

**GCSE (9-1)**

**Examiners' report**

# **HISTORY B**

## **(SCHOOLS HISTORY PROJECT)**

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**J411**

For first teaching in 2016

**J411/18 Summer 2023 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.

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## Paper 18 series overview

Paper J411/18 is a Thematic Study (Migrants to Britain, c.1250-present) with a British Depth Study (The Elizabethans, 1580-1603). The 2023 summer series saw a return to these composite papers being sat by candidates for the first time since 2019. Centres clearly continue to work hard to prepare their candidates. The ability of candidates to use different techniques, from employing second order historical concepts to organise their responses around, to comparing historical interpretations, was impressive across the range of questions. Areas which continue to require further preparation of candidates are the more developed explanations required for Question 3, the ability to effectively explore the purpose of interpretations in Question 7, and the provision of sufficient evidence across a range of factors in the essay questions.

| Candidates who did well on this paper generally:  | Candidates who did less well on this paper generally:   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• recalled at least two valid responses (Question 1)</li> <li>• analysed Jewish communities in Medieval Britain by organising their response around a historical concept, most commonly change in treatment of Jews or reasons for prejudice against them, and supported this with valid historical examples (Question 2)</li> <li>• fully explained at least one reason why Commonwealth migrants came to Britain after the Second World War (Question 3)</li> <li>• carefully selected evidence to argue points that were tied to the specific question (Questions 4 and 5)</li> <li>• picked out a general feature in Interpretation A in relation to how it depicts the Elizabethan period as an important age of exploration and then supported this with at least one point of development (Question 6 (a))</li> <li>• used a second order concept to develop their own enquiry (Question 6 (b))</li> <li>• compared the differing messages in Interpretations B and C in their portrayal of Elizabeth and appreciated how the purpose of one or both affected that portrayal (Question 7)</li> <li>• focused on the quotes and deployed a range of knowledge, using precise evidence to support their responses (Questions 8 and 9).</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• did not recall a valid response (Question 1)</li> <li>• described Jewish communities or remained focused on why they came before the 1250-1290 period, without moving on to look at the period itself (Question 2)</li> <li>• identified reasons for Commonwealth migration but did not support with precise evidence or develop into a full explanation (Question 3)</li> <li>• did not use correctly selected evidence or sufficient evidence to move beyond Level 2 (Questions 4 and 5)</li> <li>• did not address both time periods (Question 5)</li> <li>• pointed out different features/methods in Interpretation A instead of focusing on one (Question 6 (a))</li> <li>• focused on asking for more details about the interpretation rather than concentrating on a second order concept (Question 6 (b))</li> <li>• compared surface similarities and differences rather than comparing portrayal (Question 7)</li> <li>• made accurate but generalised points which they were unable to support with precise evidence (Questions 8 and 9).</li> </ul> |

## Section A overview

Section A is Migrants to Britain, c.1250–present.

To do well on the Thematic Study (Migrants to Britain), candidates needed 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 a historical event), and recall and apply their knowledge to support and challenge a statement in an essay-style question. Many responses displayed a high level of preparation from candidates who selected and deployed accurate knowledge, particularly on Question 2, and to some extent with Questions 4 and 5 (the essay-style questions). With some responses to Question 2, there was a lack of use of a second-order concept to organise the answer, which is necessary to access higher levels, while on Question 3 many candidates did not organise material effectively to produce developed explanations.

### Question 1 (a)

#### Migrants to Britain, c.1250 to present

1 (a) Identify **one** positive impact of migrants between 1500 and 1750.

[1]

Candidates found this challenging, with many invalid responses. A specific migrant group was required in order to be able to identify their impact. Answers receiving credit focused on groups such as the Huguenots with specific contributions to silk or clock making for example, or the Hansa merchants' impact on trade.

### Question 1 (b)

(b) Identify **one** contribution Italian migrants made to Britain in the late 1800s.

[1]

There were few problems here. Most candidates were able to identify contributions such as ice-cream, road-laying and organ-grinding. Incorrect responses tended to make identifications from other periods, for example referring to medieval Italian bankers.

### Question 1 (c)

(c) Identify the migrant group that the Kindertransport was set up to help.

[1]

The majority of candidates were able to identify Jewish children, Jews or German Jews here. Some candidates answered 'Germans' which did not effectively tie to the specific migrant group in question.

## Question 2

- 2 Write a clear and organised summary that analyses Jewish communities in medieval Britain between c.1250 and 1290.

Support your summary with examples.

[9]

Candidates incorporated an impressive range of knowledge about the experience of Jewish people and communities in Medieval Britain. However, the need to organise their response around a second order concept, such as change or causation, eluded some candidates, whose responses consequently remained in Level 1. Better responses developed two or more points specifically around an organising concept. Occasionally, candidates did not focus specifically on the period in question, 1250-1290, which was characterised by the worsening conditions and ultimate expulsion of the Jews in 1290.

Candidates used second order concepts such as causation, for example, why Jewish communities became victims of persecution, including reasons such as their religion and the view held by many people at the time that the Jewish religion was responsible for Jesus's death. This cause was then supported with examples such as the Lincoln Blood Libel case of 1255, the Statute of Jewry in 1275 and the expulsion edict in 1290.

### Assessment for learning



This question requires more than just description to advance beyond Level 1. Candidates need to know how to organise an analytical response around a historical concept such as causation, consequence, change, diversity or significance. Before commencing their response, candidates should consider how to organise it around one or more of these historical concepts, as they are the driver for the response rather than contextual knowledge. Candidates do not need to use the specific conceptual terms to gain marks, indeed using word such as 'significance' or 'causation' is not a precursor for success on this question.

## Question 3

### 3 Why did Commonwealth migrants come to Britain after the Second World War?

Explain your answer.

[10]

Candidates were very familiar with some of the content here, particularly the immediate post-war situation which led to the Windrush and the ability of Commonwealth migrants to gain passports to enter Britain and help with post-war rebuilding.

Many candidates were rewarded at Level 3, where the previous identification was built upon with either some precise evidence, or an explanatory point linking back to the question (but not both).

To get Level 4 or Level 5, candidates were required to explain using the identification, precise evidence and an explanatory comment linked to the question. Two explanations of this quality allowed candidates to access Level 5.

Other historical evidence in this question that was rarely used by candidates but may have been creditable included the experiences of Kenyan and Ugandan Asians in the 1960s and 1970s. Candidates tended to remain focused on the immediate aftermath of the Second World War, with the Windrush Generation and the creation of the NHS being the most common examples of specific knowledge.

#### Misconception



Some candidates seemed to lack knowledge of the nature of the Commonwealth, writing instead about Jewish refugees, Poles or other groups coming to Britain. The EU was also mentioned by some candidates. Ensuring a basic understanding of the nature and location of the Commonwealth will help students in subsequent examinations.



## Exemplar 1

|   |   |
|---|---|
| 3 | <p>After the Second World War, Britain needed a large number of workers to rebuild the country, one of the</p>  |
|   | <p>most developments was the NHS, as part of the welfare state. Many migrants from the Commonwealth were encouraged to come over and work for the NHS, or similar other industries such as factories. Ships such as the SS Windrush made it possible for them to migrate with relative ease, and the pay in Britain was often much better than where they lived.</p>  |
|   | <p>One of the primary ways in which Commonwealth migrants were enabled to come to Britain after the Second World War was due to the fact that the Nationality Act was passed. This gave people in the Commonwealth the same rights as any other British citizen to work, live or settle in Britain, and as such it allowed a large number of people to migrate to Britain, which was especially useful as English was commonly spoken in many parts of the Commonwealth due to the colonialism that preceded things such as Commonwealth nations.</p> |

This response has two developed explanations that use precise evidence to address the question about why Commonwealth migrants came to Britain after the Second World War; one based around needing workers for the NHS and the other organised around the British Nationality Act of 1948. It demonstrates a Level 5 response.



## Question 4\*

4\* 'Migrants came to Britain in the period 1750 to 1900 because they were driven from their homes.'

How far do you agree?

Give reasons for your answer.

[18]

This question was the more popular of the two essays and was generally well answered, with some good knowledge from candidates on the Irish Potato Famine in particular, along with relevant explanation of the way Russian Jews were driven from their homes in the late nineteenth century. Alternative factors were, on the whole, less well argued. On occasion candidates found difficulty with the phrase 'driven from their homes', attempting to argue that Lascars and other groups fitted with that reasoning, rather than focusing on the economic or practical nature of their migration.

With a question phrased in this way it was possible for candidates to argue that a particular group was both 'driven from their home' but also attracted to Britain for other reasons, for example Irish migrants who came to work building the railway network as navvies. There were some impressive examples of candidates doing this.

There were also a significant number of responses incorporating groups from other periods, most notable Huguenots and the Poor Palatines. No credit was possible when discussing these groups.

Less successful responses tended to identify migrant groups but did not provide sufficient support in terms of historical evidence in order to explain the reasoning behind their migration to Britain.

## Question 5\*

5\* 'Migrants to Britain were more welcome in the period **1500–1750** than they were in the period **1300–1500**.'

How far do you agree?

Give reasons for your answer.

[18]

Question 5, with its focus on two different periods, was considerably less popular as a choice for candidates.

The discriminator for access to the highest levels, Levels 5 and 6, was coverage from both periods (rather than addressing both 'welcome' and 'not welcome'). This allowed candidates to focus purely on 'welcome' or indeed 'not welcome' but explore a range of migrant groups across 450 years of British history, in order to reach a judgement about how welcome migrants were and whether attitudes across the periods remained the same, changed or even fluctuated.

Stronger responses covered several migrant groups, most commonly Flemish weavers but also Huguenots, Poor Palatines, Hansa merchants and Jews (returning under Cromwell). Once more with this question it was possible to argue two opposing points for a single migrant group, for example the Poor Palatines' initial positive reception, followed by the swift change to rejection shortly after their arrival in 1709. These responses also managed to cover both 'welcome' and 'not welcome', although there were fewer examples of the former being argued for successfully.

Many candidates deployed knowledge about migrant groups (for example, Flemish weavers' skill with the wool trade, Huguenot contributions in industries such as silk and clock making) but were unable to clearly link this to whether they were welcome or not; to achieve this, some reference needed to be made to the nature of their reception by the British people and/or government, or to legislation directed specifically at them, such as the 1530 Egyptian Act against Gypsies, or the Huguenots being given the same legal rights as British-born people in 1708.

A number of candidates wrote about Jewish communities in the medieval period, but as the question asked specifically for 1300 onwards (and Question 2 had already elicited this knowledge), no credit was given for this.

## Section B overview

Section B is The Elizabethans, 1080-1603.

To do well in this Period Study section, candidates needed to be able to identify and explain how producers of interpretations portray historical events, use second order concepts to develop an enquiry (Question 6 (a) and 6 (b)), analyse and compare historical interpretations (Question 7) while recalling and applying their knowledge in a further essay-style question from either Question 8 or 9. Once more, a high level of preparation from candidates was in evidence, alongside a confident handling of source material and willingness to engage in the construction of novel historical enquiries. Candidates drew varied comparisons from the interpretations in Question 7 and some managed to effectively address the portrayal through the purpose of the interpretations. Where responses were less strong, a failure to effectively compare messages in Question 7, or a limited amount of supporting historical evidence in Questions 8 and 9, were the primary ways candidates did not attain higher marks.

### Question 6 (a)

- 6 (a)** In **Interpretation A**, the author A N Wilson depicts the Elizabethan period as an important age of exploration.

Identify and explain **one** way in which he does this.

**[3]**

The aim of this question was to get candidates thinking about the methods used by writers, artists, filmmakers, etc. to put forward a particular interpretation of a historical figure, period or event.

The majority of candidates were able to access the interpretation and they understood the question. Most scored 1 or 2 marks by picking out a specific feature (e.g. 'travelling to every known corner of the globe') and then going on to develop their response by explaining how that feature made the period seem like an important age of exploration. Where candidates started with a very specific feature such as this, they sometimes struggled to make two points of development about their feature. The most successful responses were the ones which began with a more general point, e.g. 'The author uses dramatic language', and went on to give an example of this, e.g. 'For instance, "exceptional" and "remarkable"', and then said how this depicted the period as an important age of exploration, e.g. 'This makes it seem like there were ground-breaking achievements and changes'.

To gain a third mark, candidates needed to clearly explain how their chosen feature indicated the qualities named in the question. Responses which picked out several features rather than one feature as the question asks were unable to move past 1 mark.

## Question 6 (b)

- (b) If you were asked to do further research on **one** aspect of **Interpretation A**, what would you choose to investigate?

Explain how this would help us to analyse and understand England's connections with the wider world between 1580 and 1603. **[5]**

The target for candidates in this question was to develop their own historical enquiry from the interpretation they have begun to engage with in the previous question.

Many candidates were able to identify a further area of research using second order concepts, most commonly causation/consequence and diversity/typicality, such as the impact on the areas they explored. An entirely clear explanation of this concept was needed to access Level 3, but some candidates attained the top of Level 2 (4 marks) by beginning to develop their enquiry.

Candidates remaining in Level 1 tended to focus on an enquiry to find out more details about the interpretation, such as how many places they travelled to or what their ships were like.

### Assessment for learning



This question does not require candidates to answer their own enquiry, nor does it require them to use their contextual knowledge to develop the enquiry. It is expected that candidates will be familiar with the concept of historical enquiry, but there is no requirement that they use particular conceptual words or phrases; indeed it may not work effectively in this question to simply name those words. Instead, focus on the framing of a genuine historical question is more likely to gain reward.

## Question 7

**7 Interpretations B and C** both focus on the power of Elizabeth.

How far do they differ and what might explain any differences?

**[12]**

This question allows candidates to identify similarities and differences in how historical events or figures have been portrayed in two interpretations, and to explain any differences.

The two interpretations here, both concerning the power of Elizabeth, proved to be accessible to most candidates, with many able to identify points of similarity, such as them both discussing Elizabeth having no children and differences (B suggests she did fulfil her 'duties as a monarch', but C says she failed in her 'main task'). Many candidates were also able to compare the positive portrayal of Elizabeth's power in B with the negative one of her being weak in C, thereby accessing at least 6 marks and, with support from the interpretations, Level 3 (7-9 marks).

The strongest responses managed to explain differences in terms of the purpose of B and/or C. This might have been along the lines of 'I think the reason they are so different is because the article in B was published on a feminist website and is trying to inspire other women by providing them with powerful role models'. Less successful responses made simple, undeveloped comments relating to the provenance, often about bias in B or the fact that C is by an historian.

### Assessment for learning



In preparation for future examination series, centres should focus students on developing the skill of identifying the 'core message' of an interpretation and practising the selection of short quotes to illustrate that message. To achieve Level 4 for 'purpose', a consideration of what is specific to the interpretation is needed, along with avoiding generic, stock comments relating to 'bias'.

## Exemplar 2

|   |   |
|---|---|
| 7 | <p>Interpretations B and E differ a lot because Interpretation B focuses more on the women power and the freedom of women in Interpretation B Queen Elizabeth I is shown as very strong and "successful monarch" as she went against "all odds" and defeated the feminine views on marriage and the behaviour of women before Elizabeth's time.</p> |
|   | <p>Interpretation B makes Elizabeth a role model and inspiration to other women to be strong and have more power</p>  |



as the article announce her brave and undefeatable, someone to look up to and give a message of power and freedom despite gender inequality she went through all the odds still successful and defeated.

However Interpretation C focuses more on the downfall of Elizabeth I and suggest that how she consider herself to high almighty but achieve nothing. And it also focuses on the duty of a monarch now they are supposed to think more about the future and make heirs to carry on their bloodline and to fullfull their virtue which Elizabeth didn't. But ~~was~~ rather she supported the ill treatment of humans by executing innocent people and by betraying her own bloodline for her sake.

Both Interpretation differs because they both were written in different era as Interpretation C had more research involve and collecting different types of evidence. ~~Howver~~ However Interpretation B is different because in 2013 women's were not treated equally in the society and were paid less and had their rights taken away so Interpretation B focuses on women to be strong and speak up



|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
|  |  | For themselves in order to be treated equally       |
|  |  | while interpretation C was <del>the</del> broadcast |
|  |  | in 2021 where women still suffer but                |
|  |  | are strong and has many contribution                |
|  |  | in the society.                                     |

This response begins with a Level 1 summary of portrayal of Interpretation B. Next there is a summary of the purpose of Interpretation B but at this point there is no comparison, so it is given Level 2. Then the candidate summarises the portrayal of Interpretation C and compares it to Interpretation B using the word 'however'. At this point the response reaches Level 4 because it has the purpose of Interpretation B and a valid comparison of portrayal with support from both interpretations. It then develops further the purpose of Interpretation B and so is given Level 4 overall.

## Question 8\*

8\* According to the website 'elizabethi.org', Elizabeth I was 'remarkably tolerant'.

How far do you agree with this view of Elizabeth I's **treatment of Catholics** between 1580 and 1603?

[20]

Candidates who chose this question had clearly studied the nature and extent of the Catholic threat and knew what the question was asking. Valid points raised included:

- relative leniency at the start of Elizabeth's reign, e.g. the Act of Uniformity – which was still in force in 1580 – only fined Catholics small sums if they refused to attend Protestant services
- 1581 Act of Persuasions raised the fines against Catholic recusants to £20 per month, which only the wealthiest Catholics could pay. By 1603, even the wealthiest Catholics were being financially crippled.
- arrest, imprisonment and torture of many Catholic recusants, priests and even anyone found sheltering a priest, e.g. Campion and Clitherow.
- Mary Queen of Scots executed following the Babington Plot.

Many candidates understood that Elizabeth became less tolerant of Catholics by the end of her reign and were able to offer examples with precise evidence.

At Level 2 and above, candidates included precise evidence to support their point and explained how it addressed the question of whether Elizabeth I was 'remarkably tolerant' towards Catholics.

Responses which attained Level 5 put forward four explained points, with at least one point on either side of the argument.

Less successful candidates tended to produce a narrative of events, sometimes muddled, rather than organise their responses into discrete points and direct their knowledge at the question, or else made accurate but vague assertions (such as Elizabeth was a Protestant and didn't like Catholics) which did not demonstrate the knowledge required. These responses were generally placed in Level 1.

## Question 9\*

9\* In his 2016 article 'The dark side of Elizabethan England', historian James Sharpe argues that life for the poor was dominated by 'violence, vagrancy and crushing hunger'.

How far do you agree with this view of **daily life for the poor** in Elizabethan society? [20]

Candidates who chose this question had clearly studied the nature and dynamics of Elizabethan society and knew what the question was asking. Valid points raised included:

- the Poor law of 1601 including distinctions made between 'deserving' and 'undeserving' poor
- vagabonds/vagrants were harshly punished e.g whipping and burning/ possibility of hanging
- between 1597 and 1599 bad harvests meant rising prices and starvation
- various forms of entertainment accessible even to the poor throughout the year, e.g. cheap seats at the theatre, May Day, past times.

Many candidates understood that the interpretation was too simplistic and that it was not true for all poor people across the whole of the period.

At Level 2 and above, candidates included precise evidence to support their points and explained how they addressed the question of whether life for the poor was dominated by 'violence, vagrancy and crushing hunger'. Responses which attained Level 5 put forward four explained points, with at least one point on either side of the argument.

Less successful candidates tended to produce a narrative of living conditions in Elizabethan England that was not focused on the three aspects outlined in the question, e.g. the description of housing. These responses were generally placed in Level 1.

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