

Examiners' Report  
June 2012

GCSE History 5HA03 3B

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## Introduction

It was pleasing to see a good standard of responses from candidates in the fifth session. 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 number of candidates failed to complete (in some cases even start) question 5. This was due to mismanagement of time 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.

There was also a noticeable increase in the number of candidates who wrongly labelled the source they were referring to, especially in question 4 with Source E being confused with Source D.

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 and is offered at the end of this report.

## Question 1

Candidates were asked to make inferences about the Dunkirk evacuation. This was generally well answered. The most obvious inferences were that it was a failure and that the British had let down the people of Belgium.

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.

Candidates who stated that 'they will all mention their feeling of shame' were *copying* the source, not making valid inferences and were marked at Level 1. Those who suggested that 'the source suggests that we had let down the people of Belgium' and then added 'I know this because the Source says 'we were now handing them over to another German occupation'' were making a valid inference and supporting it from the source. Such answers were rewarded at Level 3.

What can you learn from Source A about the Dunkirk evacuation?

(6)

We can learn from source A that the troops who were evacuated from Dunkirk saw the operation as a defeat, as the source says "Morale among the returning troops was very low", suggesting that they thought things were going badly and that they had been beaten.

We can also learn that the ~~troops~~ British troops felt that they were betraying the Belgians ~~as they~~ by evacuating, as the source says "we were handing them over to... occupation", suggesting that they thought they were abandoning the Belgians.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This is part of a level 3 answer. The candidate makes two supported inferences - the first about defeat and the second about betraying the Belgians. Notice how the candidate signposts each inference with 'we can learn' and is explicit about quoting from the source to support the inference.



### ResultsPlus 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...'? Do not write too much although, if you have time, do include three supported inferences.

## Question 2

This question asks candidates to explain the purpose of a radio broadcast during the Dunkirk evacuation. The majority of candidates were able to identify the message that the evacuation had not affected the determination of the British troops against the Germans and to support it from the source. This message is supported by words such as 'cheerful' and 'morale is high'.

However, to reach Level 3 candidates had to explain the purpose of the source - what it was intended to make people think or do.

The purpose was to keep up the morale of the British people as well as of the troops. The broadcast deliberately focuses on the positive aspects of the evacuation. It was made at the beginning of the evacuation after the defeat of the Allied armies by the advancing German armies.

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'.

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

(8)

The purpose of Source B is to boost ~~morale~~ ~~the~~ British morale and show the positives of the Dunkirk evacuation as if it was a ~~success~~ success.

In order to present Dunkirk as a victory, the reporter ~~#~~ shows the positives of the evacuation. "Men of the undefeated British Expeditionary Force" have been coming home." The reporter uses the word "undefeated" because it ~~she represents~~ shows that the British had not been beaten, ~~but the~~ suggesting that <sup>the</sup> Dunkirk evacuation was just a minor set-back and the British should still have hope.

Due to 'censorship'-where the government checked news or public media to ensure it only displayed the positives of the war/~~events~~ and all of the events- ~~all~~ any media was published

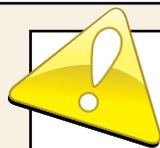
to focus on the positives of the Dunkirk evacuation. Therefore, the Source was censored before shown to the public to ensure that it displayed Dunkirk as a success.

The reporter also ~~§~~ mentions how happy the returning soldiers were, "As the men came off the ships... everyone looked cheerful with some even smiling" this was said to show the public that there was hope and the ~~event~~ Dunkirk evacuation was not a big problem. By presenting the idea of the soldiers being happy and <sup>saying</sup> "their morale is as high as ever" the British public <sup>got the impression</sup> think that the soldiers ~~must have~~ felt successful and therefore, ~~they hope that~~ <sup>also</sup> they feel it was successful.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This is a level 3 answer. Notice how the candidate begins the answer with the purpose of the source. This is supported in the second and last paragraphs with evidence from the source itself and, in the third paragraph, with contextual knowledge about censorship at that time.



### ResultsPlus 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 how far Sources A and B support the evidence of Source C about the attitudes of the British troops. A number of candidates achieved higher Level 2 by identifying agreement and disagreement between the sources. The best candidates cross-referenced Source B to Source A and Source C to Source A and made 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 also to 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 to make comparisons between the sources.

A minority of candidates demonstrated a tendency to make comments on the provenance of the source without focusing 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.

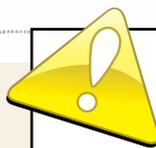
Quite a common issue with this question was candidates getting side-tracked into assessing how far A and B disagreed rather than cross-referencing A - C and B-C.

Source A and Source C disagree very strongly. They both have very different ideas and state the exact opposite to each other. However Source's B and C strongly agree. They both talk about keeping up moral and confidence of the troops, and how they were willing to return to fight the Nazis again.



#### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This is the last part of a good Level 3 answer. Notice how the candidate makes a final judgement about the extent of support between the sources using phrases such as 'disagree very strongly' and 'strongly agree'. These were used throughout the answer and were supported with evidence from each of the sources.



#### 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 utility of Source D, a photograph of two evacuated soldiers, and Source E, an interview with a British soldier who took part in the Dunkirk evacuation. Most candidates achieved Level 2 by examining the contents/information given in each source or by 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 confident with the provenance of both sources. 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.

In general, candidates handled source E more confidently than source D and did not always make effective use of the provenance of Source D, 'A painting by an official war artist'.

On the other hand, there were a number of strong and balanced evaluations. Weaker candidates paraphrased the sources or made simplistic comments or gave pre-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 utility of the contents of the sources and compared this to their contextual knowledge about the Dunkirk evacuation but failed to evaluate the nature, origins or purpose of either of the sources with reference to utility.

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 utility. The question is whether the two sources are useful.

How useful are Sources D and E as evidence of the Dunkirk evacuation? Explain your answer, using Sources D and E and your own knowledge.

(10)

Source D is quite useful but not overly. This photo ~~is~~ is useful because it can be used to show the feeling of the soldiers upon evacuation and it can help to portray the famed 'Dunkirk spirit' that the BEF were said to have adopted because the soldiers look ~~very~~ quite cheerful.

However, ~~it~~ is Source D is not entirely useful because it is a ~~picture~~ photograph so it can only portray one moment in time. This means that it cannot be used to draw any conclusions ~~as~~ about the Dunkirk evacuation because it doesn't

show the whole evacuation, just one specific moment in it. Also, due to the fact that this photo was published in a British newspaper during the war means that the Ministry of Information would have made sure that it only showed positive aspects of the Dunkirk evacuation. This means that it ~~was~~ could be a very biased ~~misleading~~ picture and so ~~cannot be used~~ it is not overly useful.



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Comments**

This is part of a Level 3 answer. In the first paragraph the candidate evaluates the utility of the contents of Source D with reference to contextual knowledge about the 'Dunkirk spirit'. In the second paragraph the candidate evaluates the nature, origins and purpose of Source D again making use of contextual knowledge about censorship at that time.



**ResultsPlus**

**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 Dunkirk evacuation was a defeat for Britain. 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 to 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 was often overtly mechanical, making it difficult to ascertain the direction of an answer. The most effective use of provenance/reliability was woven 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 about the Dunkirk evacuation to discuss the hypothesis. 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.

In conclusion, the weight of evidence indicates that the Dunkirk evacuation was not a victory. Although sources B and D largely disagree, their evidence is very slanted ~~towards~~ and unreliable, and the extracts from the fact based source F and experience based sources A and G both strongly assert that the ~~the~~ evacuation of Dunkirk was a resounding failure, and ~~also~~ ~~very~~ a defeat for Britain.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This is the last paragraph of a strong level 4 answer. The candidate gives a very effective final judgement on the hypothesis based on the weight of evidence from the sources including their contents and reliability.



### ResultsPlus 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 not on your own knowledge. Leave enough time to write an answer to this question. Remember it is worth 16 marks.

## Paper Summary

The following notes may be beneficial to centres in preparing for future sessions of this exam:

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. It is better to begin with the purpose and then support this with the message of the source.

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 Dunkirk evacuation.

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/or their reliability.

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