

Examiners' report

A LEVEL

HISTORY A

OCR Level 3 Advanced GCE in History A

H505

For first teaching in 2015

Y224/01 Summer 2025 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 responses 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 [Teach Cambridge](#).

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Paper Y224 series overview

Y224 is one of twenty-four units in Paper 2 for the A Level examination for GCE History. This unit tests a coherent period of non-British History through a short answer essay question and a traditional essay question. The paper contains two questions, each having two parts, a short answer essay and a traditional essay. Candidates have to answer both parts of one question.

To do well on the short-answer essay question, candidates need to consider the significance or importance of both issues, factors, individuals or events mentioned in relation to the question. Having analysed or explained both they must reach a supported judgement as to which is the most important or significant.

To do well on the traditional essay, candidates need to address the issue in the question, using detailed supporting knowledge. To reach the higher levels candidates need to assess the issues they discuss and reach a supported judgement, at least in the conclusion.

Question 1 was significantly more popular than Question 2.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally:
- gave equal consideration to the two issues in the short answer essay - reached a developed and supported judgement as to which issue was more significant or important - linked their knowledge of the issues to the focus of the question - in answering the essay question candidates discussed at least two issues in depth - the supporting detail was both accurate and relevant to the question set, not just the topic - reach a supported judgement about the issue in the question - made a series of interim judgements about the issues discussed in relation to the question.	- considered only one of the issues or discussed one in a superficial way - produced a judgement that was not supported and was therefore assertion or a judgement that did not follow logically from the response - were unable to use their knowledge to address the issue in the question - showed a poor understanding of the major issues relevant to the essay - were unable to support their answer with relevant or accurate material - did not focus on the precise wording of the question - made unsupported comments about issues which were no more than assertions.

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Question 1 (a) (i) and (ii)

1

(a) Which of the following had the greater impact in South Africa?

(i) The Group Areas Act

(ii) The Separate Amenities Act

Explain your answer with reference to both (i) and (ii).

[10]

Many candidates could define both the Group Areas Act and the Separate Amenities Act, but knowledge of the impact of the Group Areas Act was often more developed. Many candidates linked the act to grand apartheid through its enforcement of racial segregation. Some candidates expanded on this point by connecting it to subsequent pieces of legislation, such as the Bantu Self-Government Act (1959). By forcibly moving large numbers of people, the traumatic impact of the Group Areas Act was well known, as were its implications on the economic and educational prospects of Black South Africans. Candidates had less to say on the Separate Amenities Act despite often having a good understanding of its measures and the broader impact of petty apartheid. Its restrictions on access to public amenities had the effect of highlighting racial inequalities. In terms of its impact on South Africa, candidates usually determined that the impact of the Group Areas Act was greater.

Exemplar 1

1	a	The Group Areas Act had a greater impact on South Africa than the Separate Amenities Act because, although segregation in public spaces ~~was~~ disadvantaged people of colour in South Africa greatly, their entire lives were uprooted by the policy of the Group Areas Act to create 'white' and 'black' areas. These two laws are examples of 'grand' and 'petty' apartheid and, though petty apartheid played a large role in separating people and increasing racism, grand apartheid was on a much larger scale and aimed to separate the black population from the white South Africans completely. (1950) The Group Areas Act had a greater impact on South Africa because it transformed and significantly worsened the lives of black people in South Africa. As a result of the act, over 4 million people were removed from their homes. Black people were no longer allowed in urban areas, leading to the destruction of mixed race urban areas, such as Sophiatown in Johannesburg, and black workers were forced to take buses to and from work in the cities, which could take up to 4 hours
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each way because the designated 'black' areas were very far from the nearest cities, where black people were expected to work. The Group Areas Act also restricted the black population to only 13.6% of the land in South Africa, despite black people making up 68% of the population in 1948 and white people only 20%. The Group Areas Act also eventually led to the creation of the Bantustans which, as the Tomlinson report warned, were only able to support up to 2/3 of the population they were required to by the Bantu Self-government Act. Therefore, by the 1980s, 18% of those meant to be living in Transkei lived in 'white' urban areas and 78% of those legally living in Qwa Qwa lived elsewhere. The aim to separate the black and white people of South Africa greatly damaged the economy^{and infrastructure} of South Africa and also the possibility of unity for a long time.

The Separate Amenities Act⁽¹⁹⁵⁰⁾ had a large impact on South Africa as it meant that black people were restricted to ~~sub~~ subpar public amenities

and it was a symbol of the ~~black~~ white supremacy believed by many white South Africans, as they were given preferential treatment under this act. Although the Group Areas Act caused problems on a larger scale, ~~although~~ the Separate Amenities Act was a more symbolic law showing the government's view of the black population as inferior. This law also paved the way for other laws of segregation in other spheres to be passed, such as the Bantu Education Act and the University Extension Act in 1953, which segregated places of learning, and reduced the quality of learning for black people. The law led to a ~~sustained~~ ~~deprived~~ the black population being continuously deprived of ^{equal} resources ~~that were equal~~ to ~~the~~ those available to white people. The ANC's Defiance Campaign in 1952 challenged the Separate Amenities Act and, by the end, around 8,000 people had been arrested for using facilities, ~~or~~ entrances or transport for white people. This demonstrates how forcibly this law was upheld and how drastically racism was embedded in South African society.

		The Group Areas Act had a greater impact
		in South Africa than the Separate
		Amenities Act as, though both had
		a large effect on the lives of the
		black population, the Group Areas Act
		led to a very large amount of
		black people living in poverty ^{for decades} and
		overcrowding and transformed the landscape
		and infrastructure of South Africa.

This exemplar is an example of a Level 5 response in which both factors are analysed using generally accurate and detailed knowledge. There is an attempt to evaluate which factor had a greater impact. The answer also provides a substantiated judgement.

Question 1 (b)*

(b)* 'The collapse of Apartheid during the period from 1978 to 1989 was the result of the protests of ordinary South Africans.'

How far do you agree?

[20]

Knowledge of the protests of ordinary South Africans during this period was mixed, with some candidates drawing on earlier examples, such as the fallout from the Sharpeville massacre (1960), which was less effective, and the subsequent move towards armed resistance. Others referred to the Black Consciousness Movement and Steve Biko, with some candidates making it more relevant to the question by highlighting the wider influence of the movement. More relevant examples of protest included the role of UDF in uniting resistance, trade unions, and support for the ANC. Other factors discussed included the international condemnation of apartheid and the South African government, notably through popular support for Mandela and the crippling economic effects of the country's isolation. The failures of the National Party were also often cited as a factor, with Botha's Rubicon speech providing a fitting example of the government's failure to bring about reform. Candidates often focused on international opposition, which the Rubicon speech did much to encourage, as the main factor behind the collapse of apartheid. Answers that could explain several of these factors, including the protests of ordinary South Africans, using generally detailed knowledge, and which included a judgement, were usually placed in Level 5. Where that judgement was found throughout the answer, it moved into Level 6.

Question 2 (a) (i) and (ii)

2

(a) Which of the following had the greater impact upon Black and Coloured South Africans?

(i) Botha's 'Total Strategy'

(ii) Botha's reforms

Explain your answer with reference to both **(i)** and **(ii)**.

[10]

Candidates demonstrated broad understanding of what constituted Botha's 'Total Strategy', with an emphasis on the increased violence of the security services towards Black and Coloured South Africans. In contrast, the focus of the reforms on social issues was noted, while the ultimate failure of constitutional changes was highlighted by many candidates. In some answers, candidates struggled to distinguish Botha's reforms from his 'Total Strategy'; in some cases, the two were even confused.

Question 2 (b)*

(b)* How far was South Africa transformed between 1989 and 1999?

[20]

Candidates were able to discuss a range of factors relating to South Africa's transformation during this period, with the compromises made between political parties, the role of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the new constitution, and South Africa's reintegration into the international community featuring prominently. The extent of transformation brought about by each one was usually assessed, with, for example, candidates noting the mixed success of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Ongoing violence throughout the period was noted, as were social problems plaguing the country, such as substandard housing and poor welfare support. Thus, while on the surface, transformation had occurred, underneath, the extent of change was not as clear. Exemplar 2 highlights the importance of providing a substantiated judgement. Some candidates were able to provide relatively detailed explanations of some of the factors highlighted above, but attempts at offering a judgement were fairly limited. In Exemplar 2, a less developed judgement is provided which is sufficient to push the answer into the bottom of Level 5.

Exemplar 2

2	6	South Africa oversaw a major transformation between 1989 and 1999, one of that was unprecedented in the nation. The changes brought politically & internationally, through the RDP and through the TRC oversaw the shift from not only apartheid state to 'rainbow nation', but progressed the lives of the South African people themselves. Political change was impactful on the transformation with de Klerk making numerous changes. Namely, releasing the catalyst for major transformation in Nelson Mandela at the age of 71 after 27 years in prison in 1990. These reforms continued to the unbanning of the SACP, the PAC, the ANC and 31 other key organisations in an act of change that was essentially forced onto him due to the financial implications of the reduction in foreign investment. The transformation continued politically with the 1994 elections allowing black people to vote with an 87% voter turnout in what was an unprecedented change within South Africa. The ANC won, and de Klerk, however due to not gaining the 66% required, rather having 62.6%, Mandela was made ~~president~~ prime minister, with de Klerk and Mbeki supporting to maintain stability. The ~~po~~ Mandela was then the catalyst for significant change both transformation of South Africa following this and therefore political changes were indispensable in the ~~transformation~~ transformation. Political changes oversaw the
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unprecedented changes including landmark voting rights, unbanning of key organisations and the freedom of Nelson Mandela.

★ before those one

Internationally, South Africa also oversaw a major transformation namely through sport, establishing themselves on the world stage rather than being the outpost they were during the Cold War. This was done by ~~Mand~~ through sport primarily, making the nation appear like a reputable nation. In 1995, Mandela was able to represent South Africa on a global stage at the presentation of the Rugby World Cup, wearing the Springboks jersey, a ~~par~~ shirt with connotations of the ruling whites in South Africa. This powerful image propelled South Africa forward after decades under the Apartheid system, culminating in South African victory ~~in 1995~~ against New Zealand in the final. ~~Mandela~~ Mandela was able to get the nation on board, with a team including only one black player, unifying South Africa. Internationally, this level of unity was unprecedented ^{as on} April 1st 1960 ~~so~~ the UN condemned the Sharpeville massacre (in which 69 people died, 180 were injured and 70% were shot in the back), calling for the end of Apartheid. Therefore this level of international ~~success and unity and~~ ~~unprecedented~~ ~~unity~~ was ~~a~~ a reflection of the ~~transformation~~ the transformation within the nation.

★ However, transformation can be deemed limited and

unsuccessful through the TRC. The Truth and Reconciliation Committee was created in order to address Human Rights Violations during Apartheid and had varied success. ~~8487 people requested~~ Over 7000 people requested amnesty, with over 8000 rejections, around 800 were granted amnesty. This was ~~to~~ An upside would be that the TRC was able to compile a ^{forensic record} record of these human rights violations during apartheid that could not be denied. However, many key leaders and people refused to plead for amnesty ~~deeming~~ ^{undermining} the achievements of the TRC, with some people unable to ~~be~~ ^{be} prosecuted have such atrocities addressed. Therefore, the TRC limited the transformation of South Africa between 1989 and 1999 as many human rights violations were not addressed as ~~pleading~~ ^{pleading} was not compulsory by law, limiting the transformation on the whole.

The RDP was South Africa was majorly transformed by the RDP, with the lives of South Africans seeing benefits from the programme. The Reconstruction and Development Programme oversaw 2.1 million houses built between 1995 and 2001, granting affordable housing to many the people of South Africa. The electrification of houses doubled from 35% to 71% of houses having electricity, again, improving the everyday lives of the people. 240,000 people were also granted jobs on the Public Works

Programme constructing roads, buildings etc, but granting employment opportunities all over South Africa. However, ~~of~~ the houses built, only 30% met regulations, such inadequate housing could be harmful to the people of South Africa. Even with such changes through the RDP, the life expectancy dropped from 64 to 53, suggesting changes proved futile. Over The house builders were also not trained properly, often just giving the tools and materials ~~with~~ without proper training. With this however, changes through the RDP did benefit South Africa, transforming the lives of the people in unprecedented fashion.

On the whole South Africa did see major a transformation between 1989-99, benefitting South Africa both domestically and internationally, though issues were prominent, overall the change saw unprecedented improvements in the lives of the South African people and ~~internationally~~ South Africa was undoubtedly at last a reputable nation.

- a. Bothas 'Total Ft-Strategy' oversaw a major impact on the lives of Black and Coloured South Africans. This was made evident through his increased repressive ~~rep~~ changes to 'stamp out Communist threats both internally and externally'. Military included 800,000 people with 250,000 active and 250,000 in the reserve, with this hope to

		stamp out threats. 'Total Strategy' also extended to implementing White South Africans 2 years mandatory service, ~~not~~ primarily in the Black South African homelands and townships. Botha's changes impacts ~~prove~~ are limited by the increased township unrest in ~~Tra~~ Vaal with the Vaal Triangle uprising. Biko, ~~Alexander~~ and the ANC's peoples War on 1985. In 1984, whilst on exile the ANC called to "make the country ungovernable" and this led to the 1985 seeing a record amount of MK members coming into the country with 137 attacks, therefore impact was limited.
		His reforms- ~~too~~ saw limited change. His increased working rights for black people proved futile and unrest persisted. The allowance of trade unions and wage negotiations were beneficial however so his reforms did have the greater impact.
		Overall his reforms greater

This is an example of a Level 5 response, in which there is generally detailed knowledge and understanding, explanation of various factors, but only a less developed judgement. The quality of this judgement places it just inside Level 5.

Assessment for learning



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