

Teacher Resource Bank

GCE History

Candidate Exemplar Work (June 2009):

- HIS2F: The Loss of the American Colonies,
1754-1783



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 HIS2F Question Paper, Sources Booklet and Mark Scheme.

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

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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 HIS2F: The Loss of the American Colonies, 1754-1783

Responses to June 2009 Questions

Candidate 1

1 (a) Use **Sources A** and **B**, and your own knowledge.

Explain how far the views in **Source B** differ from those in **Source A** in relation to the seriousness of the American colonists' response to British rule by 1744.
(12 marks)

Source A and B give very different accounts of the seriousness of the colonists response. Source A saying it is an overall minor incident, but B arguing the opposite and saying it is in fact a widespread and serious revolt.

Source A says "Boston should be compelled to submit to whatever may be thought necessary", this is suggesting that the British believe it an isolated disturbance, that the other colonies in Massachusetts would not be inclined to support Boston. However B clearly states the opposite, saying "they failed to foresee the degree of support which would be given to Boston...", this is obviously a very different sided point from that of only having to deal with Boston.

Another disagreement is over how passionate the colonists were. Source B suggests the colonists were deeply political saying "they (the British) underestimated the extent of American resentment of parliamentary claims". So B is suggesting the Americans truly believed in their right of no taxation without representation. However A says "the colonists would act as lions if we chose to act as lambs"; in other words the colonists were simply opportunists, seeing what they perceived as British weakness to gain more power and standing in the relationship. So the sources disagree about the motives of the colonists and how serious they were.

Thirdly the sources disagree about the size of the problem, A saying "four regiments in Boston would be quite sufficient to prevent any disturbance", so it does not think the rebellion / resentment is very strong and poses much of a threat. However B says quite the opposite with "they were attempting to halt the major development of more than a century." With this B is saying the rebellion in America threatened the entire British Empire, for if one colony got independence, why should another not? So A thinks the disturbance is minor, B however suggests it had far reaching consequences.

Principal Examiner's Comments

This response identified four clear differences between the sources. In the first paragraph, the candidate mentioned how Source A regarded the disturbances as minor incidents, whilst B argued they were symptomatic of deeper and more serious issues. Paragraph two focussed on the location / range of the disturbances, Source A regarding the problem as purely Boston-orientated, whilst B referred to the wider support which the Boston rebels received. In paragraph three, the candidate mentioned how Source B felt the colonist had deep political motivations, whilst A saw them as opportunists rather than principled rebels. Finally, in the last paragraph the candidate mentioned how Source A felt the disturbances could be suppressed with only 4 regiments, whilst B referred to an uprising which might threaten the entire British Empire.

The good awareness of valid differences revealed here lifted the response clearly into Level 4, but the absence of any reference to similarities between the sources prevented the response from proceeding beyond the minimum Level 4 – 10 marks.

Candidate 2

1 (a) Use **Sources A** and **B**, and your own knowledge.

Explain how far the views in **Source B** differ from those in **Source A** in relation to the seriousness of the American colonists' response to British rule by 1744.
(12 marks)

It is evident that Source B differs to Source A in regards to which colony should be made an example of in illustrating British authority over her colonies. In Source A, it indicates it should be Boston, whilst in B, it demonstrates that Massachusetts would provide a positive effect throughout the rest of the colonies. However, the 2 sources agree accordingly on the fact that America's desire for independence was largely underestimated and in turn was a threat to the British empire.

Moreover, to a certain extent, it is fair to say that Source B differs from Source A in relation to what effects would appear should a forceful measure be taken; this is demonstrated as Source A indicates an 'easy obedience, whilst B suggests support would be given to Boston in order to overcome the coercive nature bestowed upon them by the British. Conversely, both clearly illustrate a very serious nature with regards to the colonists' response, which the British government had to become wary of. This is apparent as both sources realise an evident change in relationships between Britain and her American colonies. In addition, incorporated in Source A is the fact that the desire for independence would threaten the British empire to an extent, whilst in Source B, it clearly states that the government felt that this was a minor dispute within the empire.

Principal Examiner's Comments

This was a relatively limited response. In the first paragraph, the candidate seemed unaware that Boston was part of Massachusetts. In the second paragraph, the candidate stated that both sources felt Britain had underestimated the extent of the colonial rebellion, the exact opposite of the view reflected in Source A. A valid difference was identified in paragraph three: Source A believed colonial obedience would follow the use of force by Britain, whilst B stated that Boston would receive support from other colonies. There was a clumsy attempt in the final paragraph to establish a second difference, though this was accompanied by some lack of clarity. The genuine contrast identified in the third paragraph lifted the response to Level 2, and the further contrast in the final paragraph ensured that this was a mid-level response. Level 2 – 5 marks.

Candidate 3

1 (b) Use **Source A, B and C**, and your own knowledge.

How far, in the years 1763 to 1776, were British politicians responsible for the outbreak of hostilities between Britain and the North American colonies.

(24 marks)

The extent to which the British politicians were responsible for the outbreak varies significantly between the sources. However, the politicians were a major reason why America wanted complete legislative independence, and this coupled with significant Patriot propaganda had led the colonists to break their links with the mother country.

Source C states the opinion “was not the result of nationalism” but the failure of British politicians and their legislators. The British politicians were simply not in touch with what the Americans saw as their domestic policy. Constitutional issues were the main component of the war of independence. The British political nation failed to understand what the Americans saw in their assemblies: democracy. The British political nation believed that the Assemblies were merely a privilege given to the Americans and not a right as the Americans viewed it as.

However, Source B offers a contrasting view, it states that the American colonies has become “mature political communities”. Therefore, as many colonists had no real direct link with Britain, being as they were often 4th/5th generation settlers it had led them to believe they were not inferior to the British nation but equals. This sense of “nationalism” is evident from the Patriot cause and the several radical newspapers in circulation in America. The lax policies before 1763 had in someways promoted the idea of American self governance – which they obviously got used to.

The colonies by 1774 were no longer in constant competition or rivals with each other. The Patriot cause had stirred up unity, a sense of nationalism within the colonies. Evident in Source B, “the British government failed to foresee the support given to Boston.” The Coercive Acts were a political failure, however, the ideas of unity between the colonies increased and radical ideology was spread.

However, Source A claims that “regiment in Boston would be quite sufficient to prevent any disturbance”. Massachusetts was the centre of radical ideology, if the British politicians were to come up with legislative other than the Coercive Act it may have not caused the colonies to display a sense of unification. Colonial rivalry was rife, and it was only because of the failure of the British government during 1763, to 1776 did it cause the colonies to think about ideas of nationalism. Evident from Grenville’s “reforms”, the Townshend duties and Coercive, “Intolerable” Acts.

British political failure occurred consistently during 1763 to 1774. Grenville’s reforms, especially the Stamp Act created the Stamp Act Congress. The creation of the Congress should have signalled to the British that the Americans were unifying and their legislature was not appropriate. This is evident from when the British repeal the Stamp Act, but they only fail again to issue the Declaratory Act, which ultimately asserts British dominance on America.

The British politicians could not simply understand America. They failed to recognise the importance of the Assemblies in preserving their relationship with colonies, as other policies such as the Massachusetts Charter Act reduced power

of the Assemblies which caused American resentment. There were other factors to in why the War of Independence broke out such a radical / national ideology, however what ultimately caused the War was the British incompetence to correctly govern colonies.

Principal Examiner's Comments

Overall, this was a good, focussed response, based on use of all sources and own knowledge. After a brief but focussed introduction, the candidate used a quote from Source C to focus attention on British politicians and their failure to understand the colonial perspective on politics and democracy. In the following paragraph, the candidate contrasted this with the reference in Source B to the long-term development of mature political communities within the colonies, thus placing responsibility for the deteriorating situation with the colonists themselves. The candidate supported this argument with own knowledge about radical newspapers and the rise of some degree of colonial self-government.

Then followed a valuable paragraph in the developing sense of colonial unity, based partly on own knowledge and partly on Source B. Focus then returned to the role of British politicians, with reference to the use of troops in Massachusetts and the earlier passage of legislation such as the Stamp Act. Finally there was a focussed conclusion in which the candidate referred to various contributory factors before concluding that British incompetence was the major one. Sufficient balance and understanding for Level 5, though a greater range of evidence would have been necessary for a higher mark within the Level. Level 5 – 22 marks.

Candidate 4

1 (b) Use **Source A, B and C**, and your own knowledge.

How far, in the years 1763 to 1776, were British politicians responsible for the outbreak of hostilities between Britain and the North American colonies.
(24 marks)

British politicians can be considered a major influence in the outbreak of hostilities because as King George III said he was willing to get Boston to submit 'to whatever may be thought necessary' showing how they were willing to go extreme to keep control which some people thought was the case when introducing the stamp act, 1765, by taxing as many as 50 different kinds of paper goods, but then how repealing it the next year gave the Americans a heightened desire for freedom as this act 'encouraged' them. Also Source B talks about how America wasn't respected so wanted 'a new relationship' which the British never really took seriously as they only saw America as a 'minor problem'. Source C though completely agrees with the view, talking about how 'thirty different' situations were arising for dealing with and not once people who actually knew the colonies like Thomas Rawnall weren't even considered in consultation.

However British Politicians can also be considered of little importance as Source A talks about, that the colonists 'would act as lions' so showing they were looking to take any inch which could thought of when setting up the Loyal Nine in Boston then later the Sons of Liberty in New York which lead onto the events like the tarring and feathering of tax officials. Also Source B says how it wasn't politicians it was just that 'they had become mature political communities, really from the realisation after the seven years war that they were no longer reliant upon Britain,

so didn't feel the need for the presence anymore.

So in conclusion although British Politicians didn't play the only role, they played a very important one in the outbreak of hostilities with people like Grenville not giving the Americans enough respect when they weren't sure they needed British presence any longer any way, but the pure desire of a country for freedom would be a very hard thing to settle.

Principal Examiner's Comments

This was a relatively weak response, falling clearly within Level 2. The candidate plunged immediately into issues raised in Source A, with no attempt at any form of introduction. Source A itself was not clearly identified at this point, and the attempt to link the Stamp Act to these issues was both clumsy and unclear. Reference to both Sources B and C also occurred before the end of the first paragraph, with some lack of clarity affecting the argument on Source C. Although in theory the first paragraph placed emphasis on the attitude of British politicians, the argument was far from coherent or consistent.

In the second paragraph, the candidate attempted the alternative viewpoint, placing emphasis on the role of the colonists. Some valid ideas based on both sources and own knowledge emerged, but once again expression lacked real coherence and clarity. Finally, there was a conclusion in which the candidate endeavoured to sit on the fence.

Overall, there were some glimpses of understanding, and an attempt to address the issues raised, but the response was severely limited by a lack of real depth, and, above all, an absence of clarity and coherence. Level 2 – 10 marks.

Candidate 5

- 3 (a) Explain why France entered the War of American Independence in 1778.
(12 marks)

France entered the war of independence in 1778 for many short term and long term reasons.

The Americans had sent Benjamin Franklin to secure the support of the French who had unofficially been supplying them with weapons through "companies" in the Carribean. The French agreed to enter the war in order to gain revenge for defeat in the Seven years war. It also wanted an excuse to tackle rival Britain and long standing enemy. However it was reluctant at first as the French treasury was weak due to defeat in 7 years war, and it wasn't sure the Americans could put up a strong enough fight. Also King Louis didn't agree with the idea of democracy and liberty.

Victory at Saratoga persuaded the French that the Americans were worth backing, as if they captured the whole of Burgoyne's army. Also France were keen to recapture some territory lost in the West Indies in the Treaty of Paris. And saw this as an opportunity along with Spain to regain some more territory is what was considered a key economic area.

In conclusion France who were reassured by American Victory at Saratoga date 1772 agreed to enter the war to seize Britain and restore pride and land in the

West Indies.

Principal Examiner's Comments

The candidate identified four reasons for French involvement in the War of American Independence (Franklin's negotiations, the desire for revenge, the impact of Saratoga and the desire to re-conquer territory lost in the Treaty of Paris). There was development of some of these points (for example, explanation of how France needed to be convinced about American military capabilities at Saratoga before openly committing to the struggle). Overall, however, development was relatively limited and simplistic, and the introduction and conclusion were both somewhat bland, adding little if anything to the quality of response. There was sufficient range for a secure Level 3 response, but no evidence of the depth of insight required for a Level 4 mark. Level 3 – 8 marks.

Candidate 6

- 3 (b) 'British defeat in the War of American Independence was the result of military incompetence.'

Explain why you agree or disagree with this view. (24 marks)

I agree to an extent with the View 'British defeat in the War of American Independence was the result of military incompetence.'

Firstly, it is true that there were many bad decisions made by British generals. General Howe failed on several attempts to destroy the Continental Army, such as after the Battle of Long Island in 1776 in which he did not follow Washington's army and crush them. Later on in the same year, Howe could have taken Philadelphia but decided to go into winter quarter instead. These possibly happened because Howe was sympathetic towards the colonial cause.

The Saratoga campaign in 1777 was another example of British military fault. General Burgoyne underestimated the colonial army and Howe did not send help quick enough as Clinton, coming from New York, did not make it to Albany.

Cornwallis was also very positive at Yorktown in 1781, which was a key reason for the British surrender there. The distance was also a problem as Germaine was attempting to command the British Army from London, which meant that there was a considerable amount of time in which information was passed.

However, the Continental Army were aided in other ways. Foreign intervention was important as France entered the war in 1778, which gave the Continental Army more men, supplies and experienced generals. Yorktown is an example of this with Rochambeau and Admiral De Grasse helping the Victory. A war in Europe also stretched Britain, in terms of men and resources and economically. The league of Armed Neutrality also helped America's world position, as it was formed in 1780 and was an agreement to defend neutral rights.

Also, Washington as a general may not have been the most skilled but made the most of what he had, as the Continental Army was subject to illness and short conscriptions. Washington effectively turned the Continental Army from a group of militiamen into a professional army. Washington also was able to boost morale and had key victories at Trenton and Princeton in 1778, cleverly catching the Hessians off guard on Christmas Day, while re-crossing the Delaware.

The colonists also had a common goal to aim for, to fully gain independence from Britain and many loyalists were persuaded to join the cause as they disliked foreign troops such as the Hessians and the British soldiers often used supplies and houses for quartering and had a harsh martial law.

Therefore, military incompetence was important in helping the colonials to gain victory but also other factors such as foreign intervention and Washington as a general helped the cause. However, with Britain's superiority, in military terms and ironically they lost the war rather than the colonials winning it.

Principal Examiner's Comments

Overall, this was well-structured response. The candidate focussed initially on the limitations of the British military campaign, with specific reference to the limitations of General Howe, the reasons for defeat at Saratoga, and the weakness of Cornwallis at Yorktown. There was also a brief response to the attempt of British politicians to control the campaign from London, and the impact of the 'distance' factor on this.

The candidate then proceeded to identify other factors which contributed to the British defeat: foreign intervention (including the impact of the league of Armed Neutrality), the impact of George Washington (with some examples) and colonial zeal (in contrast to the alienation of loyalist support through insensitive policies). An initially mundane conclusion was redeemed somewhat with the perception demonstrated in the final sentence, where the candidate clearly placed responsibility for defeat with the failings of the British war effort. A limited introduction and some clumsiness of expression on occasions prevented this response from reaching Level 5, but its range and focus left it clearly at the top of Level 4 – 21 marks.