BAR EXAM BOOT CAMP
Quick facts

- Commercial bar prep course is essential
- Bar formats
  - Texas
  - New York
  - California
Why bar essays are different

- There IS a right answer (but you can get points for the wrong conclusion).
- More specific, concrete and concise than the typical law school exam issue spotter.
- Purpose is to show the bar examiners that you’re competent to practice law, NOT to show your professors that you’ve mastered a body of substantive law.
- In NY, multiple subjects in one essay.
What do bar graders want to see you do?

1. Analyze the facts of the question.
2. Tell the difference between material and immaterial facts.
3. Discern the points of law and fact upon which the question turns (spot the issue).
4. Apply relevant legal principles to the factual scenarios provided.
5. Organize your answer and make it easy to read. They’ll generally spend about two minutes reading your answer.

http://libguides.law.ucla.edu/content.php?pid=99088&sid=772503
1. Read the call of the question
2. Read the question – circling important items
3. Re-read the call
4. Outline your answer
5. Write your answer
6. Re-read the call. Did you answer it?
Use the same legal analysis methods you learned in law school

Determinative facts should take center stage
  ▪ The graders know the facts. They don’t need a recitation.

Grammar, complete sentences and paragraphs matter
  ▪ Be precise and concise

Use headings
  ▪ If given multiple prompts, label your answers and answer in the order asked.

Acknowledge counterarguments where appropriate.

Follow the same process for each answer. Develop a template.
Content of a bar essay

■ CRAC
  ▪ Conclusion – Be explicit. Begin with, “Yes, ...” or No, ...”
  ▪ Rule – State the applicable rule. Give the appropriate statute if you know it. “As a general rule...” or “Under the Texas ______ code, ...”
  ▪ Analysis – Apply rules to relevant fact. “Here, ...” or “In this case, ...” or “Because.”.
  ▪ Conclusion – Repeat your explicit conclusion. “In sum, ...” or “Therefore...”.

■ CIRAC
  ▪ You’ll often be encouraged to include an issue statement. Some students find that it helps them focus their answer. Make sure you use facts from the question.
    ▪ Bad: The issue is whether a life estate was created.
    ▪ Good: The issue is whether the phrase “until she dies” created a life estate for Donna.
What to NOT put in your answer

- Avoid lengthy discussions of law
  - A brain dump will not help you on the bar.
  - Tell the graders what they want to hear
    - They spend an average of two minutes (TX) to three-five minutes (CA) reading your answer.
- Do not assume any facts (unless the call directs you to do so).
- Citations
What I grade based on:

- Practically: Neat/legible? Paragraphs clearly identified? Headings?
- Is tone confident/assertive? Is the writing style clear and concise?
- Has writer answered the call of the question?
- Does overall structure make sense?
- Do paragraphs/transitions make sense?
- Does it begin with an explicit conclusion?
- Does the essay correctly identify the issues raised?
- Is there an explicit and accurate explanation of the applicable law?
- CRAC format?
- Is the law properly applied to the specific factual scenario in the question asked, dealing specifically with the determinative facts in the question?
- Does the essay and any subparts end with an express conclusion?
- Are there headings and appropriate transitional phrases used to guide the reader through the answer?
Why do this now?