

**GCSE (9-1)**

**Examiners' report**

# **HISTORY B**

## **(SCHOOLS HISTORY PROJECT)**

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**J411**

For first teaching in 2016

**J411/12 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.

A full copy of the question paper and the mark scheme can be downloaded from OCR.

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## Paper 12 series overview

This paper incorporates the Thematic Study and the British Depth Study, each accounting for half the marks of this paper. 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 (Question 2), offer an explanation in response to a historical question (e.g. explaining the causes or consequences of something) in Question 3 and recall and apply their knowledge to support and challenge a statement in an essay style question from either Question 4 or Question 5.

To do well in the British Depth Study, candidates need 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) whilst recalling and applying their knowledge in a further essay-style question from either Question 8 or Question 9.

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 are being analytical in Question 2 and selecting valid historical investigations in Question 6 (b).

### OCR support



Please note the date of the upcoming Exam Review session which is 15 October 4-6pm.  
Booking link is [here](#).

## Section A: The People's Health, c.1250 to present overview

The thematic study requires candidates to understand change and continuity from c.1250 to the present. The study requires them to consider historical development over a long period and to identify and explain why certain developments occurred. The questions test various historical skills from the ability to deploy second order concepts in their answers to writing explained arguments for or against certain views.

It was clear from the majority of answers that most candidates had been well-prepared and were able to deploy their knowledge accurately, particularly on Questions 3 and Question 5.

However, on Question 2, while it was clear that many candidates had considered how to analyse air quality since 1900, for example by examining the causes of poor air quality, fewer were able to support their responses with specific examples, falling back on generic statements. Similarly, candidates opting to answer Question 4 tended to offer only very general descriptions of living conditions which lacked precision.

Candidates who did well on this section generally:	Candidates who did less well on this section generally:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>recalled at least two valid answers (Question 1)</li> <li>analysed air quality since 1900 by organising their response around a historical concept (most frequently: changing quality over time; reasons why air quality has been poor or why it has improved; or impact of air quality on health) - supporting their response by referencing precise examples which showed they had studied this topic well (Question 2)</li> <li>fully explained at least one reason why public health improved in the second half of the 1800s (Question 3)</li> <li>effectively deployed a range of knowledge in the essay question, using precise, period-specific evidence to support their answers (Questions 4 and 5)</li> <li>offered specific actions taken by one or more town authorities as evidence of 'care' about public health (Question 4).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>did not produce a valid answer to any part of Question 1</li> <li>correctly identified causes or consequences of poor air quality, or identified a pattern of improvement/deterioration in air quality but offered very general or simplistic examples which were not rooted in developed historical understanding (e.g. 'cars', 'factories', etc.) (Question 2)</li> <li>identified valid reason(s) in Question 3, but were unable to develop their response with precise evidence and/or link their cause to a specific public health improvement</li> <li>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)</li> <li>made overly-generalised comments (e.g. waste being 'thrown out of windows', etc.) describing living conditions (Question 4).</li> </ul>

## Question 1 (a)

1

(a) Give **one** example of how people responded to outbreaks of plague in the 1600s. [1]

This question was not problematic for the vast majority of candidates. There was a very wide range of creditable answers. Most frequently rewarded were isolation, burning barrels of tar, sniffing flowers/herbs and clearing the streets of cats/dogs. Answers which were clearly identifiable as medieval (e.g. 'flagellation') were not credited.

## Question 1 (b)

(b) Give **one** reason why food in towns was of such low quality in the early 1800s. [1]

Although, again, most candidates were able to provide a correct answer, this question was less successfully answered than 1 (a). The most frequently credited answer was food adulteration. Other valid popular answers included lack of refrigeration and lack of regulation surrounding the sale of food.

There were numerous answers which referred to poverty or lack of food, but as the question asked about food **quality**, these did not receive any credit. There were also some invalid answers which were clearly outside of the time period given, e.g. answers relating to medieval markets.

## Question 1 (c)

(c) Give **one** way that technology has made lifestyles less healthy since 1900. [1]

This question was answered correctly by most candidates. The most frequently credited responses were: the development of cars leading to people walking less; technology in the home or workplace meaning work or housework is less physical; TVs, phones, consoles or tablets creating more sedentary forms of entertainment; and microwaves encouraging people to eat less healthily.

Quite often, where candidates missed out on a mark, it was because they hadn't fully engaged with one part of the question. For instance, answers which simply identified a technology (e.g. 'cars'), without saying how it had made lifestyles less healthy, did not receive any credit.

## Question 2

2 Write a clear and organised summary that analyses air quality since 1900.

Support your summary with examples.

[9]

Most candidates were able to include some relevant knowledge about air quality since 1900 in their responses. While there were some responses which contained unorganised descriptions, most also did approach their summary in an analytical way. Most frequently, candidates considered change over time (improvements and/or deterioration in quality of air since 1900); causation (reasons why quality of air was poor, or reasons why it improved); and consequence (the impact of air quality on health).

However, there were still many responses which did not move past Level 1, or were marked at the bottom of Level 2. The main reason for this was a lack of precise examples. For instance, many responses correctly identified that poor air quality was caused by factories or by cars, or that it resulted in smog, but did not develop their responses beyond these basic points. There were also many candidates who incorrectly assumed that widespread car ownership was the cause of poor air quality right from 1900. Similarly, many candidates knew the name of the Clean Air Act but were not able to identify accurately its terms or its effects. Some thought that it was brought in in order to combat pollution from cars.

To move into Levels 2 and 3, responses needed to contain precise examples relating to quality of air. Better responses were able reference things such as:

- the increase in the use of coal in homes and factories in the first half of the twentieth century
- the 'Great Smog' of 1952 and its impact
- the subsequent Clean Air Act of 1956, and its provisions or impact
- the rise in car ownership during the 1980s and its impact on air/health
- recent national and local government initiatives to combat the impact of the rise in car ownership
- government action to prevent poor air quality as a result of smoking.

A minority of candidates misunderstood the question and wrote about quality of housing or about health problems which result from smoking more generally (as opposed to passive smoking). These types of responses could not receive any credit.

### Advice to centres



Candidates need to be able to include specific historical evidence to support their responses. They need to make sure that they don't rely too much on 'general knowledge' to answer these questions as this can often lead to imprecise examples.

## Question 3

### 3 Why did public health improve in the **second half** of the 1800s?

Explain your answer.

[10]

Candidates typically attempted to tackle this question through examining changes or legislation (e.g. the Public Health Acts) and explaining why they improved health; or through examining the root causes of improvements (e.g. the extension of the franchise) and identifying which changes these factors led to.

The overwhelming majority of candidates were able to identify at least one reason why public health improved in the second half of the 1800s. Common valid responses were:

- The 1848 and 1875 Public Health Acts leading to changes such as the establishment of boards of health, authorities taking responsibility for sewers, improvements in provision of clean water and the appointment of medical officers.
- Bazalgette's building of the London sewer system which greatly reduced deaths from Cholera.
- Local initiatives such as those taken by Manchester and Birmingham which resulted in better water supply or healthier housing.
- The 'Great Stink' of 1858 which prompted the commission for Bazalgette's sewers.
- The extension of the franchise in 1867 which led to changes such as the 1875 Public Health Act.
- The abandonment of a *laissez-faire* attitude and an acceptance of an increased role for national government in public health (reflected in both Public Health Acts).
- Chadwick's 1842 report which led to the 1848 Public Health Act.
- Pasteur's Germ Theory which boosted support for government action such as the 1875 Public Health Act.

There was a good number of responses which offered at least one full explanation, supported by precise evidence/examples; these were rewarded at Levels 4 and 5.

However, some candidates were unable to progress beyond Level 2 or Level 3 because they lacked specific detail to support their response and/or were unable to identify the resulting public health improvement. This was often the case with candidates selecting Pasteur's Germ Theory.

There was also a significant number of responses which simply described the work of John Snow, or went on to argue that his investigations into the causes of cholera had an impact on the government's decisions to bring about public health reform. This was not valid and could not be credited above Level 2.

At the lower end of the mark scheme, candidates tended to make accurate but vague assertions about improvements resulting from scientific or technological advancement in this period, which did not demonstrate the knowledge required. These responses were generally placed in Level 1.

Some, but not many, responses veered away from the question's focus, instead addressing a different question, for example how effective the changes were, or why there was a lack of action. Some candidates wrote about the wrong time period (usually about housing and the NHS in the 1900s, although a few wrote about the Gin Acts or about actions on plague). These were not credited.



## Question 4\*

**4\*** 'The authorities in towns and monasteries in medieval Britain (1250–1500) cared very little about public health.'

How far do you agree?

Give reasons for your answer.

[18]

This question was not quite as popular as Question 5 and was generally not as well answered. The question was asking how much the authorities in medieval towns and monasteries 'cared' about public health. The vast majority of candidates had clearly studied the period and were familiar with the terms referred to in the question. Almost all candidates who chose to write something about monasteries knew what a monastery was, which was a noticeable improvement from 2023.

To challenge the statement, the best responses tended to offer detailed knowledge about various local measures taken by town authorities (most frequently in places such as York, London, Bristol, Norwich, Winchester and Shrewsbury, although other areas were successfully cited too). There was also good use made of movements in many towns to restrict the harmful effects of butchers and tanners and move them to the outskirts of towns, and the widespread employment of rakers by 1500. Some were able to use their knowledge about public health provision in monasteries to good effect as well, arguing that 'care' was taken over things such the layout of the monasteries to deal with waste (e.g. latrines over rivers) and the provision of clean water.

Candidates tended to find it more difficult to argue successfully in support of the statement, although there were some good responses about the lack of care relating to the disposal of waste in medieval towns, with candidates citing precise evidence such as gongfermers dumping waste in rivers; unpaved streets; and the pollution caused by butchers or tanners before restrictions were introduced. There was also frequent citing of the limited action taken during the Black Death.

Responses reaching Level 6 put forward four explained points, with at least one point on either side of the argument.

However, although most candidates were able to identify valid points for Level 2, far fewer were able to reach the higher levels by developing them beyond generic description. This was often the case when candidates came to describing poor living conditions in medieval towns. A large number of responses described medieval towns in the most general of terms, e.g. as places where human waste was constantly being thrown out of windows and onto the streets.

Similarly, there were many responses which veered away from the question about the authorities and whether they cared, and drifted off into descriptions of what people believed caused disease and/or what ordinary people did in response to the Black Death. These were rewarded at Level 1 or Level 2 only.

## Exemplar 1

However ~~to~~ I do agree with the ~~stater~~ statement partially. This is due to waste management. In towns gongfermers were meant to empty cesspits and sell the dung to local farmers. However many of gongfermers just through the dung into rivers instead. This lead to rivers becoming dirty and infected by people's waste and the authorities did not do anything to stop them leading to worse overall health in towns.

Explained points must identify a valid argument, offer specific evidence to support the argument and show how their evidence answers the question. Exemplar 1 shows a sensible paragraph structure as it is more likely to be clear and easy to follow. This candidate starts this explained point by stating that they agree with the statement because of waste management and gongfermers as their valid point. They then develop and support this using precise evidence about the gongfermers emptying the cesspits but throwing the waste in the rivers and infecting them, rather than selling it to farmers. Finally, they link this back to the question by saying the authorities let this happen.

## Question 5\*

5\* 'The gin craze was the most significant public health problem in the early modern period (1500–c.1750).'

How far do you agree?

Give reasons for your answer.

[18]

On the whole, candidates scored more highly on this question than on Question 4 and there were some excellent responses.

The vast majority of candidates were familiar with the gin craze and understood what the question was asking. Most wrote about the correct time period. They argued in different ways that various public health problems were (or were not) 'significant', e.g. by showing how dangerous they were for health; by examining how widespread or long-lasting they were; by looking at how much attention they drew from the authorities; and by assessing the ability of the authorities to deal with them. All of these were acceptable approaches.

Therefore, a wide range of points was credited as valid by examiners. Frequently credited points in favour of the statement included:

- The Gin Craze was a significant public health problem given its impact on health, families, and crime.
- The national government clearly saw the Gin Craze as a significant public health problem as they introduced numerous pieces of legislation to attempt to control it.
- The fact that it took a long time and various Gin Acts to control the craze is evidence of how serious a problem it was.

In opposition to the statement, the following points were regularly credited:

- The Gin Craze was not the most significant problem because (compared to other problems) it did not last for very long, and/or government legislation did manage to end it eventually.
- The problem most commonly argued as being a more significant health problem was the plague. Here, candidates made a variety of arguments for its significance, including:
  - National and local authorities legislated to deal with it through isolation, the Plague Acts, etc. This shows they considered it a serious problem.
  - The fact that its causes were unknown meant that attempts to tackle it were not always successful.
  - Plague was a recurring problem throughout the period and there were major outbreaks – on average – every twenty years until 1670. It could wipe out 30% of a community.
- Other problems were less frequently (and on the whole, less successfully) attempted, but included: problems of pollution, clean water and waste management in towns; the ongoing problem of famine, particularly at the beginning of the period; and problems relating to the diet of the richer classes (e.g. an increase in consumption of sugar leading to obesity and rotting teeth).

At Level 3 and above, candidates were credited for demonstrating specific historical evidence to support their points and using this evidence to address the question about significance.

Again, responses reaching Level 6 put forward four explained points, with at least one point on either side of the argument.

Candidates whose points were awarded at Level 2 usually had a lack of precise detail and/or did not use their knowledge to address the question. Quite often, examiners saw responses which provided lengthy descriptions of people's beliefs about plague which didn't get around to explaining why the disease was a significant problem.

There were a number of responses that mixed up plague (as a recurring feature in this period) with 'the Great Plague' of 1665, or mixed it up with the Black Death. These candidates usually made incorrect assertions that the Great Plague of 1665 killed 30% or even 60% of the British population, or made references to flagellants.

As with Question 4, attempts to argue that living conditions were a significant public health problem were quite often not credited beyond Level 1, as they tended to be overly generalised with references to waste being thrown out of windows, etc. Better arguments credited at Level 2 and above were more period-specific, and made good use of things like cesspits only being emptied every year or two, by carrying barrels of excrement through houses; increased use of coal as its price dropped, leading to respiratory problems; or overhanging 'jetties' in streets.

### Advice to centres



Candidates need to be comfortable with the four different time periods on the specification and be able to differentiate between them. It is also really important that candidates remain focused on answering the precise question in front of them.

## Section B: The Elizabethans, 1580–1603 overview

To do well on the British Depth Study, candidates need to be able to:

- analyse and compare interpretations
- devise historical questions
- recall and apply their knowledge to support and challenge a historical interpretation in an essay-style question.

The depth study on 'The Elizabethans 1580–1603' focuses on the latter part of Elizabeth I's reign when she was faced with dangers both at home and abroad. Topics examined this year included Drake's leadership at the time of the Armada, comparing portrayals of Elizabeth's reign, the extremes of rich and poor during the period and Elizabethan entertainment. This section accounts for fifty per cent of the paper.

There was a wide range of responses with some candidates demonstrating a very good knowledge and understanding of the topics. It was clear from the majority of responses that most candidates had been well prepared for Questions 6 and 7, although many candidates still struggled to think of wider, historical questions or lines of enquiry for Question 6 (b). On Question 7, candidates were able to successfully compare portrayals of Elizabeth's reign.

Questions 8 and 9 produced a wide range of responses. Question 8 attracted more candidates who wrote generalised responses that could belong to any period. These answers showed a lack of specific knowledge about the structure of society often leading to responses that would be valid for any period. There were also some answers of a high quality. Question 9 was very popular and often done very well. These responses were generally of a higher standard. Candidates certainly knew about the Elizabethans' love of entertainment and many answers provided balanced, well-explained arguments.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• started with a specific feature from the source followed by two points about the impression this gave of Drake - alternatively, they began with a more general point followed by an example and details of how this gave the impression that Drake was an impressive leader (Question 6(a))</li> <li>• selected an historically valid investigation that would enable them to analyse and understand England's war with Spain, for example the reasons for the war or its outcome (Question 6(b))</li> <li>• compared the portrayal/message/impression of Elizabeth I's reign supported with relevant quotations from the sources and in many cases also explained the purpose of Interpretation B. Such responses selected their</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• did not go beyond producing a quotation from the source usually the one that stated that there was time to finish the game of bowls and beat the Spaniards too – and a few simply paraphrased the text rather than focusing on the question (Question 6(a))</li> <li>• chose investigations that were not historically valid or related to England's war with Spain (Question 6(b))</li> <li>• tried to compare specific points referred to in the interpretations but often did not compare like with like - some just focused on the provenance of the interpretations or attempted to compare their purpose (Question 7)</li> <li>• wrote brief descriptions about various aspects of the lives of the rich and poor, often not specific to the period and struggled to produce</li> </ul>

Candidates who did well on this paper generally:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally:
<p>support carefully to produce valid comparisons (Question 7)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrated a sound understanding of the topic to enable them to provide detailed explanations to support the fact that Elizabethan society was characterised by the extremes of rich and poor – and were able to provide a counter-argument with reference to the middling sort or by using religion or gender (Question 8)</li> <li>produced well-argued responses with explanations on why Elizabethans loved entertainment, balanced with explained reasons for Puritan opposition and that of the London authorities – and demonstrated a sound knowledge and understanding of entertainment during the period, able to use specific examples to support their response (Question 9).</li> </ul>	<p>a balanced argument as they lacked knowledge of the middling sort (Question 8)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>had some knowledge of Elizabethan theatre but were unable to provide specific examples regarding feasts and festivals and other aspects of entertainment (Question 9).</li> </ul>

## Question 6 (a)

6

(a) In **Interpretation A**, the book depicts Francis Drake as an impressive leader.

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

[3]

Many candidates were able to start with a specific feature and then make two points of development about it or make a general point, give an example, and explain how this showed him to be impressive. Most candidates focused on his game of bowls and him saying that there was time 'to finish his game and beat the Spaniards too'. Confident and calm were the usual choice of adjectives to describe him.

### Points for centres to consider

There are still some candidates trying to focus on more than one feature of the interpretation, which is not required.

## 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 war with Spain.

[5]

Candidates who did well ensured that they selected a valid historical enquiry and that their question was framed around a second order concept. Such questions usually involved investigating why the Armada was defeated or what its impact was on England. Other questions involved comparing the tactics of the two sides or investigating the English ships and the role they played in the victory. There were still some candidates who are choosing an investigation and then answering it themselves instead of explaining how it would help us analyse and understand England's war with Spain.

Many candidates limited themselves to Level 1 from the outset. Too many chose to investigate why Drake decided to finish his game of bowls or why he was so confident. They then unsuccessfully proceeded to try and explain how this would help to understand England's war with Spain.

Candidates are clearly still struggling with this question and are finding it difficult to construct a historically valid question. As far as this interpretation was concerned, the most obvious questions could have gained them full marks. They are trying to make everything too complicated and some of the investigations would not have been feasible.

### Points for centres to consider

Candidates clearly find it difficult to come up with valid investigations. They should look for a clue in the question. They were asked how it would help them understand England's war with Spain and this could have led them into thinking about the causes of the war or the impact of the war.



## Question 7

### 7 Interpretations B and C both make judgements about the reign of Elizabeth I.

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

[12]

Candidates who did well were able to adopt a more holistic approach to each interpretation to compare the message, impression, or portrayal of Elizabeth I and/or her reign. They carefully selected their support. Some successfully reached Level 4 by considering the purpose of Interpretation B emphasising that it was to mark the 400th anniversary of the queen's death and that it was produced for celebratory reasons. They realised that the interpretation was not designed to be negative given its purpose. The focus tended to be on the comment that 'her reign created a sense of national identity that had not existed before, her 'best qualities' and the reference to 'the greatest prince this country has produced was a prince in skirts'. This was contrasted in Interpretation C with 'there is not much sign of a golden age' and 'she was not a political genius who got everything right'. Successful comparisons were also made based on England's military achievements and on the religious situation at the time.

Less successful responses often quoted from the interpretations but did not compare like with like. There were some very long responses to this question, but they often lacked organisation and candidates were trying to compare every point rather than responding to the question as a whole. Some merely concentrated on the purpose of the interpretation which confined them to Level 2. Responses that did focus on comparison were often incomplete with candidates stressing that it was to mark the 400th anniversary of her death and then not explaining that it was meant to be celebratory and not critical.

#### Advice to centres



Candidates should take a moment before beginning their response to consider, 'What impression does the author (or artist, etc.) want to give me about X?' They should then select details from the extract (or image) to support their response. They should also be encouraged to consider specific reasons that a particular organisation or individual might want to give us that impression. Because these will be interpretation-specific, it is important that candidates are given numerous opportunities to 'bump into' historical interpretations to practise this kind of thing routinely. Generic or pre-learned responses will rarely make it to the higher levels.



## Question 8\*

- 8\* According to the history website 'BBC Bitesize', Elizabethan society was 'characterised by extremes of rich and poor'.

How far do you agree with this view of the **structure** of Elizabethan society between 1580 and 1603?

Give reasons for your answer.

[20]

This was a less popular question and, on the whole, not as well answered as Question 9. Candidates who responded well demonstrated an impressive level of knowledge of the nature of life for rich and/or poor. Their responses went beyond asserting that life was harder for the poor by providing detailed examples.

Valid points raised to support the interpretation include precise evidence that there were extremes:

- of rich - made up only 2% of the population; grand houses with many windows and servants; diets with meals such as pheasant, pickled herring and marzipan
- of poor - labourers' houses were small, dark and poorly built with no chimneys; pottage for the poor and the threat of bad harvests leading to starvation.

Valid points raised to challenge the statement was less common and included:

- evidence about the 'middling sort' (used by some candidates)
- Poor Law of 1601 saw some improvements for the poor, e.g. provision of alms houses which helped to lift people out of extreme poverty.

As a result, few responses achieved the balance necessary for the highest level.

At Level 2 and above, candidates included precise evidence to support their point and, crucially, explained how it addressed the question of whether Elizabethan society was characterised by extremes of rich or poor. Responses which attained Level 5 put forward four explained points, with at least one point on either side of the argument.

There were several reasons for responses (or parts of responses) not being awarded above Level 1. Some candidates made valid points but were unable develop these sufficiently with precise evidence or they described Elizabethan society without linking it clearly to the question.

## Exemplar 2

		Reinforcing this, I agree with
		this view because of the lifestyle
		of the gentry. Despite consisting
		of only 2% of the population, the
		gentry had luxurious lifestyles
		which consisted of a diet of
		exotic meats, cheeses, fruits,
		venison, etc. They lived in huge
		housing and owned acres of
		land, and their jobs consisted
		of political positions like being
		an MP or Justice of the Peace.
		This shows that the gentry had
		all control over society and
		had all of its wealth.

Explained points must identify a valid argument, offer specific evidence to support the argument and show how their evidence answers the question. Exemplar 2 has a sensible paragraph structure as it is more likely to be clear and easy to follow. This candidate starts this explained point by stating that they agree with the statement because of the lifestyle of the gentry as their valid point. They then develop and support this using evidence about the gentry consisting of only 2% of the population and describing, with precision, their diets and housing and power. Finally, they link this back to the question by saying this shows they had control over society and its wealth.

## Question 9\*

9\* According to the website 'www.elizabethan-era.org.uk', 'Elizabethan people loved entertainment'.

How far do you agree with this view of Elizabethan **pastimes, festivities and theatres** between 1580 and 1603?

Give reasons for your answer.

[20]

Question 9 was the more popular of the two essay options. Candidates were generally able to tackle the question with real vigour, had clearly studied Elizabethan pastimes, festivities and theatres and understood what the question was asking. Many candidates were able to both support and challenge the interpretation and structured their responses around different types of entertainment. Most knew that the Puritans were opposed to it.

Valid points raised to support the interpretation include:

- most commonly theatres and their accessibility to both rich and 'poor groundlings'
- festivities such as Parish Ales or May Day
- pastimes such as bear-baiting or cock-fighting.

Valid points raised to challenge the statement included:

- most commonly Puritan opposition
- complaints made by the London Authorities about the ills of entertainment in and around Bankside.

At Level 2 and above, candidates included precise evidence to support their point and, crucially, explained how it addressed the question of whether Elizabethan people loved entertainment. Responses which attained Level 5 put forward four explained points, with at least one point on either side of the argument.

There were several reasons for responses (or parts of responses) not being awarded above Level 1. Some candidates made valid points but were unable develop these sufficiently with precise evidence.

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## Need to get in touch?


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Call us on  
**01223 553998**

Alternatively, you can email us on  
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