

The Texas Master Syllabus (exact name may be wrong) requires US History use primary sources in writing and further requires that all history courses have a minimum of 30% of the course grade (your final letter grade).

The basic math reveals that 30% means a student must do some reading and thinking and writing about primaries. This example from a 1000-point course = 700 points for objective work + 300 points for specific writing assignments may help. If you **only** attempted objective work (700 possible points)

Then the math would show:

- C work (70%) on the objective assignments, then you'd have 70% of 700 points= 490 out of the 1000 – **an F**
- B work (80%) on the objective assignments, then you'd have 80% of 700 points= 560 out of the 1000 – **an F**
- A work (90%) on the objective assignments, then you'd have 90% of 700 points= 630 out of the 1000 – **a low D**
- Perfect work (100%) on the objective assignments, then you'd have 100% of 700 points out of the 1000 – **a C**

Each example above is just too risky for students. Note: I ask my Department Chair for permission for my actions. My goal?

1. Find the fewest skills necessary for success and focus on them. Would anyone pay you for this skill?  
Link Address:  
[http://www.cjbibus.com/Getting\\_Started\\_Good\\_Habits\\_for\\_Evidence\\_Would\\_anyone\\_pay\\_you\\_for\\_this\\_skill.pdf](http://www.cjbibus.com/Getting_Started_Good_Habits_for_Evidence_Would_anyone_pay_you_for_this_skill.pdf)
2. Make it possible for students to get **better** within a semester by splitting the work into 3-Parts. You do not have to start out knowing out to do this, but if you get better by the end, you can overwrite the weak grade. (See OVERWRITE in the syllabus.)  
For the syllabus with examples in Getting Started, Link Address:  
[http://www.cjbibus.com/Syllabus\\_With\\_Links\\_to\\_ExamplesREV.pdf](http://www.cjbibus.com/Syllabus_With_Links_to_ExamplesREV.pdf)
3. **Lower** the demands for the project but increase the amount of **practice in skills** that will your **whole** life.
  - Where the **quantity of pages** or other content was **small** but the **amount of practice** was **large and realistic (because of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Parts)**
  - With **simple citation** that would work even when you were trying to figure something out for yourself, not another person or a job.
4. Require skills useful for students so practicing these skills would make them better off:
  - With skills recognized as being necessary for the **study of history**—like **figuring things out**--or understanding **anything** that is **real**
  - With skills recognized as necessary for jobs (and certainly for people who want to start and keep a business), such as reading, writing, planning, and self-management
  - With helping each other improve as **teams (not the same thing as a group)** as useful practice for many parts of your life
  - With **skills** that people need during **times of change or challenge** (life skills)