



A-LEVEL HISTORY

7042/1F Industrialisation and the people: Britain, c1783 - 1885
Report on the Examination

7042/1F
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General

Student responses to this paper included excellent answers to all the questions. It was evident that, in general, students had reasonable contextual knowledge of the period and an understanding of the major themes and trends relevant to the specification content. There was some breadth to the range of examples which students were able to use to support their answers. The majority of students were well prepared to approach the questions with structured answers that focused on the main concept of the question.

Relatively few students completely misunderstood the questions or attempted to answer without any structure. Most students reached some judgements, usually in the concluding paragraph. There was a great variation in the degree to which analysis was sustained and judgements supported. However, the majority of answers offered at least asserted judgements, with many students demonstrating the ability to offer some support and sustain their analysis to some degree throughout the answer. An approach that was common amongst more successful answers was to present a line of argument in the introduction; this was analytically considered in a balanced way throughout the answer. This approach often led to a concluding judgement which was well supported by the preceding analysis.

Question 1

The majority of students responded well to this question. Almost all engaged with the full set of three extracts, and most demonstrated at least a reasonable grasp of the arguments. Most students focused correctly on the question focus which was about the ‘changes caused by industrialisation in the years 1832 to 1860’. However, some students did focus on the process of industrialisation, rather than the changes which were caused by industrialisation. Where students focused on the development of industrialisation, they were less likely to engage with the question or the arguments in the extracts.

In terms of contextual knowledge, students showed a good understanding of the overall period 1832 to 1860. Most were able to marshal relevant examples, sometimes including relevant statistical knowledge, which were used to support or challenge the arguments that were presented. Some students had less focus on the period 1832 to 1860, and in these cases, they tended to rely more on sweeping generalisations about the impact of industrialisation in the nineteenth century rather than the specific years indicated by the question.

More successful answers focused on the main arguments presented within the extracts. Some answers instead adopted a line-by-line analysis, considering whether individual details of the extract were accurate or not. In these answers, students were less likely to understand the main arguments of the extracts.

Students tended to identify from Extract A that the argument addressed the ‘new and terrifying problems’ caused by industrialisation. Some students focused exclusively on this aspect of the argument from the earlier lines, however many students explored other aspects of the main argument, for example that the increased problems led to a determination on the part of the government, the working classes, and the self-help movement to achieve change. Most students had good examples of efforts to achieve change, both by governments and reformers; others attempted to challenge the extract by considering the limitations of government reform. One part of the argument which some students found more difficult to evaluate was that ‘industrialists solved their problems more efficiently’ than other groups’. Some students assumed that the problem facing industrialists was the need and desire to improve their workers’ lives, which was not universally the case.

The majority of students understood the argument in Extract B, which was about the way that the working population was driven to seek solutions to their problems, whether by political movements, turning to entertainment and religion, or through combining to achieve improvements in the workplace. More successful students engaged well with the argument, however some students did focus on how the 1832 Great Reform Act had affected the lives of workers without linking this to the focus of the question or the overall argument in the extract. Overall, students did show a limited grasp of the development of unions and other working-class movements in this period, which limited the ability of some students to evaluate the extract.

With Extract C, most students were able to identify the argument that there had been little change, with communities handling new living and working conditions easily and continuity in both the economy and society. Some students were able to use effectively their knowledge of the period to evaluate this argument. Many students chose to use statistical knowledge of industrialisation to challenge the main premise of the extract. A popular choice was to consider the extent of growth of the railway system in this period and the ways in which it affected society. However, some students tended toward selecting quotes from the Extract and asserting that it was accurate instead of evaluating the argument.

Question 2

This was a very popular question on the paper. Overall, students were well-prepared for a question on Pitt the Younger and most demonstrated a wide range of knowledge of his achievements. Most students were able to offer some analysis of Pitt's reforms to the administration of government. Students showed a good grasp of Pitt's actions such as the handling of sinecures and removal of corruption and excessive costs within the administration of government.

The majority of students compared these achievements to other achievements, most commonly his financial reforms. Another common comparison was with Pitt's handling of the influence of the French Revolution on Britain and the growth of radicalism. Some considered Pitt's actions in Ireland, his creation of a strong government despite his initial 'Mince-Pie Administration', and his attempts to address parliamentary reform.

More successful answers had a clear grasp of the concept of administrative reform. They also offered clear arguments as to why one achievement could be considered a main achievement. Common criteria for judgement were how much changed, how long lasting the change was, or how serious the problem was that Pitt was addressing.

Less successful answers tended to be more descriptive about Pitt's actions. They also had a less clear grasp of what is meant by administrative reform. Judgements in less successful answers also tended to assert a 'main achievement', generally on the basis that Pitt had attempted some reform. Answers which did not have a clear sense of what made Pitt's reforms to the administration of government his main achievement, or what made another achievement of his more significant, were usually unable to reach a supported judgement.

Question 3

This question was also very popular. The majority of students produced a structured response in which they considered examples where governments were concerned with limiting disorder, with instances where governments had other concerns. It was good to see that most students covered the chronological range of the question, from 1812 to 1832, with a range of examples. Many students considered the Luddites, the protests of 1816 to 1819, the government's concerns surrounding the Catholic Emancipation Act, and the formation of the Metropolitan Police. Most

students also offered valid counter-arguments, typically considering economic concerns, political self-interest, and ideas of parliamentary reform.

Somewhat surprisingly, relatively few students made the link between the 1832 Great Reform Act and disorder, despite the key role of protest in its passing in 1832. A great many students instead saw this reform as simply an expression of widespread interest in and acceptance of parliamentary reform amongst politicians, with few exploring the more nuanced concerns of both Whigs and Tories.

Where students considered the motives behind Peel's reforms to the judicial system in the 1820s, there was often a quite simplistic understanding of his motives. They often assumed that Peel and the Tories were solely interested in improving the lives of the working classes or those in the penal system. Students as a whole showed limited awareness that many of these reforms simply codified what had already become standard practice in order to streamline the judicial system.

One area of note was that a small but notable number of students attempted to answer this question by analysing whether Lord Liverpool's government became more liberal in the 1820s. This suggested some students were attempting to use answers that they had prepared in their revision rather than using their knowledge to engage with this question. Whilst it is the case that aspects of this debate could be made relevant to the question, this approach did not lend itself to answers that focused consistently on the question. Students should be careful to engage with the question set, rather than relying on pre-prepared answers to questions that they considered in the classroom.

Question 4

This question was less popular with students in favour of questions 02 and 03. However, there was still a substantial number of students who chose this question. As a whole, students who attempted this question tended to have a good grasp of the period as a whole and were able to draw about a wide range of examples.

More successful answers provided a wide range of examples across the chronological period. Some students structured their answer chronologically, considering successes and failures during the 1830s, such as Peel's use of the Tamworth Manifesto to direct the party, then his handling of problems in the 1840s and so on. The handling of the 1867 Reform Act was interesting, with some students seeing it as a success for the Conservatives in influencing Gladstone's reform bill but the majority viewing it as a political failure as a result of the Conservative loss in the 1868 general election. Other students approached the question thematically, looking at different areas of political and economic challenge, whilst still others structured their answer in two sides, contrasting successes with failures. There were good examples using all these approaches.

Since the question specified political and economic challenges, it was expected that some consideration would be given to both these areas to award at the higher levels, and both aspects were considered in almost every student response. The use of examples like famine in Ireland in the 1840s, which lent themselves to both economic and political challenges, ensured that students covered both aspects of the question.

There were a number of less successful responses to this question. There were three main features of answers that were awarded lower levels. One was that some students did not focus on the period in question, 1832 to 1868. As a result, they considered issues like the Luddites, Peterloo, or later parliamentary reform, none of which was relevant. A second feature was not knowing which governments and parties were responsible for different actions. As a result, there were students using Whig reforms of the 1830s, for example, to argue that the Conservatives were

responding to challenges. A third feature was where students described actions taken by Conservative governments without evaluating how successfully they dealt with challenges – often, these answers did not identify the challenges that the Conservatives were responding to.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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