



General Certificate of Education

History 1041

Specification

Unit HIS2G

Report on the Examination

2009 examination – June series

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Unit HIS2G

Unit 2G: The Forging of the Italian Nation, 1848–1871

Question 1

Question 01

This question generally saw good focus and source practice as well as emphasis on comparison. Some similarities and differences between Sources A and B were mostly identified. Many attempts at provenance were also evident but not always fully developed. To a lesser extent, some efforts at own knowledge were applied but with less effect. Most answers fell into the Level 3 category. Experiences of some candidates spending too much time on this question with much narrative and limited focus were often evident.

Question 02

There was evidence of much good debate on Garibaldi's contributions, although sometimes exceeding the 1860–1871 time frame in the question. References were generally made to all three sources to some extent, although many by quotation rather than direct letter reference. Sources A and B were used to consider Garibaldi's role, often in conjunction with varying degrees of own knowledge. As expected, Source C was generally used to introduce Cavour as an 'other factor', along with foreign intervention. In some cases, the relationship between Cavour and Garibaldi proved elusive as did the date of Cavour's death. He was sometimes quoted up to 1871. Many candidates offered a good standard of balanced consideration both in terms of the extent of Garibaldi's contribution and also the other factors to be examined. In general the question seemed to be accessible and provided candidates with a good opportunity to deploy their skills and knowledge.

Question 2

Question 03

Understanding the demands of this question seemed to present a lot of candidates with difficulties. Many focused on the general events of the 1848 revolutions in the Italian states and why they failed rather than consider the reasons for initial success. Better responses generally identified the importance of the earlier uprisings in Sicily, Naples and sometimes Milan but often with limited development to address the question. References to Charles Albert were often made to explain the failure of the revolts rather than identify the support that he initially provided when Piedmont declared war on Austria. The problems experienced by Austria in 1848 were, however, usually well-identified as a reason for early revolutionary success. The failure of grain harvests was less well alluded to.

Question 04

Many candidates produced some good debate on Mazzini's role prior to examining other reasons for the failure of the 1848–1849 revolutions in Italy. The identification of his ideas and beliefs generally received thin treatment, although his ideological clashes with the Church were usually made clear. Mazzini's alienation of certain groups such as the peasantry, was also well-defined on the whole. Some candidates regarded his participation in the Rome Republic as a strength to the revolutions rather than as a liability. Candidates were generally more confident in considering and developing other factors alongside Mazzini's role. The extent of Austrian power and revolutionary disunity were particularly well-considered. The reassertion of conservative military might was often identified as the key factor in revolutionary collapse. Candidates' focus was good overall.

Question 3

Question 05

This question produced a mixture of responses in general. Candidates often divided the emphasis between Piedmont and France rather than identify the motives of Louis Napoleon as the key factor. There was also a tendency for narrative as responses often set out the background to the Plombieres Pact, starting with the Congress of Paris and Cavour's ambitions for Piedmont. The terms of the Pact were similarly handled. There was, however, some good consideration of the Orsini Incident and Louis Napoleon's background which led to him wanting to assist Italian unification for historical and dynastic reasons. There was less development on his ambition to create a power balance against Austria as Cavour was often given this credit.

Question 06

This question gave candidates the opportunity to set out Cavour's economic policies at great length, along with his foreign policy and domestic reforms of Piedmont. A lot of responses regarded Cavour as the main reason for the rise of Piedmont, although often due to his whole range of policies rather than just economic. Those candidates who went beyond Cavour's contribution tended to focus on the retaining of Charles Albert's Statuto constitution and Piedmont's increased status after the failures of 1848–1849. The other factors were generally less well-developed than Cavour's work.

Overall, Question 2 seemed to be more popular with candidates than Question 3.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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