

Examiners' report

A LEVEL

HISTORY A

OCR Level 3 Advanced GCE in History A

H505

For first teaching in 2015

Y113/01 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.

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Paper 1 series overview

Y113 is one of thirteen units in Paper 1 for the A Level examination for GCE History. This unit tests an extended period of History of about fifty years through an Enquiries or source-based question and a traditional essay question. The paper is divided into two sections. In Section A, candidates have to answer a compulsory source question based on four written primary sources. The question requires them to use all four sources to assess the validity of a view. In Section B, candidates are required to answer one essay question from a choice of two.

To do well on Section A, candidates need to be able to consider both provenance of the sources and apply contextual knowledge to them in order to reach a judgement about the sources in relation to the issue in the question. The judgement should be based on an evaluation of the reliability of the evidence given, not on the topic or contextual knowledge. To reach Level 6, a judgement should be made at the end of the analysis of each source, with an overall judgement in the conclusion.

To do well on Section B, candidates need to address the issue in the question, using detailed supporting knowledge. In order to reach the higher levels, candidates will need to assess the issues they discuss and reach a supported judgement at least in the conclusion. To reach Level 6 candidates should also make an overall judgement as well as interim judgements when assessing each factor.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally:
- considered the provenance of the source(s) and used relevant contextual knowledge - clearly linked the contextual knowledge to the source being discussed to show whether the view of the source was valid or not - reached an overall judgement as to the extent to which the sources supported the view in the question - in answering the essay question candidates discussed at least two issues in depth - presented supporting detail which was both accurate and relevant to the question set, not just the topic - reached a supported judgement about the issue in the question - made a series of interim judgements about the issues discussed in relation to the question.	- did not consider both the provenance and use contextual knowledge to evaluate the sources - wrote an unbalanced answer in their treatment of the sources, with very little consideration of one of the sources - reached a judgement based on their knowledge rather than the sources - showed a poor understanding of the major issues relevant to the essay - were unable to support their answer with relevant material - did not focus on the precise wording of the question - made unsupported comments about issues which were assertions.

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Section A overview

There is one compulsory question in this section. This question requires candidates to critically assess evidence and reach judgements. The critical evaluation of sources is the central theme in this section with all marks given against AO2.

The Enquiry section in Paper Y113 is focused on whether Churchill was out of touch with British opinion on India in the 1930s.

Question 1

Churchill 1930–1951

- 1 'Churchill was out of touch with British opinion on India in the 1930s.'

Use these **four** sources in their historical context to assess how far they support this view. [30]

This question elicited the full range of responses, with many strong answers, as seen with the chosen exemplar where the candidate has evaluated using pertinent comments on provenance as well as using strong contextual information to arrive at a supported judgement that provides a full analysis of the chosen sources; it was placed in Level 5. Candidates were able to use a wide range of contextual information in order to evaluate the chosen sources, with many candidates referring to Churchill's experiences in India, the Amritsar massacre, the Rowlatt Acts, and the Salt March of 1930 to provide contextual evaluation of the chosen sources. In terms of provenance many candidates were well aware of the Indian Empire Society, while others focused on the lack of trust that Churchill had amongst the Conservatives at this point, referring to his crossing of the floor as well as his experiences in government in the 1920s. Those candidates that focused on the purpose of the chosen sources were rewarded fruitfully when evaluating the provenance of these sources. Occasionally a few candidates misread Source A, seeing this as being supportive of Indian independence and similarly with Source C a number of candidates believed Baldwin was the Prime Minister at this point or that he was in full support of Churchill's position. In general, even though the question was well-answered.

Misconception



Many candidates believed that Baldwin was the Prime Minister in 1931.

Exemplar 1

1		In the 1930s, the question of Indian independence had once again arisen in British society, with Winston Churchill being strongly against the movement. Source A, and # D and to an extent B all sup contradict the view that Churchill was out of touch with British opinion in India in the 1930s. However, source C supports this view, with Baldwin implying that those against independence are a minority. Source A is written by a member of the Indian Empire Society, which suggests that he would have has opposed the ^{the writer} is ^{is} also a retired member of the Indian Civil Service. In the late 19th and early 20th Century, there was a small number of British administrators in India with the vast majority of the running of the colony done by Indian Civil Servants. Therefore, very few people in Britain would have had a personal connection to India and therefore may not have been passionate about it continuing to be a British colony. Churchill was one of the few British people who had a personal connection to India as he had served there while he was a young man in the army. The lead
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him to develop a old-fashioned, Victorian attitude towards India. Source A refers the Churchill's 'sincere patriotism'. This is a reference to Churchill's belief that British greatness was because of his ^{her} imperial power. He also held the racist beliefs that about an anglo-saxon domination. However, these ideas greatly contrasted with those of the British public, who's opinions had been swayed by ^{peoples} protests, such as the 1930 Salt Tax March for which Gandhi was arrested. As this is a letter to Churchill by someone who opposed Indian independence, it is not representative of the public's opinion on India, which was becoming increasingly pro-independence.

Source D is another source that opposes the statement, however, similarly to Source A, it is not representative of the British public's opinion. It is a speech written by Churchill to a room of people who shared his anti-independence stance, therefore it will express his opinions rather than those of the majority. ^{on the main agenda} The speech is also called 'Our duty to India' this which is a reference to Churchill's belief that British rule had helped to develop and modernise India.

He also believed that British rule was the only thing that kept the Hindu elites from dominating over the Muslim population and that it prevented barbaric practices. However, although this belief was not shared by the majority of the public, and it increasingly seemed that British rule led to barbaric and brutal practices. For example, the 1919 Amritsar Massacre, where 200 peaceful protesters were open fired on and over 200 were killed, which received massive public condemnation. Therefore Churchill's call to displease 'the party whips' by rebelling against the government and opposing Indian Independence, was out of touch with the public's view.

Source B also to some extent opposes the view that Churchill was out of touch and it states he has support within the Conservative party. As this source is a letter it is likely that it is candid and truthful as it would have had been private correspondence between two confidants. The letter discusses how Churchill had previously been disliked in the Tory party. This was for several reasons, such as his crossing of the floor in 1904 to the

Liberal Party and his return to the Conservatives in 1924, and his campaign for ~~disarmament~~ rearmament after the Wall Street Crash in 1929. However, this source suggests that the very men who distrust Churchill have turned to him on the matter of Indian independence, which means there is strong support for India remaining a colony in the Conservative Party. However, ~~as~~ as previously stated, this view was not common among the general public as India was becoming an increasingly heavy financial ~~&~~ burden and other colonies had been given independence like Ireland in 1921. Therefore this source supports the view that Churchill's ideas were popular in some parts of his party but they were not out of touch with others.

Source C fully supports the view that Churchill's views on India were out of touch with the public's. The source is a speech by Stanley Baldwin, who supported Indian independence. His calm measured speeches and support of the 1931 Round Table Conferences often undermined Churchill's racist and ~~so~~ eccentric views. As this is a speech to Parliament, Baldwin would have been addressing both

pro and anti-independence MPs (including Churchill), so it is likely that he would have been trying to persuade people to support Indian independence. He discusses the 'difficulties' the government was facing over the issue, which could be referring to Churchill's criticism of the government in Parliament and in his newspaper columns. Overall, this source criticises Churchill and his views on Indian and supports the view that he was out of touch.

Overall, the majority of these sources oppose the view that Churchill's ideas about India were unpopular, however, source A and D are biased towards an anti-independence stance and source C only recalls the position of a small group of Tory MPs. It is source C which most closely reflects the most common opinion on Indian independence at the time. The public mostly believed that Churchill's opposition was born of racist views and that carefully guided independence for India was (not) a threat.

In this exemplar, the candidate has evaluated using pertinent comments on provenance as well as using strong contextual information to arrive at a supported judgement that provides a full analysis of the chosen sources. The answer was placed in Level 5.

Section B overview

Candidates are required to answer one essay from a choice of two. Each question is taken from a different Key Topic and requires candidates to weigh up the importance of a range of factors or issues.

In Paper Y113, the candidates were asked to assess how successful Wilson was as leader of the Labour Party between 1964 and 1976 or to investigate whether Thatcher's policies towards the miners caused more unrest than any of her other policies.

Question 2*

Britain 1951–1997

2* How successful was Wilson as leader of the Labour Party in the period from 1964 to 1976? **[20]**

Candidates were asked to assess the success of Wilson's leadership of the Labour Party across the period. Those candidates that did well concentrated on the wider aspects of his leadership, including the management of relations with Trade Unions, the handling of divisions within the party, Wilson's record of success at elections, his personal appeal to the electorate as well as his management of the economy and his social reforms. The chosen exemplar demonstrates an answer dealing with some of the wider considerations of his leadership and was placed in Level 6. Interim judgements are a good indicator of a level 6 answer, as part of the well-developed and sustained line of reasoning that is required for that level.

Misconception



In this question candidates were expected to focus on leadership of the Labour Party across the period and not just Wilson's reforms as PM, although they could also be used. Some of the aspects of Wilson's leadership candidates could have considered were his management of divisions within the party, his success at elections, and his control of Trade Unions.

Exemplar 2

2.	From 1964 to 1976, Harold Wilson faced significant challenges as Labour leader. Inheriting an internally divided and ineffectual party from Hugh Gaitskell in 1964, and facing huge issues regarding the power of unions nationally, and yet retaining core Labour supporters, Wilson still succeeded in becoming the longest-serving Labour Prime Minister of the 20th century, and in winning four general elections as leader. Despite failing to bring the 'white heat of technology' to the British people and to implement 'In Place of Strife', Wilson managed to hold the Labour party together and take back 10 Downing Street from his bitter Tory rival. Since Attlee's victory in 1945, the Labour party had been plagued by internal ideological divisions provoked by the 'Beveridge split' of the 1950s, which saw Anthony Bevan, minister for health, resign his post when Attlee introduced charges on prescriptions and dentistry in the NHS due to financial pressures. The Labour left led largely by Bevan and the Labour right championed by the social democrat Hugh Gaitskell, who had initially wanted to renounce clause IV. Given the Labour conflict, had been ineffectual by on issues of nationalisation and unilateral nuclear disarmament throughout the 1950s, leading to successive election defeats in 1951, 1955, and 1959. Upon taking over from Gaitskell, Wilson, despite once being an ardent Beveridge socialist, recognised the need for a more centrist party.
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and successfully quelled the disputes on UNO and socialist policies enough to win the 1964 election, despite the power of the trade union's block vote at Labour Party Conference which pushed the issue of UNO throughout the period. A major political success for Wilson was to deal with his main leadership rivals James Callaghan and George Brown, placing the former as Chancellor and the latter as chief of the Department for Economic Affairs, responsible for the National Plan. Though the DEA achieved little and was disbanded in 1969, Wilson managed to pit two ideological rivals against each other during his premiership, and avoided splits and leadership challenges. Though Wilson's technocratic approach as Labour leader quelled divisions to allow him to win the 1966 election convincingly, divisions opened up again following the 1970 defeat, and the Labour 'left' of Michael Foot and Tony Benn rose to positions of power. Following the 1974 election, with Labour Conference passing nationalisation of several wealthy commercial businesses into the manifesto, and allowing divisions to run deep though Labour came again, with centrist Chancellor Denis Healey repeatedly attacking Benn. Overall, despite failing to recapture centre in his old age post 1970, Wilson successfully kept his party together with a technocratic air to win a 100-seat majority in 1966, and retain his premiership.

This exemplar demonstrates an answer dealing with some of the wider considerations of Wilson's leadership and was placed in Level 6.

Question 3*

3* 'Thatcher's policies towards the miners caused more unrest than any other of her policies.'

How far do you agree?

[20]

The best responses focused on the idea of unrest. The chronology of the period was well-known, although specific details of unrest were sometimes lacking. Those candidates who were able to recall events such as the Battle of Orgreave were able to substantiate their arguments here. Unrest towards policies such as the Poll Tax and her economic policies were also included by the majority of candidates, whilst those who differentiated between public unrest and internal party unrest through her policies on Europe found this to be a profitable approach.

Exemplar 3

3	Overall, Thatcher's policies towards the miners caused more unrest than any of her other policies to a reasonable extent. This is because her highly reactionary and militant position against the miners not only led to large amounts of unemployment, but also escalated into violent conflict with large communities. However, this was also seen to a slightly lesser extent when implementing her poll tax in 1989, which although caused large amounts of unrest, it did not escalate into the violence that emerged from her policies against miners, although one may also argue that the poll tax was more hated universally than the anti-striking policies which affected specific mining communities in the North and in Wales.
	Thatcher's policies against the miners still caused the most unrest due to the violent backlash that they received. For example, the closures of hundreds of pits across Wales, Derby and across Yorkshire led to a sharp rise in the popularity of 'flying pickets', which would travel across the country to gather a large number of sympathetic workers into a singular organised bloc. The effects of such were seen to their greatest extent at the Battle of Orgreave, in which over 4000 miners, workers and families gathered to protest and clash against the anti-riot Yorkshire Police. The 4000 miners consisted of primarily miners from Yorkshire, however attendance of families and miners from across the country shows therefore demonstrates that the unrest caused by Thatcher's pit closures was not not just from only a narrow section of British

society, but rather a vast proportion of the country is unmined working class which stood above 3 million in 1984. Therefore, the mass unemployment of 3 million and the economic devastation of former working communities ultimately renders Thatcher's policy towards miners as the one which caused the most unrest.*

However, one could argue, although less convincingly, that Thatcher's introduction of the 'poll tax' generated as much unrest as her policies against miners. This was shown by the public unrest it received, as well as in the form of rebellion in her own party. The changes to the council tax system from a household to 'per-head' scheme brought the cost of living up for arguably a larger number of individuals than those affected by the policies towards miners, however perhaps to a slightly less significant extent. Despite this, the 1990 poll tax riot in Trafalgar Square, which saw over 2000 protestors and rioters against 700 police, demonstrates that the policy still received an extreme amount of public, grassroots unrest. Additionally, Nigel Lawson and Geoffrey Howe's opposition to the poll tax within Parliament also raises the significance of the unrest caused, eventually leading to Thatcher's resignation in 1991. However, the unrest created by the poll tax is slightly less significant than her policies towards miners because of the brevity of the effects of both policies. The poll tax was almost immediately scrapped upon John Major's Prime Ministership in 1991, however the pit closures remained throughout the period and

have never been reopened since, causing the unrest to be maintained for a far greater amount of time than that of the poll tax.

In conclusion, I agree with the statement that Thatcher's policies towards mines caused more unrest than any other of her policies to a reasonable extent, primarily due to the immediate unrest it generated but also the by-standing animosity towards Thatcher and the Conservatives that it generated afterwards. This is arguably epitomised by the song 'Ding Dong the Witch is Dead', from the *Wizard of Oz*, to reach number 2 on national charts the day Thatcher died in 2013, however this can also be attributed to the widespread hatred of the poll tax that extended unrest from the working class to middle class households. Therefore, although Thatcher's policies towards mines generated the most unrest of all of her policies, the poll tax takes a very close second place behind it.

*One could argue, although less convincingly, that the unrest caused by these specific policies were very narrow and sectional, reducing the significance of the unrest to the UK as a whole. Although flying pickets were used extensively by unionised workers, the lack of popularity towards NUM leader Arthur Scargill resulted in the Nottinghamshire Miners™ voting against the ballot to strike in 1984, therefore reducing the unrest caused by Thatcher and instead targeting it against the undemocratic aspects of Scargill and the NUM. However, the economic devastation

		still led to large and long-term unrest, even amongst
		those who did not strike and those who fought in
		the 1984 Battle of Orgreave.

Exemplar 3 demonstrates a Level 5 response, where the candidate supports the argument with contextual detail and adopts an analytical approach before making a judgement. Although the argument is fairly narrow, the quality of argument and support is consistently strong.

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