



General Certificate of Education  
Advanced Subsidiary Examination  
June 2010

# **General Studies (Specification A)**

# **GENA1**

**Unit 1 AS Culture and Society**

## **Source Booklet**

Sources for use with **Questions 1.1 to 1.30** and **Questions 2 to 5**.

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## Section A

### Source A for Questions 1.1 to 1.30

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#### Get your rear into gear!

(1) Lately I have been watching a lot of *Postman Pat*. My son, Sonny, likes him at about 6.30 in the morning. Pat is often put upon by people like Miss Hubbard, who is one of those posh old ladies who always presume that you should be doing something for them.

(2) Greendale is full of characters. Many of these characters have disappeared in contemporary life. The absent-minded vicar, the stately-house-owning retired colonel. And Granny Dryden, who always seems to be running out of batteries for her hearing aid. But if you were to read between the lines of *Postman Pat*, you would realise that a kind of morality tale is being played out. Postman Pat is always helping people. He is always involved in the lives of others. When the snowplough gets caught in a snowdrift it is expected that Pat will take up a shovel and help dig it out. No questions asked.

(3) *Postman Pat* is a kind of social teaching aid, probably in the same way that *Thomas the Tank Engine* is (another Sonny favourite). They mix up fun with learning and social skill-building. It's a great idea. I am not so sure that the effect is long in duration. But at least it has a purpose and it is not just pure entertainment. The kernel of the *Postman Pat* stories is 'audience participation'. Taking on the values of Pat.

(4) Once we reach adulthood, most of our media is not about audience participation. It is about sitting back and being washed away with the criminality, the violence, and the corruption of the world. Imagine for a moment remaking a *Postman Pat* that showed you the corruption of Greendale, Pat's little patch. Imagine Granny Dryden living on benefits and employing illegal immigrants in her allotment to grow ganja. Or Miss Hubbard involved in selling poor out-of-date drugs to Africa. And the colonel gun-running for Amazonian loggers. And to top it all, the Post Master selling soft jobs in the sorting office, at a price, of course. And the various secondary characters, cynics and whingers, complaining that "everyone is at it, so why bother?" If we remade *Postman Pat* to reflect TV and other media coverage of real life, you would be presenting the decline of Greendale as almost total.

(5) The most evil of all deceptions is that committed by our political masters and mistresses, and their representatives in local government. There are too many of them in it for themselves. Too many of them are corrupted by power. And the good ones are overwhelmed by the majority, who do nothing for the common good. My slogan "Get Your Rear Into Gear!" means something very simple. Human beings have caused the problems. And they can solve them. They can punch a hole through cynicism. And they can do it now. It needs a different kind of politics though – the politics of us being engaged at every level of society.

(6) Ségolène Royal is one of France's most outspoken politicians. According to a recent issue of *Prospect* magazine, she has done something remarkable, but simple. She has gone for audience participation in many of her local lycées. There have been complaints from parents about the decisions taken by the administrators of the lycées, so Madame Royal decided to do something about them. She awarded parents 20 votes a year to decide which projects should be done by the lycée. A trip to the Pyrénées, or a new building for the art block? A new running track or a school bus?

(7) It has had an electric effect. The parents are involved in some positive form of participatory democracy. It is not just all about someone representing their interests, as in a representational democracy. The parents make decisions. They are empowered to act. For centuries, the fight for the vote was around representation. The USA was formed over 200 years ago around “No taxation without representation”. The colonists revolted against a Britain that took their taxes and decided everything. The settlers wanted to be represented, and they went off and formed the United States of America.

(8) It's not that long ago that working-class men were not allowed the vote. Then they were given it. Then it was the turn of women, and then the turn of people who were over 18. The argument was that they could die in wars for their country, but they couldn't vote for it. Let us not knock the fight for representational democracy. Fewer and fewer people take up the right to vote nowadays. Politics is increasingly seen as a system already 'sewn up'. In such a climate, democracy shrinks. Politicians get further and further away from us. And we are left disengaged.

(9) Ken Livingstone, for instance, had approximately one in eight of the capital's electorate vote for him in 2004. In order to take on the office of Mayor of London, he got 12 per cent of the people who could have voted. It's democracy, but it's a very thin kind. The drop in voting creates the biggest pressure because it devalues the democratic process. Big decisions are being taken on our behalf, and we have less and less say. In other words, what took centuries to put together we have thrown away in a trice.

(10) To stop the rot we have to go beyond simply electing our representatives. We have to get involved. We have to, as with Postman Pat, take up the shovel and dig out the snowplough. We have to rebuild society in order that it works better. In order that it reflects what we want from it. And in order to bring the kinds of social justice that can only truly be created by a society that involves everybody.

(11) Does this mean that we all have to join up to become MPs? Well, it would be good if MPs were not always the usual suspects, drawn from the same social background as each other, the same representatives of the 'chattering classes'. The same smack of privilege that comes from the political classes, talking about how life should be changed without having lived the life themselves. There is an argument for drawing up people from different levels of society to be our representatives. That is one reason why I am thinking of standing for the office of the Mayor of London. It might be interesting to see what a social business activist and an ex-homeless person might make of a top job.

(12) Recently I met with a young woman whose brother had just come out of prison. Her friends have been in and out of trouble. She knows lots of young people who have been drawn into crime. She does not leave it to her local authority. She does not leave it to her MP. She gets involved by working with these young people. Listening, supporting and encouraging. We have to realise that democracy cannot just be expressed as a political form. It has a community form. Postman Pat is a good model. He is a political animal. But he is a community political animal. We need more Postman Pats.

Source: Adapted from an article by JOHN BIRD, *The Big Issue*, 26 March 2007

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**Section B****Sources for Questions 2 to 5**

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**Source B**

The government today unveiled plans to create 5000 apprenticeships in creative industries such as the arts and media over the next five years. Five new “centres of excellence” will be launched in film, fashion, animation and the digital media to help people from all backgrounds make the most of their creative skills. The strategy is designed to provide the industries with an unrivalled pool of talent to draw upon and the same formal, structured support associated with other industries.

“The creative industries will move from the margins to the mainstream of economic and policy thinking as we look to create jobs of the future”, said Culture Secretary Andy Burnham. “Until recently the creative industries were seen as a Cinderella part of the economy but things are changing, as they should. They are second only to the service sector in contribution to the economy and it is right that their importance is being recognised.”

Source: Adapted from ‘Burnham boosts creative industries’, *The Guardian*, 22 February 2008

**Source C**

Every child will take part in five hours of cultural activities each week under a government plan outlined today. Ministers are concerned that children from poorer families will miss out on top art exhibitions, concerts or theatre productions because their parents cannot afford tickets. Pilot projects costing £25 million will aim to develop the artistic talents of youngsters with a guarantee of five hours of “high quality” culture every week.

Pupils will take part in a range of activities, such as performing on stage, visiting galleries, museums and theatres and gaining experience of film-making or TV. Learning to play and perform with musical instruments and creative writing will also form part of the programme. Ministers have already said that pupils should take part in up to five hours of sport every week.

Head Teachers’ leaders, however, were sceptical, arguing that it would not be possible to offer five hours of cultural activities and five hours of sport, as well as the new responsibility for social cohesion, and give the pupils their lessons at the same time. Funding was also seen as inadequate, working out at £15 per pupil per year.

Source: Adapted from TIM ROSS, ‘Five hours of culture for schools’,  
*The Independent*, 13 February 2008

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**Source D**

Britain's diversity is a huge asset to our country – economically, culturally and socially. Immigration has helped our economy, supporting growth and boosting productivity. London's strength as a financial centre was driven by new people with new ideas. Immigration has helped enrich our cultural life, with the capital's diversity – its restaurants, markets, entertainment and festivals – acknowledged as one of its key attractions. And migrant workers, far from being a drain on our health and education system, are the ones often delivering the services.

I believe, however, that while we should celebrate diversity, we should also try to respond to the more difficult questions that arise. Patterns of immigration are becoming more complex with new residents from all over the world. With this complexity – and increased global connectedness – global tensions, like those caused by 9/11 in New York and 7/7 in London, are being reflected on the streets of local communities. Some new migrants will put down roots, others will lead separate lives in separate communities.

Against this complex background, there are white Britons who feel uncomfortable as neighbourhoods change and become more diverse. Ironically, those who are most frightened by change are those least exposed to it – they begin to believe stories about ethnic minorities getting priority treatment and so develop a sense of grievance.

To improve society we need to work at integration and social cohesion and recognise that there is more that binds us together than pulls us apart.

Source: Adapted from a speech by RUTH KELLY launching the Commission of Integration and Cohesion as reported in *The Times*, 24 August 2006

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