



General Certificate of Education
Advanced Subsidiary Examination
June 2014

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**

A

Section A**Source A for Questions 1.1 to 1.30**

Feminism's global challenge

- (1) In the western world the greatest triumph of spin in the last century is reflected in attitudes to feminism. Women's struggle for emancipation and equality has been surreptitiously rewritten as a witches' bra-burning contest. In the UK there are more blokes called Dave and Nick in government than there are women MPs. Women continue to hover at a steady 19% of MPs, put off perhaps by a testosterone-fuelled climate. The last two prime ministers' wives have given up high-flying careers to support their husbands and to satisfy the perceived demands of Middle England.
- (2) In the face of such continuing inequalities, do a straw poll in a room full of modern Brits and you'll find that those willing to commit to the F word are few and far between. But, *Top Gear* presenters aside, I wonder if members of either sex actually disagree with what feminism set out to achieve, which is the social, economic and political equality of the sexes. Better yet, it's a battle women have all but won. Time for a pat on the back to all concerned, and special thanks to Emmeline Pankhurst, Germaine Greer and the rest.
- (3) The myth of equality, or near enough, was one I fell for like so many others until I was asked to participate in a debate at the Royal Geographical Society a few years ago. "We're All Feminists Now" asserted the motion – and faced with the literary might of the likes of Howard Jacobson and Tim Lott I was initially struck dumb, fearing it was going to be a tough challenge to argue the opposite. A quick Google put me straight. Two-thirds of children denied school are girls, 64% of the world's illiterate adults are women, 41 million girls are still denied a primary education, 75% of civilians killed in war are women and children.
- (4) These are staggering statistics, and yet not powerful enough to make arguing for women's rights a respectable pursuit, rather than the aggressive histrionics of popular perception. International Women's Day, the one day a year when women are encouraged to celebrate what we've achieved and highlight what still needs to be done, conjures less bitterness than the F word, but also more apathy. When women are allowed to vote, work, choose when to have babies and dress in whatever fashion pleases them, what on earth do they need their own day for as well?
- (5) The fact that 700 000 people will experience domestic violence in the UK, and 90% of them are white British females, that there are sex slaves imported daily to this country who live lives of abject terror, that equal pay is still not a reality nearly four decades after the act enshrining it was passed, that the conviction rate in rape cases still hovers around 6.5%, that only 12% of the UK's boardroom seats are occupied by women, are just a small smattering of reasons why women's rights should remain a priority even here in the UK.
- (6) Further afield, the positive impact that gender equality can and is beginning to make in the developing world can't be underestimated. Recent research finds that equalising women's status would reduce child malnutrition by 13% in South Asia and by 3% in sub-Saharan Africa. That's a lot of lives to save by just doing what's right.

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- (7) Saving women's lives in childbirth and protecting them from HIV infection must remain a priority, but if those women have no rights or opportunities, you are also sentencing them to a life of extreme hardship. Yet try to tell the stories of the inspirational groups of feisty females currently creating havoc with the status quo in the developing world, or make a programme highlighting the quantifiable difference to a country's wealth that comes with educating girls, or celebrate the small business women across Africa who keep that continent alive, and interest evaporates.
- (8) My email to the BBC requesting some form of support for International Women's Day didn't get a reply. You could be forgiven for thinking that, in this country, what matters to women is still not considered a priority. Instead, people ask why there isn't an International Men's Day – the only response to that being that it happens on the other 364 days of the year. I'm not being dismissive, but continuing my quick review of feminism's failures across the globe makes the need to carry on shouting from a soapbox pretty clear.
- (9) Gender-based violence causes more deaths and disabilities among women aged 15 to 44 than cancer, malaria, traffic accidents and war. Basically it's safer to spend Friday nights chain smoking on the M1 than to be a woman in large parts of the world. One in five women will become a victim of sexual assault in her lifetime. One in four women will be a victim of domestic violence in her lifetime – many of these on a number of occasions. Women who experience violence are up to three times more likely to acquire HIV. Indeed, it is now among women and children, not the men spreading it, that AIDS is most prevalent. Among national governments, 29% lack laws or policies to prevent violence against women. Women hold only 19% of the world's parliamentary seats, perfectly echoed by our own MPs.
- (10) So forgive me if I struggle to find sexist jokes funny in a country where sex slavery is on the rise and 16 and 17-year-old girls from countries around the world have been abducted, assaulted and forced into prostitution. Is it triumphalist to applaud when a woman over 50 takes on the discriminatory ageism of a giant corporation and wins? And we are the lucky ones, living in a society where the possibility of justice, if not always the reality of it, exists.
- (11) There are women all over the world to whom the bounty of our lives is utterly unimaginable. Until a couple of years ago I was guilty, as many of us are, of charity-fatigue. I just couldn't be bothered to wear one more T-shirt, donate one more item of clothing, go to one more carol concert or buy one more charity record. Until the extent of the greatest crime of the 21st century, a crime being perpetrated against millions of my fellow women denied even basic human rights, became too much to bear.
- (12) That's why a group of us set up 'Great' – the Gender Rights and Equality Action Trust. That's why individuals like Annie Lennox and President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf of Liberia became active patrons. But it's not just 'sisters that are doing it'. Bono and Damon Albarn have joined our ranks – this is not a women's issue any longer; this is a human issue. There's a new wave of support sweeping from the developed to the developing world through women joining forces and rolling up their sleeves to lend a hand. The organisation We Are EQUALS is a coalition of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) large and small, which have joined forces to pursue gender equality as a tool for economic empowerment. Countries where girls are educated and women play their part in government are places where peace reigns and economies begin to flourish, and women are more interested in ending wars than starting them – there are endless statistics that prove this to be the reality.

- (13) The emancipation of women is the only possible future for the developing world, as it was and continues to be for us. There are too many people on this planet for us to be able to afford to leave nearly 50% of them in penury, uneducated and without a voice. Making women equal partners makes sense for both sexes. My profound hope is that we can, men and women alike, work together to create the circumstances in which International Women's Day can become the cause for celebration it should be. Once that's been achieved we'll work on creating that International Men's Day, too – promise.

Source: adapted from Mariella Frostrup, 'Feminism's global challenge',
The Observer, 6 March 2011

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END OF SOURCE A

Section B
Sources for Questions 2 to 5

Source B
A brush with controversy: Art collector Charles Saatchi issued a scathing attack on fellow collectors

One of Britain's most influential art collectors has slammed his peers as nothing more than 'Eurotrash' with 'ridiculously high levels of self-regard' who know nothing about art and don't even enjoy looking at pictures.

Instead, according to longtime collector Charles Saatchi, most buyers only purchase art as a vulgar demonstration of their wealth, but are unable to tell 'a good artist from a weak one'.

Mr Saatchi, who began collecting art in the 1980s and has owned a number of galleries, accuses fellow collectors of being ignorant of 'good' art and says that few people in contemporary art demonstrate much curiosity.

But his comments were criticised by one artist who suggested that they were prompted by the fact that Mr Saatchi is not as influential as he once was. "Maybe Charles is upset because he is no longer the chief proponent of the vulgarity", Turner-nominated artist Louise Wilson told the newspaper.

Source: adapted from Gareth Finighan, Daily Mail, 3 December 2011

Source C
The man who dared to tell the truth about the charlatans of modern art

Pretentious pedlars of junk masquerading as art can breathe a little easier today, for the voice of one of their greatest foes has been stilled. To the very end, the writer Robert Hughes argued brilliantly that, where much modern art was concerned, the emperor had no clothes.

The Australian, who has died at 74, saw many within the modern art world as fly-by-night con artists, unencumbered by skill, floating to the top of their profession on a sea of money supported by a cabal of critics, curators and art investors.

Damien Hirst was his *bête noire*. Hughes damned the Briton's work as "both simple-minded and sensationalist", remarking acidly of Hirst's infamous dead shark suspended in a tank of formaldehyde: "One might as well get excited about seeing a dead halibut on a slab in Harrods food hall." Nor was Hirst's partner-in-crime Tracey Emin spared the vitriol. Her 1998 'masterpiece' *My Bed* – a stained, unmade bed surrounded by knickers and condoms – was, Hughes scoffed, nothing more than "a stale icon of sluttish housekeeping".

"I love the spectacle of skill, whether it's an expert gardener at work or a good carpenter chopping dovetails. My main job is to distinguish the good from the second-rate, pretentious, sentimental, and boring stuff that saturates culture today, more (perhaps) than it ever has."

For the true giants of art, Hughes was an unstinting champion. In his eyes, "a string of brushmarks on a lace collar in a Velasquez" were far "more radical" than Hirst's shark "murkily disintegrating in its tank".

Source: adapted from Harry Mount, Daily Mail, 7 August 2012

Turn over ►

Source D**The role of artists in society**

The art world has experienced a period of unprecedented growth in the past few decades. In an ever-changing global society, how are artists perceived? Do they contribute to or reflect current issues? Is there a historical weight to their role in cultural advancements?

Melissa Chiu, a museum director and curator for contemporary art, commented, "To be an artist is a very solitary kind of existence. I think that they create works that might offer very important commentary on certain things, but I don't know that it would ever feel as if they were involved in some kind of preservation of a local culture."

Tim Hagans, a jazz composer and artistic director, argues that, "Every successful dictator knows that the masses can be controlled if the catalysts of free thinking are removed. That is why in any repressive movement, it is the artists, regardless of their race, ethnicity or religious affiliation, that are neutralised first...either by physical or mental imprisonment. Without the artistic community and their works, urging society to remain open-minded and examining all issues from all points of view, the controlling powers can easily sell their ideas with little resistance. Artists are scary. They celebrate individualism. They portray the nuances and emotions of life in abstract terms. An artist's mission is not to entertain, although entertainment can be a desired by-product. Their mission is to give the receiver of the artistic statement emotions and impressions to reflect upon. Whether the receiver likes or dislikes the statement is secondary."

Source: adapted from 'The role of artists in society',
www.theworldartistnetwork.org, World Artist Network © 2011

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