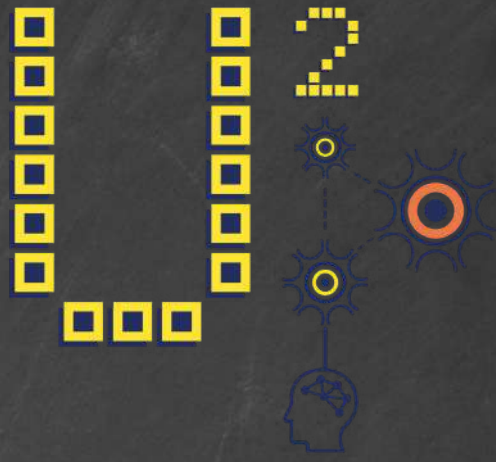
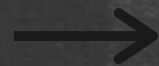


Hustons



HARNESS THE HAT TEST



Overview

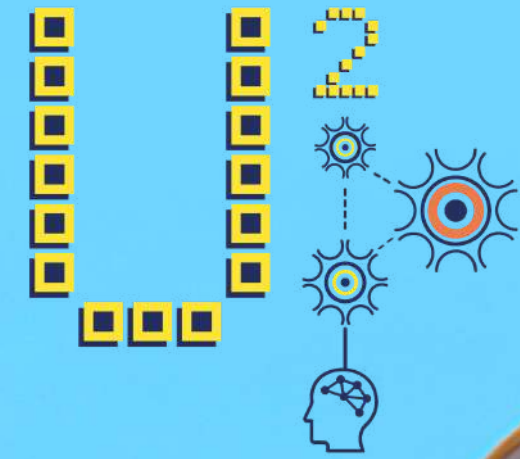
The HAT is a new type of examination for most A-Level students. Unlike most of what you might have done previously, the HAT is a reflective, rather than argumentative piece of writing, which asks that candidates use no background knowledge but rather just the source in front of them, from which to draw understanding about the past. Like most parts of the Oxbridge application, they are looking for students who can flexibly and creatively respond to unfamiliar situations. Unlike most parts of the Oxbridge application, however, it has a mark scheme that is more specific, which makes it all the more essential to understand what it is that they are looking for.

What to Expect

In these classes we will look at the HAT in detail from how to 'read' sources to how to write about them effectively. We will constantly refer to examples in class, assessing a wide range of source material, particularly types of sources that you might not have seen before.

Logistical Details

- All classes will take place over Zoom. Links will be sent out prior to the course commencing.
- The course host will typically set optional tasks between classes.

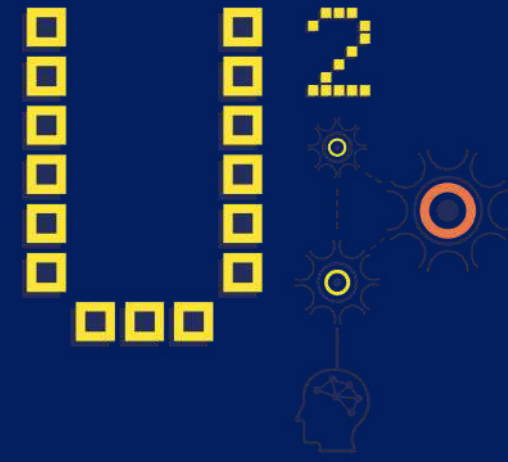


Our Host

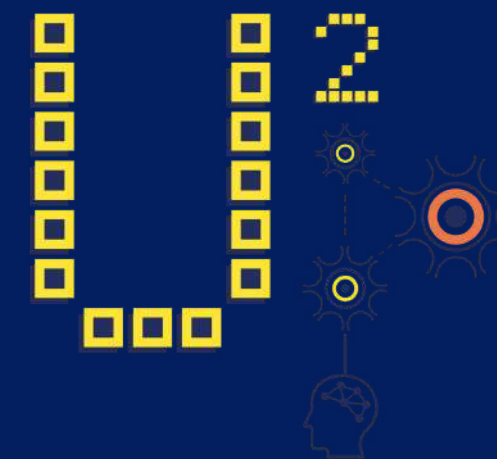


Nils

Nils graduated from Sidney Sussex College at the University of Cambridge with a first-class degree in history, receiving the Charles Whittaker prize for academic excellence. His academic focuses have varied and include the politics of time in the French revolution; economic development and class relations in 19th century Britain; the concept of the 'supernatural' in medieval Europe, and the relationship between Islam and communal life in modern Yemen. Nils is currently interested in political and legal thought, which he is pursuing in his masters at Humboldt university. Nils began teaching in academic summer schools at Cambridge University, most of which were directed towards preparing A Level students for the specific challenges of university education. Nils has since worked with numerous students for applications to Oxbridge both as part of a number of institutional programmes at the university of Cambridge and privately.



The Agenda:



Class 1 (Essay Structure)

In this class we will look at the general structure of the HAT exam, what the questions generally ask of students, how they are marked, and what an effective essay structure should look like. We will look, in particular, at what the analytical aim of responses should be, with reference to previous responses, and to the mark schemes. We will also discuss common pitfalls, and what to avoid.



Class 2 (Provenance)

In this class we will look at provenance, which requires some discussion because the way in which you're expected to deal with provenance in this exam is quite different from what most A-Level courses teach. Working with example HAT questions, focus will be placed on writing 'positively' about provenance, a higher-level skill which essentially means to derive understanding from the provenance, rather than criticise it. We will then look at how one folds this into an essay effectively to accord with the aims of the essay, which we will have discussed in the previous session.

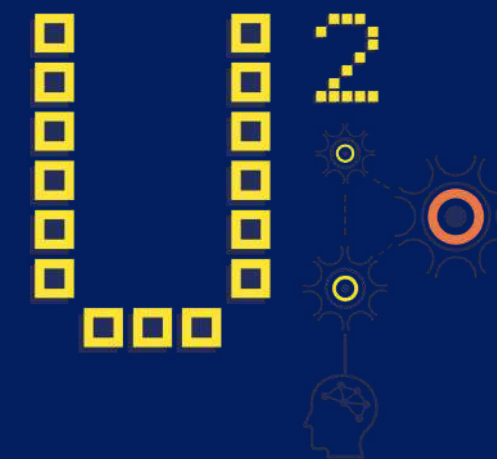


Class 3 (Fictional sources)

In this class we will focus on a source type that is often used in this exam in order to challenge students. We will move through a variety of examples to understand how one deals with, and makes use of, a source that is describing something that never happened. This requires a manner of thinking about source material that goes beyond the A-Level mode of approach, and which helps to feed into the other types of source analysis we will be doing also.



The Agenda:



Class 4 (Sources from unusual periods)

In this class we will focus on another source type that is often used, those from the ancient or medieval period. These are often selected because students tend to have less familiarity with these areas. We will look again at a variety of examples to understand how one deals with unfamiliarity in a primary source. The essential skill is to work 'from the ground up', to draw in no assumptions, and to not be thrown by the strangeness of the item itself. As with all these sessions, the exact same skills go for any HAT question.

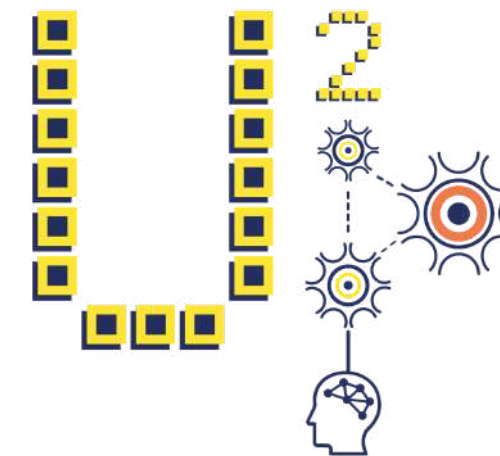


Class 5 (Sources within sources)

In this class we will finish by looking at sources, which themselves contain recorded or reported information. This is another difficult area, which requires concentration. We will draw together the skills that we have been progressively building up and, with multiple examples, address the particular issues that come with this type of source. We will finish with an overview of the main skills that have been covered in the class so far.

Any questions? Get in touch!

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