



History 7042
Specimen Question Paper 1A (A-level)
Question 1 Student 4
Specimen Answer and Commentary

V1.0

Specimen answer plus commentary

The following student response is intended to illustrate approaches to assessment. This response has not been completed under timed examination conditions. It is not intended to be viewed as a 'model' answer and the marking has not been subject to the usual standardisation process.

Paper 1A (A-level): Specimen question paper

01 Using your understanding of the historical context, assess how convincing the arguments in these three extracts are in relation to the reasons why knights went on Crusade.

[30 marks]

Student response

Extract A is the most convincing of the three extracts as it introduces us to many different reasons for why the knights may have wanted to travel to the Holy Land. Although most motives were religious there were also a variety of reasons why these knights decided to travel to the Holy Land. It reveals both financial issues with the knights in these times but also opportunities to be had in the East and the advantages that there are when travelling these great distances.

Extract A produces many different factors for discussion and a variety of logical reasons why the knights may have gone on this crusade. There was agricultural and economic crisis in Southern France and Italy which would have impacted their lives. Also there was a huge problem with inheritance because originally they split it equally between them but then decided that all the inheritance would go to the oldest so the rest would have to endure without. So there was a huge issue with both food and money which would force you out of the place you're living which is why they may have come on the crusade because they are limited in the way of resources and the East has many benefits to support these issues. The extract draws appropriate conclusions on how this would have resulted in looting in the East because they are taking what they didn't have at home and what they think they deserve.

Extract B offers many valid points that support motives for the reasons why the knights went on crusade. As they may not have had a lot of financial support so by using their assets as an investment allowed for them to have the money to gain more financial support through looting in the East, although this wasn't meant to be the original objective of the crusade. Some saw the crusades as an opportunity to spare sons in order to relieve families burden or landless knights that may see opportunity to gain land. Many knights may also have seen there to be advantages later on in their adventures across the East. By travelling East all their sins would be forgiven at their journey's end allowing them a lot of freedom. I agree with 'the odds could have lessened simply by waiting until after the agricultural depression passed' for if they had done so the actual crusade would have been held back by giving the East time to recover making it far more difficult for the crusaders. I was convinced by this extract because it offers many clear motives as to why the crusaders may have wanted to travel East and the factors pushing them away from home.

Extract C is convincing as it shows how the feudal system may have forced the knights to join the crusade and gives us a clear indication in to the reasons why. Many knights relied on the decisions of their leader or lord and because of the strength of the friendship or authority. They may pressure them to join these crusades and give them a reason why they should fight for that specific cause. One of the largest factors was peer or kinship pressure which could be related to how Godfrey of Bouillon was pressured by his aunt Matilda of Tuscany. One other issue was friends and family would either go or be pressured to go so lots of pressure was placed on people to go in order to repent their sins. This extract has a convincing conclusion because it mentions how 'Joinville took the cross with other lords among them his own cousin the Count of Saarbruck' which suggests that taking the cross worked through existing relationships.

Overall, Extract A is the most convincing because it gives a huge variety of reasons why knights may have travelled to the East and looks at many different factors as to how their lives may be impacted

because of this. Bringing them both financial benefits but also religious benefits although not made as clearly in Extract A focusing on physical benefits that may help them. Also it gives clear push and pull factors as to reasons why this may be a reason to leave and to join the crusade. So extract A is more convincing in my opinion.

Commentary – Level 3

The answer is not fully secure in demonstrating an appreciation of the interpretations of the three extracts and this is especially the case in relation to Extract B. It is inappropriate to suggest that each extract offers many valid reasons when each essentially has strong single interpretations. There is a tendency to summarise what is said with very limited deployment of knowledge of context which places the response in low Level 3.
