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Examiners' Report
June 2011

GCSE History 5HB03 3B

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Introduction

This was the third series of this 2009 Schools History Project Source Enquiry. Most candidates were able to demonstrate responses that were worthy of at least some credit. There was evidence that more responses were achieving the higher levels required by the mark scheme. There remain a number of areas where candidate responses could improve and hopefully the following report will help them achieve that. There was evidence that many centres had learnt from the experience of the first two series. That said there was some evidence that some candidates experienced some difficulty in terms of allocating time in the examination to questions in relation to the mark tariff that they are worth. Too many long answers to questions 1 and 2 were answered with much more effort and depth than many responses to question 5. The latter was despite the fact that the latter had many more marks allocated to it. There were fewer responses that were written in the wrong sections of the answer book. This is a particular problem in responses to question 4, which instead of using the next page of the answer book after completing the first page of question 4 continue their answers on the last page of question 3. There were far too many simplistic responses concerning the value and utility of sources. Many of these are inaccurate and misinformed. Too many responses saw all primary sources as reliable and useful and secondary as worthless. As mentioned in previous reports the value of tackling questions under examination conditions is a useful way of preparing candidates to respond appropriately to the demands of the examination as well as the specification.

Question 1

Question 1: Overall candidates answered this question well with a minority achieving only L1 or 2. Most candidates focused on the number of people not paying as the main unsupported inference at L2 or they focused generally on the anger and unfairness of the tax. At L3 the responses were mainly focused on supported inferences around the government's inability to control non payment and the ineffectiveness of enforcement or collection/administration of the tax due to mass opposition. Responses here tended to focus on the number of non payers being a problem as the government would have less money and income. Alternatively they could not enforce non payment as either they couldn't jail all those people or they couldn't collect the money or fines of non payment due to being stopped or violence being used on officers (e.g. sieges). Other responses were that it weakened the Governments credibility due to growing mass opposition (now 13 million) and obvious public dislike of the tax was likely to lose support in elections. Weaker responses tended to paraphrase the source or quote sections of it without comment.

1 Study Source A.

What can you learn from Source A about the problems the Poll Tax protests created for the Government?

(6)

One problem that source A shows that the poll tax created for the government was that by 1989, nearly a million people were not paying the tax. This creates a problem for the government as that as more and more people refuse to pay, the less money that is being drawn into the government, therefore creates a problem as the government cannot function without the people's tax.

Another problem that Source A shows that the poll tax created for the government was how marches and rallies were taken place involving tens of thousands of people. This created a problem for the government as due to the large numbers of people that were involved, it ~~was~~ led to ~~the~~ the media being attracted which would make the government look bad as they want give in. Also the fact that marches and rallies consisted of tens of thousands of people, it shows that the ~~pe~~ protestors were ambitious and dedicated and shows the solidarity of the protestors therefore making the government feel defeated even though they haven't got what they want yet. This creates a problem for the government as it puts pressure onto them to giving in.

Another problem that source A shows that the poll tax created for the government was how officials sent to enforce the charge were stopped from entering non-payers' homes. This creates a problem for the government as they feel as if they have ~~defeated~~ been defeated. It also creates a problem as they are still not getting the tax from the people and the only way they could have done has also been stopped therefore making the protestors bigger than them.



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Examiner Comments

This response was able to make several valid inferences and supported these with reference to the source itself.



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Examiner Tip

Remember to make two or more inferences and provide support from the source. Unsupported inferences can only achieve a maximum of 3 marks.

Question 2

Question 2: Overall candidates answered this question well with very few producing responses at Level 1. Candidates generally had a good grasp of the question and were confident in using the source, with most answers getting in to top level 2 and beyond. Nearly all candidates clearly understood that the source was against the leaders of the poll tax protest. They were also able at various levels to describe and support how they knew; the source disapproved of the protestors and was being negative. At level 2 there were mainly valid comments making use of the source, about how horrified people (old ladies) were of the violence used. Many were able to comment on the use of phrases such as "rent a mob" or describing protestors as "extremists" and "revolutionaries" At this level there was general recognition of bias. However there was less confidence displayed in using source content on how the author created, sustained or built this impression by the selection or deliberate use of language. The better answers could make effective use of the language used in the article, particularly "revolutionaries" and "militant" to support the idea of extremism and also the tone of the passage with the use of "sarcastic language". At level 3 there was good understanding of treatment and selection focusing on the negative language and bias and ability to build the impression with how the impression is created and how the author is trying to persuade people not to support the protests. Some candidates believed that the author was only against the leaders (as the author appears sympathetic to the genuine protestors, but is against the militants). Other responses supported the view that the author was against the whole protest as it has already been taken over. Some thought that the author portrayed the old ladies as weak and naïve.

2 Study Source B.

What impression of the Poll Tax protesters has the author tried to give? Explain your answer, using Source B.

(8)

Source B is from an article in 'The Nottingham Evening Post' from 7th March 1990. As the source is a newspaper, it is designed to sell. The article seems to have been sensationalised to make it more interesting and more likely to sell.

It is clear that the author is trying to portray a negative impression of the Poll Tax protestors from the language that is used to describe them. The author describes them as - "the usual rag-bag of political extremists, militant supporters and a few revolutionaries thrown in." This suggests that the author feels that the protestors are mindless vandals who simply enjoy causing havoc and have no real aim.

However, the author does include the fact that there are non-violent protestors, by mentioning "the genuine non-extremist opponents of the tax" and the author seems sympathetic



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Examiner Comments

This response made it to Level 3 with its understanding of the piece which sees different sides to the protest movement but believes that it has been hi-jacked by militants.



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Examiner Tip

You could use the nature and provenance of a source in Question 2 to support your answer.

Question 3

Question 3: Many of the responses tended to trawl through each source in turn, outlining what Source C said, followed by similar treatment of the other two sources. Candidates generally made a good attempt at this question. Most responded using all 3 sources, with only a few staying at L1 or low L2. Overall candidates understood the question and achieved mid level 2 and low level 3. In level 2 many responses matched and cross referenced content or used reliability of the source with no reference to content. Here the responses were focused mainly on supporting a 'Yes' answer with content. Yes they did use violence, A talks of violent marches and protests or office sieges; B shows violent demonstrations at town halls or they are rent a mob/revolutionaries; C is clear evidence of violence. At this level there was no attempt to dig deeper and see that B & C only went so far in showing there was violence compared to C, so no challenge was made. At the bottom of L3 there were a few weak attempts to weigh up support that collectively all sources go as far to say there was violence but some more than others. With some development this did put some at L3/7 as opposed to 8 or 9. At the mid to higher levels of L3 there was more explicit use of the content to support statements to show for and against the use of violence with and/or discussion of the nature of the source. A significant number picked up that Source A shows that non violent methods were used, except for the hint of violence in the sieges of offices. The bias of this source was also identified. B doesn't outline violent methods except the violent demonstration at council meetings. This source does mention specifically genuine non violent protestors and the obvious bias of the source which is a newspaper: C was identified as clearly showing violence but the more perceptive commented that it is just one picture which might not be typical. In relation to providence of the sources, most only focused on Source A as a leader of the protesters to help support B and C, however better students considered the nature of B and the use of a photo as evidence.

3 Study Sources A, B and C.

How far do Sources A, B and C suggest that the Poll Tax protesters used violent methods? Explain your answer, using these sources.

(10)

Source B suggests the poll tax protesters used violent methods to get their view across, "violent demonstrations" which suggests that this is the way they thought they would get what they wanted. Similarly source C has a man kicking a shop window which shows the poll tax protesters were violent because they thought this would grab attention from the government so they could give into their views. Furthermore, source B suggests

enter the Poll tax protest "is led by political extremists or revolutionaries" which shows only the extreme and dangerous methods of demonstrating will be put through not the more peaceful methods^{as only non-violent demonstrations}. Moreover, Source C has people in the background chucking objects at other windows which shows that the poll tax protest was violent as they think this is the best way to get their viewpoint across.

However, source A suggests more peaceful methods as protestors were involved in "Marches and rallies involving tens of thousands of people" which shows that

Many demonstrators peacefully got their viewpoint across and in the masses as well. Furthermore, many stopped paying taxes, "13 million new non-payers" which shows the masses who non-violently wanted to protest just stopped paying the tax altogether which is a more effective way as the government lacks the funding needed to keep the country ~~running~~ functioning efficiently.

The provenance of source A needs to be considered as it was written by a leader of the poll tax protest he isn't going to admit to being part of a violent demonstration^{or that his protest was violent and aggressive} and it was written years after which means that he would want to settle what really happened^{but it's on his mind so he's not}. However, source B's provenance is an article which could be exaggerated as

It's for a newspaper and the purpose is for entertainment because there will be much in the article but the words will have been exaggerated such as "militant" which suggests violence.

Furthermore, the prominence of source C is the strongest because it's factual proof that the methods were violent as it's a photograph and the comment is a man kicking a glass window.

Sources B and C suggests that the methods were violent and their provenances are stronger than source A therefore they are both reliable

accounts. On the other hand source A suggests more peaceful methods to get their viewpoint across.

The sources suggest to a great extent that the methods were violent especially towards the start of the protests in particular the protest in and around Trafalgar Square.



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Examiner Comments

This was a good level 3 response that made effective use of both content and nature with good use of the sources in support



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Examiner Tip

Develop effective cross referencing methods. "All three sources mention violence, C shows it directly and B mentions violent demonstrations. A however generally mentions more peaceful methods"

Question 4

Question 4: The Sources should be evaluated in this question in terms of their usefulness in answering a specific question, as well as commenting on their content, nature, and provenance. This question did cause some candidates real problems. Most candidates did not stay in L1 but clearly were in level 2. Many candidates discussed the value of D in comparison with E, with the focus on whether D was more reliable. Many thought that a firsthand Prime Minister's account rather than a biased anti-conservative web report was more reliable. At L2 most candidates showed they understood that both were biased, and then discussed some aspects of their relative strength or weakness. At this level there was little reference to information or content which showed the violence. Other candidates focused only on the information provided from the content of the sources at L2. Here they focused mainly on the information about violence such as who started it, descriptions of violence and who was to blame. There were a number of rather simplistic attempts at justifying the reliability of the sources based on when they were produced. Many answers claimed that Mrs Thatcher's was a primary source and therefore better, and that since she was the Prime Minister she would not lie. Better responses were able at level 3 to combine both NOP with source content weighing up what the source shows with comment on its reliability or lack of it. For example D provides useful statistics. However these were seen by some to take the side of the police and the Government. As such they had been purposefully selected and no mention is made of how many protestors were injured. Or the PM is not likely to exaggerate as it is an authoritative biography and she does say that the violence was due to only a group of trouble makers not all protestors. E on the other hand was valuable as it tells us who started it and how people responded. It is a secondary source done years later after the event and with further research and hindsight. It gives the peoples version and is not likely to lie as too many people were there to witness it, including the T.V. At L3 most candidates received 8 or 9 marks.

4 Study Sources D and E.

Which of Sources D or E is more valuable to the historian investigating who was responsible for the violence in Trafalgar Square on 31 March 1990? Explain your answer, using Sources D and E.

(10)

Source D suggests that the protestors were responsible for the violence whereas Source E blames the Police, personally I think that Source E is more valuable.

Source E states that the protest was 'spoilt by the actions of the Police', and claims that the Police 'attacked a peaceful demonstration'. It gives evidence of ^{the} actions of Police which ~~led to~~ ~~the~~ violence was responsible for

the violence in Trafalgar Square, for example 'horses trampled protestors', 'cars & vans drove at high speed into the packed crowds' and 'police drew blood with random use of their truncheons'.

✱ This source does not however comment on the actions of the protestors and note them as being anything other than peaceful, this could be an exaggeration as the source was written by an anti-conservative website. This is the type of source that would want to

make the conservative government & its actions in the protests look perhaps worse than they were.

Source D however does not agree, in this source it ~~also~~ claims that the protest 'developed' into rioting due to 'troublemakers' who 'deliberately encouraged violence'. However ~~the~~ the source itself gives ^{specific} no evidence to support this, only stating 'there was good evidence'. It pins responsibility on the protestors further by saying that they used scaffolding as missiles and started fires. It goes on to state that '400 policemen were injured', this suggests that a lot of the violence was carried out against police officers,

however it fails to mention how many protestors were injured. The fact that '339 people were arrested' implies that the protestors were violent and were using illegal methods to protest. However this source was written by Margaret Thatcher, prime minister at the time of those protests, who would obviously want to make herself and the actions of authorities under her command look less serious.

In conclusion source E would be more valuable to find out who was responsible for violence, as it gives evidence of Police violence on protestors and it did, to a small extent, cover violence on both sides, mentioning protestors trying to 'defend themselves'. Source D is too unreliable as evidence for what actually took place as it is limited by its origin and lack of specific information.



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Examiner Comments

This is a good Level 3 response that makes use of both content and nature.



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Examiner Tip

Combine both content and nature in an evaluation of both sources.
Remember to make a judgement as to which source is more valuable.

Question 5

Question 5: Many students had a reasonable stab at this question and were able to answer confidently at level 2 using sources or own knowledge. At this level sources were used mainly to agree with the statement with straightforward 'Yes' responses. Many then used sources A, F and G, or their own knowledge, to support their response but with no analysis or depth of evidence. A few disagreed and supported violence as the main reason why the Poll Tax was abolished. At level 3 there was more of a focused yes, with depth and own knowledge at the high end of L3 (giving the APTU, government concern over a forthcoming election and Mrs Thatcher's unpopularity as factors). Other responses favoured a combined yes and no response, with students looking at the 3 sources, or using wider own knowledge, or factors from other sources. At this level very coherent, supported and sustained arguments were put forward but without own knowledge they could not exceed 10 marks. At level 4 very few candidates received 16 as there was little attempt to evaluate the sources as part of the evidence. A few received 15 with some evaluation usually on Source A being biased but being the most useful source to support mass non payment. Most candidates received 13 or 14 marks by providing a sustained argument and clear conclusion. Typically candidates at this level weighed up the implications of mass non payment with other factors, such as not being able to legally challenge or enforce it, the loss of revenue, or John Majors tactic to win the electorate over after Mrs Thatcher resigned.

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