

Examiners' Report  
June 2016

GCSE Geography B 5GB3F 01

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## **Introduction**

This paper was the third of the 'unseen' versions of 5GB3 and probably the most accessible for candidates. With a clearly synoptic focus on the issue of declining global biodiversity and its causes, the material included in the booklet would have been more familiar than either the Ogallala aquifer in 2015 or Jamaica's tourist industry in 2014. Many of the questions could be answered effectively by simply using the Resource Booklet selectively and intelligently and many did exactly that. Most required one or two extended points to be made and it was the ability to extend that discriminated most. Some candidates struggled to add any developed ideas to basic statements whilst others could add an example or a qualification to those initial points. The final question (Question 5) required candidates to be attentive to the command words used if they were to access the higher levels of the mark scheme. Above all this paper examines the flexibility of candidates in their thinking and especially rewards their skills of assessment and evaluation. There were some very impressive answers at the top end of the cohort.

### Question 1 (b) (i)

There was a wide range of possible answers available in the Resource Booklet and the question posed few problems for the vast majority.

- (b) (i) Outline **one** piece of evidence that we might be living during a sixth 'extinction event'.

(2)

We do alot of human activity such as deforestation, which effects animal & plant habbitats for the worst.



#### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

Careful reading of questions is obviously essential. Unfortunately here the candidate doesn't do so and isn't awarded any marks.



#### ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Underline or highlight key words so as to better understand the focus of a question; its main point.

### Question 1 (b) (ii)

This proved to be problematic for some because they struggled to understand why some species might be more vulnerable than others so they frequently repeated the question in their answers asserting truisms such as 'they are more vulnerable because they are "living in more vulnerable areas"' without any extension.

- (ii) Suggest **one** reason why some species might be more at risk than others.

(2)

Some species could be hunted to ~~over~~ extinction as a result of being considered a delicacy.



#### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

The Resource Booklet provided the source of well over 75% of answers across the whole paper for candidates who knew where to look. Although slightly off-beat this is a legitimate use of the booklet - 'Hunting', and the candidate has found a reason for that hunting.



#### ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

When you open a Resource Booklet for the first time read it all through before writing any answers - tough to do but important.

## Question 2 (b) (ii)

The question was essentially a test of whether candidates understood the main factors that contribute to population growth, namely changes in birth and death rates. A small minority, missing global in the question and perhaps carried along by the active national debate regarding international migration unfortunately included that in their answers. Very few addressed the inherent difficulty of any predictions and the large cumulative increase of quite small changes in, for example, birth rates. The Resource Booklet did offer some assistance but it wasn't always 'seen'.

(ii) Outline **one** reason why there is doubt about the rate of future global population growth.

(2)

There is doubt about the future global population growth because the developed countries are having less children and in developing world they are having more children but life expectancy is low



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This example is not untypical of the type of intelligent error that can be so exasperating in our candidates. Whilst what is written here is true enough it has not been applied to the question set, so doesn't score any marks.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Always re-read your answers - carefully check whether you need to make a small modification to the wording of your answer to make it relevant to the question asked.

## Question 2 (c) (ii)

The question was designed to prod candidates towards the idea that population growth would stimulate further changes that would in turn increase threats to species. Candidates were inventive in identifying a basic cause but less good in spelling out why this posed a threat.

- (ii) Outline **one** threat to animal and plant species caused by rapid population growth.

(2)

people need space for housing and farms, so trees are cleared. The plants and animals die as the animal's home has been destroyed and the plants can't get nutrients.



### ResultsPlus

#### Examiner Comments

'Outline' questions expect one basic point to be extended with a little detail as is done here - the point about nutrients being a good twist. The response was awarded both marks.



### ResultsPlus

#### Examiner Tip

Always try to develop a point with an example or a little detail unless the question command word discourages it as in 'State...' or 'Name...'

## Question 2 (c) (iii)

The Resource Booklet gave a very direct prompt to the relevant resource and text in the Resource Booklet which most, but by no means all, candidates found. Others, missing the prompt, struggled to find a legitimate reason.

- (iii) Outline **one** reason why TNCs are buying more land in the developing world.

(2)

So that they can grow more crops for a global market of agriculture products, so they can make more of a profit on it.



### ResultsPlus

#### Examiner Comments

As in other examples this illustrates good use of the Resource Booklet by the candidate who scores both marks.



### ResultsPlus

#### Examiner Tip

Try to think ahead - the most important question on these papers is the final one. Might this idea about TNCs land-grabbing be useful in your answer to that question? If so make a quick note in the Resource Booklet not to forget it!

## Question 2 (c) (iv)

This two reason question discriminated in that many candidates found something sensible to say about one reason for variation but many struggled to find a second. The most obvious help from the Resource Booklet was the map of 'hotspots' but it wasn't 'seen' by many as being relevant here.

(iv) Outline **two** reasons why habitat destruction is more serious in some areas than others.

(4)

- 1 one reason is that some countries may be more populated. This means that the habitat may be ruined in order to create more houses-
- 2 Another reason is because some countries don't have any rules to not ruin them so they take advantage. This may be due to pollution and climate change.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

Although this answer scored full marks it did so by the narrowest of margins - as in many other cases the decision would have been easier if the candidate had used real examples.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Try to add examples when you can - remember that you cannot lose marks if the examples are, by any chance, wrong or irrelevant. You can never lose marks, just fail to gain them.

## Question 2 (d) (ii)

The most popular answer relied on the arresting idea in the Resource Booklet that China's economic growth stimulated demand for power which led to a very significant power station building programme.

(ii) Outline **one** way in which economic growth increases the consumption of resources.

(2)

Having a good economy can be good.  
Per trade, this means that ~~the~~ people may  
~~get~~ buy resources even though they don't  
need them.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This is a curious response that is not helped by its non-specific vocabulary as in 'good'. It did not score any marks.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Choose your words carefully - what is a 'good' economy? If you mean it has a higher income per person then say just that!

## Question 2 (e) (ii)

This was as much a test of knowing the conventional list of continents as it was of the distribution of global wealth. Many failed at the first of these hurdles with countries substituting for continents, albeit countries that are indeed home to many wealthy people. It was, in truth, very disappointing.

(ii) Identify the **two** continents where most of the world's richest 20% live.

(2)

1. Europe  
2. America



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

America is the obvious problem here - a continent? Not by convention.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Just now and again revise your basic knowledge of global geography - just a few minutes a month maybe!

### Question 2 (e) (iii)

This tested the understanding of the term 'social' as it was an understanding of the process that links educational and health inequalities with wealth and income inequalities. Many vaulted this hurdle with ease but often failed to add anything other than a statement about, for example, life expectancy.

(iii) Outline **one** social impact of the present distribution of wealth and consumption.

(2)

One social impact of the present distribution of wealth and consumption is that people living in the developing world do not have good access to education unlike the developed population, making it harder for the developing population to learn new things.

(Total for Question 2 = 21 marks)



#### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This is an example of a response from a candidate who had some idea about the meaning of the word 'social' and who scored 2 marks.



#### ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Some words are critical to understand on this and other papers. A quick short-list would certainly include economic, social, political and environmental.

### Question 3 (a)

The idea that there is a limit of some sort was widespread but not always as a demographic idea – few candidates saw it in terms of a given population number.

3 Study Section 3 (page 7) in the Resource Booklet and answer the following questions.

(a) Define the term **carrying capacity**. → when we reach a certain <sup>(limit)</sup>

Carrying capacity is ~~the~~ when ~~there is~~ the population is much higher than the food resources and we will ~~not~~ not be able to do anything about it.



#### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This definition was a typically confused one with an interesting twist about our impotence to engage with the problem - many candidates had the idea of it being some sort of limit but didn't focus on population. This response scored 1 mark.



#### ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

There are several key theories across the subject material and the key terms that they use are important. Make a note of them.

### Question 3 (b)

Somewhat to the general surprise of the marking team Boserup was rather better understood than Malthus; although few candidates understood that population growth is/was the necessary stimulus for technological change but most managed to say two sensible things about the relationship, despite being oblivious of that. On Malthus they were often less convincing especially over food production and the consequences of population exceeding that of production.

This response scored 4 marks.

(b) Study Figures 3a and 3b.

Outline the **two** different theories of the relationship between population growth and resources.

(4)

1 One day our population will grow ~~fast~~ enough to outgrow our resources and cause famine and war.

2 One day our population will invent new ways of preventing itself from outgrowing carrying capacity by increased resource use.



#### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

There are a few pretty fundamental ideas in this specification as, indeed, there are in others. Few are more important than the debate between (neo) - Malthusian and Boserupian opinions. Since the new specification will focus on the resource/consumption debate it should be central in teaching.



#### ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Not everyone views the world in the same way - this debate matters and it helps to get it clear.

## Question 4 (b)

As on the higher paper the main difficulty here was the mismatch between the data candidates had in front of them and their preconceptions about how more developed countries, or more accurately their populations, would care more about the environment than the poor and needy in developing economies. As commented before a clash between data and ideology usually results in a victory for ideology so many answers simply ignored the data.

(b) Explain why attitudes to protecting the environment vary.

(4)

Some people want to protect the environment as it helps everyone to live a ~~beattit~~ healthy life. However, some people don't want to spend more money on food or other goods as they don't want to ~~##~~ waste away their money. On the other hand, others would quite happily pay more money for food and other goods ~~##~~ so long as it will be an advantage to the environment.

(Total for Question 4 = 5 marks)



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This is a fairly typical example of a candidate who more or less side-stepped the question and scored no marks. In reviewing it with them it would be interesting to know why they didn't use any data from the surveys or, presumably, ask themselves why several countries are included and why the results were different from place to place.



### ResultsP Examiner Tip

The command word 'Explain..' is an instruction to give reasons - with four marks available at least two would be useful. You will not get credit for just describing a situation, as here.

## Question 5

As on the higher paper Option 1 was by far the most popular choice and it became a little disappointing to read quite so much unreconstructed neo-Malthusian rhetoric. Most candidates simply stated that population posed the largest threat and very few spotted the fact that population was likely to go on growing for some time, thus 'population must be reduced now' became the leitmotif of these answers. The best answers added some evidence from the booklet and, just occasionally a little Knowledge and Understanding from elsewhere on the specification. There were some very good responses from foundation candidates and they are certainly not incapable of this sort of approach, especially if well-trained, as many are. At the bottom end of the mark range Question 5 was not answered at all or, perhaps, just with a few bullet pointed comments. However, C grade answers were sometimes quite impressive and candidates often insisted on justifying their choice, although the question did not explicitly ask them to do so.

This response just reaches Level 3.

**Spelling, punctuation and grammar will be assessed in your answer to this question.**

\*5 Study the three options concerning the declining biodiversity of the planet.

Option 1: Biodiversity decline is mainly caused by population growth. Governments must tackle this immediately and slow down population growth, to gain some time.

→ Option 2: Biodiversity decline is mainly caused by economic growth. Governments must tackle this immediately and slow down economic growth, to gain some time.

Option 3: Biodiversity decline can be prevented by creating new technologies. Governments must spend much more money researching solutions despite the cost to us all.

Select **one** option.

Explain the **advantages** of this option.

Use information from the Resource Booklet and your own knowledge from Units 1 and 2 to support your answer.

(9)

Chosen option 2

In Paris 2016 there were 197 countries that all agreed to cutting down on greenhouse gases, ~~so~~ in order to find new technologies to stop the huge effect of economic growth in which can happen and seriously effect the whole world.

It is now becoming apparent, that biodiversity decline is caused by 2 things, economic growth, and population growth. However, the advantage of Paris agreement is that the countries are now keeping there word and improving, for example in Kyoto (previous agreement) the UK managed to decrease there total emissions by 20%, this

had a large effect on other countries, because it opened there eyes to see that they can cut emissions and its not difficult. It is also

apparent now that extinction of species is officially, 100x faster now due to human activities, in comparison to the natural rate, this effects ecosystems, food chains etc. and ~~the~~

when this becomes very apparent to everyone it is possible to cut half of the prediction of green house gasses in 2050. this will also mean there will be half of the ~~rest~~ that the global impact would have

halved and would hopefully continue to decrease in the future. Scientists are working on an energy source known as superconductors, in which to get them working at room temperature due to their low ~~costs~~ waste / no waste, which gives 100% percentage yield, it's available to every country in the world and produces high energies of energy. It is also known as a 'clean' energy source. In which will allow developing countries to break out of 'poverty' traps. Therefore, overall if economic growth is decreased and slowed down it gives the governments time to tackle and re-evaluate the potential Earth threatening extinction possible. Not only will it reduce extinction but it will also give more of a 'fair' chance to those whom aren't as wealthy etc. to try and re-evaluate and develop differently. If economic growth slows it will reduce the overall pressure of habitat destruction and species extinction. However, the prediction for 2000 - 2060 is that the global population could potentially grow by 11.5 billion, at it's max, or 8 billion at it's

lowest, in which is still very high but a better outcome than 11.5 billion. However, at an average global population is seen to increase by 9.5 billion, therefore this will have ~~some~~<sup>such a</sup> large effect on the economy ~~and~~ and Earth, that it could initially lead to total extinction. It is also predicted that between 2015 - 2060 overall consumption of developing countries will be ~~over~~ taken over by TNC's producing food for the wealthy & developed economy; giving the farmers in Africa, for example less land to farm on and develop. In conclusion, a method needs to be discovered before it

(Total for spelling, punctuation and grammar = 3 marks)

(Total for Question 5 = 12 marks)

becomes 'uncontrollable', due to the overall effect being negative.

TOTAL FOR PAPER = 53 MARKS



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This is a good answer but it rather fades. Up until the middle of the answer it is well focussed on the chosen option, brings in a good deal of Knowledge and Understanding as well as Resource Booklet material and makes good evaluative points about links with economic growth. However, it then offers up a detailed account of superconductors which is not tied to the chosen Option at all and on the last page the material is dominated by an exposition of the changing global population - in fact it is very hard to guess what the focus is from any part of this page.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Try to plan your extended writing to make sure that it stays on track and addresses the question. If you think that you might be contradicting yourself make that relevant by adding - 'some may argue that...' which would then become counter-argument, which would be admissible in this type of summative question.

## **Paper Summary**

Of all the papers in this summer's Specification B series this might prove to be the most interesting and informative for centres that are taking on the 'new' Specification B in the autumn. The loss of a Foundation paper has implications for both the delivery of the material and the preparation of candidates for what will be a challenging test for previously foundation level candidates in 2018. In this specification the content for Unit 3 is now more identifiable with its focus on resource exploitation in one of two contrasting forest environments: tropical rainforest or taiga, whilst the format of the paper is pretty much fixed in stone. The lessons learned both this summer and in 2014 and 2015 will be invaluable.

## **Grade Boundaries**

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:

<http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx>



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