



A-LEVEL HISTORY

7042/1G Challenge and transformation: Britain, c1851–1964
Report on the Examination

7042
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Section A

Question 1

There were some encouraging responses this year to question 1. Students generally found the extracts and the question accessible. There were very few short answers. Many answers were able to identify the main arguments in each of the extracts and more successful responses offered carefully selected evidence to support the evaluation offered. Better answers tended to offer a balanced assessment of the arguments in each of the extracts. This was typically in relation to one of the arguments that they did not find fully convincing. For example, some students challenged the argument in extract A that suggested that women were rewarded as a consequence of their war efforts. They successfully argued that those rewarded with the vote in 1918 were not the women that worked in the munitions factories for instance. Consequently, students should be encouraged to identify the main argument and others in each of the extracts, although, this should not tip into a scatter gun approach. Arguments should be interrogated in turn with an appropriate amount of evidence and judgement. There were a number of responses that summarised all of the arguments first and then outlined evidence. Whilst this can be very effective, for weaker students, it can become unclear which argument is being evaluated and the evaluation itself can become less explicit. Better responses maintained a laser focus upon the question and the evaluation of arguments. These responses often offered clear judgement on each extract in relation to the question.

A small number of students were unsure about some of the arguments in the extracts. This was often the case in responses that adopted a line by line analysis rather than reading the whole extract to identify the key arguments. There was some misunderstanding of the arguments in Extract B for example. Some students wrongly believed the historian was arguing that women were reluctant to enter the factories during the war. Further, the line 'Although, at first sight, the period after 1914 seems to be one of great change' was understood by some students as the historian suggesting the war was transformative ignoring the later point about the victory being 'temporary'. In this case, the main argument came at the end of the extract and students should be reminded that the opening line to an extract is not necessarily the main argument being put forward.

Some weaker answers paraphrased or quoted extensively from the extract and tested for 'truth'. For instance, in relation to Extract A, by the 1929 election, all women over the age of 21 had been given the vote. Students then went on to confirm this fact with some knowledge about suffrage reform. This is not an argument but a statement of fact. Some responses incorporated skills more appropriate to component 2, such as attempts to consider 'value' or provenance. This is irrelevant to the answer and should be discouraged. Students should also be reminded that there is no need to compare the extracts.

Most students found Extract A the most accessible. Good answers offered some well selected evidence of women's work in factories for instance. They were able to explain how this changed the perceptions of women in society and among politicians. Most answers also understood the arguments regarding the 'violence' used by the Suffragettes and the argument as to whether this hindered the movement. Good answers gave relevant examples of violence such as the bombing of Lloyd George's house in 1913 to corroborate. As mentioned, the most effective answers, challenged the extract before coming to a supported judgement.

Section B

Question 2

This was quite a popular question and there were some impressive responses at the top end. Good answers considered a range of social classes and geographical locations and made balanced assessments of each of these groups and how they benefited, or not, from the economic growth. Really good answers made comparisons between the groups and analysed why their conditions differed. Some students even supplied nuanced answers that differentiated between subsections of the working classes for example and how skilled workers fared against those employed in more casual labour. It was clear that students were well versed on the nature of the economic growth in the period and the developments in for instance, farming. However, at the weaker end, students only offered a glimpse at the benefits or drawbacks for social groups as they were intent upon outlining the economic achievements. At the lower end, answers became quite general or drew upon material outside of the question. Others drifted in focus into legislative changes that benefited classes. However, most answers were able to provide a balanced response to the question that covered the period.

Question 3

There were some very good responses to this question. Overall, many students concluded that there were clear differences in approach between the Conservatives and the Liberals in this period. Most students were able to outline their differences over Home Rule and better responses were able to analyse why this difference existed. Some students also suggested that under Gladstone's leadership, there was an attempt to ameliorate the condition of Ireland and placate the majority of Irish Catholics. By contrast, the Conservatives were consistently resistant to measures they believed could undermine the union and the rights of Anglo-Irish. However, many students were able to balance this by spotting similarities in land reform and their use of coercion. The most effective responses addressed the question in a themed approach that covered the period of the question. They analysed the degree and the reasons behind the similarity and difference and were able to explain why this may have changed over time. Less effective answers had a tendency to only make cursory glances at the Conservatives and spent much of the answer outlining the actions of the Liberals. This left a key aspect of the question unaddressed.

Question 4

This was also a popular question and there were some excellent responses seen. Many students understood the concept of political consensus and approached the answer in a themed response. Nearly all made reference to for instance, welfare, the NHS and housing policy. There were some responses that considered employment and the economy. Some responses took a broader approach and also considered foreign policies. There were examples of excellent analysis where the students explained the shift in zeitgeist before and/or during the war. The different expectations of the British public for greater state intervention and the impact of the Beveridge Report for instance were analysed. Effective answers were able to identify areas of consensus and balance the consensus with areas of disagreement between the two parties. They did this by making reference to the whole period and actions and policies of a range of governments and their oppositions. Least effective responses did not get beyond the early 1950s. Most of their attention

was in how Churchill continued some aspects of Attlee's policies after the war. Alternatively some students adopted a descriptive approach in outlining Attlee's actions followed by the same for Churchill. Students should be reminded that this is a breadth unit and the questions require consideration of the whole period and an assessment of continuity and change. There was also a tendency in weaker answers to discuss at length, disagreements within the Labour Party as evidence for the lack of consensus. This suggests that the student was not secure in their understanding of political consensus between the two parties. However, if internal disputes were linked to a more general comment on the existence of consensus on the national level, then this was rewarded by examiners.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.