

“Compare the relative importance of written, oral and visual forms of communication in early medieval culture. In your argument, please use at least one written and one visual source from assigned readings.”

The exam question is based on the entire course and themes discussed at classes 1, 2, 6, 7, 11, and 12. The question can therefore be answered with reference to the list of assigned literature for these particular classes. Of particular importance are the following works:

- Mathew Innes, ‘Memory, Orality and Literacy in an Early Medieval Society’, *Past and Present* 158,1 (1998), 3–36;
- Julia M.H. Smith, *Europe after Rome*, pp. 13–50;
- Notker the Stammerer, *The Life of Charlemagne*;
- Lawrence Nees, *Early Medieval Art*;
- James A. Francis, “Visual and Verbal Representation: Image, Text, Person, and Power,” in *A Companion to Late Antiquity*, ed. by Philip Rousseau (Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), pp. 285–305;
- Rosamond McKitterick, ‘Text and Image in the Carolingian World’, in *The Uses of Literacy in Early Medieval Europe*, ed. by Rosamond McKitterick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 297–318;
- Ildar Garipzanov, ‘The Rise of Graphicacy in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages’, *Viator* 46,2 (2015), 1–21 (21 pp.) [available as e-journal];
- John J. Contreni, ‘The Carolingian Renaissance: Education and Literary Culture’, in *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, vol. 2, ed. by Rosamond McKitterick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 709–57;

This discussion must demonstrate a clear understanding of what written, oral, and visual forms of communication are and how writing, orality, graphicacy, and the use of figurative art was employed in early medieval culture. The exam papers should not only examine the differences between these forms of early medieval communication but also their impact on society at large and its specific social groups. Furthermore, the exam papers must indicate how the relative importance of these forms of communication developed in the process of transition from late Roman culture to the Christian culture of early medieval Europe. This discussion should also include some of the following features: visual-centred rituality; the interplay between orality and literacy; the interplay between the word, image, and graphic sign; the unique nature of the early medieval book; the sociopolitical role of literacy; the nature of early medieval diagrams and maps; the important role of royal courts, episcopal sees, and monasteries for literacy, especially during the Carolingian *renovatio*.

A very good exam essay (A & B) will have a good structure and writing style; it will also consequently use a proper reference style in its list of bibliography and references. It will present a clear discussion of the main forms of early medieval communication and their relative importance for early medieval society. It will demonstrate a nuanced understanding of the chosen textual and visual sources, and will present an independent argument combining the discussion of chosen primary textual and visual sources with that of relevant literature. A good exam essay (C) will list the main forms of communication in early medieval culture, show a correct discussion of chosen primary sources, and give a reasonably orderly narrative. It will to a lesser degree place its discussion of the source in the context of relevant academic literature and in its overall argument. A satisfactory essay (D) will demonstrate some important and relevant facts about early medieval literacy, orality, graphicacy, and figurative art including relevant primary sources, but will to a small degree arrange them within a persuasive and coherent narrative. It will not show an independent discussion or the knowledge of a broader historiographic context. A sufficient essay (E) will show some relevant knowledge which

will demonstrate a minimum of what may be expected based on the reading list for this course. It will lack insight into early medieval communication as a whole and its main features.