

A LEVEL

Examiners' report

HISTORY A

H505

For first teaching in 2015

Y111/01 Summer 2019 series

Version 1

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Introduction

Our examiners' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on candidates' performance in the examinations. They provide useful guidance for future candidates. The reports will include a general commentary on candidates' performance, identify technical aspects examined in the questions and highlight good performance and where performance could be improved. The reports will also explain aspects which caused difficulty and why the difficulties arose, whether through a lack of knowledge, poor examination technique, or any other identifiable and explainable reason.

Where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report. A full copy of the question paper can be downloaded from OCR.

Paper Y111/01 series overview

Y 111 is one of thirteen components for the revised A Level examination for GCE History. This component tests an extended period of History of about fifty years through an Enquiries or source-based option and an essay. The paper is divided into two sections. In Section A candidates have to answer a compulsory source questions based on four written primary sources. The question requires them to use all four sources to assess the validity of a view. In Section B candidates are required to answer one essay question from a choice of two.

To do well on Section A, candidates need to be able to consider both provenance of the sources and apply contextual knowledge to them in order to reach a judgement about the sources in relation to the issue in the question.

To do well on Section B, candidates need to address the issue in the question, using detailed supporting knowledge. In order to reach the higher levels candidates will need to assess the issues they discuss and reach a supported judgement at least in the conclusion.

<i>Candidates who did well on this paper generally did the following:</i>	<i>Candidates who did less well on this paper generally did the following:</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considered the provenance of the source(s) and used relevant contextual knowledge. • The contextual knowledge was clearly linked to the source being discussed to show whether the view of the source was valid or not. • Reach an overall judgement as to the extent to which the sources supported the view in the question. • In answering the essay question, candidates discussed at least two issues in depth. • The supporting detail was both accurate and relevant to the question set, not just the topic. • Reach a supported judgement about the issue in the question. • Make a series of interim judgements about the issues discussed in relation to the question. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did not consider both the provenance and use contextual knowledge to evaluate the sources. • Wrote an unbalanced answer in their treatment of the sources, with very little consideration of one of the sources. • Reached a judgement based on their knowledge rather than the sources. • Showed a poor understanding of the major issues relevant to the essay. • Were unable to support their answer with relevant material. • Did not focus on the precise wording of the question. • Made unsupported comments about issues which were assertions.

Section A overview

The Enquiry section in this component examines the contribution of women to the war effort in WW1 and in particular examines the view that their efforts were the main reason why female suffrage was granted in 1918. The question requires candidates to critically assess evidence and reach judgements. The critical evaluation of sources is the central theme in this section with all marks given against AO2.

Question 1

England and a New Century c.1900–1918

- 1 Using these four sources in their historical context, assess how far they support the view that the contribution of women to the war effort was the main argument used to justify female suffrage. [30]

Most candidates were able to analyse the content of the four sources and reach a well-reasoned conclusion regarding those which supported the premise in the title and the sources that didn't. Most candidates displayed a sound understanding of technique and so understood the need to use both context and provenance when evaluating the sources. Candidates should be reminded of the need to reach an appropriate judgement on the sources as this is something that was omitted in many answers. Candidates who were less successful tended to mine parts of the sources that agreed with their points without clear analysis and also tended to ignore the provenance of the sources or produced an analysis of provenance that was stock in nature or undeveloped.

Source A was used to both support and contradict the given view. Candidates were able to point out how the source called on the government to support women's claim for the vote due to the services provided in the war. Many were also able to point out the claim that this was also deserved because of their encouragement of male relatives to join the forces. Contextual knowledge of the role of women in munitions factories and in auxiliary roles was used well. Provenance was also handled well with most answers able to discuss why it was unsurprising that this committee of suffrage societies would emphasise these ideas to Asquith at this time.

Source B was generally used to challenge the view in the question and demonstrate how Lord Selborne was more concerned with the security of the State and the "steadying influence" of female voters. Some candidates were able to show that although the service of women was mentioned, this was only to confirm the beliefs that Selborne already had before the war had broken out. In terms of contextual support the debate about providing the vote to army personnel was well-known while most were able to draw on the activities of the WSPU before the war to demonstrate why Selborne believed there might be danger in not granting the vote to women. A substantial number of candidates pointed out that these views were untypical of the Conservative Party at the time and produced reasoned comments on provenance as a result. This approach is exemplified in Exemplar 1 which demonstrates a skilful combination of analysis, contextual knowledge and some evaluation of provenance.

Source C was treated well by the majority of candidates who knew that Asquith had been opposed female suffrage fervently before the war. His transformation was seen in part by the efforts of women in the war, although a significant number also noted that his desire to be seen as not yielding to violence also played its part. Contextually there was a variety of knowledge used, including further references to the pre-war campaigns, as well as the problem of reconstruction and the issues created by returning servicemen. We are sorry for the misprint in Source C, with the word "former" missing before Prime Minister from the steer of Source C. In order that candidates were not unfairly treated however, candidates who evaluated Asquith as either the former or current Prime Minister were equally credited

Source D was used to challenge the view in the question with MacArthur at pains to state that the vote was not to be seen as a reward for wartime service. Contextually most were able to discuss the concerns of women regarding the proposed age limits for the franchise reforms and in terms of provenance many answers pointed out that this would be the expected view of a deputation of suffrage societies meeting Asquith at this time.

Exemplar 1

Sources A and C strongly support the view that the contribution of women to the war effort, was the main argument to justify female suffrage. Both sources state how women were crucial in the war effort, and therefore they should be given the vote as reward. In contrast, source D rejects the view, and states that women should have the vote as they are part of society and will be affected by the policy changes after the war. Source B is more ambiguous. It states that women should be given the vote, but states that things which will occur, and have already occurred, be 'vehemently disliked'. As a result, this source seems to disagree somewhat with the view.

Section B overview

Two essays are set, each from a different Key Topic. Here the candidates are asked to examine the domestic reforms of Gladstone and Conservative domination between 1885 and 1902. The questions set require candidates to analyse causes and consequences of major historical issues.

Question 2

Liberals, Conservatives and the Rise of Labour 1846–1902

- 2* To what extent did the domestic reforms of Gladstone's first ministry establish equality of opportunity in Britain? **[20]**

This was a significantly more popular essay and was generally well-answered. Stronger responses provided a definition of equality of opportunity and then proceeded to argue for and then challenge the given view. Those candidates who did well chose a range of material to demonstrate equality of opportunity including Gladstone's Civil Service Act, army reforms, Education Act and his reforms of the judiciary. Irish reforms were generally used to demonstrate both views in the question. Exemplar 2 demonstrates a simple but effective use of a 2-sided argument which explains how Gladstone's reforms ensured equality of opportunity.

To challenge the given view, the best responses analysed the problematic nature of some of these reforms including trade union reforms that denied the right to picket alongside other reforms such as the Licensing Act. The best responses also analysed the areas that Gladstone didn't tackle such as public health and housing which might have helped to establish equality of opportunity. Weaker candidates largely did not address both sides of the argument and were restricted to Level 3 and below.

Exemplar 2

Much of the domestic reform in Gladstone's first ministry did ~~not~~ establish equality of opportunity. The first legislation passed was the Irish Universities Act, which allowed non-Catholics to attend Dublin University. This increased ~~of~~ equality of opportunity as it meant more people could attend university. Cardwell's army reform also provided equality of opportunity, as it removed payment for promotions. This meant promotion was given on merit meaning the most capable and deserving people were in charge, not the richest. This meant poorer people could progress through the ranks. This clearly provides equality of opportunity. A third reform which provided equality of opportunity was the Trade Unions Act, which prevented trade unions from being held liable for losses due to strike. This shows how it allowed the unions to be heard without fear of prosecution, giving more rights to the workers, increasing opportunity. ~~These reforms show~~ The disestablishment of the Irish Church also provided for Non-Catholics in Ireland. This provided opportunity. These reforms show how Gladstone's first ministry did establish equality of

Question 3

3* 'The Conservative Party dominated domestic politics, 1885–1902.' How far do you agree? [20]

This was the least popular of the essay questions and candidates found the topic challenging. A number of candidates adopted a narrative approach introducing their response by stating that the Conservatives dominated domestic policies because of the amount of legislation passed and then merely listed the acts passed. This did not score highly. Better responses analysed the effectiveness of Salisbury, the organisation of the Primrose League and the popularity of Conservative foreign policies as well as the declining role of Gladstone. A good example of this can be seen in the use of the Primrose League in Exemplar 3. Alternative views pointed out that the Liberals did form ministries in 1886 and 1892-95 as well as pointing out the unpopularity of both the Boer War and the 1902 Education Act.

Exemplar 3

However, the conservatives during ^{the state} this period did remain primarily popular among voters - primarily due to the Primrose League - erected in Disraeli's honour and serving to openly campaign for support for domestic policies. This can be seen to ~~mean~~ create a domination of ~~the~~ ^{the} voters' popularity from voters for any domestic policy - and while the amount of policies were limited - the support from the Primrose League as well as ~~reaction~~ ^{reaction} to Liberal forms ~~to~~ could be argued that through popularity conservatives did dominate domestic policy during this period.

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