

History A (Schools History Project)

General Certificate of Secondary Education **J415**

Examiners' Reports

January 2011

J415/R/11J

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CONTENTS

General Certificate of Secondary Education

History A (Schools History Project) (J415)

EXAMINERS' REPORTS

Content	Page
A951/11 – 14 Medicine Through Time/Crime and Punishment Through Time Development Study/Depth Study	1
A952/21 Developments in British Medicine, 1200 – 1945	6
A952/22 Developments in Crime and Punishment in Britain, 1200 – 1945	8

A951/11 – 14 Medicine Through Time/Crime and Punishment Through Time Development Study/Depth Study

General Comments

The entry for this January sitting was comparatively small. Germany was the most popular option and had over a thousand candidates. The entry for American West numbered a few hundred while the entries for Elizabethan England and Britain were very small. Medicine was the more popular Development Study but there were a reasonable number of candidates for the Crime and Punishment option.

The scripts covered the entire ability range. It was encouraging to see some excellent scripts but there were also a number of very poor ones where candidates did not appear to be ready to take the examination at this time. It was noticeable that a number of candidates were able to cope with either the Development Study or the Depth Study, but not with both. There was also a significant number of rubric errors.

A significant minority of the candidates wrote some good answers demonstrating sound chronological understanding in the Development Studies and an ability to construct developed historical causal explanations in the Depth Studies. Some of the sources would have been unfamiliar to most candidates but they rose to the challenge well and produced interesting, informed and thoughtful analyses for the source questions. There were, in particular, interesting answers to Medicine 1(b), 1(c), Crime and Punishment 1(b), Elizabethan England 5(a), Britain 5(c), American West 5(b) and Germany 1(c). It is good to see that when SHP candidates have to think on their feet, they can.

A number of candidates were familiar with the basic features of the topics studied but had neither the necessary knowledge nor understanding to write developed explanations. Many candidates failing to achieve a Grade C wrote assertions, descriptions or very thin explanations that lacked genuine causal explanation. It is important that candidates understand what constitutes an explanation. If, for example, candidates are asked to explain why Paré was able to make advances in Medicine, it is not enough to describe what he did or to identify the factors that made advances possible. Candidates need to name a factor, for example, working during the Renaissance, working during battles, or running out of boiling oil by chance, and then explain how that factor helped Paré to make a particular advance.

Many candidates would do better if they directly addressed the question in the first sentence of their answers. Thus in response to a source question about surprise they could start 'I am surprised by this source because...', or to a question about why a source was published at a particular time 'This source was published then because...'. The same applies to essay answers where, for example, a question about whether the homesteaders were more successful than the ranchers, could begin 'I think the homesteaders were more successful because...'. Of course, this approach does require candidates to think about the question and their answer before putting pen to paper. Above all, it requires candidates to know what their answer is before they start writing it. At the moment a good number of candidates appear to almost accidentally address the question about three-quarters of the way through their answers.

The part (c) questions on Medicine asked about the importance in the history of medicine of an individual or a factor. Many candidates, for example, simply described what the individual did, thus failing to address the issue of 'important in the history of medicine'. To answer this kind of question satisfactorily candidates need to explain, for example, how an individual improved on what had gone before, or how an individual helped developments in the future.

Even many of the best candidates still fail to reach the top level in their answers to part (c) of the essay questions. Many simply assert a factor as being most important and then simply repeat what they already said about that factor. Candidates need to compare the importance of the different factors they have been writing about, and come up with a clinching argument about why one was more important than the other.

Comments on Specific Questions

Medicine

Question 1(a) made candidates think carefully and there was a full range of answers. Better answers explained that there was no reason to be surprised because the Romans used both methods at the same time or that there is good reason to be surprised because Source A contains natural beliefs and so is more advanced than Source B in its understanding of medicine. Weaker candidates simply asserted that they were not surprised because the Romans came after the Greeks. Part (b) was answered either very well or very badly. Candidates had not seen the source before and had to think on their feet. Many were able to infer from the source that they knew disease was contagious – otherwise they would not bother firing the heads. Weaker candidates simply stated that the source is useless. Part (c) also produced a wide range of answers. The question required some careful thinking and it was pleasing to see so many candidates do this. They compared the knowledge of germs or the realisation that there was a problem with dirty water in Source D, with the continuing use of the Four Humours and bleeding in Source E. They used their knowledge and understanding to explain why Source D contains a better understanding. Some candidates went slightly wrong by claiming that Source D demonstrates knowledge of germ theory. Weaker candidates thought that Source D was supernatural and was blaming disease on monsters while Source E demonstrates natural beliefs and methods.

Question 2 was a popular choice. There were many good answers to (a) but some candidates simply wrote down everything they knew about the Egyptians and ignored the words 'stay healthy'. This often distracted them from what they should have been writing about and they produced lengthy answers scoring very few marks. In response to (b) candidates were divided into two broad groups – those who focused on why the Greeks were able to make so much progress and those that simply described what they did. The latter seemed to think that examples of progress were sufficient explanation in themselves. Part (c) was generally answered well with most candidates at least able to explain what the Romans and the Greeks did. Better candidates explained how what they did contributed/or did not contribute to the development of medicine. Very few candidates were able to score full marks by ending their answers with a convincing reason why one is more important than the other, for example, the Romans learned much from the Greeks.

Question 3

This question was more popular than Question 4. Part (a) was answered well by only a few candidates. Some seemed to think that monasteries were simply hospitals, while others thought that they were where dissections were carried out. There were more good answers to part (b) with an encouraging number of candidates focusing on the relevant enabling factors. There was a wide range of answers to part (c). Most candidates knew something relevant about both men but only some of these were able to explain their importance in the history of medicine. Even fewer were able to compare them in terms of importance. Many simply asserted that one was more important than the other because of what he did, and then repeated what they had already written about the work of that individual. For full marks candidates need to give a clinching reason why one is more important than the other.

Question 4

This was not a popular question but was generally answered well. Candidates' knowledge of the work of Nightingale has noticeably improved over the years and there were many good answers to (a) that went beyond what she did in the Crimea. Candidates used a wide range of examples in (b) ranging from Paré to recent developments in blood transfusion. A few candidates got no further than 'bandages'. There were many good answers to (c) and interestingly a higher proportion of candidates scored full marks than on the other part (c) questions. A common and perfectly valid answer was that Lister was more important because without antiseptics the advantages of anaesthetics could not be fully exploited.

Crime and Punishment

Question 1(a) produced few very poor or very good answers. Some candidates failed to focus on 'attitudes' while others failed to focus on the Gunpowder Plot itself and how representative it was of the crimes of that time. Many candidates were able to answer (b) at least reasonably well by explaining the Bloody Code. However, there were still a worrying number of candidates who failed to demonstrate any historical knowledge or understanding and simply expressed outrage that such crimes were punished by the death penalty. There was a range of answers to (c) although a number of candidates focused on demands for the ending of the death penalty rather than the ending of public executions.

Question 2

Few candidates attempted Question 2 and most of these only managed weak answers. Part (a) produced answers that could have been about the twentieth century. There were a few candidates who knew enough history to write good answers to part (b) but most answers were too general to merit many marks. The same has to be said about answer to (c) where most candidates could not entertain the idea that the story of Robin Hood might actually tell us something about medieval crime and punishment. Most answers consisted simply of the story.

Question 3

There were some good answers to (a) containing relevant detail. Most candidates seemed to know something about smugglers although a few claimed they dealt in watches and drugs. Part (b) was answered well. Most candidates could suggest several valid reasons for the increase in highway robbery, and some explained them properly as causal factors. Part (c) also produced an encouraging number of good answers. Many candidates were able to explain why the authorities were worried by both groups, but only a few could come up with a clinching reason why they were more worried by one group than the other. There were some good answers about poaching with candidates' explanations of the concern of the authorities based on issues of class and property. However, a few weak candidates thought the landowners would starve because their food was being stolen.

Question 4

Very few candidates answered this question and it is difficult to comment in a useful way.

Elizabethan England

The entry for this option was small. In response to Question 5 most candidates knew enough about the issue of marriage to answer parts (a) and (b) reasonably well. In (a) better candidates explained their reactions to both Elizabeth and the MPs. Part (c) was not answered particularly well. Most candidates were able to infer impressions from both portraits but some simply assumed that Source C was painted towards the end of the reign while Source D must have been painted much earlier. The point that because Source C was painted after she was dead and therefore the artist could be more honest was lost. It was clear that many candidates either did not know when Elizabeth's reign ended or simply ignored the dates of the sources.

Question 6

Part (a) was answered reasonably well, while there were some good, well informed answers, to (b). Part (c) caused more difficulty for many of the candidates apparently not aware of the Poor Law Acts at the end of the reign.

Question 7

There were some good answers to part (a) with good accounts of the divided nature of the country and of events in Mary's reign. Some candidates spoiled their answers by including events from later in the reign. Part (b) produced a range of answers with the weaker candidates ignoring the religious issue completely and focusing only on the execution of Mary. Part (c) also produced a range of answers with some candidates able to argue both sides. The weaker candidates simply assumed she was a great threat and barely explained why.

Britain, 1815 – 1851

The entry for this option was low with the candidates being on the whole better than average. Part (a) of Question 5 was answered well. Most candidates knew about the Swing Riots and were also able to suggest a valid contextual purpose. Part (b) was not answered as well. Candidates tended to keep to the surface information of the sources and failed to make inferences or to explain eg that Source C might be more useful because of the link it makes between poor conditions and the spread of disease. Most candidates understood Source D and were able to use their knowledge to question the promises made by the cartoon. An encouraging number of candidates focused on the purpose of the cartoon in context.

Question 6

This question was slightly more popular than Question 7. Most candidates were reasonably familiar with the Speenhamland and Roundsman systems in (a). There were some good, detailed answers to part (b) with candidates able to turn their knowledge into causal explanations. Most of the answers to (c) were also at least reasonable. Many candidates could explain both points of view supported with relevant knowledge. Few, however, were able to suggest a clinching reason in their conclusion.

Question 7

The small number of candidates who chose this question answered it well. Detailed knowledge was demonstrated in response to part (a) including knowledge of the Six Acts. Most of the answers to (b) explained several valid reasons although a minority confused the Reform Act with the Poor Law reforms. There were several interesting answers to (c). It is fairly straightforward to argue that Chartism failed, but there were also excellent reasons suggested for why Chartism can be regarded as a success, for example, raising working class consciousness.

The American West

Question 5

There were plenty of good answers to part (a) but a significant minority of candidates failed to use or mention the source. Candidates needed to explain what can, and cannot be, inferred from the source about the importance of the buffalo to the Indians. Part (b) divided candidates into two broad groups - those who used their historical knowledge and understanding to realize there were good reasons to not be surprised, and those who simply spotted the difference between the two sources (eg Indians free, Indians not free) and expressed total surprise. The candidates were divided evenly between the two groups. Part (c) was answered particularly well. Most candidates understood and explained message, purpose and context of the source. However, in some answers the context was rather general and not specific enough.

Question 6

Most candidates were able to score at least reasonable marks on part (a). In response to (b) there were some excellent detailed explanations of the plans laid by Young to get the Mormons across the Plains. However, a minority of candidates spent most of their time writing about Smith, banks and elections. Part (c) was not answered as well as (b). Candidates were stronger on the homesteaders than the Mormons and many clearly had little idea of what more the Mormons had to do after reaching Salt Lake.

Question 7

Although this question produced a full range of answers, there were many excellent responses. Knowledge of the work of the cowboy has improved over the years and many answers were accurate and detailed. A few weaker candidates wrote about gunfights, drunkenness and prostitutes. Some of the answers to part (b) were the best that have been seen for a long time on this topic, and there were some excellent answers to (c) with a good number of candidates achieving full marks by using change over time as a way of comparing the success of the two groups. This worked very well for these candidates as it gave them a clinching reason to use for why it can be argued that one group was more successful than the other.

Germany c.1919-1945

Question 5

All parts of this question were generally answered well. There were some excellent answers to (a) with many candidates able to explain message and purpose in the correct historical context. Some candidates added little to the information in Source A while some thought it was about the French and the occupation of the Ruhr. There were many excellent answers to (b) with candidates able to infer the message of the source in the correct historical context. Better candidates went on to explain purpose in context. A few candidates took the word 'French heroes' literally and explained how the source was designed to praise the French. In response to part (c) most candidates fell into one of two groups – those who used their historical knowledge and understanding to explain that Source C does not make Source D surprising, and those who could not understand why, after waiting so long for their wages, they then burned the money.

Question 6

There was a range of answers to (a) with the weaker candidates throwing into their answer anything they knew about the Nazis. A number of candidates strayed into the thirties and included ideas that were not valid for the 1920s. Part (b) was not answered well. Many candidates appeared to be answering the question they had been prepared for rather than the one on the paper. They spent most of their time explaining how the Putsch was a success for the Nazis in the long term. In (c) candidates wrote well on other reasons but when they came to write about Hitler's leadership many tended to be rather wholly. Candidates appeared to lack specific examples to use about Hitler's leadership or speaking skills.

Question 7

There were some good answers to part (c) based on actions in the 1930s. However, a number of candidates based their answers on the Holocaust. In response to (b) many candidates were able to demonstrate knowledge of the activities of groups such as White Rose and Swing, but struggled to explain why they opposed the Nazis. In answer to (c) some candidates wrote about factors before 1933 (just as some candidates in response to 6(c) wrote about factors in and after 1933). However, there were some candidates who were able to write about the activities of the SS (and not the SA) and the Gestapo in detail, and then went on to explain other factors such as propaganda.

A952/21 Developments in British Medicine, 1200 – 1945

General Comments

There was a good range of responses to the paper. Candidates had good contextual knowledge and they had clearly been well prepared for this paper. There was still a tendency for weaker candidates to write down everything they knew about Jenner in Q1 and Q6, but overall, a good number of candidates deployed their contextual knowledge well.

Some centres are still clearly advising candidates to start by answering Q6 first. Whilst one can understand the reasoning behind this, it is a strategy that rarely serves candidates well. There was evidence that a number of candidates who tackled the paper this way ran out of time and missed out a question, or answered one question very briefly. Answering Qs 1 to 5 before Q6 also helps candidates to better and more fully address the sources and other evidence they need to consider for Q6. For these reasons, centres would be better advised not to encourage this strategy.

Question 1

This was generally well attempted with most candidates finding at least one good inference and supporting it with evidence from the source. There were plenty of possible inferences that could be made from this source, and most candidates were able to make them well. A small percentage of candidates still did not understand the requirements and simply either copied the source or paraphrased it with a potted history of Jenner's work. Some candidates mistakenly inferred that Jenner had only taken on a couple of cases, thinking that there were no cases between number one and number seventeen.

Question 2

Many candidates had seen this source before and knew it was the work of a French artist. This sometimes led to irrelevant comments about Napoleon's involvement. The style of the picture confused some, as they got absorbed by the detail in the painting, for example, the vines, the clothes, the house and the vibrant colours. A number used these details to comment on the social background of those gathered at the scene. It was most disappointing that so few of the candidates recognised the existence of the painting as symbolic of Jenner's importance in history. Many commented that because the painting was produced in the nineteenth century, it must be unreliable. Such answers barely got beyond level one or two. Most candidates were able to show the uses of the source but that is as far as they went. Many candidates did try to show that its reliability was also important in deciding whether it was useful, but not many did this successfully or appropriately.

Question 3

Most candidates were able to show that these two sources were quite different, but again that was as far as they went. A common error for a number of candidates was to assume that these two sources were both anti-vaccination and then go on to prove it, clearly misreading and misinterpreting Source D. Some candidates who recognised from the source attributions that these two accounts were probably from opposing camps did not always substantiate this point by referring to the language or tone of the sources. Pleasingly, fewer candidates this year simply described the two sources and then said 'so they are different'.

Question 4

Very few candidates failed to show surprise/no surprise even through interpreting their answers, and a very small number failed to express this in any way that could be interpreted from their answer. Most answers were well thought out, noticing the errors in Hume's account that Jenner had vaccinated James Phipps and had carried out 20+ experiments. There was particularly pleasing use of contextual knowledge here. This did not have to be especially detailed. For example, those who said they were not surprised because Jenner could not explain why his idea worked were clearly going beyond the detail in the source. Many commented about how this was pre-Pasteur. Other candidates were able to argue from other sources (most notably Source C) that Jenner faced a lot of opposition and so it was not surprising that Hume said what he did. Others went on to argue that inoculators were losing out to Jenner's vaccination. This question was answered well on the whole.

Question 5

This was well answered. It was pleasing to see so many candidates discuss the purpose of this source. Some candidates were confused by the attribution. It is unlikely that this cartoon was published by the Anti-Vaccine Society; even though this is what some of the textbooks say – indeed, even the latest official SHP textbook perpetuates the error! Such candidates were able to score top marks, so long as they showed how the purpose of the source was reflected in both its content and substantiated by other sources or contextual knowledge. Therefore, any Centres concerned about this point should not be worried that their candidates might have been penalised. Top marks were also available for arguing that the source was published to scare people off the vaccine, provided that the answer was substantiated by content, contextual knowledge/cross-reference. There were a small number of candidates, however, who made no reference to the source in their answers and even some who thought that the growths were other animals, such as pigs! Several commented on the people in the background apparently worshipping the cow and used this to discuss religious objections to vaccination.

Question 6

This was generally well attempted by the majority of candidates, and the vast majority of centres now know how to prepare their candidates to tackle the over-arching question. Some candidates managed to write valid answers but actually failed to make any detailed reference to the sources, other than the source letter. Some gave good details from the sources without addressing the question. However, there was clear evidence that a number of candidates had planned their answers. More candidates made reference to some aspect of reliability and were able to pick up the additional two marks. Some candidates showed an understanding that the word 'immediate' was significant in the statement and they generally used the dates of the various sources well.

A952/22 Developments in Crime and Punishment in Britain, 1200 – 1945

General Comments

This was the first January examination to be taken by significant numbers of Year 11 candidates. The total entry was, in fact, around one-third of a typical candidature for the June examination, but this smaller entry seemed to include the full ability range and was not, judging by the quality of work, in any obvious respect different from the full June cohort. The topic of the paper was transportation. Candidates had no serious problems comprehending the sources or answering the questions, though the contextual knowledge they brought to their answers was rather generalised and skewed towards the view that transportation was something of a soft option. A feature of at least a couple of the sources (for example, Sources A and D) was their possibly ambiguous nature – did they show transportation to be harsh or lenient? Where sources could be interpreted either way, candidates were rewarded according to the support offered to their interpretations; that is, the marking did not insist that one or other interpretation was correct.

Comments on Individual Questions

Question 1

As usual, this question asked candidates to make inferences from the source, which on this occasion was a picture of two young transportees. They did not, on the face of it, seem like convicts. They were wearing their own, maybe fashionable, clothes, they were not in chains, they were not being forced to work, or being maltreated in any way. However, they *were* convicts, and possibly their expressions indicated sadness, and their clothes, though seemingly clean, were probably no more than simple and practical. It was possible to look at the source either way. Unfortunately, many candidates looked closely at the source, but not closely enough at the question, which asked what one could tell about *transportation*, not about *transportees*. In other words, candidates were being asked for inferences one could make about the system of transportation on the basis of these two people who had been transported. For example, one might suggest that the system was not harsh (inference) because the convicts are dressed well and not being made to work (support from the source). A supported inference like this would earn a high mark, and if two valid inferences were made then full marks were awarded. However, if the inference was, for example, that these two convicts were treated well, then this failed to say anything about the system, and was instead an inference about the convicts. This could only earn up to half marks.

Question 2

In the past, when asked an 'Are you surprised?' question, some candidates have failed to address the issue of surprise and have therefore earned no marks. This time very few made this mistake, perhaps because Source C was so obviously surprising – why would 80 convicts, about to be transported to America, be happy about it? But candidates were often so keen to offer an explanation for this behaviour based on what they knew about transportation, that they often ignored the other source (Source B) to which they had been referred. This was a pity because Source B provided good material both for reasons why one would be surprised by the convicts' reactions, and for why one would not. Thus many answers simply judged the issue of surprise on what was often very generalised knowledge about transportation:

I am surprised they would be cheering because if I was going to be away from my family and possible never see them again, I would be unhappy.

I am not surprised they are cheering because I know that transportation was seen as an easy option so they would be looking forward to making a good life for themselves.

These answers were given a little credit, but for higher marks candidates had to take other routes. As previously suggested, one of these was to make use of the content of Source B, which gave details of what awaited the convicts in America. It suggested that some convicts would be able to run away, and others would serve their time and become useful people, both of which would support the idea that the convicts' reaction was not surprising. On the other hand, Source B also made it clear that many Americans did not want the convicts, suggesting that their reception might not be too welcoming, a reason for surprise. Another route was to use contextual knowledge, but for this to be specific and detailed. This could be about conditions in the colonies (and reference to Australia was permitted, even though on this question it was anachronistic), conditions on the voyage, or even conditions in Britain. For example, many answers explained that it was not surprising that prisoners were cheering when released from the bad conditions in Newgate Prison, of which they then gave details. Higher marks were awarded to answers which addressed both surprised and not surprised, or used both of the approaches described above. Only a very small number of answers attempted to base their arguments on an evaluation of the reliability of the sources. Discounting the usual assertions about newspapers wanting to sell more copies, which hardly scored, it was possible to doubt the reliability of Source B, since the letter writer was clearly in favour of transportation, or to be surprised by the candour of Source C at the time of the Bloody Code. Any answers which could provide a valid explanation on the basis of such arguments received a high mark.

Question 3

This question was based on a picture of convicts being paraded through the streets prior to being transported. Candidates were asked why the picture was published. The nature of the answers depended to some extent on how the candidates saw the treatment of the convicts. Did they look depressed and ashamed, or were they playing to the crowd, seeming happy to be transported? Either interpretation was allowed, and gave access to the highest level of the markscheme, depending on the nature of the explanation provided. Some weaker answers were distracted by information given in the provenance about these parades, so that instead of providing reasons for publication of the picture, they focused on reasons for the parades. This could not be rewarded. Another, happily rare, failing was to describe what was going on in the source without ever giving a reason for publication. Indeed, given the wording of the question, providing reasons for publication was of the essence, and these varied considerably in nature from the frankly implausible (*'to humiliate the prisoners in the parade'*) to the persuasive and probably correct (*'to deter people from crime'*). The most basic of plausible explanations saw the picture as factual information to be transmitted to the audience; in other words the picture was published to show people what was going on. Slightly better were answers that used the audience as the explanation – candidates were told that these parades attracted a lot of attention from the public – and the explanation for publication was therefore that people were interested. Good answers, though, understood that the artist was wanting to make a point about transportation, that there was a message for the audience. This could be that transportation was good, or bad, that convicts were getting what they deserved, or not – depending on the candidate's interpretation of what was shown. Finally, the best candidates realised that the message was not the end of the story, and that the artist had a purpose behind the message, an impact he wanted to make on the audience. Again, the nature of the impact was dependent on the interpretation of the picture. Most common was the suggestion that the picture was intended as a deterrent – showing people what would happen to them if they committed crimes. However, for those who saw the picture as illustrating the softness of transportation as a punishment, the purpose was generally to make the government wake up to what was going on and toughen up.

Question 4

Candidates generally have problems with the concept of proof. Where questions target this concept, the reaction of most candidates is to take it as a synonym for 'agree with', though a few give a knee-jerk response asserting that nothing proves anything. What candidates should be asking themselves is whether or not they can believe the claims made in the source(s) concerned. In this question they were given two contrasting sources about transportation, one of which was a statement from a convict requesting a pardon. Those candidates who were focused on the issue of reliability tended to see straightaway the possibility that such a source might not be telling the whole truth, as the convict has an obvious interest in presenting his case as favourably as possible. Can such a source, then, 'prove' that the brutality towards transportees described in Source E never happened? This line of thought automatically puts the answer on the right track. In contrast, those answers that began by working on the content differences between Sources E and F often never moved on to a genuine consideration of the issue of proof, tending instead to conclude that if one was different from the other then indeed it must prove it wrong. Although it was certainly true that the impressions of transportation given in the two sources were very different, this in itself was no assistance in determining whether either, or indeed both, might be believed, so concluding that the difference must prove one or other wrong was given only a modest mark. Progressing beyond this required some kind of reasoning. At its most basic this reasoning was an attempt to explain away the difference – different times, different places, different convicts. This was fair enough as an argument that the specific cannot be used to 'prove' the general. Remarkably few chose to use cross-reference either to specific contextual knowledge or to other sources as a way of checking the impressions given in Sources E and F. Of course, such cross-references would not have resolved the issue of 'proof', but they would certainly have generated some consideration of what could or could not be believed. For example, noticing that Source B agreed that transportees could 'behave well, and become useful people', might have made the admittedly self-serving picture presented in Source F more credible.

Question 5

As always with utility questions, most candidates resolutely regarded the source as factual information rather than as evidence to be evaluated. Those that attempted to question the reliability of Source G generally failed because they could not provide any adequate explanation of why the Minister would wish to present the situation in Tasmania in the manner he did. More often than not they asserted that he would hide the true situation because the government would not want to be embarrassed by it – even though the source does exactly the opposite! Contextual awareness helped a lot in providing a properly argued response. By 1850 transportation was coming to an end. In so far as the Minister had any purpose in admitting that the situation was bad, it was probably to help justify the process of ending transportation. Interpreted in that light, the source might even be regarded as liable to exaggeration, and therefore not useful. A much more obvious way to evaluate the source, though, was to notice that the Minister was admitting that things had gone wrong, and that not attempting to hide the truth made his statement more reliable, and thus useful. Given that one can believe what he is saying, the real utility of the source is apparent – it helps to explain why the system of transportation was collapsing by the mid-19th century. This level of understanding is what earned the highest mark. Most candidates, however, earned only the relatively few marks available for accepting the source at face value and indicating that its utility lay in what it said, or did not say, about transportation. Even the obvious route of arguing that the source was not that useful because it told you only about the situation in Tasmania, which might not have been typical, was generally ignored.

Question 6

Most candidates were able to score well on this question, finding at least some sources to support both the idea that transportation was effective, and that it was not. There were, however, two possible pitfalls. First, the idea of 'effective' involves a judgement, and sometimes the judgements made by candidates could not be supported by the source in the manner they suggested. The most obvious example was Source E. This was clearly a view of a critic of transportation, and regarded transportation as little more than slavery. Candidates were not, then, rewarded for arguing that it shows that transportation was effective because it brutalised convicts and taught them a lesson. Second, some candidates decided to use a slightly amended hypothesis, generally that transportation was 'good' or 'bad'. Since these are not exact synonyms for 'effective/not effective', the manner in which the sources were used could sometimes become invalid. However, as most of the sources clearly had a view on the efficacy of transportation (and again, candidates were allowed valid alternative interpretations of ambiguous sources), most answers found at least some sources to use in a valid manner. The issue of source use is nonetheless what makes this final question demanding. The ability to explain just what it is in a source that supports or questions a given hypothesis is not possessed by all candidates, and it remains relatively rare for candidates to score full marks, not least because to do so an answer would have to include at least one piece of genuine source evaluation.

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