

History B (Modern World)

General Certificate of Secondary Education **J417**

General Certificate of Secondary Education (Short Course) **J117**

OCR Report to Centres

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This report on the examination provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the specification content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and mark schemes for the examination.

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A971/11–17 Aspects of International Relations, 1919–2005 with the Study in Depth

General comments

Many candidates were well-prepared to meet the demands of the examination. These candidates scored well on all types of question. Answers produced by these candidates were characterised by the following:

- A clear focus on the question as set, with this being maintained throughout the answer.
- A clear message or purpose, where demanded, supported by detail from the source and contextual knowledge.
- Concise factual answers to part (a) questions.
- Clear reasons and explanations to part (b) questions.
- Development of a clear argument producing a balanced answer with some evaluation to part (c) questions.

Comments on specific questions

Part 1: Core Content – Aspects of International Relations, 1919–2005 Section A: The Inter-War Years, 1919–1939

Question 1(a)

Some of the answers were excellent, giving a clear main message supported by detail from the source and contextual knowledge. The candidates producing these answers had considered what a British cartoonist's message was likely to have been in 1919. This gave a clear steer that the cartoon was likely to have been unsympathetic towards Germany. Using this approach offered a number of main messages which were accepted. Other answers needed to give more consideration to the attribution. These answers focused on a German point of view which restricted the interpretation to a secondary message. Some answers could have been improved by a reduction in the reliance on contextual knowledge used at the expense full consideration of the source and its message.

Question 1(b)

Good answers identified clear points of disagreement between Clemenceau and Lloyd George as the basis of an explanation as to why these differences existed. Numerous answers would however have benefited from a clearer focus on the question. Many showed good knowledge of the demands made by Clemenceau and Lloyd George on behalf of their respective countries, but failed to explain why the two disagreed. Weaker answers focused almost entirely on the 'wants' of the two politicians.

Question 2

Part (a) allowed candidates to identify successes of the League of Nations in the 1920s. Here there were many answers which did that, often gaining maximum credit. Others needed to progress beyond a straightforward statement such as 'Aaland Islands' or 'Upper Silesia' to demonstrate the League's success.

Many responses to (b) were excellent. Reasons were identified and explained. This explanation included reference to the context of the time, in addition to the idea of disputes often being 'small conflicts'. Other responses showed candidates' ability to identify and describe reasons for success. These responses would have been improved if explanation had been used to show understanding.

Better responses to (c) showed a sound knowledge and understanding of the workings of the League in relation to the 1930s. Here not only was the League's structure and organisation put into a period context, but the debate was enhanced by explained reference to events of the 1930s which impinged on the League. Less strong responses needed to develop League weaknesses beyond the simplistic 'no USA' approach through explanation of significance in relation to the 1930s.

Question 3

In (a) the best answers demonstrated good factual awareness of what happened in the Saar as a result of the Treaty of Versailles. Most added something about the implications of the plebiscite result. Occasionally time was wasted describing the actual Treaty terms. Some answers were weak on detail. These often showed awareness of a plebiscite but were often confused as to the choices available to the population of the Saar. The weakest answers confused the Saar with either the Ruhr or the Rhineland. Often these candidates were not aware that the Saar was German.

In (b) most answers linked Italy and Japan to events in Abyssinia and Manchuria but were unable to explain how these events threatened world peace. Better answers gave thoughtful consideration to wider aspects including Pacts that were signed by the two countries.

Answers to (c) often showed good knowledge of Hitler's foreign policy and other causes of war. In order to achieve high marks these causes had to be linked to the outbreak of war but in many cases this did not happen.

Section B: The Cold War, 1945–1975

Question 1(a)

Some responses were excellent, as the main message of the cartoonist was given importance. As it was a British cartoonist these candidates picked up on the idea that really Kennedy had little cause for complaint given the size of the threat the US was posing to the Soviet Union. Further use of the attribution allowed the context to be set immediately prior to the Missile Crisis. Despite the date given many assumed that the cartoon related to the Crisis. This failure to fix the context resulted in a missed main message but gained reward for a secondary message. Weaker answers were limited to description of the cartoon, and here the sides of the dispute were often unclear.

Question 1(b)

Good answers developed explanation in relation to the increasing threat of communism, the impact on trade and the failure of the Bay of Pigs invasion. Some candidates need to understand that dates are put in a question for a reason, as a significant minority failed to take note of the dates in this question and wrote about events in 1962. This approach was not given credit.

Question 2

Many linked their definition of the 'Iron Curtain' in (a) to Churchill and his speech in America and made clear it was not referring to a physical structure. Some answers lacked clarity. There was confusion between East and West when linking with capitalism and communism together with a lack of thought which placed the Iron Curtain in Berlin. Indeed in this question and the (b) question many candidates thought that Germany and Berlin were the same.

This lack of basic knowledge also showed with many referring to the Berlin Wall when writing about the Blockade. There were many good answers to (b) which began with decisions made in 1945 being used as reasons for tension. In these answers, actions by both the West and the East were also used to explain the situation.

In (c), some candidates had the confidence to argue that the West partially failed and that Soviet policy was much more successful. Others were more conservative but with an equally valid approach. Here the actions of each side were considered and explained in terms of containment. Less strong answers were often one-sided, with the weakest side being that relating to the USSR.

Question 3

Many very detailed answers to (a) demonstrated a good factual knowledge of the Tet Offensive, gaining high marks although some candidates unfortunately thought it was an American attack.

Those who read (b) carefully were able to demonstrate not only a good knowledge of American tactics but also were able to explain why these were unsuccessful. Some candidates failed to score well because they focussed on the tactics of the Vietcong, often adding reference to American tactics as an after-thought.

In (c) those candidates who focussed on the question, linking the two factors clearly to withdrawal, produced many high scoring answers. Others needed to move away from description of the two factors and develop an answer more clearly related to the question if higher marks were to be achieved.

Section C: A New World? 1948–2005

Question 1(a)

Candidates who looked at the cartoon as a whole, including the attribution, produced excellent responses. Here the main message was given at the start of the answer and related either to Arafat's reluctance or Reagan's insistence. The message was well supported by detail from the cartoon and contextual knowledge. Acceptable contextual knowledge had to be linked to the PLO conflict with Israel. Weaker answers concentrated more on parts of the cartoon first and tried to create a message around the part they had identified.

Question 1(b)

The good answers gave at least three reasons for the actions of the Provisional IRA, the most popular of which was 'to remove British troops from Northern Ireland'. These identified reasons were developed into explanation. Weaker answers were characterised by their lack of development, being no more than general description.

Question 2

There were many good answers to (a) which demonstrated accurate detailed knowledge of the Soviet response. Other answers needed to be more focussed on the question, with too many just describing the events which led to the invasion.

Answers to (b) were often well-informed with candidates able to offer at least two explained reasons for the Soviet invasion. Often explained were the 'Prague Spring' and the threat to the Warsaw Pact. Excellent answers demonstrated the link to Yugoslavia and Romania. Weaker answers lacked focus with over-concentration on describing the actual invasion.

Most candidates in (c) were able to offer a variety of identified reasons, with better answers explaining a number of these. Too often comment about 'Solidarity' remained in descriptive mode and these responses failed to access the highest levels.

Question 3

Many answers to (a) demonstrated good, specific subject knowledge.

There were many excellent answers to (b) with detail of the GB/US spin, the role of the UN and in some instances the Blix Report. Answers showed good understanding in the explanations

provided. Weaker answers were unsure of the chronology. This often resulted in answers suggesting that WMD's were an important weapon of the actual war.

In (c), the best answers defined 'success' in terms of 'for whom?' This resulted in an evaluative essay with two sides to the argument and a meaningful conclusion which fully addressed the question. Other answers were more traditional, cautious and predictable in their approach. This approach still produced many good response, although sometimes the explanation of success was weaker. Some answers showed good knowledge of the period but failed to develop their identified points into explanation.

Part 2: DEPTH STUDY

GERMANY, 1918–1945

Question 4(a)

Many candidates produced good answers which recognised the purpose of the poster as being to get Germans to reject communism using appropriate contextual knowledge about the political instability in post-war Germany and the attempted revolution by the Spartacists to develop their responses. A significant minority of candidates were unable to make the connection between bolshevism and communism. To avoid disadvantaging these candidates the mark scheme allowed any reasonable interpretation of the source to be credited at Level 3 and any recognition of its general purpose e.g. warning the German people of the danger posed by bolshevism, without understanding what bolshevism meant, was credited at Level 5.

Question 4(b)

Whilst there were many good answers to this question, a large number of candidates simply focused on the provenance of the source to evaluate its claims. Fewer candidates were able to develop their answers by using appropriate contextual knowledge from the year 1922 about, for example, growing inflation, or the economic impact of the Treaty of Versailles, such as the loss of territory containing industry. The least successful responses used inappropriate contextual knowledge from the economic crisis in 1923 to test the claims in the source.

Question 4(c)

Most candidates were able to explain the message of the cartoon with appropriate supporting details from the source. The best answers were able to place the cartoon in context, recognising that this was the year when the reparations amount was finally fixed, and the first year it was paid, with the attendant German reaction. Less successful answers incorrectly used contextual knowledge from later in the 1920s about American loans.

Question 5

There were some good answers to (a), with many candidates displaying a good knowledge about different forms of resistance by individual churchmen. Less successful responses focused too much on how the regime dealt with this resistance.

In (b), whilst most candidates were able to explain why the Night of the Long Knives happened, it proved difficult for some candidates to explain two or more discrete reasons. The best responses attempted to distinguish between different causes discretely, typically focusing on Hitler's need to choose between the Army and the SA in the light of Röhm's aspirations, and the growing incompatibility of Röhm's radicalism with Hitler's own political ambitions. Less successful responses tended to make one overall point about Röhm becoming a liability backed by a number of unstructured assertions.

Part (c) brought many very good answers with the majority of candidates well-versed in the mechanics of coercion and consent. It is important that candidates do not simply describe what they know, but actually focus on the question throughout their answers. The least successful

responses were either too descriptive without enough focus on the issue of control, or used inappropriate evidence from the pre-1933 period.

Question 6

Most candidates who answered this question were very comfortable providing details about the Hitler Youth in (a) and able to achieve full marks.

Part (b) was generally well answered, but again, as in 5 (b), the best responses provided discrete reasons, focusing on Hitler's plans for Germany which could be realised through a well-indoctrinated youth such as his foreign policy ambitions, the creation of a racial state based on Aryan blood and a new generation of committed Nazis. Less successful responses typically made assertions about young people being the future in different ways without being fully explained.

There were many good responses to (c), with candidates able to explain why the different policies appealed to ordinary Germans and increased support for the Nazis. Less successful responses simply described different policies without explaining why they increased support. A number of candidates made the error of describing the policies and how their implementation increased the vote for the Nazis in the period before they came to power rather than explaining the policies as promises for the future.

RUSSIA, 1905–1941

Question 4(a)

Many candidates were able to correctly explain the message of the source as a projection of Stalin's achievements in making the USSR a strong military power. Less successful responses interpreted the message as a projection of Stalin's control over the USSR and its people.

Question 4(b)

There were many good answers to the question with most candidates understanding the significance of the 'kulaks' in the context of Stalin's Collectivisation policy. The best answers recognised the purpose as being the need to unite the party and people against the 'kulaks' in order to justify the brutal policy of 'liquidation', with good supporting contextual knowledge. Less successful responses focused on the message rather than the purpose – typically that Stalin wanted to destroy the kulaks.

Question 4(c)

There were many excellent and thoughtful responses to this question. The best answers used detailed knowledge of the experience of ordinary Russians during the Five-Year Plans together with the propaganda, both positive and negative, used by the regime, to explain both sides of the argument.

Question 5

In (a) most candidates were able to detail various aspects of the tsarist system of rule. Less successful responses drifted into descriptions of Russian social and economic conditions in the early twentieth century.

There were many good answers to (b), with candidates well-versed in the 'carrot and stick' policies of Stolypin. The best responses focused on the question and explained why the policies made the Tsarist regime more secure in the period up to 1914. Less successful responses simply described the policies without explaining their significance in relation to the question.

In answering (c) most candidates were able to display a good knowledge of developments in Russia surrounding the two cited factors. The best answers were able to use this knowledge to explain why the military failures and the activities of Rasputin damaged the credibility of the

autocracy and contributed to revolution in March 1917. Less successful responses described the two factors without explaining why they contributed to revolution.

Question 6

In (a) most candidates were able to describe a number of Trotsky's strengths in detail. Less successful answers contained vague assertions, typically that he was 'clever'.

Part (b) was generally well answered with candidates displaying a good understanding of the dynamics of the power-struggle following Lenin's death and Stalin's emergence as the undisputed leader by 1928. Once again, less successful answers tended to describe events such as Trotsky being misled about the date of Lenin's funeral without explaining why this aided Stalin's rise.

There were many good answers to (c) with candidates displaying a good understanding of how terror and propaganda contributed to Stalin's dictatorial control over the USSR. The best answers focused on the interplay between the two factors and explained how propaganda achieved consent for Stalin's rule through positive messaging but also justified the need for the terror through for example the Show Trials. Less successful responses simply described aspects of terror and propaganda without clear focus on the question.

THE USA, 1919–1941

Question 4(a)

Candidates demonstrated detailed knowledge of the car industry in the 1920s, and used this knowledge to both comment upon and challenge the usefulness of the source. Some better answers commented on the wider effects of Ford's idea of mass production to explain usefulness and also challenged usefulness by explaining that this success was not evident in the older traditional, well-established industries. Weaker answers were content with little more than copying out the source, with very few establishing why it was useful in terms of the purpose of the speaker.

Question 4(b)

There were many good answers that immediately got to the main message of the cartoonist and putting this firmly in the context of the USA at that time. This related to the inequality between the experiences of farmers and industry during the boom years, supporting this message with details from the source. Weaker answers struggled to get beyond description, not seeming to realise that they had to give an interpretation. A very small number linked the cartoon totally to farming, ignoring the industrial representation.

Question 4(c)

Candidates were able to ascertain the message of the photograph, referring to the deep divisions within American society, and most explained this message with reference to the source. A number of answers did not go beyond Level 2, as candidates wrote about black Americans having the worst jobs and low pay, but did not relate this context to the photograph. The better answers gave a clear purpose for the photographer's actions, putting this in the context of the period.

Question 5

In (a) variety of social consequences were described, such as homelessness, dependence upon charity, starvation and the increase in suicides. Candidates need to realise that to gain good marks they must focus on the question. In this instance a number of answers concentrated on the financial rather than the social consequences of the Wall Street Crash.

For (b) Candidates were able to identify reasons for Hoover's lack of success, such as his reliance upon the policy of laissez-faire, the idea of rugged individualism and his belief that prosperity came in cycles, but these identifications were not always developed into explanations as to why this meant he was unsuccessful in dealing with the effects of the Depression.

For (c) there were many detailed descriptions of both speculation on the stock market and overproduction by American industries. In better answers these factors were developed by explaining their effects on share prices and how this was linked to the Wall Street Crash. The weakest answers remained in descriptive mode.

Question 6

In (a) there were many good answers demonstrating sound knowledge of the actions taken by Roosevelt in his first hundred days. These ranged from details of the Emergency Banking Act to fireside chats.

In (b) the better answers not only identified the main opposition to the New Deal, such as the objections of the Republicans and the Supreme Court, the views of Long, Townsend and Coughlin and the views of the rich, but developed these into clear explanations of why these objections were held. Weaker answers were characterised by the identification of opposition without moving into descriptive mode.

In (c) the benefits to farmers and industrial workers were explained well, with focus upon the role of the AAA in improving life for farmers and the role of the Wagner Act in giving workers the right to join trade unions. Commentary upon the benefits to black Americans tended to be more generalised in nature and not specific to the New Deal. Effective responses here focused more upon the lack of benefit for black Americans with Roosevelt failing to introduce anti-lynching laws because he was dependent on the support of the southern Democrats.

Mao's China, c.1930–1976

Question 4(a)

Candidates who looked carefully at the source and the attribution realised that the content of this source related to a relatively early period. Where this happened answers were put in the correct context, of aid from the Soviets helping Mao with his Five-Year Plan. In some instances this purpose was explored more fully. The better answers explained the context in terms of relations that existed earlier as well as at the time of the source.

Question 4(b)

The best answers related to the message the cartoonist wanted to give based on candidates looking at the wider picture of the illustration and the attribution. This approach ensured the message was set firmly in relation to the context of Mao and the Communists representing China at the UN. Weaker answers concentrated more on Chiang Kai-shek rather than the 'larger than life' depiction of Mao. Some of the weaker answers suggested that President Nixon was saluting Mao as he approached.

Question 4(c)

Many answers identified correctly the context of what happened in 1972 between China and the USA in terms of relationships, although this was often related more to the giving of a message rather than to purpose. The better answers considered what impact / change the cartoonist wanted to happen and this led to a valid purpose.

Question 5

In (a) candidates were able to offer a number of valid pieces of information about the Jiangxi Soviet which allowed the higher marks to be achieved.

The better answers to (b) concentrated on the actions of Chiang Kai-shek against the Communists which were linked to the actions of the Communists to avoid being wiped out. These points were developed into sound explanation. Additionally some linked the March to the establishment of a stronger communist base in its widest sense and again this was often explained. Weaker answers concentrated on a description of what was happening to the Communists without every getting into explanatory mode.

In part (c) the weakest answers failed to take note of the question which related to the 'Civil War'. These answers were more general in nature going back to the fight against the Japanese and in some instances to the time of the Long March. Those answers that were firmly rooted in the Civil War were much stronger with many challenging the question's hypothesis. This challenge was along the lines of Mao's strengths being outweighed the failings of Chiang Kai-shek. This argument was comprehensively supported by explanation of wide-ranging factors.

Question 6

Answers to (a) varied considerably. The most popular related to the use of propaganda and terror. Weaker ones just described changes brought in by Mao, e.g. in relation to women. There were very few answers relating to Cadres, one party state or state control of businesses and banks.

In (b), those who concentrated on the question were able to offer a number of identified reasons for the chaos caused. The most popular explanation developed from these identifications related to the effect on education. More often it was just the story of the Revolution which limited the marks.

In some instances answers to (b) and (c) confused the Cultural Revolution with the Great Leap Forward. In (c) those candidates who established clear reasons for the Cultural Revolution then categorised these under the two factors given in the question. Once this process was completed explanation from based sides of the argument followed. Too often candidates were unable to link the causes appropriately and thus their answers suffered.

Causes and Events of the First World War, 1890–1918

Question 4(a)

Many answers concentrated on the face-value of the source with comments such as 'I am not surprised that the Kaiser would want to praise his own navy'. This approach was of a basic standard. Candidates needed to get into the motives / purpose of the Kaiser, saying what he did and then putting this into the context of the period. This approach was taken by those who produced better answers. Here the idea of morale was often introduced with a link to the Battle of Jutland. On the other hand the context of the scuttling back to port following an indecisive sea battle made the source rather surprising.

Question 4(b)

Candidates need to understand that the attribution is one of a number of helpful clues towards the message of a cartoonist. In this instance, despite the attribution stating it was a British cartoon, the vast majority of candidates approached the cartoon from a German perspective. This resulted in the cartoon being treated from the incorrect angle, i.e. the German view point. The best answers stated that 'Germany cannot be trusted and is giving a two-faced view to the outside world'. Having come to this conclusion it was easier to give this view credibility from the source and from contextual knowledge relating to the naval blockade.

Question 4(c)

There were many good answers to this question, where the candidate addressed purpose from the outset, supporting this with contextual knowledge relating to the superiority of the Royal Navy. Others failed to consider purpose, limiting their approach to message. These candidates thought that the reason for publication was just to give a message rather than to impact on

improving morale / belief in the war effort. At whatever level most answers made good use of the source and attribution.

Question 5

There were many good answers to (a). The Alliances, and Alliance members, were often given accurately.

Answers to (b) concentrated more on the descriptive element of events in Morocco although on occasions these were confused with 1911, particularly with regard to the gun-boat incident. Better answers took care over establishing who was involved and why their actions might cause crisis. In this way the 'story' was developed into explanation. Others just concentrated on Germany, with equal success.

In the vast majority of instances candidates were able to write something about the three factors they were given in (c) although comment about the Balkan Wars was particularly weak. What was lacking was the link between the descriptive nature of the answers and the focus of the question, i.e. 'rising tension'. Making this link pushed answers into a higher level.

Question 6

Answers to (a) were often good. Events in Sarajevo were well-known and candidates produced good narratives of the day. It is important, however, that the amount written should show some correlation to the marks available, and many candidates wrote too much.

In (b) most could describe the Schlieffen Plan and treated this question in much the same way as part (a). Those who avoided this pitfall went on to explain how this German plan made a significant contribution to the outbreak of war. Particularly strong explanations centred on the Belgium aspect whilst others were equally strong in relation to the part played by Russia.

Generally those who had been strong in relation to parts (a) and (b) produced good responses to (c) particularly in relation to Austria-Hungary and Russia, where the impact of the Alliances was considered in great detail. Explanation of Britain's contribution in 1914 was often much weaker. Here candidates often resorted to time periods outside the question to complete their answers.

End of Empire, c.1919–1969

Question 4(a)

Many answers showed an awareness of 'Indian Disunity' and wrote at length about this, prompted by the labels on the three elephants. This resulted in answers that were detailed in content but with the question being forgotten. Others got to a message about 'opportunity', as presented by the British, thus scoring more marks, particularly when supported by details from the source. Throughout many answers specific context was barely evident. Purpose was only evident in a small number of scripts.

Question 4(b)

Whilst some answers were limited to little more than paraphrasing the source, many candidates were able to look at context, purpose and motives to explain why they were not surprised by the events recorded in the passage. They produced clear, concise and well-argued answers underpinned by good contextual knowledge. Less strong were the arguments of 'not surprised or surprised' in relation to the attitude of the British people on the train.

Question 4(c)

Many candidates ignored the attribution and particularly the date, writing their answer as though independence had already been achieved. Other weak answers were characterised by their descriptive nature of what could be seen in the cartoon. The better responses drew on the cartoon including the attribution to think 'what might the British be saying' at that time. This allowed development into message along the lines of 'India is on its own' or more perceptively

that 'Britain is leaving India to bloodshed'. Once a main message was established many used the cartoon profitably in support. Even the better candidates were less strong on context.

Question 5

In (a) there were many excellent answers with phrases such as '1/4 of the Earth's surface' and '1/5 of the World's population' being common. Countries including Canada, Australia and India were often named. Weaker answers generalised in terms of continents such as 'Africa.' On occasion, 'immediately after the First World War' was not identified correctly.

Answers to (b) were characterised by a lack of explanation with factors being identified but not developed. The growth of nationalism was the most common answer.

Answers to (c) varied significantly in quality. The best took the factors given and explained each part. Weaker answers showed some knowledge of Suez but failed to make the link to the ending of the British Empire.

Question 6

In (a) events at Amritsar in 1919 were well known and described in detail.

The opposite was true of (b) where reasons for the India Act (1919) often did not go beyond the impact of war on attitudes.

Some good answers were seen in relation to (c), with the impact of both Gandhi and Nehru being explained with regard to their impact on increasing pressure for independence. Weaker answers were less balanced, with Gandhi being more well-known, whilst comment on Nehru became more descriptive. On occasions comment on Gandhi was outside the time limit of the question.

The USA, 1945–1975: Land of freedom?

Question 4(a)

Those candidates who considered context, motives and purpose produced good answers to this question as they were able to consider the usefulness of the source within the context of how it was being used by a President who wanted change. Most were able to consider limitations with varying degrees of success, usually by testing against contextual knowledge which showed that this treatment of black people was still common. Little was seen about links with the war and attitudes towards black soldiers.

Question 4(b)

There were many good answers to this question getting immediately to purpose. In these instances purpose was well supported by details from the cartoon, but less so by contextual knowledge, which needed to be different from that printed on the question paper. Less strong answers progressed as far as message with support from the cartoon. The weaker answers failed to make clear the purpose, or even message, and were more content to describe what they could see, perhaps with the hope that the examiner would search for something credit-worthy. On a limited number of occasions, good contextual knowledge was demonstrated, but by not stating either message or purpose the marks achievable were limited.

Question 4(c)

There were many good answers to this question along the lines of 'black people don't want segregation'. The message was well-supported by detail from the cartoon and by strong contextual knowledge. Weaker answers were characterised by secondary messages, often with good support from the cartoon rather than contextual knowledge. The weakest answers failed to offer any interpretation being content to describe what the cartoon showed.

Question 5

There were many excellent answers to (a) which made clear what the Movement was.

Surprisingly very few knew the effects of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 in (b). The usual answer was that more people could vote. The stopping of literacy tests and the use of federal examiners were rarely mentioned. Relatively few were able to explain the link between the literacy tests and black Americans.

The best answers to (c) were strong on Martin Luther King and his role in the campaign for civil rights but with President Johnson were limited to his vision of a 'Great society'. Weaker answers were strongly descriptive of King rather than explanatory.

Question 6

In (a) instead of stating specific terms as required by the question, answers were more general and concentrated more on treatment of those affected.

Answers to (b) in most instances gave clear explanation from the historical point of view as to why there were demonstrations in 1973 at Wounded Knee. Less well explained were reasons for the then current prompts for the demonstrations, although some of the reasons were identified. Knowledge of the activities of the Bureau of Indian Affairs was often weak.

Answers to (c) were stronger in relation to the Hispanic Americans, although even here some answers were more descriptive than explanatory. Answers about Native Americans often raised more general issues about civil rights rather than more specific ones.

A981 Aspects of International Relations, 1919–2005

Section A: The Inter-War Years, 1919–1939

Question 1(a)

Whilst there were a small number of very good answers to this question most candidates failed to come to terms with the question. The very best answers considered why Lloyd George was in need of help from another person and explained this need in the context of what he had promised the country and what he had tried to achieve at Versailles. Here it was suggested that perhaps it was not that he could not be trusted, but that he was not being completely honest. Only a relatively few answers went further to consider the motives of the writer. The weakest answers took the source at face value and paraphrased it or discussed the content in relation to the terms of the Treaty of Versailles.

Question 1(b)

Some of the answers were excellent, giving a clear main message supported by detail from the source and contextual knowledge. The candidates producing these answers had considered what a British cartoonist's message was likely to have been in 1919. This gave a clear steer that the cartoon was likely to have been unsympathetic towards Germany. Using this approach offered a number of main messages which were accepted. Other answers needed to give more consideration to the attribution. These answers focused on a German point of view which restricted the interpretation to a secondary message. Some answers could have been improved by a reduction in the use of contextual knowledge at the expense of message and source.

Question 1(c)

Good answers identified clear points of disagreement between Clemenceau and Lloyd George as the basis of explanation as to why these differences existed. Numerous answers would have benefited from a clearer focus on the question. Many showed good knowledge of the demands made by Clemenceau and Lloyd George on behalf of their respective countries but did not explain why the two disagreed. Weaker answers focused almost entirely on the 'wants' of the two politicians.

Question 1(d)

A small number of answers showed a flawed interpretation of Source C, failing to take note of the attribution, and therefore assumed the person in the cartoon was unhappy at the way Germany was being treated. Answers of similar quality ignored Source B and therefore were not surprised by Source D. The better answers went beyond the surface detail in Source C in terms of purpose / tone / language / emotions to allow effective evaluation of D.

Comment on Questions 2 and 3 can be found in the report on A971.

Section B: The Cold War, 1945–1975

Question 1(a)

Some responses were excellent as the main message of the cartoonist was given importance. As it was a British cartoonist these candidates picked up on the idea that really Kennedy had little cause for complaint given the size of the threat the US was posing to the Soviet Union. Further use of the attribution allowed the context to be set immediately prior to the Crisis. Despite the date given many assumed that the cartoon related to the Crisis. This failure to fix the context resulted in a missed main message but gained reward for a secondary message. Weaker answers were limited to description of the cartoon although here the sides of the dispute were often unclear.

Question 1(b)

Good answers developed explanation in relation to the increasing threat of communism, the impact on trade and the failure of the Bay of Pigs invasion. Some candidates need to understand that dates are put in a question for a reason. A significant minority of candidates failed to take note of the dates in this question and wrote about events in 1962. This approach was not given credit.

Question 1(c)

A characteristic of the weakest answers was a lack at any attempt to evaluate the sources resulting in them being used for information and as they were written by Khrushchev to Kennedy, Khrushchev could not possibly be lying. A significant number of answers took each source individually and tested the content against contextual knowledge to come to a decision as to honesty of Khrushchev. The better answers considered aspects of purpose, tone and motivation in an attempt to identify the reliability of the sources, with some going further to evaluate reliability within the context of the time.

Question 1(d)

The best answers offered a clear purpose to the cartoon and supported this with contextual detail from the time the source was produced. More often answers failed to move beyond message. These candidates clearly identified a valid main message and this was supported with detail from the cartoon and / or with contextual knowledge. Candidates need to realise that in 'why was this source published?' type of question they must access purpose to gain the higher marks.

Comment on Questions 2 and 3 can be found in the report on A971.

Section C: A New World? 1948–2005

Question 1(a)

The best answers made use of the source attribution as well as source content to effectively evaluate in terms of purpose / tone / language / emotions. This allowed a more effective consideration of 'surprise'. Other answers at the higher levels attempted to look at 'surprise' by using contextual knowledge which although valid was often less effective. Weaker responses concentrated on surface features of the sources to make a decision.

Question 1(b)

Candidates who looked at the cartoon as a whole, including the attribution, produced excellent responses. Here the main message was given at the start of the answer and related either to Arafat's reluctance or Reagan's insistence. The message was well supported by detail from the cartoon and contextual knowledge. Acceptable contextual knowledge had to be linked to the PLO conflict with Israel. Weaker answers concentrated more on parts of the cartoon first and tried to create a message around the part they had identified.

Question 1(c)

Those who were able to locate the event shown in Source C within their understanding and within their awareness of significance were able to give a very clear supported purpose relating to Republican prisoners. Others were stronger on the message and were more able to extract support for this from the photograph. Others were able to link message with a specific context. Weaker answers did not go beyond description of what was shown or were a narrative of events which failed to address the question.

Question 1(d)

The good answers gave at least three reasons for the actions of the Provisional IRA, the most popular of which was 'to remove British troops from Northern Ireland'. These identified reasons were developed into explanation. Weaker answers were characterised by their lack of development, being no more than general description.

Comment on Questions 2 and 3 can be found in the report on A971.

A972/21 British Depth Study, 1890–1918

General Comments

The overall impression which emerged from this year's paper was that candidates were very well prepared for the topic of Liberal Reforms. In many cases candidates showed immensely detailed knowledge on a wide variety of aspects of the reforms although in some cases candidates were less focused on the reasons for the reforms (the main thrust of the paper) and more on the content of the reforms. It was clear that many candidates had predicted that this would be the subject of the paper and so were well prepared. At the risk of stating the obvious, centres may wish to remind candidates that it is very unwise to prepare only for one topic as the paper could be on any topic in any given session. A second consideration is that for some candidates extensive knowledge turned out to be a burden rather than a boon, as they either struggled to work out how to use that knowledge to support their answers or simply used the source as a stimulus to write all they knew about particular issues, largely ignoring the question.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Many candidates handled this source very well. As a rule, shorter answers fared better, where candidates considered the nature of the publication and then why the photograph would have appeared in that publication. Many candidates were able to score Levels 6 or 7 by arguing that the purpose of the photograph was to change attitudes towards the poor at the time. The queue at the workhouse showed the scale and severity of the problem of poverty and reports such as those of Booth and Rowntree had illustrated that the majority of poor were not to blame for their own plight.

Where candidates struggled with the question it was because they felt they had to explain what conditions were like in the workhouse. Whilst many showed impressive detailed knowledge in this area, such approaches were usually limited to Level 2 as general context, or perhaps Level 3 where candidates argued that the purpose of the source was to provide information. This difficulty illustrates why many candidates did not fulfil their potential on this question, and indeed do not do so on purpose questions more generally. If they see the purpose of a source only as delivering information, they are very unlikely to realise that its true purpose is to bring about changes in behaviour, attitudes or perhaps even legislation.

Question 2

Question 2 was challenging and proved to be an effective differentiator. Many candidates attempted to argue that the source was useful because of the information contained in it. This was a valid response but is effectively comprehension and so such responses were marked at Level 2. A significant number saw the possibility that the source may present a slanted view of the state of child poverty in order to encourage donations or promote the charity's own work and therefore reached Level 3.

Level 3 answers still focus on the value of the content of a source at face value. It was encouraging to see many candidates who were able to understand the content of the source and draw deeper inferences from that content, making points which were not specifically made in the source. The fact that the source indicated the scale of child poverty was a common inference which took candidates into Level 5. Relatively few candidates were able to develop their answers further using contextual knowledge in a relevant way. Those who did usually made inferences about the importance of the work of charities, given the lack of other forms of help, and then used their knowledge of the Children's Act and School Meals to show that these concerns were widely shared.

A small but pleasing number of students were able to reach Level 5 by identifying how the appeals made in the poster revealed the preoccupations of the time with such issues as national efficiency and empire.

Question 3

This question was a relatively unfamiliar format for many students and as such it stretched candidates and forced them to think deeply. The majority of candidates were able to reach Level 3 by selecting elements from each source which would have persuaded the Liberals that action of some kind was needed to tackle social problems. Frustratingly, many candidates selected relevant extracts but failed to give any indication of why they had selected them. The exam is a challenging environment and it is understandable that candidates start writing before they have fully formed the point they are trying to make. However, they should be encouraged if at all possible to pause and think through what they are trying to say. Candidates who did this in Question 3 often wrote relatively short answers which reached Level 4 or 5, typically by arguing that Source D would have been convincing because it chimed closely with the work of Booth and Rowntree or that Source C's shocking tone would have influenced public opinion and therefore the Liberals.

Question 4

This was another question which departed slightly from traditional patterns and candidates should be congratulated for getting to grips with it relatively successfully. Many candidates were able to match up extracts from the sources and argue that, as a result, Source E did help to understand Source F and so reach Level 3. Once again, many candidates failed to reach Level 3 simply because they failed to explain the importance of the extracts which they had selected. This is frustrating for examiners as well as students. A significant proportion of candidates did manage to reach Level 4 by arguing that Churchill saw Labour as a threat to the Liberals. Relatively few were able to progress into Levels 5 and 6. The majority who did so actually reached Alternative Level 5 or Alternative Level 6 by making a good case that Churchill may have been influenced by Source E but explaining that other factors were also important in his thinking about social reform.

Question 5

The source in this question was a relatively complex one with a main message which praised the idea of the National Insurance Act but criticised Lloyd George in the way he forced people to accept it. Many candidates were able to reach the top of Level 3 and score 5 marks by identifying elements of the message but relatively few got to grips with the full main message. In this question many examiners commented on how candidates were often hampered by having extensive contextual knowledge at their fingertips but being unsure how to make use of it. Many lost sight of the question and used the source as a stimulus to describe the terms and passing of the Act, sometimes interpreting details of the source which matched elements of their knowledge. Such answers generally reached Level 2.

Question 6

Most candidates are familiar with the approaches which lead to high scores on this question and generally they did not disappoint. The great majority of candidates reached Level 2 by using Sources E, F and H to argue that the threat of Labour motivated the Liberals and these sources supported the statement. It must be acknowledged that the question was a little more challenging than some previous questions in that the sources which disagreed with the statement required candidates to identify the factor present. Some candidates simply argued that Source A or Source B led to the Liberal reforms. It was frustrating to see many candidates understanding the content of a source but unable to explain that those sources indicated a causal factor such as social reformers or simply high levels of poverty.

A972/22 British Depth Study, 1939–1975

General Comments

The overall impression which emerged from this year's paper was that candidates were very well prepared for the topic of immigration. It was a challenging paper and it was pleasing to see how many candidates made effective use of their knowledge in answering questions, as sometimes a wealth of knowledge can distract candidates from the core business of addressing the source(s) in the question. On the whole the candidates made good use of the sources and attempted to answer the questions set rather than falling back on pre-prepared answers. Candidates were often able to see how attitudes to immigrants in the 1950s and 1960s were being played out again today. This was an encouraging sign and centres should be congratulated on preparing candidates well.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Most candidates opened their answers by describing either the general context of racial tension in the 1950s or the specific context of racial violence which took place in 1958. Most showed impressive knowledge and were able to reach Level 3 at the very least, recognising the secondary messages in the source, such as the fact that there were relatively few immigrants. However, a significant number of candidates recognised the main message relating specifically to 1958, rather than more general racial tensions. Most candidates who recognised the purpose of the source went straight to Level 6 and it was noticeable that on the whole the best answers tended to be shorter answers, where candidates started with the purpose (to change attitudes) and then explained why the immigrant organisation had that purpose at that time.

Question 2

Most candidates made a reasonable attempt to answer the question, although a significant number got bogged down in describing the events of 1958 from their own knowledge. An equally large number showed some confusion by bringing Enoch Powell's Rivers of Blood speech into their answers even though that was in 1968. The majority reached Level 3 or higher by describing how the two sources showed contrasting attitudes. Some candidates undermined their own answers by selecting appropriate details but failing to explain why they had selected them. A pleasing number of candidates were able to use the context or provenance of one or both sources, most commonly the fact that the MP was a representative of the area of Notting Hill. Many candidates were able to go straight to Level 5 once they recognised that the purpose of the judge was to set an example, and it should be stressed that candidates who took the time to think through what they were trying to say usually fared well, scoring high marks with relatively short answers.

Question 3

The source in this cartoon proved to be very challenging for many candidates. The main difficulty lay in candidates misinterpreting the cartoon as being a comment on the treatment of immigrants once they arrived in Britain, when it was in fact a comment about immigrants not being allowed into Britain. Candidates who understood that the cartoonist was criticising Britain's position on immigration usually had little trouble reaching Level 4. However, the cartoon's precise main message involved two elements which did make it challenging. Candidates who understood the main message about Macmillan being a hypocrite because of his comments about the Commonwealth usually went straight to Level 6.

Question 4

There was a very mixed response to this question. In many answers it was clear that candidates were attempting to answer the question but found it difficult to organise their thoughts to explain clearly what they were trying to say. For many candidates sources are only useful for lifting information out of them. This left many of them in Level 2. Some were able to argue that the information in the source did not give a complete picture and so reached level 3. However, the thrust of utility questions is to challenge students to think like historians and consider how the source is useful rather than how it is not. Many candidates did make this mental leap and made clever inferences about how the source revealed the scale of discrimination, or that it was useful because it showed how deeply entrenched racism was, with little change since 1958. Some of these answers went on to use cross references to Sources A or B to develop this point and reach Level 5.

Question 5

This was a challenging question but the majority of candidates focused on the central issue of whether it was surprising that students in 1968 would be protesting against Enoch Powell, essentially using their contextual knowledge to indicate this was not surprising. A gratifying number of candidates did this, rising straight to Level 4 often with a perfunctory mention of the dockers in Source F. Sadly, a substantial number of candidates started by using Source F as a trigger to write all they could about Powell, and although their knowledge could have been used relevantly, more often such candidates lost track of the point they were trying to make in their answer. Many candidates dwelt too deeply on Source F and why it was or was not surprising, and so limited themselves to Level 2, as this was not what was being asked. Another common error was to assert that the two sources were different because the dockers represented an older generation and that the students had grown up in a multicultural society so would be more tolerant.

Question 6

Most candidates appreciated that they needed to find evidence which supported the statement and opposed the statement to achieve a Level 3 mark. However, in some cases the delivery of these arguments was flawed and it was difficult to award recognition of Yes or No answers when candidates simply asserted that 'The British were racist and sources B and C prove this', but with no further explanation. Such candidates failed to establish and demonstrate how the sources and their content proved the case. Thus, there were cases when the candidate might have felt that he/she had addressed both sides of the argument, but their answers were as described above, and did not qualify to be rewarded as a balanced answer. Very few comments qualified for extra marks for evaluation, and contextual knowledge was more commonly deployed in what amounted to an additional knowledge based section, at the end of the answer proper which considered the sources. Candidates would benefit from using their undoubtedly impressive knowledge to evaluate sources in the main body of their answer, although it is recognised that this can be challenging.

A973 and A982 Historical Enquiry Controlled Assessment

The impressive standards established last year were maintained in 2012. Moderators were agreed that the general standard of the work seen was a significant improvement on that submitted for coursework in the past. There were many interesting questions that appeared to have motivated candidates and produced much excellent work. What was particularly pleasing was to see candidates of below average ability producing some coherent extended writing. This was often descriptive but contained relevant material and was worthwhile. Moderation proceeded smoothly with most centres sending their samples of work quickly. The consultancy service appears to be working effectively as there were almost no centres using inappropriate questions. Most packages of work were well-organised and included copies of the sources that candidates had used as well as the MS1s and the Centre authentication forms.

The most popular options were the Depth Study and the Role of the Individual. It was encouraging to see some challenging questions set with a wide scope allowing able candidates to develop their own arguments and show what they were capable of. There were occasional examples of questions being too broad for most of the candidates in a centre. Centres should make sure their questions are within the capabilities of most of their candidates. The Consultant's job is to check that the question matches the generic question but s/he cannot make a judgement about the suitability of a question for a particular group of candidates.

There were many excellent answers where the knowledge of the candidates was good, leading to answers based on arguments that were supported by informed explanation and analysis. Selection and deployment of knowledge and information had improved and there were very few candidates producing irrelevant answers. It was good to see that more centres had encouraged their candidates to state their judgement at the beginning of the answer and use the rest of the answer to support that judgement through analysis, argument and use of evidence from sources. When candidates use this approach, they should be careful not to produce a one-sided answer. They need to explain not just arguments that support their point of view, but also arguments that oppose it. They then need to convince the reader that the arguments that support their point of view are the stronger ones. They should also try to make every paragraph relate directly to the question. Every paragraph should add something to the argument. If it does not, then it should not be there. Candidates should avoid write a totally balanced answer where their point of view only emerges in a few lines at the end.

The appropriate way to use sources in work such as this is taking candidates a little longer to adjust to. The use of sources varied from centre to centre, and whilst there is no desire to insist on just one approach, centres are reminded that they should avoid turning the task into a source exercise where candidates are working their way through the sources and commenting on each one. The most important task for the candidates is to produce a relevant and focused answer to the question. Evidence from the sources should be used to help them do this. The argument should be the focus, not the sources. Many candidates did this well. They brought in evidence from sources when it supported and strengthened a point or argument they were making.

There were still candidates who found it necessary to make an evaluative comment on every source they used. This often disrupted their argument and was usually of little value. The fact that a candidate has used a source as evidence tells us that he or she thinks the source is useful and reliable. There is no need to say so. The moderator is much more interested in how well the evidence strengths the argument. Candidates should be encouraged to explain this, rather than just giving a quotation. Occasionally the origins of a source might make the evidence from it particularly powerful. This is worth commenting on briefly. Some candidates needed to make

more explicit reference to sources used. In a few centres the moderator only knew that sources had been used because of the marker's annotation.

Some answers exceeded the suggested number of words by a large amount. This often encourages candidates to supply much irrelevant material and to describe or narrate. Candidates should be encouraged to keep close to the recommended number of words. This often leads to concise, focused and relevant answers that score very high marks. Meandering answers, that cover every aspect of a topic without a clear focus on the question, do not.

The annotation and marking of work were mostly completed accurately. The summative comments on each piece of work were very helpful, especially when they referred directly to statements in the mark scheme. Marginal comments throughout the work also helped moderators, but it should be noted that judgements about Bands should not be made until the whole answer has been read. Some markers were writing, e.g., 'Band 4 reached' in the margin after the first half of a page. It is not possible for a candidate to reach Level 4 after half a page. Judgements about Bands should be holistic ones taking into account all the strengths and weaknesses of the answer.

While most of the marking was accurate there were two areas where moderators made a number of changes. The very top of the mark range, 45 plus, was generously used by some centres. This part of the mark range should be reserved for outstanding work for GCSE. One would expect extra complexity in the analysis and the argument that goes beyond 'good work'. Conversely, some centres were mean with marks at the bottom end, and marks in the range below 20 were often put up by moderators.

All of the above comments apply equally to A973 and A982, although the overall standard of work for A982 was rather lower than that for the full course. Both the set questions for A982 worked well for most candidates. There was a tendency for candidates to write too much narrative about suffragette activities and some found it difficult to explain the extent of change in the experiences of immigrants. Candidates should be encouraged to focus on answering the question at all times. Every paragraph should contribute to the question being directly answered.

OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations)
1 Hills Road
Cambridge
CB1 2EU

OCR Customer Contact Centre

Education and Learning

Telephone: 01223 553998

Facsimile: 01223 552627

Email: general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk

www.ocr.org.uk

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Facsimile: 01223 552553

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