



**General Certificate of Education
June 2011**

History 1041

Unit HIS2P

Report on the Examination

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Unit HIS2P

Unit 2P: The Campaign for African-American Civil Rights in the USA, 1950–1968

Question 1

- 01** Candidates had few difficulties identifying basic differences of view between the sources but there were a number of candidates who wasted valuable time and space comparing the provenance of the sources. Credit was given for an understanding of Stokeley Carmichael's role in the period. Many students attributed the writing of the Kerner Report to Johnson and failed to identify that he had commissioned it in response to the riots, in addition students frequently made the point that it was the Kerner Report that revealed the condition of the ghettos to Johnson rather than identifying that the report confirmed many things that Johnson already knew, subtle distinctions such as this were the difference between Level 3 and Level 4 answers. Similarities between the sources were the more difficult for students although the many identified the fact that Source B referred to Social and Economic conditions as the driver for riots and Source A suggested social conditions were a key factor. Most answers made it to Level 3.
- 02** This question was poorly answered on the whole with some notable exceptions. Many student missed the reference to the Northern cities and instead discussed Birmingham and Selma at length. Students also seemed very quick to dismiss the reference to King in Source A which suggested that the violence towards King angered northern blacks, an implicit argument that he had importance. Another common failing was to dismiss Source B entirely and fail to see that King's focus in Chicago, and in his later campaigning, developed into addressing the very social and economic conditions highlighted by the Kerner Report. The best answers included reference to the political skill of Richard Daley and the failed marches in Marquette Park as well as how King alienated Johnson with his condemnation of the Vietnam War and this prevented his attack on social conditions carrying the same political weight as his earlier campaigns. Most students sought to provide a balanced answer but without a good understanding of the geography of the civil rights movement and the ability to infer from the sources many answers never moved above Level 3.

Question 2

- 03** This question was designed to test understanding of the very early part of the course and was an effective differentiator. Some students attempted it with little expectation of success merely to gain access to their preferred Little Rock question. Those who did this without a grasp of the key event of 1950–54 either filled their answer with generalisations or brought in a good understanding of the long term problems for blacks. There was a worrying lack of understanding of the role of Truman in the Civil Rights movement and very few students identified the wider impact of the Cold War on any organisations perceived as left-wing. However, good answers were found which incorporated much of the mark scheme and included both long term reasons and specific reasons related to the period 1950–54, these answers were linked well.
- 04** This question was very well answered on the whole despite the fact that the question was phrased to remove the easy answer that the Brown decision was far more important.

Balanced answers were the norm although many students only gave a single other event as a potential turning point. The understanding of Little Rock was impressive both in terms of the events and the significance of them and better answers were able to draw out the fact that Little Rock tested the Brown decision but didn't lead to significant changes. The most thorough answers included Brown II, the Southern Manifesto, 1957 Civil Rights Act and the 1960 sit-ins and subsequent founding of the SNCC.

Question 3

- 05** This question was extremely well answered and it was clear that the events in Albany were well understood by candidates. More impressive still was the ability to link reasons together although the nature of the events did make this considerably easier. Knowledge was often precise, i.e. Laurie Pritchett was named in most answers and the measures taken by the whites involved were well understood.
- 06** Students showed a good understanding of the actions of both Kennedy and Johnson but frequently elected to provide balance by suggesting only that one President was important and the other was not. Better answers engaged with the positives and negatives of both Presidents and sought to weigh their achievements against the context in which they occurred, i.e. Kennedy's short presidency and the wave of public sympathy for Kennedy's policies that followed his assassination and enabled Johnson to push through the Civil Rights Act. Limited use was made of the sources which may have helped some candidates provide more precise evidence to balance their assessment of Johnson, i.e. his commissioning of the Kerner Report and his failure to intervene to support King in Chicago but on the whole this question was dealt with well considering that a comparison of Presidents had not been required in previous papers.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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