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Examiners' Report
June 2011

GCSE History 5HA03 3A

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Introduction

It was pleasing to see a good standard of responses from candidates in the third session of this modular unit. The paper requires candidates to answer five questions in 75 minutes and some candidates managed to write at considerable length in this time.

However, it was noticeable that a small number of candidates failed to complete (in some cases even start) question 5. This was due to mismanagement of timing often as a result of writing over long answers to previous questions. Centres should note that the amount of space provided in the booklet for answers, is more than we would expect any answer to take, not a recommendation of the amount candidates should write.

There were strong answers to all questions although, in some cases, there were formulaic responses which did not directly address the question. For example, some answers referred to the reliability of the sources in questions 3 and 5 without directly relating this to either the strength of support or challenge for the cross referencing or the hypothesis.

Contextual knowledge is essential for ensuring understanding of the provenance and meaning of the sources as well as underpinning answers to all the questions. Indeed there were a number of candidates who lacked understanding of the significance of the Liberal National Health Insurance scheme and this impacted on their answers to questions 4 and 5.

An example response from the examination is given for each question in the report. Please note that in some cases part answers only are given as exemplification, not full answers. However, a general summary for improvement in the approach to question types (which are common across the three options) may prove of benefit to centres:

Question 1. Candidates often wrote too much for inference. It is sufficient to make the inferences and support them from the source, often with a direct quote. The reliability of the source is not a relevant issue.

Question 2. Ensure that candidates identify the underlying purpose of the source, not just the message. This could be what the source is trying to make people think or do. This should be supported with evidence from the source itself and/or contextual knowledge.

Question 3. Ensure that candidates focus on the style of a cross referencing question and actually cross reference the sources. They should identify support and differences and make judgements on the extent of support based on the content and reliability of the sources.

Question 4. Candidates should avoid simply describing the contents of the sources. They should evaluate both the information/contents in the context of utility or reliability as well as the nature, origins and purpose.

Question 5. A small number of candidates made little or no reference to the sources and instead wrote extensively about the Liberal welfare reforms. Ensure that candidates focus only on using the sources to test the hypothesis. Highest marks require them to make judgements on the extent of support and challenge to the hypothesis based on the weight of evidence given in the sources and their reliability.

Question 1

Candidates were asked to make inferences about OAPs from the memoirs of a leading Labour politician. The most obvious inferences were that pensions were not enough, pensions made a huge difference to the country, pensions only applied to certain people and the Labour Party did not fully support the scheme.

The key to answering this question is to make the inference and use the wording of the source only as the support for the inference. An inference should not be made using the words of the source, as that is likely to produce paraphrasing.

So candidates who stated that 'Old Age Pensions were brought in by Lloyd George' were copying the source, not making valid inferences and were marked at Level 1. Those who suggested that the Labour Party were critical of the scheme because the source says 'the Labour supporters were concerned at the limitations of the pension proposals' were making a valid inference and supporting it from the source. Such answers were rewarded at Level 3.

On this question, some candidates brought in their own knowledge, either to make the inference or to provide a historical context. This is not a correct approach to the question. Both inferences and support must come from the source. Candidates should make two supported inferences to reach top marks.

Answer ALL questions.

Look carefully at the background information and Sources A to F in the Sources Booklet and then answer Questions 1 to 5 which follow.

1 Study Source A.

What can you learn from Source A about the Old Age Pensions Act of 1908?

(6)

From source A I learn that old age pensions were only offered to people above 70 years of age. I know this because it says "provided pensions for some half a million men and women over seventy years of age. I also learn that pensions were only offered to some but not all the people above seventy years because of how much they earn on a weekly basis. I know this because the source says "paid at a rate of 25p* a week to persons over seventy year of age who could prove that they had ~~not~~ no other income exceeding 50p a week. The source infers that ~~labour~~ suggested

~~The member~~ labour supporters were unimpressed with the specificity of who the pension went to. I know this because the source says "Labour supporters were concerned at the limitations of the pension proposals."



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Examiner Comments

This is a Level 3 answer. The candidate makes three inferences, each of which is supported by quotes from the source. Notice how the answer signposts the examiner, 'From Source A I can learn...', and also signposts the support from the source, 'I know this because...'. Furthermore, the candidate has included three inferences to try to guarantee full marks. However, two inferences are enough for 6 marks.



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Examiner Tip

To gain higher marks you must make two inferences supported from the source. Why not say 'I know this because the source says...'?

Question 2

This question asks candidates to explain the purpose of a sketch from a newspaper in January 1909, showing old people collecting their pension. The majority of candidates were able to identify the message of the source, which was to suggest that pensions were a great achievement very much appreciated by the old. They were able to support this with details from the source.

However, to reach Level 3 candidates had to explain the purpose of the source - what it was intended to make people think or do - which was to gain support for the new pension scheme by convincing people that the state pensions were a great achievement by the Liberal government. Contextual knowledge would have helped to identify the message and purpose of the sketch - it was published in January 1909 when the first pensions were collected.

A minority of candidates confused the message of the source, (the point it is trying to put across), with its purpose, (what the message is trying to achieve). The best candidates made effective use of discourse markers such as 'suggests', 'persuade'.

2 Study Source B and use your own knowledge.

What was the purpose of this sketch? Use details of the sketch and your own knowledge to explain your answer.

(8)

Personally I believe there were two main reasons to the sketch, to make the government look good, and make it too look as though the pensions have given them what they want. Therefore I believe its a piece of government propaganda, as it appears in a 'national newspaper', which would spread this sketch.

Firstly I believe that it is propaganda as it shows the pension scheme in the best light possible. This is because it shows that the people are wearing smart, unattered clothes. Whereas I know that around 30% of the population were living in poverty, and more than likely old people, due to the fact they don't work.

Another purpose is too make the pension scheme look like it works. This relates directly to my previous point as it shows clean people, collecting money from a clean working place. However the money wasn't much, so the use of the nice clothes shows it too be better than it is.



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Examiner Comments

A Level 3 answer in which the candidate immediately focuses in on purpose and is able to explain this using evidence from the source itself as well as contextual knowledge about the percentage of the population living in poverty.



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Examiner Tip

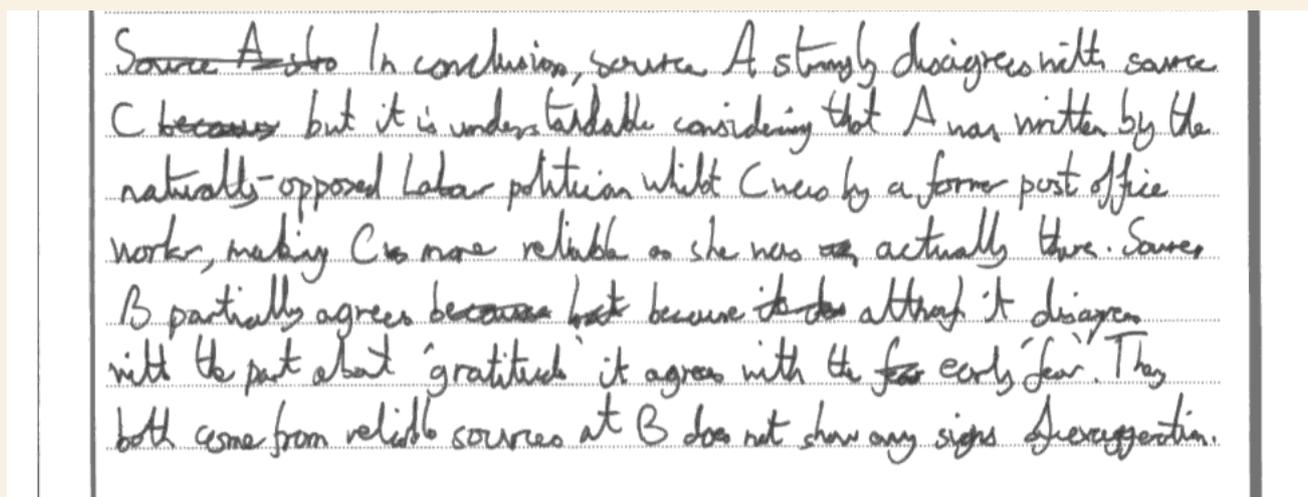
The key to Level 3. Why not go straight to the purpose of the source? Remember, however, that this must be explained fully by reference to the source itself and/or contextual knowledge. Try to do both to ensure top marks.

Question 3

The question is asking candidates to decide to what extent Sources A and B support the evidence of Source C about Old Age Pensions. A number of candidates achieved higher Level 2 by identifying agreement and disagreement between the sources. The best candidates cross referenced Source C with Source A and Source C with Source B, making reference to the content of the source to establish the extent of agreement and disagreement. Again, well prepared candidates were able to make skilful use of discourse markers ('similarly', 'on the other hand', 'by contrast', 'to some extent') to get their point across. Candidates who were able to cross reference effectively and comment on the extent of agreement/disagreement were able to access Level 3 and could achieve Level 3 (9 marks) or even full marks.

Some candidates, however, gave formulaic comments on reliability and did not use these to address cross referencing and the extent of support. Others compared each source to the view given in the question and showed little or no evidence of cross referencing between the sources. Such candidates were able to access Level 2 but not Level 3. This question specifically asks candidates to cross reference and make comparisons between the sources.

Again, a minority of candidates demonstrated a tendency to make comments on the provenance of the source without focus on the question. While candidates were not penalised for doing this it often resulted in time management problems later on in the paper. Comments on the provenance of the source must compare the attitude and motives of the writers of the sources to be credited.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This is the last paragraph of a Level 3 answer. The candidate had already made supported judgements showing agreement and disagreement between Sources C and A and Sources C and B. The conclusion makes a final judgement and also makes relevant comments on the provenance of Sources A and C.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

As well as comparing each source to the given view, ensure that you cross reference between the sources and give evidence of support and challenge. Remember to identify and explain agreement and disagreement between the sources. Make explicit judgements about the extent of support/challenge throughout your answer and especially in your conclusion based on the contents and reliability of the sources. Use judgement phrases such as 'strongly agree', 'partial agreement', 'totally disagree'. Ensure that reliability is used to judge the extent of support between the sources.

Question 4

For this question, candidates had to examine the reliability of Source D, a Liberal Party poster about the National Health Insurance scheme, and Source E, an extract from the diary of Beatrice Webb. Most candidates achieved Level 2 by examining the contents/information given in each source or commenting on the nature, origins or purpose of the sources.

Many candidates were able to interrogate the sources effectively commenting on both their content and provenance. Candidates who were able to do this effectively with both sources could score Level 3 (9/10) with full marks awarded to candidates who interrogated the sources most effectively. Candidates were generally more confident with the provenance of Source D and less so with Source E. Some did comment on the fact that, although Beatrice Webb was a Labour supporter, she makes favourable comments on the Liberal measure. This increases its reliability.

However, a number of candidates used formulaic responses in which they went through the nature, origins and purpose of each source without making direct reference to how these affected utility. Others simply described the contents of each source - what they could see or read. On the other hand, there were a number of strong and balanced evaluations. Weaker candidates paraphrased the sources or made simplistic comments or learned responses about the sources, often referring to them as biased or as primary/secondary sources. Such responses were confined to Level 1. A number wrote at great length about the reliability of the contents of the sources and compared this to their contextual knowledge about the Liberal National Health scheme movement but failed to evaluate the nature, origins or purpose of either of the sources with reference to reliability.

Finally, although utility and reliability questions require the application of similar skills - evaluating the contents and nature, origins or purpose of the sources, candidates must ensure that they focus on reliability. The question is not whether the two sources are useful but whether they are trustworthy.

Similarly, Source E was written by "a leading member of the Labour Party" - a party which were the political opponents of the Liberal reforms and believed that they ~~did~~ did not go far enough - and so the opinions given may be strongly biased.

However, this seems to contradict the quite

balanced content of Source E - it even recognises that "the Liberals have outwitted the Labour Party". For this to come from ~~the~~ the opposition, the statement is likely to be highly reliable. However, although much of its content is accurate, the statement that the benefits to the rich "prevents them from falling into poverty" is limited in its accuracy that only the breadwinners received the money, and widows, for example, did not necessarily receive money under the National Insurance Act.



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Examiner Comments

This is part of a very good Level 3 answer. Notice how the candidate comments on the provenance of Source E to stress its reliability but then questions the reliability of the contents against their own contextual knowledge about the Liberal measure.



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Examiner Tip

Remember to mine and interrogate each source. Make judgements on the information/contents as well as the origins, nature and/or purpose of each source.

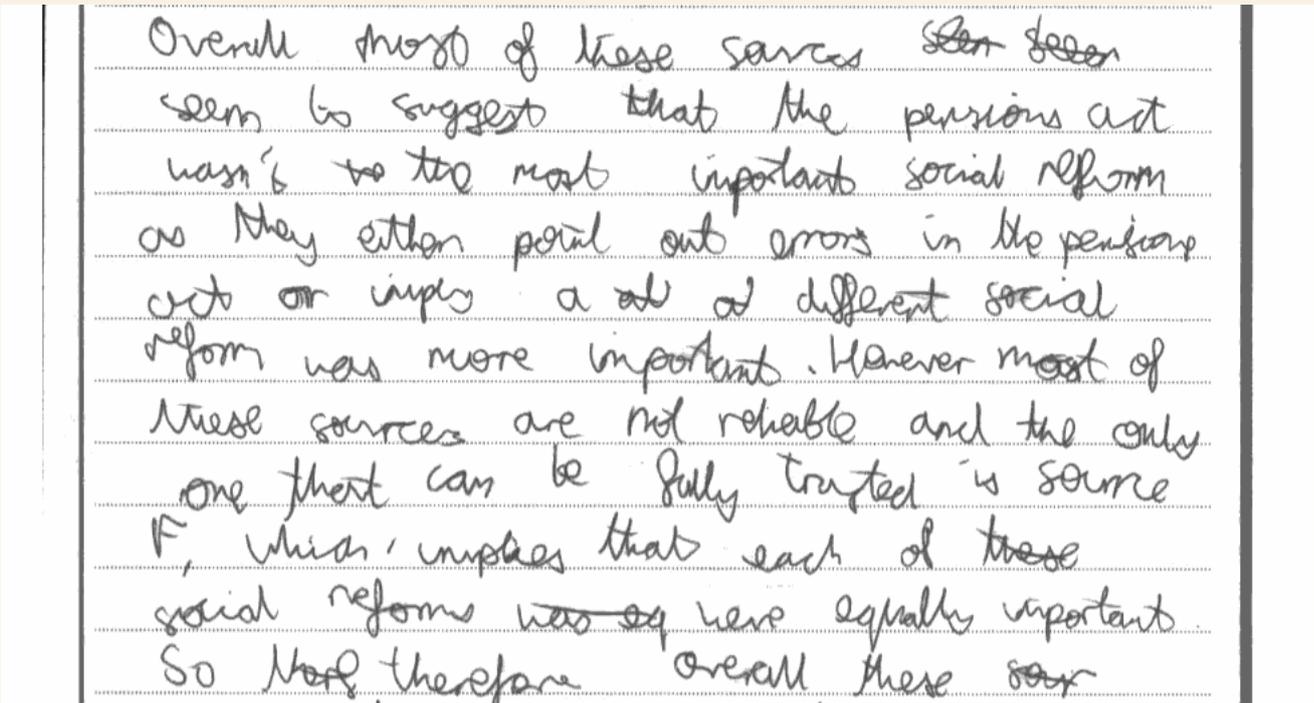
Question 5

There were a number of well structured answers to this question which asks whether the sources support the hypothesis that the Old Age Pensions Act was the most important Liberal welfare reform. Some candidates were able to achieve at least Level 3 by addressing the issues inherent in the question and the extent to which the sources addressed them. At Level 4, candidates were able to select, draw inferences and use extracts from the sources to address the question set. The best candidates were able to weigh the evidence from each source, based on contents and/or reliability, and use their conclusion to make a final judgement based on the weight of evidence given in the sources for or against the hypothesis.

Use of provenance/reliability varied in quality and often was overtly mechanical making it difficult to ascertain the direction of an answer. The most effective use of provenance/reliability was weaved into the wider argument of whether or not the source supported or challenged the hypothesis, with candidates making explicit judgements about whether the reliability of the source weakened or strengthened it as evidence. In a minority of cases, time management issues undermined candidates' responses to this question.

A small number of candidates failed to make sufficient use of the sources and used their own knowledge to explain whether the Old Age Pensions Act was the most important Liberal welfare reform. Remember that this is a source enquiry question. Candidates are being asked to evaluate the strength of the evidence in the sources themselves - in their content and reliability. Candidates should not bring in additional own knowledge to support or challenge the hypothesis but should use their contextual knowledge to identify the issues involved and to evaluate the provenance of the sources. A minority failed to grasp that Sources D and E provide an alternative Liberal welfare measure and saw these as an extension of the Old Age Pension Act.

A number of candidates failed to use Source F. Candidates should now be aware that Source F is there to provide alternative views which can challenge the hypothesis. However, candidates can achieve Level 4 and even full marks by making effective use of most but not all of the sources.



Overall most of these sources ~~seem~~ seem to suggest that the pensions act wasn't the most important social reform as they either point out errors in the pensions act or imply a different social reform was more important. However most of these sources are not reliable and the only one that can be fully trusted is source F, which implies that each of these social reforms was ~~as~~ were equally important. So ~~that~~ therefore overall these sources

sources do not support the view that
that the pensions act was the most
important social reform.



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Examiner Comments

This was a very strong conclusion to a Level 4 answer. The candidate had made supported judgements in support of and challenging the hypothesis using the contents and reliability of the sources. The candidate uses the weight of evidence in the sources to make a judgement - this is based on the contents of the sources and their reliability e.g. Source F.



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Examiner Tip

Ensure that you use the sources to make judgements on the hypothesis. Do not simply summarise each source or use own knowledge. Your overall judgement should be based on the weight of evidence given by the contents/reliability of the sources.

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