

Examiners' Report  
January 2012

GCSE History 5HB03 3C

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## Introduction

This was the fifth opportunity candidates had to sit this Schools History Project Source Enquiry paper on The Impact of War on Britain c1914-c1950. The focus this series was government efforts to control food supplies during the Second World War. It was handled in the main with some confidence and increased awareness of the demands of individual questions than some of the earlier series. Few candidates were unable to produce answers that were not worthy of at least some credit and some were able to achieve the highest levels of questions, though Level 4 of question 5 proved more challenging to many. There were fewer problems with time management than previously but it still is an issue for some candidates where responses to questions 4 and 5 showed signs of undue haste or in the case of question 5 was sometimes not answered at all. There is some evidence that a few candidates leave out or rush an earlier question to ensure they attempt question 5. The latter approach has the advantage of focusing on the question carrying the highest number of marks. However a more effective approach would be to allocate enough time for each question. However it is encouraging to see signs of real progress by candidates who seem to have benefited from the experience of and lessons learnt from earlier papers. The issue of getting the allocation of time right and ensuring all questions are attempted would lessen if candidates were given more practice of answering questions under examination conditions. The increasing number of past papers should prove helpful in this process.

## **Question 1**

Responses to this question were varied from the very weak to the well-developed and focused. Many candidates were able to make one inference and provide support from the source, fewer were able to develop responses involving two or more inferences with support. Responses would indicate that a visual source is not necessarily an easy one.

In particular few saw the idea of the long term or the idea that government could control people's lives. Whilst many got the idea of everyone being in it together a sizeable number immediately assumed that the King had meat, and more of it than everyone else so that was very unfair. This revealed a lack of knowledge of what foods were rationed and a cynical and unhistorical understanding of the context. The idea of the King setting an example was not often appreciated. Among the supported inferences made, common was that rationing was fair because it even included the King. More perceptive responses commented on the fact this book was for 26 weeks so the Government obviously thought rationing was obviously going to last some time.

## **Question 2**

Most candidates were able to achieve at least a level 1 either extracting some valid comments about the need for more food, everybody could help or by simply stating that women were wanted. The best level 3 candidates found a range of aspects of the poster to comment on, often with subtlety. There were comments on the wording focusing on "Women" and "Victory" or on the imagery of the poster. There were some very good Level 3 responses from those candidates who, as well as examining content, commented in great detail about the way the poster was phrased with examples of capital letters and punctuation. Most saw that the poster was aimed at women. Others developed the link that the poster was an opportunity to demonstrate how women might contribute to the war effort.

Some perceptive responses were able to identify the emotions this poster tried to tap into, they tended to focus upon guilt in relation to mother's being unable to feed their children. Few answers considered that mothers were being encouraged to get their children involved. Candidates need to see the stress on the word "how" and to see both the particular and the whole. Some thought it was sexist to address only women, showing a lack of understanding of the context of the war and that many men had been called up to fight.

Many candidates appeared to struggle to incorporate analysis of design elements such as the use of capital letters or font chosen in answers.

A large number of candidates concentrated on one aspect of the poster, commonly its pictorial aspects. The highest grades went to those candidates who could explain this aspect accurately, but combine it with an understanding of other aspects such as the impact of the images used and wording. Candidates would be advised to study visual sources carefully and accurately and to consider a range of aspects for the higher marks.

Source B is a government propaganda poster trying to encourage people to grow your own food and help the country. The poster says 'Dig for Victory', that suggests that by growing your own food you are helping towards the war effort and you are leading the country to victory. It also makes a special call to 'Women' so they want to make sure everyone feels involved in helping the war and this will raise morale. In Source B 'DIG' is the largest, boldest word in there so it is getting it's point across by highlighting this word. It is not asking you to dig, it is telling you to dig, it says 'You must grow your own.' This sense of urgency makes the public feel like they can't wait any longer and they must grow their own vegetables otherwise we might not win the war. It puts pressure on them to grow their own vegetables and they could feel guilty if they don't. It also has signs with crossed out words.

of things that used to grow their e.g 'broccoli' or 'cabbage', this gets it's point across as it's saying these are the things the farmers aren't growing anymore, they are growing more useful things like 'wheat' and 'potatoes'. They are urging people that if they want these nice vegetables, they will have to grow them themselves.

The origin of the poster is from the government so we know that it is propoganda and they are trying to encourage us to grow our own food. The purpose was the persuade the public and make them feel pressured like they have to do so or we might lose the war.



### ResultsPlus

#### Examiner Comments

A good Level 3 response that makes effective use of the source to explain how the poster's message is put across.



### ResultsPlus

#### Examiner Tip

Use details such as font and language used to create message.

### Question 3

Some candidates simply selected details from the sources but without any linkage to the question focus. Some simply stated what each source said in their own words providing a Level 1 answer. The majority of candidates were able to reach Level 2 on this question. Although there have been improvements in candidates' cross-referencing skills, overwhelmingly the biggest problem was a failure to move beyond matching the sources. Many answers went through each source in turn and then related the sources content to the question. Many candidates failed to cross-reference the sources, and where they did it was often done poorly. Where cross-referencing was done well it was often accompanied with a thorough consideration of both the source content and nature in order to reach a conclusion.

A fair number of candidates were able to match on both content and reliability and to do this thoroughly and in detail, but they did not take their good work one step further by making a judgement about the extent of support that the sources offered based on the kinds of sources that these were. Where candidates did do this, they showed high levels of reasoning and could be very perceptive in their judgements.

Preparation for this question needs to concentrate on encouraging candidates to develop the ability to make a judgement on how accurate a general historical judgement is, based on an accurate consideration of what sources say and how reliable they can be judged to be.

(10)

Sources A, C and D each contribute interesting ideas <sup>as to</sup> whether the system of rationing was fair and all give ideas which support and challenge the fairness of the rationing system.

Source A immediately appears to support the fairness of the rationing system by proving that even King George VI was made to ration despite the fact that he ~~is~~ <sup>was</sup> both 'rich' and owned his own 'land' which is mentioned in source D to challenge the rationing system. Also the fact that source A is a legitimate document made in 'January 1940', which was of course during the war, and that rationing books were official government documents and so could not be faked or lie suggests that source A is a reliable source. Source C was also written at the time of the war, 'November 1939', and appeared in a national newspaper ('Daily Express') which could mean that the information given is reliable and the fact that the government did not censor it is very interesting. Source D appears to both support and challenge, although mainly support, saying that the 'fair\* and\* efficient\*' rationing of food' was a 'major achievement of the wartime government'. This suggests that the system of rationing was in fact very fair pointing out that 'the same amounts' of 'starch' and 'protein' were distributed to families 'throughout the country'.

However, source D does also give the alternative view saying that the 'rich' managed to 'avoid the effects of rationing by getting an extra supply of meat'. This does not appear fair at all, and considering source D is written by a historian who has hindsight on their side, the condemning evidence should be factual. Source C also strongly disagrees with the idea that the system of

rationing was fair by suggesting that 'the public should revolt against the introduction of the rationing system', later going on to describe the system as 'trouble' and 'expense' finishing the paragraph by describing the system as 'stupid' and 'almost impossible to understand'.

Overall, if I were to make a judgement on how far sources A, C and D suggest that the system of rationing was fair I would have to say, considering both supporting and challenging evidence, that the sources appear to suggest that the system was in fact 'fair' and a 'major achievement' as I feel that perhaps the Daily Express only started the campaign to create a story rather than because of the actual unfairness of the system.



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Comments**

Good answer on both nature and content with effective cross-referencing of the answer.



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Tip**

Avoid describing each source in turn without addressing the question set.

## Question 4

Although a number of candidates judged the use of the sources on content alone or less commonly just on reliability, large numbers were able to consider the sources on both. Many showed an appreciation of censorship during the war. However few appeared to have any clear idea of the typical readership of "The Lady". On the whole the sources presented few problems for candidates. Some showed sympathy to the bird feeders as they could do what they liked with their own bread, whilst others took an anti-rich stance. In many there was a clear lack of historical context in which the sources were located.

Candidates struggled with considering the nature or authorship of the sources, particularly source F. Where an attempt was made to consider the nature of F, it was often analysed as a newspaper rather than an account of a trial in a newspaper. Very few responses considered the dates of publication within their answer.

The lesson to be learnt here seems to be that candidates need to consider both content and reliability for the highest marks, and that they need to move beyond glib generalisations about types of sources to a more measured consideration of the value of a particular source for a specific historical investigation, a consideration of what the source has to offer and the care that needs to be taken in using and interpreting it.

Source E is an article in 'The Lady', a weekly magazine, published in 1943. From the Nop of this source it is clear to the historian that this source will be reliable as it is from the time during WW2. In some ways source E is ~~us~~ valuable to the historian as it is showing that many ~~a~~ women of all social classes were thankful for the system of rationing. It is valuable as it showing a positive attitude to the rationing however may not be as valuable due to it only having one view and also as it ~~is~~ is from a women's magazine it may be bias.

Source F is an account of a trial in Barnet, published on 20 January 1943. Again from the Nop of source it is valuable to the historian as it was during the time of WW2, so it shows it won't ~~be~~ <sup>be</sup> false information. It may be more valuable as it showing how one person was fined for wasting food, it gives real statistics so it showing that it may be more.

Valuable to the historian ~~also~~.

Both sources show that they are valuable to the historian in some way but source F is more ~~valuable~~ <sup>valuable</sup>, as it is giving key facts about ~~an~~ ~~att~~ one attitude towards rationing. It shows the consequences to those that didn't take care of their rationing system and ~~misused~~ ~~misused~~ <sup>privileges</sup> ~~privileges~~ given to them.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

A response that edges into Level 3 with a focus on content and nature.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

Avoid just describing each source in turn without addressing the question directly.

## Question 5

Only a few candidates were able to reach the higher levels for this question. Those who reached Level 4 were a comparative rarity. Some candidates, whose use of the content of the sources was excellent, did not contribute a sufficient amount of their own knowledge to access higher marks. The hardest element of the question was own knowledge which was limited, some candidates did mention the black market. Hardly any talked about U-boats or blockades or other propaganda campaigns.

Where candidates did do well they referred to the three sources mentioned in the question and used their own knowledge. Some candidates went further and acknowledged that the sources disagreed with one another and made an attempt to assess each source and link it to the question. Very few candidates explained the strength of the evidence.

Many students were confident in their analysis of sources B, D and G within their answers, and were able to link their judgements to relevant details. Very few answers attempted to answer the question without any reference to the sources at all. Very few students who were able to include additional knowledge were able to integrate that within their analysis of the sources. Conclusions tended to be weak or absent.

Many of the best responses to this question were unfinished and underdeveloped. Many potential level 4 responses were incomplete. There seems to be an issue with examination technique and the planned use of time.

In some ways I agree with this statement and in some ways I don't. Source B shows that the government had control of the food supplies as they were encouraging people to grow their own vegetables and told farmers to grow more useful things like wheat and potatoes. The government had controls of what food farmers were producing and had introduced rationing in 1940. I know the Dig for Victory campaign was a success because by 1942 the number of allotments in Britain had almost doubled. This shows that the government's attempt to encourage people to grow their own vegetables had worked and they had control on what people thought.

Source G also shows that the government had control of food supplies as Vera Lynn says that rationing was 'shared equally and efficiently'. Because she was a singer during the war we know that she had a first hand experience on what the rationing in the war was really like.

She agrees with source B that the government did have control on food supplies as she says that there were free school meals available and free orange juice for under twos. This shows us that the government had control over rationing as they told farmers what to grow, as shown in source B, and told schools what they could and could not give the children. It shows that the government had control on every aspect of rationing so was therefore successful.

Source D also agrees with both sources B and G as it calls rationing in the war an 'achievement'. It says that rationing was fair and successful however because it was written by a modern historian it might not give us a true insight as to whether rationing really was successful and whether the government really had control. The historian would have based his book on historical facts so we could say that it is reliable and ~~that~~ <sup>when</sup> he says it was fair and efficient this is probably true.

Because source G was published in 1989, a long time after the war, we might not

and rationing. Although it does agree with the statement this might not have been her opinion during the war.

Although all sources eg B, D and G agree with the statement that the government had control of the supplies, I know that there was a black market during the war. People were buying food from the black market at inflated prices so this shows that the government did not have control of everything and all the food supplies. Therefore I don't agree with <sup>part of</sup> this statement as if the government did have control of food supplies the black market



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

A good level 3 response that uses both sources and own knowledge to good effect.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

Leave enough time to answer this question with the highest mark allocation.

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