

A LEVEL

Examiners' report

HISTORY A

H505

For first teaching in 2015

Y306/01 Summer 2024 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.

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Paper Y306 series overview

Y306 is one of twenty one units for Paper 3 of the A Level examination for GCE History. This unit tests an extended period of History of at least one hundred years through an interpretation question on a named in-depth topic and through two essays.

The paper is divided into two sections. In Section A candidates are required to use contextual knowledge to test the views of two historians about one of the three named in-depth topics or an aspect of one. The question does not require them to comment on the style of writing or the provenance of the interpretation.

In Section B candidates are required to answer two essay questions from a choice of three.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> showed a clear understanding of the views of the two interpretations in relation to the question were able to use contextual knowledge to test the interpretations, linking that knowledge directly to the interpretation through evaluative words were able to consider both the strengths and limitations of both Interpretations using contextual knowledge covered the whole period in a balanced way adopted a thematic approach made links and comparisons between aspects of the topic explained the links and comparisons supported their arguments with precise and relevant examples reached a supported judgement about the issue in the question. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> showed a limited understanding of one or both of the interpretations did not go beyond a basic explanation of part of the interpretation did not link any contextual knowledge directly to the interpretation and therefore did not evaluate the interpretation adopted a chronological rather than thematic approach did not make links or comparisons even if events from different parts of the period were discussed in the same paragraph did not cover the whole period did not focus on the precise wording of the question made unsupported comments about issues which were no more than assertions.

Section A overview

There is one compulsory question in this section. This question requires candidates to explain the view of each interpretation in relation to the question and then evaluate the interpretation by the application of contextual knowledge. Responses should show an understanding of the wider debate connected to the issue.

Question 1

- 1 Evaluate the interpretations in **both** of the two passages.

Explain which you think is more convincing as an explanation of the nature of the Pilgrimage of Grace. [30]

The two interpretations offered very different views as to the nature of the Pilgrimage of Grace. While some drift to causes was credited this could not be the focus of responses that scored highly. It is important that responses take an overview of the interpretation and consider what view it is offering about the issue in the question, rather than cherry pick a phrase and then evaluate that.

Interpretation A argued that the rising was popular and spontaneous and it was the elements of the interpretation that focused on that which should have been the focus of the evaluation. Interpretation B argued that the rising was planned and that the Aragonese faction played a significant role in this.

A significant number of responses across all units, not just Y306, often focus on explaining what the interpretation is saying and do not evaluate the view, evaluate means giving a value to the interpretation, in simple terms, is the view valid? Here, those who did evaluate Interpretation A often picked up on the scale of the rising and then the initial leadership in Lincolnshire. Many were also able to point to the gentry securing the leadership of the movement and also discussed the organisation of the pilgrimage into 'hosts'. Some responses used issues such as the availability of badges to challenge the view it was spontaneous, while others commented on the name of the pilgrimage to show it was a popular movement.

In evaluating Interpretation B, many candidates were able to use their knowledge of the Aragonese faction and how this was reflected in the demands to show it was planned. Others also showed that some of the demands reflected gentry rather than commoners' needs, to argue that it was planned.

Responses also considered the ease with which Pontefract castle fell, to argue it was organised. Exemplar 1 shows the level of evaluation and knowledge being used in order to reach the top of Level 6.

Exemplar 1

Q1	A	Both Passage A and Passage B argue give arguments on whether the Pilgrimage of Grace was a spontaneous rebellion or not. Passage A argues that it was a spontaneous rebellion in nature whilst Passage B argues that the rebellion was not a spontaneous rebellion. In this essay I will assess which passage is more convincing, reaching the conclusion that Passage B was more convincing as an explanation of the nature of the pilgrimage of Grace.
		Passage A first states that the Pilgrimage of Grace was an 'overwhelmingly popular and spontaneous'. whilst it is true that it was a popular rebellion as it provoked support not only in the commons, but also gentry and nobles, it is not necessarily correct to state it was spontaneous. Passage A also explains that the 'gentry were first forced into offering leadership', whilst this

		is what gentry and nobility members Hussey, Darcy and Aske proclaimed, it is not what actually happened and so this is less convincing. It was in fact Lord Hussey who refused to help the defend Pontefract castle and fled rather than try and hold the rebels off. Furthermore, Pontefract castle was one of the most important centres that held supplies greatly needed to the rebels. ^{if they were to succeed} If Hussey was really forced then he would have at least tried to defend such important supplies with a fight, especially since Henry VIII had wrote to him in advance asking for him to defend it. However, this is not to say that Pilgrimage of Grace did not have any spontaneous elements. Passage A also mentions how 'rumours of destruction of parish religion' spontaneously caused the commons to revolt. This is convincing as it was rumours, mentioning such as commissioners taking church goods and jewels, and as Passage A states, 'closure of parish churches' and 'taxation on baptisms' as well as burials and marriages that caused protest in the early stages of rebellion. This can be reinforced by the fact that 'captain cobbler' started the uprising after government commissions visited to oversee destruction of church images images. This is therefore convincing evidence to show it was a spontaneous rebellion. Passage A also off offers the idea that Pilgrimage of Grace was spontaneous as it was created by 'word of rising elsewhere'. Although this is true, the spontaneity of the rebell rising must be assessed. After Aske was appointed as leading the rebels, he travelled to the several different counties gathering the support and motivating the rebels, and therefore was not particularly spontaneous.
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but more of a strategic tactic by Aske. This argument is therefore less convincing as an argument that it was a spontaneous rebellion. Passage A is more convincing as it explains how 'gentry secured control of the movement by the end of October' ~~and~~ meaning how, although the rebellion started with rising of the lower classes, such as Nicholas Mutton, it was ~~later~~ the gentry and nobility that later assumed control. However, in the end, the rebels seemed less happy to be led by the nobles and gentry and they often put their issues above their own as this was seen in the Pontefract articles themselves. Despite enclosures being ~~one~~ one of rebels' grievances it did not appear in the demands. But, the restoration of Mary to the line of succession was, something that the Aragonese faction wanted. And this is stated in Passage A where it explains how 'the gentry had won a competition ~~for~~ for the leadership' but 'who would accept elite authority so long as it was advancing their interests' and this is therefore convincing. Furthermore, it is ~~or~~ convincing as Bigod's rising ~~all came as a~~ ~~con~~ stemmed from a fear that the gentry would betray the commoners and they were right. So overall, passage A offers some convincing argument, but arguments of spontaneity were flawed and therefore less convincing.

~~On the~~ On the otherhand, Passage B argues that the Pilgrimage of Grace was not spontaneous and was in fact planned. It does say in Passage B, that Aske 'claimed to be forced by peasant rebels' but this cannot be given weight as many nobles, including Hussey also claimed this. The reason as to why

		they would not claim leadership is because it would have resulted in harsher punishments - to claim they were forced prevents admitting outright treason, and as a lawyer, Aske would have been aware of this. Passage B also mentions that Aske may have been planning to be involved with the Lincolnshire rising after weekending with the Ellerkers. Whilst this may be not add too much strength to the argument it was planned, his travelling to different counties afterwards, including Yorkshire can be used as convincing evidence that Aske was intentionally trying to gather support for the rebellion ^{which would eventually reach 40,000.} Furthermore, Passage B explains how rumour spreading that provoked rebellion; there is 'evidence of rioters being paid for their work'. The rumours Passage B refers to is the rumour refers to it the idea that the tax on horned cattle would spread to other farm animals, but also that commissioners would be seizing all church goods. The rumours were also initially spread by the clergy, which is very important. The church ^{and clergy} was very active in the Pilgrimage of Grace despite their involvement being a sin for going against the God-chosen ruler. The church not only funded the rebellion by paying for the supplies, but they also also the clergy took up arms in the rebellion. The Pilgrims marching under the banner of the Saviour of Christ signifies the churches involvement. The church were arguably affect the most by the dissolution of monasteries and so it is a convincing argument that they would have been part of planning the rebellion. Also the fact that it started as Pilgrimage of Grace for the commonwealth, but later changed to a more religious stance shows church involvement in manipulating the rebellion to work in their favour. The most convincing argument, however, in the passage B is the idea that
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		the pilgrimage was a 'decision by one court faction to take the battle out of the court into the nation'. This is very convincing as one of the main main factions involved in the rebellion was disaffected pro-Aragonese factions. After losing their positions after the divorce of Catherine of Aragon they were eager to get back into political power. They held key positions in the rebellions and help to strategise and organise demands made. One of these rebellions had been demands was that Mary was restored to the line of succession which would secure the pro-Aragonese factions position in court. And so, overall, passage B is more convincing in arguing that it was not a spontaneous rebellion.
		And so, passage the Pilgrimage of Grace is is not a spontaneous rebellion as it was planned by Aske and the church but also the nobility of disaffected pro-Aragonese faction. This is seen through Aske's carefully planned route around the country gathering support, the church's financial aid and the nobility's demands in Pontefract articles. The church's involvement can also be seen as 9/24 of the Pontefract articles were religious, even though it started as commoners being upset over rumours of tax on horned cattle and white meat as well as the peacetime subsidy. However despite this only 3/24 were economic demands in the Pontefract articles. This shows that the spontaneous uprising of the commons was slowly but surely overtaken by the gentry and nobility, showing passage B is more convincing.

Assessment for learning



'Evaluate' means give a value to the interpretation. In simple terms, is the view valid?

Section B overview

Candidates are required to answer two questions from a choice of three. To do well on Section B candidates need to make connections and links across the whole period of their study. They should explain similarities and differences between the events they are discussing to show an awareness of continuity and change across the whole period, unless instructed otherwise. The comparisons may be made across the period within the topic or between regions, depending on the Topic. It is also important that the comparisons are explained - what is similar or different between the periods or regions.

The strongest responses will test a hypothesis and reach a supported judgement.

Question 2*

2* How similar were rebellions in England and Ireland in the period from 1485 to 1603?

[25]

The question required a direct comparison of a range of issues about English and Irish rebellions. This often included a discussion of the length of the rebellions, the size of the rebel force, the motives and even causes. There was plenty that could be discussed, but what was crucial was a comparison between English and Irish rebellions, not within English rebellions.

Exemplar 2 provides a very good example of a response placed at the top of Level 6 because there is strong synthesis in most of the essay, comparisons are made and explained. Candidates compared the size of the rebellions in the first half of this period. It was argued that the English rebellions were larger in nature than the Irish rebellions. However, there was some change in the second half of the period in England. Appropriate examples were used to support this argument.

Motives of the rebels was a useful point of comparison with many arguing for similarity in terms of protest against growing centralisation, seen in the Pilgrimage of Grace and Northern Earls. This was compared most notably with Tyrone's rebellion and the rejection of rule from London. Some also linked this to the idea of faction and argued that it is possible to see faction as a motivating force behind all Irish rebellions, but not English, while taxation and other economic grievances played a significant role in England, they were absent in Ireland.

Location was also discussed and this was linked to duration, with many commenting that those nearer to London were shorter-lived than those further away, regardless of whether they were in Ireland or not.

Exemplar 2

2	<p>Rebellions in England and Ireland were partially similar over the Tudor period. Rebellions in England and Ireland often had similar causes and objectives such as factional rivalry and economic disputes. However, whilst rebellions in England tended to gather more support than that of those in Ireland. English rebellions however, did not tend to last as long making them less of a threat. Therefore rebellions in England and Ireland were only partially similar between 1485 and 1603.</p> <p>Firstly, the causes of Irish rebellion were similar to that of rebellions in England. For example, in the Munster revolt of 1558 to 1565, Shane O'Neill sought to preserve the Catholic faith as England's increase in English land owners had led to an increase in the number of Protestants living in Ireland.</p>
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Similarly, England had experienced multiple, pro-Catholic anti-Protestant revolts such as the 1549 Western Rebellion where rebels seek the restoration of Latin Mass and Catholic religious practices in canonisation. However, whilst the Shane O'Neill rebellion had religious undercurrents, O'Neill was more focused on advancing his own political career after having his rivals promoted. Tyranner's rebellion, however, can be seen as a revolt with similar objectives to the 1536 Pilgrimage of Grace and the 1596 Oxfordshire rebellion. This is because Tyranner and many picked up support of much of the Irish peasantry who were angry at English plantations, whereby landlords illegally took land and increased rent rapidly to very high levels. This is similar to the 1536 Pilgrimage of Grace where rebels were vocal about landlords such as the earl of Cumberland, Ralph Hargrey, increasing rents. Therefore, Irish rebellion can be seen to be similar to English rebellions as they had similar causes.

However, Irish rebellions were not similar to English rebellions in that they generally gained less support. This is evident as rebellions in England such as:

the 1497 Cornish rebellion gained 15000 supporters; the 1536 pilgrimage of grace gained 40000 supporters; the Western rebellion of 1549 had about 8000 rebels; and the 1669 Northern rising gained 3000 rebels. However, rebellions in Ireland tended to gain less support, with the 1534 Silken Thomas revolt, the 1558 Munster revolt and both of Fitzgeralds rebellions gaining less than 5000 rebels. Despite this, Tyrone's rebellion in Ireland received support from around 14 000 rebels in all 4 of Ireland's provinces - however, this could be seen more of a national uprising as opposed to a rebellion meaning the size of support cannot be compared to those in England or the other Irish

rebellions. Therefore, English and Irish rebellions cannot be seen as similar due to their different levels of support.

In contrast, however, Irish rebellions did tend to last longer than English rebellions. For example, the Tyrone rebellion lasted 8 years, with Fitzgerald's first and second rebellions lasting 3 years and 5 years respectively, O'Neill's Munster revolt lasting 7 years and Silken Thomas's rebellion lasting 3 years. This contrasted English rebellions which tended to be suppressed much faster. For example, the 1496 level rebellion lasted just 1 month, Sumner's rebellion lasting just 3 months, the Pilgrimage of Grace lasting a year and Oxford Essex's rebellion lasting just 12 hours. This was likely due to the distance from London, with Ireland being the furthest, meaning by virtue of being in Ireland Irish rebellions were different to English rebellions as it caused them to last longer due to it taking longer for the government to hear of and send troops to suppress rebellions in Ireland. Therefore, rebellions in Ireland were different to English rebellions due to their length.

However, Irish rebellions can be seen as similar to those in England as both in Ireland and England, rebellions were headed mainly by nobles. For example, all of Ireland's rebellions were led by nobles with Thomas in 1534 (son of 9th Earl of Kildare), Shane O'Neill (an Irish deputy) in 1568, and the Fitzgerald ^{as Earl} in 1569 and 1572, and the Earl of Tyrone in 1595. Similarly, most English rebellions were headed by nobles. For example, Lovell in 1486, the Earl of Lincoln in 1495, rebellion, ~~the~~ ~~Baron~~ ~~in the~~ ~~1536~~ ~~Pilgrimage~~ ~~of~~ ~~Grace~~ ~~and~~ ~~Huss~~ ~~in~~ ~~1536~~, and the Earl of Northumberland and Westmorland in 1569. However, some rebellions in England were not led by nobles such as the 1525 Amicable grant rebellion, the 1549 Western rebellions with Berry and Winglade as leaders, and the 1596 Oxfordshire rebellion. Whilst this shows how they were dissimilar to Irish rebellions, the threat posed by these rebellions was never as high as great, chain of being hadn't been broken at the top, meaning English rebellions were similar to Irish rebellions in that only rebellions with noble leaders threatened the rebellion.

Therefore, rebellions in Ireland were only partially similar to those in England.

		This is because, whilst they had some
		similar causes and objectives, and both
		had ^{mostly} noble leaders, Irish rebellions lasted
		longer but gained less support than
		those in England. Therefore rebellions
		in Ireland were only partially similar
		to the rebellions in England.

Misconception



Synthesis does not mean stating something is similar - there needs to be direct comparison and explanation as to whether something is similar or different, or whether there is change or continuity.

Question 3*

3* 'All Tudor rebellions failed to have an impact on government and society.'

How far do you agree with this view of the period from 1485 to 1603?

[25]

Although a popular question, some candidates did not read beyond the first part of the question and therefore answered whether all rebellions failed, not whether they had an impact on government and society. There were some responses that simply went through each rebellion and explained its impact, which made synthesis very difficult.

However, responses where a thematic approach was taken did provide valid comparisons. There was a range of themes discussed, such as the impact on ministers, foreign policy with taxation rebellions, the numbers who were killed by government forces, economic and religious legislation and the changing of the ruler. Discussion over legislation provided a particularly fruitful area of comparison. Not only did responses argue that rebellions often led to economic legislation, as seen after both 1549 and 1596 which met some of the grievances, but they compared this to religious rebellions where rebels failed to achieve their aims and actually saw the process of change accelerated with the closure of the larger monasteries after the Pilgrimage of Grace and the Prayer Book (Western) Rebellion.

Taxation rebellions also provided an area where good comparisons were made as the Yorkshire, Cornish and Amicable Grant were all seen as having an impact on both government and society. The impact of rebellions on ministers and the monarchy also provided some useful discussion – did ministers fall as a result of rebellion, as in the case of Wolsey and Cromwell, but survive with Cecil in the 1590s? Similarly, dynastic rebellions did lead to some change, including the establishment of the Tudor dynasty, the restoration of Mary and her short-term defeat, which was contrasted with the limited impact of the Northern Earls.

Question 4*

- 4* How important was the Church in the maintenance of political stability in the period from 1485 to 1603? [25]

This was a popular question in which the strongest responses compared the Church with other institutions or bodies in the maintenance of stability. There were a number of responses which did not go beyond discussing the Church and this provided only a partial response, while many drifted into a discussion of religion as a cause of stability/instability. However, even those who wrote about the Church and other institutions often found it difficult to make comparisons across the period (demonstrate synthesis).

In discussing the Church candidates could have considered how the role might have changed, with it playing an important element in the period to 1558 with the involvement of bishops in government, the preaching of homilies on obedience and the use of the pulpit, while under Elizabeth, some argued it was less important. However, some argued that it maintained its importance, upholding the Religious Settlement, designed to create stability and that the Church was under the Crown's jurisdictional control, so played a key role.

In discussing other themes, candidates often focused on the monarchy and nobility. The latter provided a useful point of comparison as some nobles played a key role in maintaining stability while others undermined it. There was also some discussion of the changing nature of institutions which helped to uphold stability, from the increasing importance of JP's to the emergence of the middling sort as overseers of the poor or as churchwardens. Synthesis could also have been demonstrated by comparing the relative importance of these bodies across the period.

Misconception



The Church and religion are not the same thing. The Church is an institution and it is this institution that candidates need to discuss in Question 4

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