# 101A Final Exam Study Guide

What to bring:

*New World Reader* Blue/green book

Weekly assignments Class discussion notes

Dictionary (optional) Reading panel notes

Handouts—Benjamin Barber’s “The Educated Student,” Taylor-Tilford’s “Why Consumption Matters,” Jennifer Baichwal’s *Watermark*

What to expect:

2-hr short essay, open book exam

Material to be covered:

NWR readings—section 11 on the global environment, 344-383 (Carson, Rooney, Gore, Botkin, Goodall, McKibben, Schell); Barber on the global citizen/consumer; Taylor-Tilford on our consumer society and its environmental effects; *Watermark* on our use of global water resources; your independent readings, observations, experiences.

Writing practices—MLA format for in-text citation, grounded question, basic sentence grammar, paragraph development, whole essay clarity and coherence.

Course web pages—Benjamin Barber and Taylor-Tilford instructor demos. G-drive reading panels.

How to form a grounded question and follow-up Qs—based on preliminary facts and findings.

How to develop a “quote sandwich”—introduction + direct quotation + your explanation or analysis—avoid dropping in quotes without context or explanation.

How to recognize an unstated main idea (what is suggested or implicitly indicated in the text)—potentially more powerful than a stated (explicit) idea because the reader actively constructs the meaning and, therefore, is more likely to seriously consider this idea. For example, what is “the obligation to endure” (346)?

Suggested step-by-step preparation:

1 Before reviewing each essay, read “Thinking About the Essay” questions.

2 Re-read each essay, locating (a) key words, (b) quotes, (c) main points—what is the central idea of each essay? What is the subject (in broad terms) and topic (in more specific terms) of the essay? What are the complications of the problems or issues presented? What does the author propose toward solving these problems?

3 Consider the “Thinking About the Essay” questions again—what do you think? Do you agree/ disagree with the author—or something in between? Based on your analysis of the essay as well as your own observations and experience, offer critical commentary.

4 Review Taylor-Tilford for (a) understanding the push/pull of economic growth/ environmental quality and (b) examples and data points on consumption, population, and natural resources. Why are our patterns of resource extraction and waste production unsustainable? If air and water quality have no geographical boundaries, where does the responsibility lie? What are our expectations of economic growth and industrial progress? Since we can measure economic growth in dollars or euros, how can we assess the value of what cannot be measured—quality of life? If there is no metric for quality of life, is it worth talking about it?

5 What is the unstated idea of each essay? What are the unstated ideas of the collection of essays on the global environment? What are the unstated ideas of everything we’ve read in the NWR anthology (and the internationalist approaches of Adichie, Sen, Appiah—cooperative, interdependent, multilateral, pluralist, beyond borders)?

Helpful hints:

1 Build a working vocabulary for thinking and writing about the essay subjects and topics. Start with the title and “Before Reading” introductory remarks.

2 Build a source of quotes and page numbers for each essay. Locate the author’s thesis statements—his or her claim or proposition that is supported by a line of reasoning, facts and findings, examples.

3 Without looking at the text, practice talking about each essay—explaining it to someone who has not read it. Exchange ideas in a small study group or talk to your dog. Speaking out loud forces you to clearly articulate your key words and ideas, rehearsing responses to potential questions.

4 Practice talking about Barber’s ideas—on our roles and responsibilities as consumers or citizens—as an encompassing frame for all the essays on the global environment. How does he extend his concept of independence into one of interdependence? How does he link education, citizenship, and democracy? Why do educators like Barber as well as the media pay attention to college students as a special demographic?

How to recognize an author’s writing strategy:

1 Does the author rely mostly on reason, emotion, ethics/morals? Or, a combination?

2 What are the author’s biases? Is the author an academic, activist, investigative journalist, government leader, entrepreneur…?

3 Does the author explain and analyze the subject for better understanding? Or, is the author motivated to provoke, argue, and persuade? Or, both?

Test-taking strategy:

1 Preview the whole test before starting to write. Choose questions strategically—lead with your strengths.

2 Give yourself time to think. If writing is thinking made evident, then thinking is part of the process.

3 Follow instructions. Note the weight of each part and spend time proportionately.

Helpful hints:

1 Avoid personal opinion without references to readings. Instead, develop a connection between the reading and your writing—the reading provides a basis for your own explanation and analysis, whether or not you agree with the author.

2 Avoid summarizing what you’ve read without your own analysis and critical commentary. Summary ≠ explanation and analysis.

3 Avoid vague generalizations. Provide facts, quotes, examples. Support general statements with specifics.

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| *Research skills checklist:* | *Writing skills checklist:* |
| Grounded question | Basic sentence grammar |
| In-text citation + explanation, analysis | Paragraph development |
| Recognition of author’s thesis | Whole essay—clarity and coherence |

*Write a free-standing essay with a title—avoid generalization or opinion without specifics.*

*Avoid summarizing what you’ve read without your own commentary—balance information with analysis.*