

GCSE

History A (Schools History Project)

General Certificate of Secondary Education **J415**

OCR Report to Centres June 2014

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<http://ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse-history-a-schools-history-project-j415-from-2013/>.

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OCR REPORT TO CENTRES

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

General Comments:

The entry for this paper increased significantly but the overall standard was similar to that of previous years. Germany overtook the American West as the most popular option although candidates taking the latter performed more strongly. The entries for Elizabethan England and Britain 1815-51 remain small by comparison.

A number of general points need to be made about candidates' answers to the source-based questions. The best answers are those where candidates have based their interpretation and reading of the sources on their knowledge and understanding of the historical context. This does not require any explicit, and rather clumsy, use of statements such as 'my own knowledge tells me...'. Instead of such statements being bolted-on to answers, it is much better if candidates can infuse their analysis of a source naturally with their knowledge. The use of source detail and the use of knowledge should be inseparable in the explanation of the meaning or message of the source. Thus one knows, for example, that the purpose of Germany Source B must be to encourage the Germans to resist the French.

It might help candidates deal with cartoons if they are encouraged to first always look for the point of view of the cartoonist (whatever the question is). Cartoons always represent a point of view, e.g. American West Source B has a point of view about the slaughter of the buffalo, and candidates will be moving a long way towards a useful reading of the cartoon if they focus on working out the point of view. They then need to think about how to use this in relation to the question.

Successful answering of source questions requires candidates to understand what kind of question they are faced with. Questions that ask why a source was published at a certain time will be 'purpose' questions and candidates will be required to explain the context, the message and the purpose of the source for high marks. Candidates should remember that 'purpose' involves the intended impact on the audience. In other words, how does the author of the source aim to change the behaviour or views or attitudes of the audience?

Questions that contain the word 'prove' as in Medicine Question 1(a) will require candidates to carry out some evaluation of the source. In Medicine Question 1, contextual knowledge of public health in either Roman times or in the sixteenth century was required to evaluate whether the two sources do actually prove that public health was better in the sixteenth century. A good answer will not be based on an analysis of the sources alone.

Moving on to the structured essay questions, it is worth noting that most candidates perform less well in part (a) than in parts (b) and (c). Part (a) questions are deceptive because they look so straightforward, while they actually require precise recall and selection of relevant knowledge. In answering parts (b) and (c) candidates often have a choice of content to bring into their answers. Part (a) questions offer far less flexibility and candidates sometimes do badly because they have not used the right examples. The skills to select what is relevant and to have the confidence to leave out everything else are crucial for answering part (a) well.

For the part (b) questions it is critical that candidates understand what constitutes an explanation, and how that is different from a description or narrative. An explanation requires a second stage in the answer. Thus in responding to American West Question 10(b) ('Explain why the Mormons were unpopular while Joseph Smith was leading them?') it is not enough to reply

that they were unpopular because he introduced polygamy. No amount of explanation of what polygamy is will turn this into an overall explanation. The crucial move is to focus on why people at the time were so upset by the idea of polygamy. An acceptable answer to this would be because it offended their Christian beliefs and practices. If this is added to the answer above, then we have a historical explanation of why the Mormons were unpopular.

Finally, a number of questions this year asked candidates to assess the importance of a person, factor or development. It is important that candidates realise that description is not enough for good marks. To assess importance it is necessary to explain the extent of impact of the factor at the time, to compare it with what went before or to explain what influence the factor had in the future. In other words, to assess 'importance' some criteria are needed. It is not possible, for example, to explain how important Hippocrates was simply by describing what he did.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Section A: Development Study

Medicine Through Time

Question No. 1

Part (a) was answered well with most candidates at least able to use the evidence in the sources to compare them. A good number of candidates went further and used their contextual knowledge in a relevant way to answer the question. This usually consisted of arguing that the sources do not prove that public health was better in the sixteenth century because of the candidates' knowledge of Roman public health. This was often cited concisely and relevantly. There were also many good answers to part (b) with candidates using references to that fact that germ theory had not yet been developed, or, much better, that John Snow had not yet carried out his work on the Broad Street pump, to explain why they were not surprised. There were some weak answers, lacking in historical empathy, where candidates simply accused people in nineteenth-century Exeter of being stupid in not realising the connection between cholera and water. In response to part (c), many candidates were able to interpret the cartoon in terms of what it tells us about the state of public health in 1858, but far fewer were able to go on and infer the attitude, and in particular the purpose, of the artist.

Question No. 2

This was the most popular optional question. Part (a) was answered well with candidates mentioning a range of examples of progress such as the channel theory, learning about organs of the body from the process of mummification, and the recording of treatments on papyri. Part (b) was answered less well. Some candidates described Roman achievements such as public health but a reasonable number were able to identify reasons such as the conquest of the Greeks and engineering skills. However, fewer candidates were able to explain these as enabling or causal factors. There were many more good answers to part (c) with candidates demonstrating accurate and detailed knowledge of the work of both Hippocrates and Galen. It was pleasing to see so many of these candidates going beyond description and assessing importance.

Question No. 3

It is essential that when answering questions about factors such as chance and communications, candidates use precise examples rather than general assertions. Part (a) was not answered well because candidates rarely got beyond general claims about doctors learning from each other. Examples such as the use of hieroglyphics and the printing press, or the way the rivalry between Pasteur and Koch was conducted, could have been used. Answers to part (b) were better, although some candidates seemed to think it was about 'taking a chance'. Good

use was made of examples such as Pare, Pasteur and chicken cholera, and Fleming. There were more general assertions in response to (c) with much vague description of doctors learning about new wounds from war. However, there were also many good answers that focused on actual examples such as the Roman army, Nightingale and the development of penicillin. There was a tendency for candidates to only give one side of the answer thus limiting themselves to a maximum of 6 marks.

Question No. 4

Answers to part (a) were disappointing. Many candidates produced lengthy accounts of Pasteur's various experiments without actually explaining Pasteur's theory. Some wrote a page or more without mentioning that the theory states that germs cause disease. It is important that candidates read the question carefully. In part (b) a reasonable number of candidates explained the importance of penicillin during the Second World War and especially on D-Day. Fewer were able to go backwards and explain the previous failure to treat streptococci and staphylococci germs and the failure of chemical antiseptics. Some candidates failed to read the question carefully and told the story of Fleming's discovery. Part (c) produced better answers with both sides of the argument being explained. Good knowledge of the roles of Florey and Chain was demonstrated.

Crime and Punishment Through Time

Question No. 1

In part (a) a number of candidates were able to express surprise at Desiderata behaving differently from what was expected of her gender at this time. Other candidates focused on the role of the official keeping the king's peace. Part (b) produced a wide range of answers. Some candidates merely compared the two prisons. Better answers focused on why the sources differ. These first used Source B to help explain the nature of prisons around the beginning of the nineteenth century, and then went on to use Source C explain the nature of the changes later in the century. The key to answering part (c) well was to recognise that the cartoon is about the suffragettes. Most candidates were able to do this and many understood the anti-suffragette point the cartoonist was making. There were some excellent explanations of this. The best answers went further and explained the purpose of the cartoonist.

Question No. 2

Most candidates were well informed about sanctuary for part 2(a) although a few did confuse it with benefit of clergy. In response to part (b) there were some detailed descriptions of various trials by ordeal that were largely irrelevant. Candidates who had read the question carefully were able to explain reasons why this type of trial was used. The two most common reasons given were religious beliefs and failure of a jury to agree a decision. Part (c) was answered reasonably well with good candidates producing excellent explanations of William's desire to be seen as the true heir. As with some of the part (c) answers for Medicine there was a tendency to explain just one side of the argument.

Question No.3

In part (a) the work of Matthew Hopkins was known reasonably well although some answers drifted into general accounts of witches and witch-hunting. To gain good marks it was important to focus on Hopkins. There were many excellent answers to (b) with a range of reasons being explained including the social crime aspect of smuggling, the involvement of whole communities, isolated coastlines and the loss of tax revenue for the government. Part (c) focused on highwaymen from a new angle and many candidates rose to the challenge impressively. The part of answers explaining why some people saw highwaymen as heroes was answered particularly well, with some impressive explanations about the way highwaymen were reported in the popular press and the 'Robin Hood' image that some had.

Question No. 4

In answering part (a) most candidates managed to avoid describing conditions on the voyage to Australia but there were some very general accounts of conditions in Australia. Many candidates still lack a detailed knowledge of the treatment of the convicts and most are unaware of the dreadful experiences many convicts had. Robert Hughes book 'The Fatal Shore' is full of such detail and worth consulting. Part (b) produced better answers many with candidates able to explain the loss of America, the deterrent argument and the desire to consolidate England's claim to Australia. Part (c) was answered less well with some vague answers some of which seem to be rehearsing arguments about today's prison system. The development of policies towards prisons in the nineteenth century can be a difficult topic for candidates to grasp and needs clear and careful coverage.

Section B: Depth Study

Elizabethan England

Question No.5

There were many good answers to part (a) with candidates using details of the portrait and knowledge of the context to write good explanations of why this portrait was used as the official pattern. Part (b) produced a wide range of answers. Some candidates could get no further than everyday empathy but there were also some excellent answers where candidates explained contextual reasons for being both surprised and not surprised. Candidates based their answers on Caesar's attitudes towards Elizabeth's visit and on the fact that she was visiting at all. Most candidates were able to recognise Source C as the 'Armada portrait'. They explained the message of the painting in the context of 1588 and the better answers went on and explained the purpose behind the painting.

Question No. 6

Part (a) was answered well with many candidates demonstrating an excellent knowledge of the beliefs of Catholics and Puritans. There were also many good answers to part (b) with the better answers focusing on why in 1587 rather than explaining more general reasons. The best answers explained both the long-term reasons and the triggers. Part (c) was not answered quite so well. Many candidates tended to spend some time describing the problems posed by Jesuits and Puritans, rather than explaining how effectively the government dealt with them. There was also a tendency to write about Catholics in general rather than about Jesuits in particular. However, there were also some outstandingly good answers which reached informed and convincing conclusions.

Question No. 7

This question was less popular than Question 10 and tended to be chosen by less good candidates. This probably explains the fact that there were a lot of general answers lacking in detail. Part (a) was answered well with many candidates knowing about, amongst others, anglers, clapper-dudgeons and doxies. Some candidates wrote about all poor people rather than just about vagrants. Part (b) tended to be answered with general answers that could almost have been about anywhere at any time. However, there were some better answers that were able to produce contextual explanations about disease, crime, fears of rebellion and scaremongering. There were some good thoughtful answers to (c) for one side of the argument but few that were able to explain both sides. Some candidates did not realise that they needed to bring into their answers a second failure so that they could compare. There were some excellent attempts when writing about poverty and the poor at differentiating between different periods of Elizabeth's reign.

Britain 1815-1851

Question No. 5

In response to part (a) candidates were generally well-informed about the Swing Riots and a good number were able to explain valid reasons for being surprised by the position taken by the magistrates. There were, however, even better answers which explained why the sympathetic attitude of the magistrates is not at all surprising given their responsibilities and the situation at the time. Some candidates were unable to recognise this cartoon as being about the Swing Riots. They wrote answers about the general situation at the time with some even writing about factories. Others used the date and the burning hay-rick as clues as to the message of the source. The best answers explained the point of view of the cartoonist, ie he was sympathetic towards the labourers and critical of the landowners. There were some excellent answers to (c), with an encouraging number of candidates not only understanding the message about the workhouses but able to go on and explain, in context, the purpose of the cartoonist.

Question No. 6

This question produced better answers than Question 7 which tended to be the choice of the weaker candidates. Part (a) was answered well with relevant knowledge being selected and used in a concise and focused way. There were many good answers to (b) with the best answers explaining how there was disappointment on both sides. Some tried to base their answers purely on the Chartists' six points. This approach did not work very well as some of these demands were not expectations before 1832. Part (c) produced a range of answers but there were very few weak answers. Nearly all candidates were at least able to recognise the fact that the Chartists did not win their demands. However, the most interesting answers were those that explained in detail and depth the various ways in which the Chartists can be said to have achieved a great deal. Candidates who made such answers wrote well about working class organisation/consciousness and identity and the results of the other activities of the Chartists such as their educational enterprises.

Question No. 7

Part (a) was answered well with many candidates knowing lots of relevant detail. There were some good answers to (b) with some excellent explanations of factors such as laissez faire, worries about the cost, and attitudes about self-help. There were also some very general answers that could have been about any period. In responding to part (c) some candidates were able to explain in detail improvements in working conditions. Many knew about the changes to hours and ages for work in mines and factories. Far less was known about the extent to which living conditions were improved. There was, for example, little awareness of the 1848 Public Health Act. As a result, there were many one-sided answers.

The American West, 1840-1895

Question No. 5

In part 5(a) Source A produced a wide range of answers. Some candidates gave good reasons why they were not surprised that Indians were hunting buffalo. Better answers went beyond this and discussed the method shown being used in the source. Candidates came up with good reasons for being surprised and not surprised by this method. Sources B and C produced many interesting answers. Some candidates wanted to base their answers on the Indians, an approach that did not produce good responses. The better answers explained that Source B is critical of the extermination of the buffalo. Source C is rather ambiguous and different interpretations were allowed. It can be seen as a celebration of the slaughter, but it can also be seen as a condemnation. The best answers set all these points in the context of the time. Most candidates had no difficulty in scoring at least reasonable marks on part (c). Many reasons for

the Plains Indians being on reservations were explained but extra credit was reserved for those who explained the purpose behind the reservations - to destroy the culture and way of life of the Indians and to turn them into 'white men'. There are hints of this in Source D.

Question No. 6

In part (a) the story of Smith's discovery, and the story on the plates, were known, at least in part, by most candidates. Only a few thought the question was about the gold rush. Part (b) also produced many good answers although some candidates knew so many reasons for the unpopularity of the Mormons that they tended to list them all instead of explaining just two or three. The content covered by part (c) was also well known. There were some excellent answers explaining why the choice of Salt Lake was so vital, but also explaining his organisational success during the journey and later at Salt Lake.

Question No. 7

In answering (a) there was a tendency to describe who the vigilantes were and what they did, as well as the weaknesses of the systems of law and order, rather than focusing on the problems caused by the vigilantes. There were also some very general answers that applied to any criminals or law-breakers at that time. Part (b) produced better answers with the best candidates explaining how the actions and needs of both sides contributed to the conflict. Some answers to part (c) focused so much on the lack of law and order in mining towns, about which they knew quite a lot, that they quite forgot about the role of the discovery of gold. Other candidates merely carried on from part (a) and wrote more about the vigilantes. The best answers connected the discovery of gold to the lack of law and order and then went on to explain how the discovery also caused problems with the Plains Indians.

Germany, c. 1919-1945

Question No. 5

Part (a) produced a wide range of answers. Some candidates set their answers in the very broad context of post-Versailles Germany and received few marks. Better answers focused on the Kapp Putsch and the dangers posed by the Putsch. Most candidates realised that Source B is about the French occupation of the Ruhr. Thus most answers were set in this context. Some went on to explain the message of the poster but better answers explained a valid purpose, e.g. to encourage Germans to resist. Source C produced some interesting answers. The best were based on the recognition that the poster comes from just after the failure of the Munich Putsch. This raises some interesting issues about, e.g. the change in tactics by the Nazis. Even if candidates did not realise the connection with the Munich Putsch, they could still achieve good marks by explaining about the typical Nazi references and imagery in the poster.

Question No. 6

This question tended to be answered better than Question 7 which was the choice of many of the weaker candidates. Some candidates still confuse the Great Depression with the economic difficulties in the years after the First World War and there were references to inflation. However, most candidates were able to identify unemployment and businesses closing. Fewer went on to identify developments such as cuts in unemployment benefit and increases in taxes. Some candidates told the story of the causes of the Great Depression in the USA rather than focusing on the requirements of the question. Part (b) produced many good answers. Candidates understood about Hitler's fears about Rohm and the SA and his need for the support of the army. Part 6(c) was not answered so well. Many candidates explained how Hitler used the Reichstag Fire to his advantage but they had less to explain about the Enabling Act. There were some vague references to Hitler's having absolute powers. Those candidates who did explain both found the move to comparing their importance well within their reach.

Question No. 7

Part (a) produced some disappointing answers because a number of candidates explained why young Germans opposed the Nazi regime rather than describing how they opposed it. Candidates who read the question carefully had no difficulty in writing about the activities of White Rose, Swing Youth and the Edelweiss Pirates. In response to (b) a few candidates wandered into the Hitler Youth which is made irrelevant by the wording of the question. A good number of candidates knew some detail about the changes to the curriculum and many differentiated between the education provided for boys and that provided for girls. There were some good answers to part (c) but some candidates found it difficult to write about the two groups separately and to distinguish clearly between them. The Hitler Youth would have been one way to illustrate the importance of young people to the Nazis but those candidates who wrongly mentioned it in part (b) did not use it here.

A952/21 Developments in British Medicine, 1200-1945

General Comments:

The overall quality of work by candidates was broadly in line with that produced last year. It is pleasing to note continued improvements in examination technique, particularly in answers to question 6, although a very small number of candidates continue to insist on tackling this question first, with no obvious benefits. Spelling, punctuation and grammar was generally better than last year. Candidates appeared to use their time well.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Question No. 1

This was harder than usual, with fewer opportunities to make supported inferences. However, most candidates were able to demonstrate that the source showed people believed God had sent the plague as a punishment for sin. Some candidates produced well-argued responses about the panic and desperation caused by the plague. Some candidates misread the later sections of the source and assumed the poet was describing events during the plague, not giving arguments about why the plague was sent. Relatively few candidates explained the limitations of the source and therefore missed out on reaching level four.

Question No. 2

Many candidates found Source B very difficult to understand. Most saw it as evidence that people in the Middle Ages believed God sent the plague. This was not the case. The source shows a 'good death', something which medieval people craved. In the picture, the victim is not being saved; he is on his death bed, but God has promised to save his soul by granting him mercy. Arguments about the utility of the source needed to focus on the creation of this collection by a monk in the fifteenth century as evidence that people maintained their faith in God despite the Black Death. However, a substantial number of candidates rescued their answers by using cross-reference to other sources and/or contextual knowledge to explain the ways in which the source was not useful. In doing so, they were able to reach the top level.

Question No. 3

This question was answered very well by the majority of candidates. They showed an ability to explore similarities and differences and support specific points by using details from the sources. Fewer candidates this year on this type of question fell into the trap of describing one source after the other and assuming they had made comparisons. This was very pleasing. The only issue for some candidates was that they tried to argue that Source C (like Source D) was using religious arguments because of the reference to priests hearing confessions. This was not valid, but it did not spoil otherwise good answers.

Question No. 4

Again, this was answered well by the majority of candidates, many reaching Level Four and in some cases Level Five. They had good contextual knowledge about Hippocrates, Galen and miasma and they deployed this knowledge effectively. Cross-reference to other sources was less frequent, but done well where it occurred.

Question No. 5

This was perhaps the least well-answered question on the paper. Significant numbers of candidates wrote at great length about miasma and the butchering of animals, without exploring the message of the source or the reasons for its publication. Candidates needed to consider the motives of Edward III in 1371 and why he sent this letter to the authorities in London at this time. In addition, some candidates confused this letter with 'The Great Stink' and cholera in the nineteenth century.

Question No. 6

This was well done, with candidates clearly able to sustain an argument by using sources and by considering both sides of the issue. Whilst some candidates made only passing reference to source details, there was a pleasing number who had clearly got the message that to answer this question well, they needed to make extensive use of the sources.

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

General Comments:

As has always previously been the case, most candidates were able to provide positive answers to all six questions. Incomplete scripts were rare, and, where they did occur, it was clear from the excessive length of answers that the cause of the incompleteness was a misuse of the time available. The most important issue affecting the quality of responses was the extent to which candidates were able to comprehend the sources; gross miscomprehension was very rare, but misunderstanding of aspects of what the sources were saying or suggesting was more widespread than usual. For example, in using Source E, a significant number of candidates seemed to think that Annesley and Redding were poachers, or in Source B White was seen as supportive of the poachers in his village. This had an inevitable impact on the quality of responses. A strength of the answers was the clear focus candidates kept on the questions asked. Past reports have urged candidates to use the key words from the question as a means of starting each answer – for example, where Q3 asked why the picture was painted, to begin the answer with, ‘I think the painter produced this picture because....’ – and this strategy seems to be paying off, as there was less unfocused ‘writing about’ the sources than in the past. Another strength was the quality of source evaluation (relevant in Qs 4 and 5) with most answers showing an awareness that an assertion of un/reliability – normally on the basis of the provenance - would be insufficient, and that a demonstration of un/reliability, using the source content, or by cross-reference, or by an analysis of the author’s purpose, would be necessary.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Question 1

Candidates know that the first question on this paper simply requires them to make inferences from a source. This has been used as a way of easing candidates into the paper in a relatively straightforward manner. This year, though, the source itself – a picture of poachers in Dorset – raised the issue of what could count as an inference. The definition of an inference used over the years has been *something one can tell from a source, even though the source itself does not say/show it*. So, with Source A, to say that you can tell poachers worked in groups, when these poachers are standing in a group, can hardly count as an inference. In addition, many answers merely described what the source showed, or attempted inferences about the group of poachers depicted, so could not possibly make inferences about poachers *in general* as they only ever dealt with these particular poachers in the picture. The trick was to take something the picture showed – for example, that the poachers appeared to all be wearing the same uniform – then make an inference about all poachers from this – that poachers must have been well organised. Plenty of candidates were able to make these supported inferences, but more than usual found it difficult to do so.

Question 2

When asked how similar two sources are, candidates know that they need to be on the lookout both for similarities and differences. They should also be aware that genuine comparisons can only be made on the basis of a common criterion, and that it is no use simply taking from the sources two unrelated pieces of content and claiming them to be similar/different. There were some obvious surface differences and similarities in Sources B and C – in B they poach deer whilst in C they poach fish, but in both they see poaching as a sport. Many candidates were able to spot these. However, at a less obvious level, the authors of the sources demonstrated very

different attitudes towards poaching, with B clearly disapproving and C sympathetic. The best answers detected this, and illustrated it from the source content. This was, though, a question where source comprehension played a major part, and there were many candidates who attempted a comparison of authors' attitudes but went astray on one of the sources. This was still regarded as a valid attempt to compare – albeit at a lower level than valid comparisons of attitude – as long as support was offered from the content of the source that was correctly comprehended. For weaker candidates, comprehension of what the sources were really saying posed a big challenge. It was, then, common to see in Source B, for example, that poaching damaged crops, or that the author of Source C disapproved of poaching because he was telling people to sell their fishing tackle. More surprisingly, weaker candidates also had difficulty in spotting the surface similarities/differences mentioned above, and often omitted to make even the simple comparisons of provenance, or of topic, that would have earned them some basic credit.

Question 3

This was almost universally answered positively, and at a good level of understanding. Most answers detected valid messages about poachers/poaching that the painter was trying to transmit. It was a rare candidate who perceived the picture as anything other than a positive comment on poachers, and who thereby failed to detect valid reasons for the picture being painted. As always, however, better candidates moved on to ask themselves two questions encompassing the ideas of purpose (what impact was the message intended to have on the audience?) and context (why did that message matter at that particular time?). Detecting the sympathetic tone of the painting was key to providing valid reasons based on purpose, and knowledge about the harshness of the Game Laws provided the necessary context. Almost all the higher-level answers saw the reason for painting as an attempt to make people sympathise with poachers, so that the harsh aspects of the Game Laws would be repealed. One final point about this kind of question, mentioned in many previous reports, is worth repeating. The question asked 'why' the picture was painted. This means that only reasons for it being painted will be rewarded. Much of most candidates' answers consisted of interpretation of what the picture showed, but this can only ever be support for reasons given, never a reason in itself. It is vital that candidates understand exactly what reasons are, and how to phrase them, rather than relying on inadvertently including them as part of 'writing about' the source.

Question 4

This was another question that most candidates found straightforward, even if in the end they answered at a modest level of skill. What became apparent was that candidates had sharply varying levels of understanding of the meaning of 'murder', which frequently led to conclusions, for example, that Annesley was guilty of murder even if the shooting was an accident. This meant that it was necessary for candidates to make explicit whether they were arguing for guilt or innocence, rather than simply speculating about the circumstances. The source, of course, offered opportunities to argue both ways, since there was evidence suggesting both that the shooting was deliberate, and that it was accidental. Most candidates were able to detect valid support from the source for one or both of these conclusions. Better answers, though, were not satisfied with arguments based on the source alone, and used their contextual knowledge, or evidence gleaned from other sources, to test the claims in the source. There was an even more sophisticated way to use contextual knowledge of attitudes towards poaching at the time. This was to argue that, given the background of official hostility to poachers as seen in the Game Laws, Annesley must surely have done something seriously wrong for the case ever to have come to court. It was a rare candidate who perceived this.

Question 5

Answers to this question reflected the growing awareness amongst candidates that questions about utility inevitably raise issues of reliability. Concluding that a source is useful simply for the information that it provides at face value never has gained much credit, but in the past many candidates have remained trapped at that low level of understanding. This question produced a much richer range of responses, perhaps because the source provenance itself offered a way into arguments about reliability – the arguments still had to be properly developed, however, and many candidates did this well. The approach adopted by most candidates was first to summarise the ways in which they found the source useful in relation to the information it offered about poaching. They would then move on to ways in which they found it not useful. For a few candidates this was still a matter of information – that there were things about poaching that the source did not tell you. But for most candidates the most important limitation of the source was whether or not you could believe it. The quality of the answer depended entirely on how well this doubt could be explained. If it was merely asserted, it gained almost no credit. However, most answers successfully illustrated the bias of the source, using the loaded language within the source, or inconsistencies/omissions when compared with other sources. Even better, many candidates were able to explain the unreliability of the source in relation to its author's purpose – to deter children from becoming poachers themselves. Few candidates, though, were able to push these arguments to their logical conclusion by showing an awareness of the fact that all sources are useful, but that their utility varies according to how they are used as evidence, rather than simply as information. Here this meant that despite the source's unreliability as evidence about poachers, it remained useful as evidence of what those in authority wanted people to believe about poachers. Whilst it might be true that most candidates will never achieve this level of conceptual sophistication, it is still worthwhile for teachers to try to make their candidates aware of the idea that it is wrong to assume that a source's lack of reliability means that it can be dismissed as useless.

Question 6

The hypothesis for candidates to test asked about people's *perceptions* of poaching – did they see it as a crime? Obviously, poaching was undeniably a crime, so the hypothesis did not bother to ask that, and had it done so, one would have thought that only one side of the hypothesis could have been argued. Nonetheless, this did not stop candidates framing their answers around 'Was it a crime?', and in practice this had to be accepted as more often than not the words used by candidates were sufficiently ambiguous. For example, '*Source B says poaching was a crime because it harmed the villagers' morals*'. Here, Source B is a person, Gilbert White, and he's saying it was a crime, so he obviously regarded it as a crime. Given this concession, most candidates were able to find evidence from the sources to support both sides of the hypothesis. Nonetheless, a lot of what was written fell short of showing how a particular source supported or questioned the hypothesis, Candidates obviously find it hard to use source content in this way, and many wrote about several sources before they were successful in using the content effectively. The usual problems also occurred when sources were grouped together, with an assertion then made which was not true of the group as a whole. This approach generally does not work and candidates are best advised to work through the sources individually, indeed as most already do.

A953/02 Controlled Assessment

There have been three areas of progress this year. The first has seen a significant number of centres managing to encourage their candidates to address the specific question directly. This has produced a better standard of work from a large number of candidates. Previously, a significant minority of centres appeared to encourage the candidates to wait until the conclusion before they directly addressed the question. This clearly did not sit well with a mark scheme that put considerable emphasis on maintaining a clear focus on the task. The impact of candidates beginning their analysis of the question from the start has been very pleasing and has really helped candidates achieve better marks.

In addition, many moderators have been quick to report that more centres this year have provided source materials along with the samples of controlled assessment which has helped them in the moderation process. Perhaps a sign that reports back to individual centres have rather more impact than those that give general feedback. Finally, the number of centres who do not get the candidates to tackle the right question based on this year's generic task has been reduced to literally less than a handful. Perhaps this suggests that centres are now finding the process of using the interchange routine. Together with the fact that most moderators reported marking was either in line with agreed standards with the holistic mark scheme, or fractionally out, must remind everybody that the controlled assessment in its current form is coming to an end. It is perhaps an appropriate time to remind everybody what the key changes are going to be:

For the next round of controlled assessment, all centres must use the template available from OCR to indicate what the task will be, and the teaching programme they propose to use along with the resources they have available. Secondly, the mark scheme has pulled out the three assessment objectives, so that centres give individual marks for each to reach the overall score. As the mark schemes have fundamentally the same level descriptors, the total should be the same as would have been achieved before. Finally, the word limit has now become a strict one and centres must draw a line under any work done above the 2000 word figure. This final change really needs to be passed onto candidates before they begin to try and reduce the negative impact to a minimum. Hopefully it will encourage a further move towards directly answering the task.

Returning to the standard of work and marking this year, History Around Us produced a wide range of interesting sites, with many centres providing an excellent framework of site visit, teaching programme and resources to encourage the candidates to select and deploy their knowledge and resources to directly address the issues raised in the question. Most coped well with the idea of how the site fitted into the overall development of whatever period or issue was chosen.

The Modern World Study appeared to present a challenge with the inclusion of attitudes. However, many candidates made the necessary move to consider them for a good level to be reached. The range of modern issues being studied has grown, with the Arab-Israeli conflict and Terrorism splitting up into a myriad of specific studies that have been able to capture many candidates' enthusiasm. The level of understanding shown around complex historical issues with a focus on the current impact was impressive.

Overall, there has been plenty of evidence this year that centres have made progress since the inception of controlled assessment in a number of directions. The most impressive of these being the evidence that a great many candidates have been able to produce a well written and analytical response to a single question, drawing on a wide range of evidence and understanding to develop their ideas in a well-constructed response. When the assessment was introduced, there were some who suggested this was not possible. Marking the work holistically

has now become accepted, based on the majority of moderators' reports. Hopefully the changes to the assessment will not be a block on candidates continuing to use the task in a productive and positive way. The most pleasing element of the assessment has always been the ability it has had to get young people to write proper historical answers. I suspect we may come to miss it when it has gone.

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