

## Teacher Resource Bank

GCE History

Candidate Exemplar Work (June 2009):

- HIS1G: Britain, 1815–1865



The following responses are not 'model' answers, nor are they indicative of specific overall grades, but are intended to illustrate the application of the mark scheme for this unit. These responses should be read in conjunction with the HIS1G Question Paper, Sources Booklet and Mark Scheme.

Copies of the paper and are available from e-AQA or the AQA History Department.

E-mail: [history@aqa.org.uk](mailto:history@aqa.org.uk)

## **AQA GCE History Teacher Resource Bank Commentaries on June 2009 AS answers**

### **General Introduction by the Chief Examiner**

The first June examination series for the new AS specification saw some excellent examples of well prepared candidates who were able to demonstrate their breadth of knowledge and depth of understanding by addressing the questions set directly and efficiently. Sadly, it also suggested that, whilst some candidates knew the material quite well, they struggled to apply it successfully to the questions asked. At the lowest end, there were, of course, some candidates whose knowledge let them down, but even these might have been able to achieve more highly had they thought more carefully about each question's demands.

The importance of timing for both Units needs to be stressed. In Unit 1 candidates should allow themselves approximately 12 minutes for the first part question and 25 minutes for the second. In Unit 2, they could spend 15 minutes on the first part question and 30 minutes on the second, but they are likely to need slightly longer for the source question. Good time keeping is essential in any examination. No matter how successful the answer to the first part question, an incomplete second part question will always mean a loss of marks (notes receive limited credit).

These commentaries are intended to help teachers and candidates to understand the demands of each question type and consequently to encourage students to perform at the highest level of which they are capable. Please note that errors relating to Quality of Written Communication (of spelling, syntax, etc.) have been reproduced without correction. Please note that the AQA convention for question numbering will be changing as from the June 2010 examination papers. Examples of the new format for question papers can be found elsewhere in the Teacher Resource Bank.

### **Unit 1**

The first part of each question in Unit 1 (those questions labelled 01, 03 and 05 in the new numbering style from June 2010) asks candidates to 'explain why' an event, issue or development came about. The best candidates answered this question, not only with a selection of reasons (and a minimum of three well-explained reasons was expected for Level 3/4), but also by showing how those reasons linked together. This is essential to meet Level 4 criteria and can be achieved by prioritising, differentiating between the long and short-term factors, or showing how different categories of reasons, such as political, social and religious inter-link. It is not, however, enough to simply assert that the links exist – they also needed explaining.

Candidates who only performed at Level 2 often wrote too descriptively, whilst many achieved a good Level 3 by offering a range of relevant and clearly explained reasons but failing to make any links between them. As the exemplars demonstrate, answers did not need to be long but they had to be effectively focused and directed to achieve good marks.

The second part of each question (those questions labelled 02, 04 and 06 in the new numbering style) asked for a response to a question beginning 'how far, how important or how successful'. Each question stem invited candidates to offer a balanced response and this was the key to an award at high Level 3, 4 or 5. Most answers which achieved only a Level 2 or a low/mid-Level 3 mark contained too much description, were excessively one-sided or lacked depth and precision in their use of examples. Some candidates also failed to address the full question set, often

by ignoring starting or finishing dates. To achieve the higher levels, candidates needed to balance one side against another. For example, a question asking how far 'X' contributed to 'Y' demanded a consideration of the importance of other factors which also contributed to 'Y'. Sometimes questions, particularly 'how important' questions (e.g. how important was 'X' in bringing about 'Y?'), could be balanced by considering the ways in which 'X' was important as opposed to the ways in which it was not, rather than introducing 'other factors'; either approach was equally legitimate. The crucial test of an answer was, therefore, the degree to which the candidate was able to argue the issue and how well that argument was supported by accurate and precise evidence. The best answers at Level 5 managed to sustain a focus and convey convincing individual judgement.

## Unit 2

The first part of question 1 (labelled 01 in the new numbering style from June 2010) asks students how far the views in two given sources (A and B) differ, in relation to a given topic. Perhaps the most common error was to waste time writing a paragraph or more about the source content before addressing differences. Levels were awarded according to how well candidates identified and explained differences of **view**. This was not simply an exercise in source comprehension, so such answers received an award of only Level 1/2. Contrasting 'views' required students to go beyond the mere words of the sources or their omissions, and to assess 'how far' the sources differed required some awareness of the degree of **similarity** they contained. To meet the full demands of the question and obtain an award at high level 3/4, candidates also needed to introduce some contextual own knowledge to explain the differences and similarities identified – possibly (but not necessarily) referring to provenance when it helped the explanation, and, more often, explaining references in the sources and drawing on their contextual knowledge to account for differing views.

In the second part of question 1 (labelled 02 in the new numbering) candidates were asked to answer a question beginning 'how far, how important or how successful' with reference to the sources as well as their own knowledge. The best answers to these questions maintained a balanced argument (as explained for Unit 1 above) and the information given in the sources was used in support of that argument. Poorer answers tried to address the sources separately – at the beginning or end of the answer, or sometimes as an asterisked afterthought. Those who omitted them altogether could not obtain more than top Level 2. Whilst the main criteria for the higher levels was the degree of argument, the precision of the evidence and the judgement conveyed, in addition to these, good source use could ensure that students were placed higher in a level than those who used the sources in a perfunctory way. Source use needed to be explicit, and the best candidates appreciated that Source C was provided to give further ideas and/or information that was of direct relevance to this question.

In questions 2 and 3 (03/04 and 05/06 in the new numbering) candidates were asked to respond to an 'explain why' question – on which comments will be found under the Unit 1 commentary above – and a short, provocative quotation about which they were invited to explain why they agreed or disagreed. The demands here were similar to those for the second part of Unit 1 (b) questions. In adopting a view about the quotation, candidates were expected to examine the opposing arguments in order to reach a balanced judgement on the extent of their agreement/disagreement.

Sally Waller Chief Examiner December 2009

## GCE History HIS1G: Britain, 1815–1865

### Responses to June 2009 Questions

#### Candidate 1

- 1 (a) Explain why Lord Liverpool's government followed reactionary policies in the years 1815 to 1820. (12 marks)

One of the main reasons for Liverpool's reactionary policy was that he believed the country to be in threat of revolution. He was aware of a revolution in France and was afraid that this would encourage the British public, mainly the working classes, to stand up against their government. This is the reason for the harsh punishments at events like the Pentrich Uprising of 1817 and the Cato Street Conspiracy of 1820, where all the leaders were either hanged or transported for life. Liverpool was reactionary because he feared revolution in Britain.

Liverpool had to follow reactionary policies because of the constant levels of working class agitation and protests. He may have tried to reform, although this is unlikely, but got sidetracked by the civil unrest in the country. His policies like the suspension of Habeas Corpus and the Six Acts were after protests and showed Liverpool was scared of revolution. With the suspension of Habeas Corpus any deemed to be revolutionary could be jailed for an indefinite amount of time after being arrested. Although this affected very few people it was still a revolutionary step of Lord Liverpool's government as a consequence of protest and unrest.

There was also a rise in radical politics around this time with people like Major John Cartwright who facilitated opportunities to discuss parliamentary reform and spread ideas of reform that could lead to civil unrest and eventually revolution, it was people like him who started rumours that the Tory government was in trouble. Therefore Lord Liverpool's government had to pre-empt revolution by reactionary policies against radical politics i.e. Six Acts.

In conclusion I believe that the threat of revolution was the most important reason why Lord Liverpool's government followed a reactionary approach because he had seen events in France and was scared of a possible mirrored action in Britain.

#### **Principal Examiner's Comments**

*This is a semi-classic way to reach Level 4. The first paragraph offers the threat of revolution whilst the second focuses upon popular protest and the third focuses upon an individual. The conclusion then offers a link between two of the reasons. The range of three reasons and a link meets the criteria for Level 4 but the conclusion is not developed and the second and third paragraphs are similar so the mark is at the bottom of Level 4. The answer could be improved by offering a third paragraph on economic difficulties and offering a clearer explanation for the chosen causal hierarchy. Level 4 – 10 marks.*

**Candidate 2**

- 1 (a) Explain why Lord Liverpool's government followed reactionary policies in the years 1815 to 1820. (12 marks)

In 1815 there was unrest in Britain, Britain had just come out of the Napoleonic Wars with France. There was very high unemployment after the war, due to the demobilized soldiers and workers who had worked in making weapons/armour. There were reformist groups, such as the emergence of Luddites in 1812, who were based in north of England mainly. Luddites smashed the new machinery in factories, as the machines had replaced workers – which angered a lot of the working class. There were other protests and riots like Spa Field Riots. Liverpool's government passed a number of reactionary reforms to try to stabilize Britain. Breaking of machinery (Luddism) had a high punishment of transportation. Liverpool suspended Habeas Corpus – so could imprison people without trial. Then also came up with Six Acts. These measures were vital in dealing with the crisis in Britain and controlling it, so it did not expand. Especially at this time, when the government was very worried that Britain, like France, would have a revolution.

**Principal Examiner's Comments**

*This is a typical Level 2 response. Much of the answer reads in a descriptive way but nonetheless offers solid information on the state of Britain at the time. The second half of the answer does describe Liverpool's actions so it has been treated as offering two factors – the economy and repression. Without a third element there is no hint of Level 3 and so the answer is placed in the middle of the band. Level 2 – 5 marks.*

**Candidate 3**

- 1 (b) How far was Lord Liverpool's government a reforming one in the years 1822 to 1827? (24 marks)

In 1822, Lord Liverpool restructured his cabinet. The introduction of more "liberal-minded" men seemed to signify a change in the Tory party's direction towards the possibility of reform. However, though the government did seem to introduce many reforms in the period 1822–1827, it could be argued that this was only notable compared to the lack of reform in the period before.

Huskisson was one of the men introduced, and he was at the forefront of reforms. He wanted laws to gently introduce more free trade to Britain. Examples can be found in his modification of the obstructive Navigation Laws, his reduction of customs duties, and most importantly his sliding scale for the Corn Laws of 1815. These had originally been a post-war retaining measure, and his willingness to change them represented a move towards reform for the Tories.

Other reforms indicated this change. The repeal of the Combination Laws, for example, shows how the government were now less concerned with unrest and social protest. However, they also illustrate a key point about the Tories move towards reform. It must be remembered that Lord Liverpool's government was not in favour of reform for its own sake. It was merely able to make necessary changes once economic conditions had improved. The new strength of the economy meant that an amendment to the Corn Laws was economically viable, and also meant there was less unrest, meaning that trade unions would now be

allowed. Thus Liverpool's government 1822–27 could hardly be called a reforming one.

It is also worth remembering that though trade unions were now legal, later on restitutions were imposed on them that greatly reduced their effectiveness, such as them not being allowed to persuade workers to \*\*\*\*. Thus the repeal of the Combination Laws doesn't make the Tories great reformers.

Moreover, although Huskisson and other excellent economic managers introduced acts such as the Bank Act of 1826, which strengthened banks and the economy, the economy had really naturally righted itself in a \*\*\*\* way. This had very little to do with the governments reforms and so they cannot really be called reformers in that sense.

The government also did very little to tackle the underlying economic problems such as complete income inequality. The poor lived in squalor, in polluted cities with very poor public health. Nothing was done about this. Slavery and hanging were rife, and neither of these were abolished either. Thus the government can hardly be labelled reformers.

It is also worth noting that although Huskisson managed to get his reforms passed, a great deal of his colleagues opposed them, especially the Ultras and the House of Lords, who were a lot less liberal than the Commons yet wielded more power. As such it might be fairer to conclude that Huskisson and others were great reformers, rather than the government itself.

Overall then, the government were not reformers. Very little was done to improve the squalid conditions of the working class, or financially change Britain overall. It is likely that because the government from 1815–1822 had been so opposed to change, a government which was more open to the ideas of *lassaiz-faire* and reform appeared like reformers. However, they were certainly not compared to the decade of Whig reform that followed

### **Principal Examiner's Comments**

*This is a Level 5 essay because it takes an analytical approach throughout. The introduction makes it clear that the candidate is going to offer evaluation of the evidence presented. The candidate deals with trade, banking and the combination laws but there are errors which ultimately cost the candidate full marks. The conclusion is as analytical as the body of the essay. The way in which the paragraphs contain mini-judgements is a model. In the twenty five minutes available, the candidate has shown a lot of understanding. Level 5 – 22 marks.*



**Candidate 4**

- 2 (a) Explain why there were demands for Parliamentary reform in the years before 1832. (12 marks)

There were demands for reform because certain classes such as the working that were not receiving the vote, and middle-classes had limited representation. Also that industrial cities like Sheffield and Birmingham did not have any MPs and so there was distress from the lack of representation in those kind of areas.

The government wanted to keep the prices for landowners to the same level as the war therefore saving them from cheaper foreign imports causing riots and petitions.

The voting system in Britain was corrupted and bribery and corruption were used in elections so the class system was flawed. The owners of the land corruptly controlled both the voters and the MPs showing public opinion from minor groups in constituencies without the secret ballot.

Overall it was discontent with the system that was the main factor of this issue in Britain.

**Principal Examiner's Comments**

*This response reaches Level 3 because it does address a range of factors and shows some understanding. The first paragraph looks at the under-representation of the new cities whilst the third focuses on corruption. In between, there is a reference to the economy and class interests. All of these points could have been developed and better evidence offered but there is clearly an intention to analyse and so it is appropriate that it is in Level 3 but as it is thin it is also appropriate to put it at the bottom of the band as the examiner would have considered the top of Level 2. Level 3 – 7 marks.*

**Candidate 5**

- 2 (b) How important was disappointment with the Reform Act in causing the rise of Chartism? (24 marks)

Chartism, although founded by middle class business men who were indeed angry at the result of the 'Great' Reform Act of 1832, was quite quickly taken over by the working class and a numerous amount of pressure groups such as the London Working Men's Association (LWMA) and Thomas Atwood's revival of the Birmingham Political Union (BPU).

The Reform Act of 1832 was supposed to incorporate the working class as well as the middle class. However, when the Act was passed the working class found themselves with even less of a voice than before. Some of the boroughs that had actually listened to the claims of the people were now gone and so the poor found themselves still in the dark when it came to putting their views across.

Yet, although the Reform Act was one of the points that caused the rise of Chartism, it wasn't the only thing. As with most protests, costs of things is usually



a point being made, and in the middle to late 1830s, Britain was faced by a continuance of bad harvests and so bread prices were higher causing hunger and anger at those still enforcing the Corn Laws for the benefit of the rich.

Radicalism had also re-emerged at the end of the 1820s and this went hand in hand with Fergus O'Connor, leader of the 'Physical' force Chartists, who believed that the best way of being heard was to break things until someone did what you wanted.

A radical idea, but one put forward by Parliament, was the New Poor Law of 1834, which caused more hardship for the poor, as although previously the poor relief system had been old – Elizabethan in its methods – the Speenhamland system of working outside for relief was viewed in a better light than the new workhouses which were seen as the worst of the worst to be and almost punished the poor for being poor.

The 'war' of the unstamped press allowed the 'Newport Star' the paper of the Chartists to be published and printed a lot more cheaply and so this meant that more and more found that they could at least hear about the Chartist movement and support in any way possible.

So, to conclude, although disappointment with the reform Act led to a large number of people wanting to have their voices heard as they had been stopped from speaking in Parliament, it was not the only reason that Chartism found itself to be so popular with the masses. As their was continuing anger at those protecting the rich instead of helping the poor, many believed that if enough people signed on the dotted line, then eventually their protests would be heard by those who had previously neglected them.

### **Principal Examiner's Comments**

*This essay, too, shows technique. The candidate addresses a key factor in each paragraph such as the Poor Law. There is a solid range of material covering the economic and political factors behind Chartism. Some of the assessment is under-developed e.g. the paragraph on the Poor Law should offer a reason why they were so detested. The conclusion offers balance and so the answer reaches Level 4. However, the conclusion is limited in offering a rather bald statement of the Chartists and their petition. Level 4 – 18 marks.*