

GCSE (9-1)

Examiners' report

HISTORY B

(SCHOOLS HISTORY PROJECT)

J411

For first teaching in 2016

J411/51 Summer 2022 series

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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. A selection of candidate answers is also provided. 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 and the mark scheme can be downloaded from OCR.

Advance Information for Summer 2022 assessments

To support student revision, advance information was published about the focus of exams for Summer 2022 assessments. Advance information was available for most GCSE, AS and A Level subjects, Core Maths, FSMQ, and Cambridge Nationals Information Technologies. You can find more information on our [website](#).

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Paper 51 series overview

Paper 51 is The People's Health, c.1250–present.

To do well on the Thematic Study, candidates need to be able to: present a historical summary of an area of content they have learned; offer an explanation in response to a historical question (e.g. explaining the causes or consequences of something); and recall and apply their knowledge to support and challenge a statement in an essay-style question.

It was clear from the majority of responses that most candidates had been well-prepared and were able to make use of their knowledge accurately at least in part in the essay-style questions (Questions 4 and 5).

However, on Question 2, while most candidates were able to provide accurate and often detailed summaries, many did not present an analytical response.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally did the following:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally did the following:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recalled at least two valid responses for Question 1 • analysed Health in Britain after 1900 by organising their response around a historical concept (most frequently done well were those that looked at food as an aspect and talked about the consequences of diet/activity during this period) and supported their response using specific examples • fully explained what people believed caused cholera in the early 1800s, showed an understanding of why this was wrong plus a specific example from this period • effectively deployed a range of knowledge in the essay question, using precise evidence to support their responses (Questions 4 and 5). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • did not have a strong sense of chronology and could not put specific examples about methods to prevent disease in a specific period • did not produce a valid response to any part of Question 1 • described living conditions from 1900 particularly identifying that there was a change for the better in terms of housing but not what it had changed from and to i.e. they only described housing in one period • explained why cholera spread so quickly in the 19th Century • made accurate but generalised points which they were unable to support with specific evidence in the essay question; or else gave precise evidence but did not explain how it helped to address the question being asked (Questions 4 and 5).

Question 1 (a)

- 1 (a) Name **one** aspect of people's lives in the period 1500–1750 that led to poor public health. [1]

There were few problems here - there were very few specific responses that did not address this question.

Question 1 (b)

- (b) Cholera was a killer disease. Identify **one other** killer disease that was common in the period 1800–1900. [1]

Candidates found this challenging and there were many invalid responses, particularly Spanish Flu which was not in this period.

Question 1 (c)

- (c) Give **one** example of a government action that was aimed at improving the health of children since 1900. [1]

Many candidates found this unproblematic and the majority of responses referred to free school meals. There were some chronological misunderstandings of 1900 which produced examples from the 19th Century.

Question 2

2 Write a clear and organised summary that analyses living conditions since 1900.

Support your summary with examples.

[9]

The vast majority of candidates were able to include relevant knowledge in their responses to this question. However, many candidates began this response referring to improvements i.e. change and then did not address conditions both before and after – this was especially true in the case of housing.

The most effective form of historical organisation was around consequence; candidates used terms like 'this meant' or 'this led to' particularly when addressing the Housing Act of 1919 which led to council housing, technology leading to inactivity and obesity or the Clean Air Act ending smogs.

Candidates supported these reasons with specific examples.

Several candidates clearly thought they had to use certain words such as 'significance' or 'diversity' but sometimes the inclusion of these words in their responses suggested a lack of understanding and it came across as muddled or contrived. A small minority of candidates wrote about the 19th Century and the conditions in the industrial revolution.

The most common response from candidates who achieved the highest levels was around inactivity - stopping people walking and the negative impact this has on health. Again a consequence response.

Exemplar 1

2	<p>Since the 1900s many improvements had be been made to living conditions regarding food. During the 1900s for refrigerators had been invented and had become more popular as well as food having a longer sell by date. This meant that due to these food had a longer life, preventing people from eating and becoming ill off of gone off food. This was significant as it limited illnesses and deaths from contaminated food and also had less of an impact on people's health.</p>
	<p>Also, the if Since the 1900s housing has also significantly improved. Firstly, the government banned back to back housing, eliminating diseases like typhoid as it could not spread as easily. Secondly council housing was introduced in the 1919 housing act. This meant that the government could house families who were living in slums or on the streets, into houses, for cheap prices. This was significant as it stopped diseases spreading due to families in close proximity being moved into their own homes, causing</p>

		less claims and having a positive effect on peoples health.
		Finally however, people started to become a lot more inactive. This was because of new technology like cars, stopping people from walking to places, instead driving. This had a negative effect on peoples health as due to cars they were doing a lot less exercise. This was significant as it started to lead to obesity and people becoming overweight, causing other health problems like heart disease.

Exemplar 1 is a response from a candidate who clearly knows quite a bit about the period and topic in question and has used their own language to progress to Level 3. It reaches Level 2 when food is improved due to refrigeration; the candidate does talk about things getting better but has not organised around change but impact/consequence.

The response does this again about back to back houses and council houses but as if caused by the 1919 Housing Act where the term 'This meant' shows that improved housing was a consequence of the Act.

Advice to centres

This question does not ask for just a description. To move beyond Level 1, it is important that candidates are clear about how to organise an analytical response in these types of questions. The organisation of the response around a historical concept (such as change, continuity, causation, consequence, significance and diversity) is the driving force behind this question, as opposed to contextual knowledge alone.

Candidates should spend some of their time thinking about how to organise their response before putting pen to paper.

It is worth noting that there is no requirement for candidates to use particular words or phrases – sometimes including particular learnt words may be counter-productive and lead to a muddled response.

Question 3

3 Why did attempts to stop the spread of cholera in the early 1800s have limited impact?

Explain your answer.

[10]

Most candidates were familiar with cholera and methods that were used to prevent disease. However, the very specific nature of this question meant that candidates needed to be able to explain what people believed (usually miasma/religion), what measures they took in the early 1800s to prevent cholera (burning tar, John Snow's research) and then why this did not work (cholera was in the water)

The majority of candidates explained why cholera spread so quickly in the 19th Century and included detail around Chadwick's report (not a measure to prevent cholera) or the creation of the sewers (not early 1900s). These were marked in Level 3.

Exemplar 2

3	Attempts to stop the spread of Cholera in the 1800's had limited impact. This was mainly because of the people's beliefs beliefs. The idea miasma - smells in the air - was still thought as well as religious views that illness was a punishment from God and confession of sins was advised. However, science and technology were able to invent the microscope where Louis Pasteur discovered the germ in 1861 creating the germ theory. Many chose to ignore his discovery until many years later. Due to the fact Louis theory was not accepted there was no knowledge of how cholera spread and so it could not be prevented.
	secondly, the Government kept a laissez-faire attitude throughout the industrial

		period meaning they refused to take
		control of things affecting people living
		in England until the early years of the
		1800's. This led to cholera spreading further
		as beforehand and during the government
		had refused to be involved and spend
		money on better sewage systems and
		water pipes to those that could not
		afford it (council housing) leading
		for any attempts that would have been
		made to stop the spread of cholera to
		fail due to the poverty's susceptible
		living style to disease.
		In conclusion there were limited impact to
		attempts to stop the spread of cholera
		due to the Government's laissez-faire
		attitude and lack of involvement to
		spread news of new discoveries that
		could have made a much bigger impact
		on the movement to stop spread of
		cholera.

Exemplar 2 is a good example of a response where the candidate was able to describe beliefs in the 19th Century about causes of disease - miasma and religion. They then go on to explain why they did not work using the fact that germ theory had not been discovered or proved to explain this – this is not a measure to prevent cholera but a lack of understanding of germs which led to deaths. The next section around Laissez Faire is not about an action to prevent cholera so the response remains in Level 3.

Advice to centres

Candidates need to have specific knowledge at their fingertips in order to offer precise evidence. They need to direct their knowledge at the question asked, and make sure they remain focused on what the question is asking without drifting off to answer a different one.

Question 4*

- 4* 'Science and technology were the most important factors that improved public health in the Early Modern (1500–1750) and Industrial (1750–1900) periods.'

How far do you agree?

Give reasons for your answer.

[18]

Candidates knew what the question was asking.

The quality of the responses was very varied. Most often, the points raised by candidates to support the statement were: the invention of microscopes through to Louis Pasteur and the Germ Theory, Bazalgette and the development of sewers, John Snow and cholera. Some candidates used the early modern period to discuss the printing press leading to the plague orders but not enough then explained how these measures improved public health.

Arguments to oppose the statement were mainly around government action, laws or legislation and these were often not explained as well by linking to how they improved public health, the three steps needed – factor – example – how it helped was not always completed and remained in Level 2.

Most candidates were clear about the historical periods studied – they did not need to give examples from both periods to achieve full marks and most did attempt to balance their responses clearly.

Some candidates also used the fact that science and technology led to poor public health to oppose the statement but although valid, this often meant that they became a bit confused.

Exemplar 3

4.	<p>Some people would agree with the statement due to Louis Pasteur's germ theory published in 1861. Louis Pasteur's Germ Theory challenged the idea that pandemics, illnesses and disease were caused by God to as a punishment for sin however, it was accepted by many. This theory led to a better improved personal hygiene like washing hands and helped curbed the spread of later pandemics as people and the government knew what caused it and could take effective measures against it. This led to less people dying from easily preventable illnesses.</p>
	<p>Furthermore, some people may agree with the statement due to Joseph Bazalgette's sewers. Joseph Bazalgette was commissioned by the government to do something about the waste problem due to the great stink happening. The smell from the river was incredibly bad</p>

	<p>due to it being the summertime which prompted the government to do this. Joseph Bazalgette built 1,300 miles of sewers under London to manage the waste problem, they worked at removing waste and lead to the smell being lessened and river water becoming less contaminated, which also further improved people's health as the water they were getting was slightly safer for them to drink than before.</p>
	<p>On the other hand people may disagree with the statement due to there not being much advancement in science or tech during the early modern period. However, health during this time did slightly improve due to people now being fined for throwing waste out of windows. Many places like York also introduced a dungheap where people could put their waste. While this did slightly improve health due to waste not being thrown into the street and contaminate things like water, it had very limited effect compared to advancements made in the industrial period.</p>

Furthermore, due to the great fire of London happening in 1666 paths ~~were~~ and houses were now built in stone and streets were widened. Initially this was for aesthetic purposes however it did improve health slightly.

Furthermore, people may disagree with the statement and instead say that it was the laws introduced in the industrial period that were the most important. The introduction of the Pure Food Act is arguably one of the most important acts. Introduced in 1860, the Pure Food Act made it illegal to adulterate food. Before this act people who sold food could mix inedible things into their products to get more money and/or make their products look more desirable. For example some could mix flour and sawdust together others could mix copper into butter to make it look better as it was more yellow. This led to people's health worsening.

as they weren't meant to eat sawdust or copper. In addition to the pure food act, two public health acts were introduced. One of these acts made it so it was compulsory for towns to have their own board of health to monitor conditions.

Overall, science and technology were the most important as Louis Pasteur's germ theory led to changes in hygiene which meant less people got ill and Joseph Bazalgette's sewers worked so well that they are still used today. However, other factors like laws are arguably just as important as if the pure food act wasn't introduced the food quality would probably just be as bad now as it was then. The industrial period was also better for the advancements in public health compared to the early modern period, due to more science and technology and a lesser belief in God.

Exemplar 3 is a good example of a candidate who is consistently able to recall relevant knowledge and direct it at the question asked, working their way up the levels.

Common agreements are addressed - Pasteur and Bazelgette - and then disagreement around laws and fines which stopped people throwing waste which led to improvements, and then the Food Act of the 19th Century which improved food quality.

This is an example of a candidate who has given specific examples in a clear way to access high marks – Level 6.

Question 5*

5* How far do you agree that medieval people had no understanding of how to protect themselves against disease between 1250 and 1500?

Give reasons for your answer.

[18]

This appeared to be the most popular question but did not appear to be answered as well as Question 4.

Nevertheless, most candidates seemed to understand what the question was asking and wrote well about lack of understanding about the cause of disease – miasma, religion, four humours, They did not always effectively link this to answering the question and remained in Level 2.

A lack of chronological knowledge was apparent in this question with many candidates confusing measures from the early modern - killing cats and dogs, burning tar, painting crosses on the door/putting straw in the windows or using a white stick - with Medieval ideas. Candidates who referred to isolation were rewarded.

Better candidates were able to discuss King Edward's and other town's attempts to clean up as well as the monasteries who had clear ideas about keeping clean to counter the argument but often this was marred by a lack of knowledge stated as fact.

As with Question 3, it was candidates who had specific evidence at their fingertips who were more successful at reaching the higher levels.

Advice to centres

Candidates who have revised thoroughly and have a wide range of precise evidence at their fingertips to support their points will do best on these questions.

It is also very important that candidates are familiar with the time periods on the specification, and that they answer the specific question in front of them.

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