

GCSE (9–1)
Candidate Style Answers

HISTORY B

(SCHOOLS HISTORY PROJECT)

J411
For first teaching in 2016

J411 - Britain in peace and war, 1900 - 1918

Version 1



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Introduction

This resource has been produced by a senior member of the GCSE History examining team to offer teachers an insight into how the assessment objectives are applied. It illustrates how the sample assessment questions might be answered and provides some commentary on what factors contribute to overall levels.

As these responses have not been through full moderation, they have not been graded and are instead, banded to give an indication of the level of each response.

Please note that this resource is provided for advice and guidance only and does not in any way constitute an indication of grade boundaries or endorsed answers.

See <http://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/302759-sample-assessment-materials-taster-booklet.pdf> for the sources referenced.

Question 6(a)

In Interpretation A the artist Richard Hook tries to portray some of the drama of life in Britain in the early twentieth century. Identify one way in which the artist does this. [3]

High level response

The artist has chosen to depict the fight for women's votes in a very dramatic way by focusing on the activities of the Suffragettes. For example, he shows a newspaper seller shouting out alongside a sensational headline about the death of a Suffragette and a policeman forcibly removing another protestor. This suggests that there were shocking and remarkable developments in the struggle for women's votes in this age.

Examiner commentary

This response would receive all three marks because the candidate has identified one way in which the artist portrays the drama of life, then developed this by explaining how he this gives us this impression. They provide examples from the interpretation.

Medium level response

The illustrator shows soldiers off to fight in the First World War, a Suffragette being arrested, the King, and the invention of the motor car. I don't think life was really this dramatic for most people as lots of people were very poor. For example, some of the more mundane developments like Rowntree's investigations into poverty aren't shown.

Examiner commentary

This response would receive only one mark because the candidate has identified a variety of different features of the painting without explaining how one of the features helps to give the impression of drama. Note that the question is not asking for candidates to evaluate the interpretation so their last comment does not add to their response.

Question 6(b)

If you were asked to do further research on one aspect of Interpretation A, what would you choose to investigate? Explain how this would help us to analyse and understand life in Britain in the early twentieth century. [5]

High level response

I would choose to compare the impact of the campaign of the Suffragettes to the campaign of the Suffragists by examining evidence of their influence on politicians and public opinion. It's interesting that the artist has not chosen to include any Suffragists on his interpretation, suggesting that their peaceful campaign was less significant than the militancy of the Suffragettes. The Suffragettes seem to get more attention in history books but the Suffragists' campaign had considerable support so I think this investigation would help us to understand how much influence each group's campaign had on the campaign.

Examiner commentary

This is a Level 3 response because the candidate has used a second-order concept (significance) to frame an enquiry (there is no need to specifically name the concept; indeed, this could lead to some rather mechanical and poor responses. Importance would work just as well). In fact, they are also discussing impact as well. They have developed this line of enquiry by explaining what aspects could be researched and there is evidence of the **relevant** use of their contextual knowledge to help to frame the enquiry.

Medium level response

I would choose to research when the car was first invented and how fast it could go, and who the football team is in the picture. This would be interesting because we would be able to see how much things have changed since then. I know from my knowledge that the Edwardian period is known as a 'Golden Age' and that there were other new inventions like typewriters and films. I would also like to know how many people had a car and how much it changed their life from before.

Examiner commentary

This is a Level 2 response. It starts off by listing pieces of information to be acquired rather than framing a particular enquiry. However, a basic enquiry question is reached at the end, although this is not really developed and it is not explained how this would help us to analyse and understand life in the early twentieth century. There is some knowledge present and although it is accurate, it is 'bolted on' rather than being used in a relevant way to help to frame an enquiry.

Question 7

Interpretations B and C both focus on the force-feeding of suffragettes. How far do they differ and what might explain any differences? [12]

High level response

The interpretations mostly agree about the process and consequences of force-feeding but differ to great extent in terms of emphasis and tone.

The interpretations are similar in that they essentially agree that force-feeding involved tubes being pushed up a woman's nose. B says that this would have been 'extremely painful' and C agrees with this because it talks about the noses passages being 'bruised' gums being 'ripped.' They also both discuss the consequences of bad publicity over force-feeding – that the government introduced the 'Cat and Mouse Act' which allowed women on hunger strike to be released when they became ill and then re-arrested once they had recovered.

However, the interpretations differ in focus and in tone. C emphasises the brutality of force-feeding and thus goes into graphic detail about specific injuries and accidents which occurred. In this way, C seems to aim to make the reader sympathise with the hunger strikers against the actions of the government who still 'watched' the woman after their release under the Cat and Mouse Act. In contrast, B gives us a rather more simplified version of events in a neutral tone, e.g. 'the woman was held down and a rubber tube pushed up her nose' and says the women were 'released until their health improved.'

The interpretations differ in this way mainly because of their purpose and audience. C was written by a journalist in a popular history book who seems to want to emphasise the cruelty of force-feeding, so he lingers on the more lurid details. Meanwhile B is from a school textbook where the audience is younger so the authors have probably decided to tone down the horror somewhat.

Examiner commentary

This is a Level 4 response. The answer frames their argument at the start by addressing the question of how far they differ. The response offers a very detailed analysis of similarities and details. The answer begins with a basic comparison, cross-checking details from each interpretation, then progresses as the candidate compares their focus and tone. The response finishes with a full explanation as could be expected from these two particular interpretations about why they differ. The candidate's knowledge has been used to understand the interpretations, e.g. the impact of the bad publicity surrounding force-feeding.

Medium level response

The interpretation agree in some respects but not in others.

The interpretations are similar because they both talk about force-feeding. They both say that this involved tubes being pushed up a woman's nose. B says that this would have been 'extremely painful' and C agrees with this because it says 'metal contraptions resulted in broken teeth and ripped gums' which would have been painful. Both interpretations mention the 'Cat and Mouse Act'. I know from my own knowledge that this was passed in 1913 and nicknamed the 'Cat and Mouse Act' as suffragettes were let go and then caught again, like mice being played with by a cat.

The interpretations differ as well. C goes into more detail and tells us the whole story of the dancer who nearly died when her lung got filled up with the food. This isn't mention in B. Also, in B the Suffragette is fed with 'milky liquid' but in C this is 'sloppy food'. C also talks about bruising and ripping being caused by the force-feeding so I think it goes into more detail.

I know as well that suffragettes argued that they should be treated as political prisoners but the government refused so they began to use hunger strikes in protest.

I think they differ because C was written by a journalist in a history book for adults. He may be exaggerating because he's trying to sell his books. But B is from a school textbook so it's probably more straightforward and reliable. I trust interpretation C more because I know of other suffragettes like Lady Lytton who were treated in a very brutal way.

Examiner commentary

This is a Level 2 response. The answer offers a valid analysis of similarities and difference, although it only uses the basic content of the interpretations to compare individual points of similarity and difference. Depending on the question and interpretations, candidates who go further and examine the interpretations' overall focus, tone, style, purpose or portrayal of people/events will fare much better than candidates who compared individual points of content from the two interpretations. The points at the end are very general and limited and could be applied to almost any interpretations of these types. Candidates to avoid trying to 'stock evaluate' interpretations in this way. There is no requirement to say which interpretation is more accurate or reliable as the question does not ask this.

Question 8

In an article in the *Daily Mail* newspaper in 2015 the historian A N Wilson stated that, in the period before the First World War, 'life for the majority of men and women was hellish'. How far do you agree with this view? [20]

High level response

The working class made up the majority of men and women and although life may be described as 'hellish' for some of them, this wasn't the case for all working people and in a lot of cases their lives were improving by 1914.

There was a large section of society which was extremely poor whose lives may be described as 'hellish'. In some towns, poorer working class families continued to live in overcrowded and insanitary slums. Those born into a working class family had to work all their life from the age of 12 until they were unable to work any longer. Only 66% of working class babies lived beyond the age of one. Large numbers of workers worked in industries which were unregulated. For example, dock workers had to wait at the docks each day to see if there was any work. They may only have got three days' work a week. Gas workers worked in horrendous conditions shovelling coal into furnaces. Those who worked in a Sweated Trade like making matchboxes had to work extremely long hours in very poor conditions and they were usually paid a tiny wage for the work they produced.

Seebhom Rowntree carried out a study in York and found that 28% of York's population lived below the poverty line. For some people, even when they were in regular work their wages were too low to keep them above the poverty line. The average wage for an unskilled labourer in York was just £1 a week. Charles Booth made a different study in London which also suggested that around 30% of the population lived below the poverty line as a result of problems like old age, illness, low wages, casual work or economic depressions.

Nevertheless, even in 1900 life for the working classes was improving. Wages were higher than they had been in the 19th century and some workers could afford better food along with luxuries like sweets, tea and coffee. Government regulations and inspections began to improve working conditions, pay and safety in factories and other workplaces. By the early twentieth century, many working class families lived in better housing, as local councils built good-quality streets and new terraced houses which often had clean running water and an inside flushing toilet. Also, many workers had Saturday afternoons off and went to watch football and cricket. There were four bank holidays in the year and lots of factories closed for a week in the summer. This meant many families went to British seaside resorts like Blackpool and Scarborough.

Finally, the Liberal government brought in a variety of measures to improve the lives of very poor people. For example, free school meals were provided for children in 1906. Old Age Pensions were introduced in 1908 – pensioners over 70 got 5 shillings a week or 7s 6d if they were a couple. The National Insurance Act in 1911 improved lives with unemployment and sickness benefit.

In conclusion, 'hellish' might be accurate from a modern perspective but not from a contemporary one. It would depend very much on the nature of someone's employment – workers who worked (or whose husbands worked) in a regular industry benefitted from being able to take advantage of things like holidays, leisure time and better wages. However, those who still lived in slum areas or who had irregular employment had much worse lives, with a large proportion living in poverty. Nevertheless, by 1914 there had been measures passed which began to tackle some of the worst problems, so I don't think the statement in the question can be properly justified.

Examiner commentary

This is a very strong Level 5 response. The answer is well structured and there is a sustained use of relevant and detailed evidence, leading to a 'clinching' argument at the end, which would take this to the top of L5. The candidate has remained sharply focussed on the issue of the lives of the bulk of the population throughout the response. There is a clear focus on the words 'majority' and 'hellish' given in the interpretation. All contextual knowledge is relevant to the question being asked. The response shows a sophisticated understanding of the concepts of diversity and consequence; change within the 14-year period is also considered.

Medium level response

For some people life was definitely hellish but not for everybody.

The majority of the population were working class and their lives were hellish. They lived in overcrowded slums and had to work all their life from the age of 12. They didn't have any servants or things to help with the housework like washing machines. Servants only got a half-day off a week and one full day off a year. Housemaids earned £9 a year. Many people also lived in poverty as proved by social researchers such as Seebhom Rowntree and Charles Booth. But the rich didn't pay much attention to the poor because they thought if people were poor it was because they were lazy or drank too much. I think for women life may have been hellish too. Their lives could be boring and repetitive because they did not go into the world of work like their husbands. They weren't allowed to vote. Female teachers were paid less than male teachers. But there were some women's colleges at Oxford and Cambridge. But men were ashamed if their wives had to go out to work.

But on the other hand, women's lives improved during the war because they had the opportunity to go out and work whilst the men were away fighting. The number of women in employment increased from 3.2 million in 1914 to 4.8 million in 1918. Women worked in the Women's Land Army and were also in demand in heavy industries, like shipbuilding and engineering. So they had new experiences and this helped to lead to some women being given the vote in 1918.

In conclusion, the lives of most people were hellish. It was only rich men whose lives weren't hellish.

Examiner commentary

This is a Level 3 response. The answer has some kind logical structure, though muddled in places. It demonstrates sound knowledge of key features and characteristics of the life of the majority of people. However, the second section, which constitutes the other side of the debate, is not valid because it discusses evidence from after 1914, when the question limits candidates' responses to the 'period before the First World War'. The response shows a good understanding of the concepts of diversity and causation.



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