**British Society in Painting Final Test Study Guide**

**PART I: SHORT ANSWERS ON THE HISTORY OF BRITISH PAINTING**

***Give short (one-to-three sentence) answers to the following questions.   
Each question is worth two points.***

1. ~~Before the 20th century, what particular criteria did European art academies apply to the assessment of paintings? In other words what, in their opinion, made a particular painting ‘good’ or ‘bad’?~~
2. ~~In terms of subject matter, what was the hierarchy of the ‘appropriate’ themes that a ‘good painting’ should have dealt with?~~
3. ~~What does the word canon refer to? What canons can you name in the history of painting? (Give at least two examples from any period.)~~
4. In painting analysis, what does iconography refer to?
5. In general, what influence did the English Reformation have on the development of English visual art in the mid-16th century?
6. What is iconoclasm? (What form did it take in 16th- and 17th-century England?)
7. What artistic forms did English artists turn their attention to after the Reformation?
8. What is a limning? Who is a limner? (Give example of these in English painting of the 16th century)
9. Name two prominent representatives of English miniature painting of the 16th century.
10. The Elizabethan miniature portraits of men express a special relationship between their sitters and the Queen. How would you describe this relationship?
11. What brought Hans Holbein the Younger to England? What career did he pursue there?
12. How did Holbein portray Henry VIII in his portrait from 1536?
13. What technique in painting is referred to as anamorphosis? (Give one example in English painting.)
14. *Lady with a Squirrel and a Starling* is considered one of Holbein’s masterpieces. Why? (*A History of British Art*, plate 19)
15. How would you describe Holbein’s legacy for the future development of English painting?
16. In terms of his style, in what way was Anthony Van Dyck different to Hans Holbein?
17. What brought Anthony Van Dyck to England? What career did he pursue there?
18. How did Van Dyck paint women at the Court of Charles I? (Make references to a specific painting)
19. Some consider *Cupid and Psyche* Van Dyck’s English masterpiece. If so, why? (*A History of British Art*, plate 24)
20. Some art historians argue that Charles I did more to destroy the art of Van Dyck’s than anyone else. How could that be?
21. For what purpose was the *Triple Portrait of Charles I* painted? (*A History of British Art*, plate 25)
22. What symbolism does Andrew Graham-Dixon see in Charles I’s fondness for equestrian portraits?
23. How did Samuel Cooper’s miniature portrait of Oliver Cromwell correspond to the morality of the Puritanical society of 17th-century England? (*A History of British Art*, plate 27)
24. According to Andrew Graham-Dixon the ruling class of 18th-century Britain manifested an important characteristic – a form of *arrogant modesty*. What evidence of this characteristic can we find in the attitude of the British upper classes to art?
25. What is an engraving? (Who was the most famous English engraver in 18th-century England?)
26. In terms of subject matter, what new genre did William Hogarth create in English art?
27. How does Hogarth use the word *progress* in the title of his series *A Harlot’s Progress*?
28. In terms of the relationship between art and its consumers, Hogarth did more than any other British artist to revolutionise the British ‘art market’. In what way?
29. How did Hogarth’s own mission as an artist relate to the Protestant values of the English Reformation?
30. In what way is Hogarth’s *Shrimp Girl* different to the rest of his works? (*A History of British Art*, plate 35)
31. What is the theme of Hogarth’s *Bathos*? What do you think the artist’s message to the viewer is? (*A History of British Art*, plate 36)
32. What was the influence Hogarth exerted on the subsequent generations of British painters?
33. According to Andrew Graham-Dixon, what does ‘phizmongering’ refer to?
34. What was the personal relationship between Joshua Reynolds and Thomas Gainsborough?
35. What are the contradicting interpretations of Thomas Gainsborough’s *Mr and Mrs Andrews*? (A History of British Art, plate 40)
36. How did Gainsborough portray women? (Make references to particular paintings)
37. What is the theme of Gainsborough’s *Diana and Acteon*? (A History of British Art, plate 42)
38. How did George Stubbs’s early experiences in life influence the way he learnt to paint as well the choice of themes he chose to depict? (What was the painter’s main preoccupation throughout his life?)
39. Which region in England is the life and work Joseph Wright associated with? Why?
40. In terms of light, nearly all Wright’s paintings with scientific themes have one feature in common. What is it? (Can we see any symbolism in this?)
41. What wider moral issues does Wright’s *Experiment with an Air-pump* raise?
42. According to Andrew Graham-Dixon, Constable was, along with Turner, one of the most revolutionary painters of the 19th century. Why?
43. According to Andrew Graham-Dixon, what does Constable’s snow refer to?
44. Why is it that some art critics consider Constable’s sketches (small preparatory oils on paper or canvas) more important than his ‘finished’ paintings?
45. In what way are the scenes Constable chose for his large six-foot landscapes connected with his life? (Make references to specific places depicted in Constable’s paintings.)
46. Why does Andrew Graham-Dixon see, in Turner’s *Hannibal and his Army Crossing the Alps*, a departure from classical themes of narrative history? (A History of British Art, plate 56)
47. In what way are Turner’s earlier paintings, such as *The Fifth Plague of Egypt*, different to his later masterpieces such as *Rain, Steam and Speed*?
48. What symbolism can we see in Turner’s *The Fighting Temeraire Tugged to Be Broken Up*?
49. In what way was Turner’s attitude to new technology different to other artists’ perception of it? (Make references to a specific painting.)
50. Someone remarked that Turner’s personality resembled that of the fictional character of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde. Why that might be?
51. Is there any evidence that Turner regarded nature’s violent manifestations as something beautiful? Give specific examples.
52. In contrast to many painters before him, Turner was lucky enough to paint whatever he liked, in whatever style he wanted. How was this possible?
53. What influence did the great fire of the Houses of Parliament in 1834 have on Turner’s work as an artist?
54. Andrew Graham-Dixon says that, for Turner, form only existed to give reality to light. How do we understand this?
55. What evidence is there that a whole generation of French artists that came after Turner felt deeply indebted to this English painter? (What were these French painters called?)
56. In general, what did the notion of Gothic mean to the Victorian world? (Why was it so appealing to the artists in the period?)
57. Where did the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood take their name from? (Explain)
58. What were the aims of the Pre-Raphaelites, as seen by the artists themselves?
59. What subjects did the early Pre-Raphaelites considered most suitable for painting?
60. What is the theme of Edward Burne-Jones’s *Ophelia*?
61. What subject matter do genre paintings deal with?
62. Which 19th-century British artist painted the series of moral paintings entitled *Past and Present*? (What does it deal with?)
63. What purpose, according to its founders, should the National Portrait Gallery in London serve?

**PART II: PAINTING ANALYSIS AND ANSWERING QUESTIONS IN DETAIL**

***Analyse the paintings or discuss the theoretical questions in detail, in a comprehensive, essay-like form. Address all the points related to specific questions. You may add comments of your own if you feel they are relevant to the given topic. Each question is worth 15 points.***

**1. The legacy of the English Reformation in British art**

* How did the English Reformation influence the history of art in Britain? In what particular places is this influence most visible?
* How did the Reformation change British people’s attitudes towards visual art in centuries to come?

**2. Hans Holbein: *The Ambassadors***

* Describe the main characters and their historical background.
* Explain the use of symbolism and references to period objects.
* Explain what anamorphosis is and talk about the symbolism of objects.

**3. The state portraits of Elizabeth I**

* What function did Elizabeth’s portraits have in the relationship between the Queen and her subjects?
* How did Elizabeth want to be portrayed?
* What role were Elizabeth’s portraits to play abroad?
* Explain the use of symbolism in Elizabeth’s portraits.

**4. Anthony Van Dyck: Portraits of Charles I**

* How did Charles I want Van Dyck to portray his king?
* What symbolism can we observe in the equestrian portraits of Charles I?
* How does the way in which Van Dyck portrayed Charles I differ from the style of Hans Holbein? What effect did Charles’s love for art have on contemporary Puritan society?

**5. The legacy of Hans Holbein and Anthony Van Dyck in the history of British painting**

* How did the styles of Holbein and Van Dyck differ? Make references to specific works of art.
* According to Andrew Graham-Dixon, what two defining traditions in British painting do the two artists represent?
* How did Holbein influence the British painters that came after him? (Whom in particular?)
* What influence did Anthony Van Dyck have on subsequent English painters and whom did he influence the most?

**6. William Hogarth: *A Harlot’s Progress***

* Characterise the work of art in terms of its genre and technique.
* How does Hogarth use the word ‘progress’ in the title of his work?
* What is the story depicted in this series?
* What was Hogarth’s attitude to the theme he depicted in the prints?
* In terms of its theme, what does *A Harlot’s Progress* have in common with Hogarth’s other satirical engravings?

**7. Portraits by Thomas Gainsborough**

* Analyse Gainsborough’s painting *Mr and Mrs Andrews*.
* According to Andrew Graham-Dixon what evidence is there in *Mr and Mrs Andrews*, as well as in Gainsborough’s other portraits, that the artist had a very firm idea of what an ideal woman should look like?
* Was Gainsborough a mere hireling of the rich, as his detractors say, or did he pursue his own artistic vision?
* How did Gainsborough personally feel about portraiture and landscape painting?

**8. John Wright of Derby: *The Experiment with an Air Pump***

* Describe the sitters, scene and the action taking place in the painting.
* Speculate about the attitudes and feelings of the sitters in response to the experiment depicted.
* Discuss the iconography and references to the historical period in which the painting was executed.
* Write about the moral issues and implications of the experiment.

**9. John Constable: *The Hay Wain* and *The Flatford Mill***

* Discuss the subject matter depicted in both paintings.
* What was the actual size of the paintings? What was the reason for this?
* Describe the setting, the foreground as well as the background, people, objects and activities in both paintings
* How did Constable feel about the country he depicted in these paintings?

**10. J. M. W. Turner’s *Rain, Steam and Speed* and W. P. Frith’s *The Railway Station***

* Compare and contrast the two paintings in detail.
* What is the main subject matter of each painting?
* Both painters used the train as a medium to communicate a message to the viewer. What did they want put across to their audiences?
* What symbolism is there in each painting? (Make references to specific objects.)
* How were the two paintings received by the public at the time of their creation?

**11. ~~Stanley Spencer:~~ *~~The Resurrection, Cookham~~***

* ~~Describe the setting and the characters as a whole. Why did the painter choose this particular location for his painting?~~
* ~~What is the scene depicted? Where did the artist find inspiration for his painting?~~
* ~~How do the people in the painting feel about what is happening around them?~~
* ~~Comment on the artist’s use of colours to deliver the atmosphere of the scene.~~

**12. ~~David Hockney: comparison of~~ *~~Mr and Mrs Clark~~**~~and Percy~~* ~~with Jan Van Eyck’s~~ *~~Arnolfini Portrait~~***

* ~~Describe the setting and overall atmosphere of the two paintings.~~
* ~~Compare the stance, appearance and the facial expressions of the sitters.~~
* ~~Comment on the differences between the two portraits, concentrating on how the sitters could have felt about the way they were to be portrayed.~~
* ~~Discuss the use of symbols in both paintings, focusing on the objects in the foreground and background.~~
* ~~Give details about the real people and their story in Hockey’s portrait.~~