors must really be after something other than what the questions ask, is misplaced. Most essay questions are broad for a reason, but that reason is not to trap students. A broad essay topic may make it easier for you to write a good essay. Asking you to “discuss” a broad topic is a graceful way of asking you to write down, in as full and orderly a way as possible, all you know about that topic. You have the freedom, under the umbrella of a broad essay prompt, to decide on an approach to the topic, collect as much relevant information as you can, organize it to the best of your ability, and write about it as clearly and logically as you can. You have the freedom to show the instructor how much you know and how well you know it, in the best English you can muster.

Essay exams offer you a certain freedom. Look again at the prompt mentioned above: “Discuss the relationship between kinship and biology.” To answer, one student may decide to write about the relationship between marriage patterns and biology, saying little about descent. A second student, however, may choose to emphasize the relationship between patterns of descent and biology, saying little about marriage. If both essays were well written, well organized, and full of relevant information, both would merit an “A,” even though they didn’t answer the question in exactly the same way. The broader the question, the more room there is for you to write essays that reflect what you know best.

### Preparing for Essay Exams

1. *Do all the assigned readings, attend all classes, and take good notes.*

This should go without saying.

2. *Review your notes often.*

An essay exam requires you to recall information; doing so can be difficult if you haven’t reviewed often.

3. *Attempt to predict test questions.*

Some hints on predicting:

- Review the syllabus. Are there major concepts that stand out?

- Review your notes. Are there major concepts or points that stand out?
- Review the outline of the chapters in the table of contents and chapter summaries of your textbook. What major concepts or points would make good essay questions?
- Talk with your classmates and with students who have had the class before.

4. *Form a study group.*

Ask “What information did the instructor discuss in class?” Make an outline of information (main ideas, facts, examples) for each question you think the instructor may ask.

5. *Go through your notes and readings, looking for material relevant to the questions you predicted.*

Write down information that should be part of your answers. Check for overlap between class notes and assigned readings. Write down definitions and examples for all technical terms. Write down details concerning examples you wish to use to illustrate your answer, so that the examples will be complete and convincing.

6. *Think about the material you have gathered and its relation to the questions.*

What information is the most important? Least important? Which examples are strongest? Where would the examples best fit into your essay answers?

7. *Organize your answers.*

Think of an essay as having three parts: introduction, body, and conclusion. The introduction may consist of only a few sentences in which you summarize the main points to be developed in the body of the essay. The body should be the logical presentation of information gathered from notes and readings that justifies your answer. The conclusion need be only one or two sentences that tie up loose ends and restate the major points of your essay.

8. *Practice writing your essays ahead of time.*

The more you write, the better you will get at writing. Practicing writing out your essays will also give you a chance to see just how sure you are of your arguments and where you need further work. Finally, writing things down is an excellent way to lodge them in your memory.

9. *Proofread your essays and evaluate your answers for content and structure.*

Content: Did you include all the arguments, concepts, details, examples, and illustrations? Structure: Did you include an introduction? Are the main ideas, details, and examples in the body of the essay clearly delineated by paragraphs? Did the ideas flow from one idea to the next? If appropriate, did you use transitional words such as “first,” “second,” “third”? Did you include a brief summary? If you have written and proofread practice essays in preparation for the exam, you will discover that test-taking anxiety virtually disappears the day of the test. All the hard work will have been completed before you even walk into the classroom.

## Writing Your Essay Answer in Class

### 1. *Read each question carefully.*

Be sure you understand what is being asked of you. Some essay questions are short and broad in scope: “Discuss the relationship between kinship and biology.” Other questions may have several parts to them: “The anthropological perspective is described in your text as holistic, comparative, and evolutionary. What does this mean? What are the subfields of anthropology? What is the role of each subfield in the integrated study of human beings that is anthropology?” Write down all the parts of the question that need to be answered, so that you don’t overlook any of them. In this case, you might write a question-inspired outline:

- A. Define holistic, comparative, evolutionary.
- B. List the subfields of anthropology.
- C. What is the role of each subfield in anthropology as an integrated study?

In all cases, write down terms that need to be defined, as well as possible examples that could illustrate your answer.

### 2. *Have a mental conversation.*

Carrying on a mental conversation as you analyze the question can be a helpful way to count the separate parts of the question and to decide what information to include in your answer for each part.

### 3. *Consider both content and structure.*

After thinking about the content of your answer, decide on the structure. Divide the answer into an introduction, body, and summary or conclusion. If the question contains many parts, you may want to restate and answer the first part in the first paragraph.

### 4. *Evaluate your answer. Imagine that you are the instructor grading this essay.*

Did you write an introduction? Did the body of your essay include all the required points, details, and examples? Did you answer every part of the question? Do the ideas flow in a logical manner? Did you write a conclusion? Although answers that receive full credit will vary, each of them will include a wealth of information written in an organized, easy-to-follow manner.

### 5. *Do not assume that the reader of your essay knows more than you do.*

Students who forget to define their terms or illustrate with examples sometimes plead, “But I knew the instructor would know what I meant!” True enough—the instructor does know what technical terms mean, and which examples are relevant. But the essay exam is supposed to show the instructor that *you* know what the terms and examples mean and can use them properly. As high school math teachers say, “Show your work!”



6. *Think of each essay question as a chance for you to tell your instructor everything you think is important about the topic.*

This means giving evidence that you have done the assigned readings and attended the relevant lectures, by making clear reference to the material covered in them. Nothing is more disappointing than an essay that attempts to answer the question using “common sense”—that is, an essay that shows no evidence that its writer ever opened the textbook or attended a single day of class, even if she or he has done both. Include as much detail and as many appropriate concrete examples as you can cram into the four or five paragraphs you write.

### **After the Test: What Do I Do Now?**

When you receive your test score, you may be pleased; if, however, you’re disappointed, develop a plan.

#### *1. Analyze your answer.*

If the instructor wrote comments on the paper, try to discern from the comments why you received your score. Think about the content and structure of your essays. Were you missing major ideas, details, illustrations, or examples? Did you answer every part of the question? Evaluate the structure of the answer. Did you have an introduction? Did the information in the body of your essay flow logically from one idea to the next? If applicable, did you use paragraphs and signal words (“first,” “second,” “third”) to lead the reader from one point to the next? Did you include a summary?

#### *2. Discuss your test with your instructor.*

See your instructor if he or she did not make comments on your paper. Some instructors just mark down a score, and you may not be able to determine why that particular score was given. Ask the instructor for suggestions so that you can improve your score on the next test.

#### *3. Review how to prepare for and write essays.*

Reread the tips in this guide. In addition, consider seeing a tutor for help in predicting questions, writing essay answers, and evaluating the structure and content of your answers. Knowing your strengths and weaknesses can help you do better in the future. Hang in there!

## Chapter 8: Evaluating Your Progress at Midterm

Do a midterm evaluation to determine what you expect your grade to be, what you must still do for the class, what strategies are most effective for you, and what changes you plan to make to help you learn the information.

Because the factors of attitude and motivation may have an impact on your achievement, you should also consider your attitude toward your classes and your motivation to study. Students who are effective learners analyze what they know and must do, decide on the study strategies that will fit the situation, monitor their comprehension and retention (Am I understanding? Am I remembering?), and modify or change their strategies as needed. So, how are you doing? What is your plan for the rest of this anthropology course?

<b>Midterm Evaluation</b>	
<b>1. What is your grade now? What grade do you want?</b>	
<b>2. What do you still have to do?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Textbook: How much do you have to read for the next test?</li> <li>• Lecture notes: Do you have a good set of notes? Missing notes? Vague notes?</li> <li>• Papers/projects: What do you have to do?</li> </ul>	
<b>3. What type of test(s) will you have?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple choice? Fact questions? Application questions?</li> <li>• Essay test?</li> </ul>	

<p><b>4. How much background knowledge do you have of information in the rest of this book?</b></p>	
<p><b>5. What strategies are effective for you?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading your textbook: Are you using the preview-read-review method and asking questions to test your knowledge?</li> <li>• Notetaking: Are you cross-checking your notes with your classmates'? Reviewing and reciting often?</li> <li>• Charting and mapping: Would organizing information into a chart or map help?</li> <li>• Notecards: Would writing vocabulary cards help?</li> <li>• Group study: Do you have friends to study with?</li> <li>• Instructor and tutors: Are you getting extra help with your questions?</li> <li>• Tests: Are you predicting test questions? If you have an essay test, are you writing out</li> </ul>	

<p>answers to practice and determine whether you know the information?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Procrastination: Are you avoiding the procrastination virus? allowing yourself adequate time to read and learn the information?</li> </ul>	
<p><b>6. What additional strategies would help you?</b></p>	
<p><b>7. What is your attitude? Positive? Negative? Overwhelmed?</b></p>	
<p><b>8. What can you do to motivate yourself to study?</b></p>	