

# The pyramid of power



# Top tips on exam technique!



The preparation pyramid

***Be prepared, not scared.***

Take your answers  
from good  
to great in  
3 simple  
steps

Decode the question.

### **Step 1**

*Read the question*  
*Identify the **subject***  
***specific words**, look at the*  
*number of **marks** available*  
*and follow the **command** words*

**Describe**: Set out characteristics.  
Say what it shows.

**Explain**: Set out the causes of something  
and/or factors which influence it.

**Evaluate**: Give your verdict after providing evidence which  
both agrees with and contradicts an argument.

**To what extent/ assess** : How much do you agree with a statement  
based on the evidence.

**Compare**: Look at two or more different factors and identify  
similarities and differences

## Plan your answer.

### **Step 2**

*Plan your answer by identifying evidence and examples that can be used to support your work.*

**Sequencing words:** Firstly/  
Subsequently/ Consequentially/ Finally

**Comparing words:** Similarly/ In the same way/Akin to

**Qualifying words:** However/Although/Except

**Supporting words:** Furthermore/ Additionally/ Also

**Emphasising words:** Notably/ Significantly/ Indeed

**Exemplification:** For example/ For instance/ Such as

# Review

## Step 3

*Check your answer by **going through the following questions:***

Have you attempted the question?

Have you answered the question set by following the command word?

Does your answer link back directly to the question?

Have you used specialist terminology?

Where needed, have you written in full sentences and used capital letters and punctuation? Maximise SPaGST!

Check the number of marks available, have you written enough/ followed the command word?