



General Certificate of Education

General Studies 1766

Specification B

GENB1 Conflict

Report on the Examination

2009 examination - January series

Further copies of this Report are available to download from the AQA Website: www.aqa.org.uk

Copyright © 2009 AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved.

COPYRIGHT

AQA retains the copyright on all its publications. However, registered centres for AQA are permitted to copy material from this booklet for their own internal use, with the following important exception: AQA cannot give permission to centres to photocopy any material that is acknowledged to a third party even for internal use within the centre.

Set and published by the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance.

GENB1 Conflict

General Comments

Most candidates completed the paper in the allocated time. There were few infringements of the rubric; only a handful of candidates failed to answer three questions.

The assessment objectives (AOs) were not all addressed to the same standard. Candidates spent less time, and, therefore, put less emphasis on Assessment Objective 3 (AO3), which calls for an appreciation of different types of knowledge. For some candidates, this prevented them from accessing the higher assessment levels.

Question 1

Although this was not the most popular question, the majority of candidates answered it reasonably well. A large number demonstrated good knowledge and understanding of the roles of different types of pressure groups, discussing the principles of causal and sectional groups, insider and outsider groups, and providing appropriate examples. Whilst most exemplified their answers with national groups such as Greenpeace and Fathers for Justice, there were also some good local examples offered.

Weaker answers did not address how pressure groups bring about change. There was an assumption that change always happens or never happens as a result of pressure-group intervention, without any real exploration of the reasons for success or failure. Similarly, weaker answers referred only to the examples given in the stem. Although some developed the ideas of world poverty and animal welfare by giving specific examples, such as Live 8 or the attack by the Animal Liberation front on Mutchmeats Livestock Process Plant in Oxfordshire, generally most did not use these to develop their argument.

Many candidates showed good understanding of the place of pressure groups in a democratic society, especially in terms of how government can be influenced, for good or bad, by pressure groups. They referred to changes in law, for example fox-hunting, and to changes in policy, for example pressure by environmentalists to tackle the issue of climate change. There was a less well-developed appreciation of how pressure groups might contribute directly to the democratic process by giving campaigners a voice, particularly in the period between general elections.

Question 2

This question was the least popular and was not particularly well answered overall. Most candidates did, however, show good understanding of what is meant by the arts, usually offering a wide definition that covered literature, painting, sculpture, cinema and performance arts. Some candidates focused too much on this cue, at the expense of the other cues, so their answers were narrow. They also tended to lack structure.

Most discussed the ease of accessibility to the arts, either in physical terms, for example via the internet, museums, books and theatre productions, or in aesthetic terms, advocating the idea that there is art in every element of life and we are constantly surrounded by it. Higher-level responses referred to access to the arts through education and understanding how to interpret the arts.

The least successful answers tended to be generic, containing no or very few examples of specific artists' work. Too many did not go beyond the examples in the stem of Mozart, Picasso and Shakespeare. Although some candidates developed these examples, giving further

illustration of their work, particularly the plays of Shakespeare, the majority simply repeated the stem.

AO3 was the least well-addressed objective. Many could not explain why the arts are important to us, although a few articulated its place in the development of culture, successfully setting the arts of today in an historical context. The concept of value was usually linked to financial worth and appreciation of the arts.

Question 3

This question was very popular and was generally well answered. It was the strongest answer of many candidates and they tended to follow the cues closely. The majority showed a good level of knowledge and understanding of the services provided by supermarkets and their benefits to the consumer. Most candidates showed a clear appreciation of the role of competition that was well linked to the question. A small number of candidates deviated from the question by discussing the impact of large supermarket chains on groups other than consumers; for example, supermarkets create employment for local people and can create environmental issues. This type of discussion is not directly relevant to the question, although some candidates related job creation to the fact that most employees are also consumers. Similarly, candidates mentioned the Credit Crunch, but did not discuss its impact on consumers.

Examples of large supermarket chains, other than Tesco, were scarce. The names of chains such as Morrison's, Asda and Sainsbury's were mentioned, but were not used as evidence to support a point. There was some recognition of the growth in smaller supermarket chains, such as Marks and Spencer, Aldi and Lidl, which target specific client groups and have a more specialised supermarket focus.

Many answers lacked balance, only discussing the positive elements of large supermarkets. Although some candidates recognised that smaller shops may go out of business as a result of supermarket dominance, they usually did not go beyond a simple statement. The most successful answers explored the differences between the services offered by small, specialist businesses and their impact on the consumer, and those offered by supermarkets. They were able to refer to the loss of individual expertise, personal service, effects on town centres and the dangers of monopolies.

Question 4

Whilst this was a popular question, candidates' interpretation of "people in the news" was often narrow. Most candidates focused on celebrities, which restricted their range of points. They gave relevant examples, however, which were usually well used to support their argument. Celebrities such as Paris Hilton, Britney Spears, David Beckham and Amy Winehouse featured heavily and candidates analysed the impact of press intrusion on their lives. The more successful responses applied a wider interpretation to the term, "people in the news", including those in the news for reasons other than celebrity status, such as criminal activity, politics, achievement or personal tragedy. For example, the case of Madeleine McCann was discussed from two perspectives: the way the family used the press in their search for their daughter and the way the press turned on the parents with judgements and accusations of their part in Madeleine's disappearance.

The least successful answers were too generic with no references to specific cases or people. These tended to be repetitious of the right to privacy, a point which is contained in the question.

Similarly, these generic responses were also unbalanced, focusing purely on the rights of individuals to have a private life, without mentioning their responsibilities in the way they publicly conduct their lives. A small number of candidates discussed the responsibilities of the press rather than responsibilities of people in the news. The majority of candidates showed little depth of understanding of the value of privacy, or of why a lack of privacy might affect people's well-being.

Question 5

There are two parts to the question: whether aggression is a natural instinct and whether it is beyond our control. The question was well answered overall, although many candidates either ignored or just touched upon the control aspect. Inevitably, this affected on the level awarded.

Most demonstrated awareness of the nature of aggressive behaviour and gave a series of examples of different types of behaviour. Better answers identified the factors that might result in aggression, such as protection and self-defence, as part of the basic survival instinct. Others gave endless and often repetitive examples of particular situations where people might lose their temper and become violent.

The most successful responses showed a good understanding of the Nature versus Nurture argument, and were able to label it thus. Their argument was generally well developed with a clear understanding of aggression as a learned response; for example, discussions of children who have been raised by aggressive parents, or live in an area of high crime and violence.

The three cues were generally well used. The least successful answers were too generic, often lacking structure and making little or no reference to specific situations. Most candidates, however, covered all three to some degree and AO3 was more evident in responses to this question than to any other.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.