

To: Class of 2012
From: Rich Levitt / SARC
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Subject: USMLE Step I
Book/Resource Survey Results from Class of 2011

The Class of 2011 students were asked to recommend Step 1 review books/resources using the 'clarity of hindsight' (i.e., after they completed their Step 1 exam). This document summarizes their thoughts & opinions.

BE AWARE—>

a resource preferred by the majority may not be the best book for you as an individual, so you may want to peruse more than the top recommendations.

Each year there are some 'first appearances', any of which could become a top-resource in the future. Some books reach the market after our preparation period has ended and thus are not noted here at all (e.g., some in the High-Yield Systems series)

Many students used more than 1 book for each area and it is neither possible nor useful to present the many variety of book 'mixes'; as a result, you'll notice that total percentages under each discipline exceed 100%.

I received survey replies from approximately 2/3 of the class of 2011, but since the number of responses did vary from question to question, only percentages are provided

The following legend is used:

bold, and underlined -> the most frequently recommended resource(s); percentages noted.

bold -> many recommended this resource; percentages noted

Normal -> one to several recommendations for this resource; percentages sometimes noted

Rich's Notes:

*The survey requested that **First Aid for USMLE Step 1** not be noted as a resource unless it was the sole review resource (other than question resources); when you see "Firat Aid" listed, it was **the** chosen resource by that proportion of students.*

*Most students strongly recommended **First Aid for the USMLE Step 1** as a part of each review area, but not in place of review books in **most** instances- -they used First Aid as the first thing to look at to help identify an area's high-yield content, and the last thing to look at after reviewing each portion of an area to be sure all high yield content was covered. Many also went back over **First Aid** after completing their entire review. The 2010 edition of First Aid is likely available near the end of December, 2009, but early in January, 2010 for sure.*

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GROSS ANATOMY:

High -Yield Gross Anatomy (40% recommended it ... earlier editions preferred..most with Netter along with it)

Dr. Schumann's Handout (15%),

An Atlas like Netter (15%)

First Aid (12%)

BRS Anatomy (book &/or cards) (8%)

Kaplan's Review/MedEssentials (5%)

course syllabus with Netter (5%)

USMLE Roadmap: Gross Anatomy (5%)

<http://www.e-anatomy.org/> (1%) for Radiology Images

Representative Comments:

High-Yield's earlier editions better than later editions as the newer editions especially have much more detail than needed.

High Yield especially good for extremities & head and neck, though more detailed than necessary; know results if extremity nerve is cut.

High Yield CT images of abdomen useful as a supplement to First Aid

Early editions of High Yield may not cover nerve palsies.

No Resource explains "Claw Hand" well

CELL BIOLOGY:

First Aid (30%)

Dr. Duker's packet (25%)

High-Yield Cell (18%):

BRS Physiology (8%) (*first couple of chapters*)

Kaplan (3%) video lectures &/or MedEssentials

Rapid Review Biochem (3%)(touched on this area a bit)

Lippincott (3%)

Wheater's Atlas (1%)

Goodman & Gillman's "The Cell" (1%) (for reference_

Netter's Histo Flash Cards (1%) (each card shows histo, discusses cell bio & ties in a pathological condition)

First Aid Cases.

Representative Comments:

Good sources for questions outside of USMLEWorld: PreTest Anatomy, Histology & Cell Biology, and Q Bank

HISTOLOGY:

First Aid (36%)

'used nothing just for this' (11%)

Wheater's Histopath (7 %)

Utah WebPath: <http://library.med.utah.edu/WebPath/webpath.html> (7%)

Wheater's Functional Histology (6%)

High-Yield Histopathology (6%)

BRS Pathology (3%)

Boston U. Medical Histo Website: http://www.bu.edu/histology/m/i_main00.htm (2%)

Kaplan (3%)

Netter's Histo Flash Cards (1%) (ties histo & cell bio to path condition)

Representative Comments:

Best integrated with systems

Pure histo was not a noted topic on Step 1

EMBRYOLOGY :

High-Yield (61%) (with *earlier edition* generally preferred/less detail)

First Aid (16%)

Dr. Lance-Jones' Packet (14%)

Dr. Lance-Jones' recorded Review (3%)

Kaplan (3%) (2007 lecture notes & anatomy videos)

Representative Comments:

Error noted in High-Yield: "It states that DiGeorge Syndrome is due to a defect of the 21st chromosome, when it is really the 22nd...disease is known as 'Catch-22' syndrome."

High-Yield especially useful for genetic diseases.

NEUROANATOMY:

High-Yield (58%) (good images)

First Aid (10%)

Haines Neuroanatomy (8%)

USMLE Road Map: Neuroscience (6%)

BRS Neuroanatomy (5%)

Kaplan (4%) (MedEssentials)

Dr. Humphrey's recorded lecture (2%),

Neuroanatomy Made Ridiculously Simple (1%)

Utah WebPath (1%) <http://library.med.utah.edu/WebPath/webpath.html>

Goljan audio lectures (1%)

First Aid Cases (1%)

Blumenfeld's Neuroanatomy Through Cases: An Illustrated Colour Text (from Britain)
(1%) (radiological images and sections)

BIOCHEMISTRY

Rapid Review (Goljan) (32%)

Lippincott's Biochem (21%)

Carole Coffee Materials:

(radiological images and sections) **Carole Coffee's Packet from Book Room or Book (15%)**

Carole Coffee's Lecture Recording (5%)

First Aid (12%)

Kaplan (8%)

Underground Clinical Vignettes (1%)

Representative Comments:

Goljan's Rapid Review Pathology especially helped tie biochem into Nutrition & Heme; also, the book's questions are challenging.

Many who used Lippincott used it for Nutrition and Molecular Biochem.

Coffee's older used Metabolism book was \$8 online.

Lippincott's had good diagrams

PHYSIOLOGY:

BRS (94%)**

Kaplan (3%)

First Aid (2%)

Goljan Rapid Review Path (1%)

Representative Comments:

**The “94%” says it all

MICROBIOLOGY:

Clinical Microbiology Made Ridiculously Simple (64%)

Micro Flash Cards (53%) (Most Lippincott, some BRS & some Lange)**

Lippincott’s Biochemistry (25%)

Lange’s (Levinson’s) Medical Micro & Immuno (18%),

First Aid (7%)

Rapid Review Micro & Immuno (3%)

Kaplan (1%)

Representative Comments:

“If you used ‘CMM Ridiculously Simple’ back in Micro class it’s a quick read to remember everything...”

**Many who reported using micro cards didn’t identify which cards they used; at least ½ of the class used micro cards.

“...Micro Cards, 5-10 a day throughout the study period...”

“ ‘bug-of-the-day’ approach allowed for chunking a huge subject into manageable bites”

BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE: Psych:

BRS Behavioral Science (56%)

High-Yield Behavioral (19%)

First Aid (19%)

Kaplan (4%)

Representative Comments:

(In BRS) “2 charts near the book’s end outline in a ‘What would USMLE want you to say’ Step 1 format for ETHICS questions”.

“The last chapters towards the end of BRS very high yield.”

High –Yield had lots of Psychiatry...coherently represented, and ...decent clinical vignettes.

BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE: Biostat/Epi:

BRS Behavioral (36%)

First Aid (28 %)

High Yield Behavioral (14%)

Handouts (14%) (Dr. Rao’s, or former students’ Drs. Bascomb & Nelson Kaplan (3%) (“Kaplan’s Video showed time-saving ways to answer (these kinds of questions.”)

GENETICS:

First Aid (44%)

High-Yield Genetics (9%)

Goljan's Rapid Review Path (9%) (biochem and genetics chapters)

High-Yield Cell & Molecular Bio (8%)

Rapid Review Biochemistry (5%)

High-Yield Embryo (5%)

Lippincott Biochemistry (5%)

Kaplan (5%)

Underground Clinical Vignettes (1%)

Representative Comments:

"I compiled my own genetics list as I reviewed each system."

"If you struggled in genetics in MS1 & need the basics relatively quickly, High-Yield Genetics is good."

"High-Yield Embryo's first few chapters covers some genetics disorders"

IMMUNOLOGY:

Abbas (54%)

First Aid (16%)

***Lange's Medical Micro & Immuno by Levinson** (15%)**

Rapid Review Micro/Immuno (6%)

High-Yield (5%)

Kaplan books (3%)

Kaplan Video (1%)

Goljan Path (1%)

Hi-Yield

Rapid Review,

Representative Comments:

- ** In addition to the Immuno portion in the book itself, this portion is also an ~80 page packet borrowable from Book Room as well.*
- *“Rapid Review’s On-Line questions are good.”*
- *“If you didn’t use Abbas during MS1 Immuno, it may be too detailed to read all the way through for Boards.”*

PATHOLOGY:

Goljan's Rapid Review(78%)

BRS Path (39%)

Goljan's audio lectures (20%)

Robbins & Coltran Review Question Book (14%)

Utah WebPath* (9%)

Kaplan's Path Video* (4%)

Lange's Path Cards (2%)

Robbins & Coltran, and Harrison's On-Line Questions*

Robbin's Atlas of Path by Klatt (for visuals) (1%)

Representative Comments:

Path being the weightiest area, most students used more than one path resource.

Some wrote of **Goljan's Rapid Review** as praiseworthy in all respects; others wrote of it being of weak organization, overly detailed and some errors in all but General Path and Hemepath. Goljan's Rapid Review great for Heme-Onc (Hemeonc was Goljan's specialty) though over-represented in book

PHARMACOLOGY:

Pharm Cards * (80%) (broken down with Lippincott's most used, then in no particular order: BRS, Lange, Johannsen & Sabatine, Saunders-Elsevier's "Clinically Oriented Information", Brenner, PharMneumonics.)

Lippincott Pharm * (14%)

First Aid (10%)

USMLE Road Map Pharm (1%)

***Representative Comments:* ***

"Dr. de Groat's lecture on Navigator...very straight forward and useful."

Many who used Lippincott's Pharm used the first 2 chapters on

Kinetics/Dynamics/Autonomics only.

Although 80% used Pharmcards, some used more than one publisher's cards

SYSTEMS:

Nearly all individual student notes: by far used system chapters in the top-rated discipline books (BRS, Goljan, Hi-Yield, etc.);

Many used Goljan's Rapid Review Path as their main systems review, while somewhat fewer use the First Aid Cases. Many used Robbin's Path Review Questions.

For Cardio, a number used "cheat sheets" from Dubin's Rapid interpretation of EKGs.

1 student used the Crash Course for Step 1 book for cardio and respiratory systems.

"Cases and Concepts book great primer for the most important aspects of different organ systems...use towards the end of your review to pull things together in weak areas."

General Comments mostly on books & Sites from above

(remember, "Different strokes for Different Folks"):

USMLE World by far the most used question source, but many used more than 1 source including questions from:

QBank, USMLERx (both the website and First Aid Q & A), Utah WebPath, and <http://www.usmleconsult.com>

"Limit your resources"

"In general, reading 2 books of the same subject is a waste of time"

"Use First Aid Cases and Robbins' Path QBook"

"Large path flash cards for clinical vignettes shorter and close to the question stems of Step 1 than First Aid's Case Book."

"Working with another with questions can be helpful; I used the Underground Clinical Vignettes (book room copies) with a classmate."