

A LEVEL

Examiners' report

HISTORY A

H505

For first teaching in 2015

Y112/01 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 Y112/01 series overview

Y 112 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 awarded 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. There is no need for a long, elaborate introduction and Exemplar 1 shows a candidate who starts the response by immediately analysing Source A. 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.

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

Source A supports the view that women's contribution during the war was the main reason that the vote was extended to them. The source claims that women's "services in the war... cannot be ignored". Further, the source suggests that their services were widely acknowledged by Ministers as "mainly responsible for the maintenance of the country's industry". Indeed, with so many men away fighting, the ~~enrollment~~ enrolment of women into the workforce was key to maintain industrial production, particularly in munitions. The source also suggests that even the women "who have given their husbands and sons ungrudgingly to the defence" are perhaps even more deserving of the vote. The source, written by a committee of many suffrage societies, is likely to reflect the arguments used by these groups to justify granting women the vote accurately. Female suffrage groups would have used the most compelling arguments possible for giving women the vote, and hence the emphasis of the source on the war as a primary reason suggests that this was the main argument used. Indeed, the source was written before the Representation of the People Act had been drafted, and furthermore after the worst of the munitions crisis had passed, in which Lloyd George, with the help of female workers, maintained munitions production. Hence at this point, the war women's war service was a key reason for suffrage.

Source B instead suggests that women were granted suffrage as it was in the benefit of the state, rather than for their war contributions. The source justifies female suffrage as the "steadying influence of the ~~state~~ women voters" would be beneficial for the State; indeed, it would even be "dangerous" to deny female enfranchisement. Furthermore, the source argues

Section B overview

Two essays are set, each from a different Key Topic. Here the candidates are asked to examine the domination of the National Governments by the Conservatives in the 1930s and Labour's victory in the 1945 election. The questions set require candidates to analyse causes and consequences of major historical issues.

Question 2

Britain c.1918–1951

2* To what extent were the National Governments, 1931–40, dominated by the Conservative Party? [20]

Fewer responses were seen for this question, although those candidates who tackled it tended to produce reasonable responses to the question. The general approach was to show how the National Governments were dominated by the Conservatives by discussing the Conservative electoral majority in the period, MacDonald's lack of authority, the leadership of Baldwin and Chamberlain and the policies attached to both men. The alternative view tended to examine the cross-party nature of the Cabinet, MacDonald's role and the growing tendency towards some state intervention during the period. A good approach to this question can be seen in the introduction to Exemplar 2 given here which is clear in its approach towards a balanced argument.

Exemplar 2

The National Government, formed in 1931 by MacDonald in the midst of an economic crisis, was dominated by the Tories from the start. This dominance increased with the introduction of protectionism (tariff reform), an explicitly anti-Labour Party policy, the sidelining and growing personal isolation of Ramsay MacDonald, and the despite the continuation of Labour policies of rationalisation of industry and direct help to areas during the Depression.

Question 3

3* 'The victory of the Labour Party in the 1945 election was unexpected.' How far do you agree? [20]

This was the more popular of the 2 essay questions and was generally well-answered. Most candidates were able to produce a good analysis of the question focusing on Conservative weaknesses and Labour strengths to show why the election was either expected or unexpected. The best answers produced a balanced response that was able to show why the victory was unexpected, focusing on the respect for Churchill, the victory in the war and the lack of charismatic figures within the Labour Party. In challenging this view most candidates pointed out the roles that Labour had played within the coalition, the impact of the Beveridge Report, the shift of public opinion during the war and the unpopularity of Churchill as a peacetime leader. This can be seen in Exemplar 3. Weaker responses tended to produce a less balanced response but were generally able to point out why the victory was not unexpected.

Exemplar 3

After winning the Second World War, the war-time leader and Churchill and his party lost the next general election to the Labour party. In some ways, this was a surprise. Churchill was after all the charismatic war-time leader, and rode into the election on a wave of national euphoria at defeating the Nazis. However, in other ways, the election result was less as unexpected. Atlee's party had a clear vision for post-war reconstruction, and there was the sense that Churchill was less suited to peacetime leadership.

That Churchill had led Britain to victory in the war perhaps made him a strong favourite to win the election. He was the charismatic face of Britain's war effort, and, like Lloyd George before him, was widely considered as "the man who won the war". In this regard, his appeal transcended the long-standing prejudices of class that had dominated British politics since 1914.

Churchill himself was credited with maintaining morale on the Home Front, especially during the difficult period in 1940 when Britain was alone in fighting Germany, and Hitler seemed to be winning the war and planning an invasion of Britain.

His speeches, during this period particularly, were incredibly uplifting, pledging to fight till the last and honoring the soldiers fighting for their country. Hence in this wave of nationwide euphoria, it was unexpected that the hero of the war and his party would lose the next election.

However, the Labour victory could be expected as the party had a strong programme for post-war reconstruction and reform. Their leading members had gained recognition and appreciation during the war — Attlee for example had served as deputy prime minister — and Labour played a large role in ensuring that Britain continued to survive & under the premises of war. The success of Labour in managing the Home Front during the war gave voters confidence that their reform programme could succeed. Labour's proposals were indeed ambitious — fuelled by the creation of a welfare state, with an embedded national insurance service and a free healthcare system — but given their success in handling domestic problems during the war, voters had faith in their vision. This successful role ~~in time go~~ Hence Labour's reform programme, combined with their success in governing domestically during the war, makes their victory more expected.

The feeling among voters that Churchill might not be a good peacetime leader makes the Labour victory more probable. Indeed, throughout the campaign, Churchill combatively denigrated Labour aggressively, suggesting for example that their welfare state could only be maintained by a Berberia-style police force. Such vituperation alienated voters and persuaded them of the type of behavior that led Churchill to be causing a political

pariah in the 1930s. Churchill was also remembered for his hostility towards trade unions and his actions during the General Strike in 1926 — these all suggested that he might not manage reconstruction as successfully as Labour. Indeed, his campaign didn't have a ~~vision~~ vision of reforms like Labour. Hence when ~~it was felt that Churchill was~~ ^{it was felt that Churchill was} his Churchill's intense hatred of the USSR and Communism also didn't bode well for ~~post~~ peace-time leadership. Hence to Churchill's characterisation seemed ill-suited to leading post-war Britain especially in contrast with Labour.

Hence overall, there is strong ^{reason} ~~evidence~~ ^{evidence} to predict a Labour victory in the 1945 election. Atlee and Labour had a convincing post-war reconstruction programme, and the party had acquired the ~~franchise~~ ^{franchise} all in ~~winning~~ ^{winning} the Home Front. Though Churchill was ~~brilliant~~ ^{brilliant} the man who won the war, he was undermined by traits that made him ill-suited to peace-time leadership, and for

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