



**General Certificate of Education
January 2012**

History 1041

Unit HIS2F

Report on the Examination

Further copies of this Report on the Examination are available from: aqa.org.uk

Copyright © 2012 AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved.

Copyright

AQA retains the copyright on all its publications. However, registered schools and colleges 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 schools and colleges 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.

The Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA) is a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales (company number 3644723) and a registered charity (registered charity number 1073334).
Registered address: AQA, Devas Street, Manchester M15 6EX.

Unit HIS2F

Unit 2F: Challenging British Dominance: The Loss of the American Colonies, 1754–1783

General Comments

Another paper which has produced relatively few problems. Few, if any, students seemed concerned about the presence of a compulsory question on the French and Indian Wars. The students seemed to prefer Q05/06 to Q03/04, possibly because relatively few felt confident about the Proclamation Line (Q03).

Question 1

- 01** There were some good responses here, with students often able to identify a range of differences between the two extracts, usually based on the underlying difference: the fact that Source A perceives few obstacles to British success after Pitt's rise to power, whilst Source B is much more cautious about the impact of this change. Within this context, students were then able to contrast different views about British success/failures, the extent of French weakness, the role of Montcalm, and the ease with which Quebec fell. Most students were also able to identify at least one similarity across the two sources, either agreement that Britain had performed badly before Pitt, certainly before 1759, and/or that France was too weak to avoid eventual defeat. Students were almost universally stronger on differences than similarities. This was not inappropriate, given that the question asks primarily about differences; however, teachers should remember that students are asked about the extent to which the sources differ, and therefore at least some comment should be made about similarities. Most students were aware of this, though a small number failed to reach Level 4 because, despite a good range of differences, they identified no similarities at all.
- 02** Most students were able, based on source extraction and own knowledge, to produce good responses to this question. Better students started with the impact of Pitt the Elder, following the establishment of the Pitt/Newcastle coalition in 1757. Almost invariably, they would proceed to identify a range of other factors, such as the strength of the British navy, the growing weakness of the French, the role of individual military commanders, such as Wolfe and Amherst, and the importance of Newcastle in ensuring that Parliament made sufficient funds available for the war effort. Stronger students emphasized the impact that Pitt had in some of these areas (for example, his role in appointing Amherst and Wolfe). Most students are now aware of the need to demonstrate clearly their use of sources, and there were very few instances of students producing lucid responses with absolutely no reference to the sources at all.

Question 2

- 03** The main weakness here was that students often had only a restricted knowledge of the reasons why the British government established the Proclamation Line in 1763. Usually there was awareness of the link to Indian unrest, and most students were able to refer to Pontiac's Rebellion; however, quite often students were unable to identify a wider range of reasons behind the government's actions. As well as avoiding conflict between the colonists and native Americans, the government had a deliberate policy of channeling

migration northwards and southwards (to help with defence against the remaining French and also the Spanish in Florida), whilst it would be easier both to tax and control the colonists if they were forced to remain close to the Eastern seaboard.

- 04** The main problem with this question, as with similar questions in previous papers, was the reluctance of students to cover the time range specified in the question. It was not unusual for students to omit reference to any events of the early 1770s, sometimes not really proceeding beyond 1767. Whilst a purely narrative approach would not be expected, and it is accepted that some parts of a specified period may have more significance than other parts, students should be made aware of the need to utilize material from the whole range of the period. Weaker students often confined themselves to a flimsy narrative of the early part of the period.

Question 3

- 05** There were some knowledgeable responses here, with many students aware of the limitations of Burgoyne, Howe and St Leger, and also the tactics and ability of the American commanders, Gates and Arnold. Several students were more inclined to write about the general reasons for British military failures (terrain, climate, distance from Britain, etc.) rather than the specific factors that contributed to defeat at Saratoga; whilst such considerations did have some merit in the context of the question, students who failed to proceed beyond these did not really demonstrate real understanding of the reasons for Burgoyne's defeat. Too many students continue to regard George Washington as the victorious commander at Saratoga.
- 06** This question caused few obvious problems. Students are now very familiar with the reasons for British defeat in the War of American Independence, and are usually able to produce a wide range of factors. However, there was a tendency for some students to rely too much on factors applicable before Saratoga, with reference, for example, to British failures at Bunker Hill and Long Island; whilst such pre-1778 military failures may have weakened the overall British position, and may also be regarded as indicative of continuing British failings, too often they were presented as relevant in their own right, which clearly they are not. On the issue of foreign intervention, most students were able to appreciate that this was not confined to France, with mention of Spanish involvement, and the impact of the Armed Neutrality. Students were also usually aware of the limitations of direct French involvement (e.g. relatively few troops deployed in North America), and also that French support for the colonial cause pre-dated Saratoga. The best responses appreciated that the real value of foreign intervention was the deflection of British resources away from North America.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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

UMS conversion calculator: www.aqa.org.uk/umsconversion