



A-level HISTORY

The British Empire, c1857–1967

Paper 1J

ADDITIONAL SPECIMEN QUESTION PAPER

2 hours 30 minutes

Materials

For this paper you must have:

- an AQA 12-page answer book.

Instructions

- Use black ink or black ball-point pen.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer book. The **Paper Reference** is **1J**.
- Answer **three** questions.
In **Section A** answer Question 01.
In **Section B** answer **two** questions.

Information

- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- The maximum mark for this paper is 80.
- You will be marked on your ability to:
 - use good English
 - organise information clearly
 - use specialist vocabulary where appropriate.

Advice

- You are advised to spend about:
 - 60 minutes on Question 01
 - 45 minutes on each of the other questions answered.
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Section AAnswer Question 01

Extract A

It is not clear when the old empires realised that the Age of Empire was definitely at an end. Certainly, in retrospect, the attempt by Britain and France to reassert themselves as global imperial powers in the Suez adventure of 1956 seems more doomed than it evidently did to the governments of London and Paris, who planned a military operation to overthrow the revolutionary Egyptian government of Colonel Nasser, in conjunction with Israel. The episode was a catastrophic failure (except from the point of view of Israel), all the more ridiculous for the combination of indecision, hesitation and unconvincing disingenuousness by the British prime minister, Anthony Eden. The operation, barely launched, was called off under pressure from the USA and ended for good what has been called 'Britain's Moment in the Middle East', the epoch of unquestioned British hegemony in that region since 1918.

E. Hobsbawm, **Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century 1914–1991**, 1995

Extract B

What brought Eden down was not an American stab in the back; Britain's crisis was in reality self-induced. Until 1956 it remained the assumption in Britain, particularly among the general public, that the country was still a great power. India had been lost but most of the other colonies and territories remained part of the British Empire, or the Commonwealth as it was now named and British influence continued to pervade Asia, Africa and the Middle East. Suez exposed the extent of Britain's pretensions. Eden had tried to take an independent line in the Middle East, only to discover that Britain lacked the means to do so. Her armed forces were ill-prepared, she antagonised world opinion by her spurious cover-story, she lacked the bases and air transports needed for a swift operation and her economy was vulnerable to American pressure. The outcome was the worst humiliation in Britain's twentieth century history, beginning a long period of introspection and doubt.

D. Dimbleby & D. Reynolds, **An Ocean Apart**, 1988

Extract C

Because Eden had suspected that the United States was 'out to replace the British Empire', he had made the cardinal mistake over Suez, as Churchill intimated, of not 'consulting the Americans'. His successors, recognising their country's satellite status, did not make the same mistake – quite the opposite. For his part, Eisenhower aimed to employ the British Lion, injured though it was, in his struggle with the Russian Bear. This meant rebuilding the damaged alliance and shoring up Britain's position in the Middle East. Contrary to myth, therefore, the imperial legions did not march home in 1956. Of course, London's freedom of action was circumscribed by Washington. But, although Suez brought the Commonwealth to 'the verge of dissolution', according to the Canadian foreign minister Lester Pearson, it remained a global body. And Britain, possessing other allies as well as nuclear weapons, still aspired to be a great power.

P. Brendon, **The Decline and Fall of the British Empire**, 2008

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Using your understanding of the historical context, assess how convincing the arguments in these three extracts are in relation to the impact of the Suez crisis on Britain's role as an imperial power in the years after the Second World War.

[30 marks]

Section BAnswer **two** questions

0 2

‘British rule in India combined self-interest with an arrogant attitude of racial superiority towards the native population.’

Assess the validity of this view with reference to the years 1857 to c1900.

[25 marks]**0 3**

‘The consolidation and expansion of the British Empire in Africa between c1890 and 1914 owed more to the ambitions of key individuals than to economics.’

Assess the validity of this view.

[25 marks]**0 4**

‘The end of the First World War unleashed anti-imperialist national movements that successive British governments were unable to understand or to control.’

Assess the validity of this view with reference to the years 1919 to 1939.

[25 marks]**END OF QUESTIONS**

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Question 1 Extract A: E Hobsbawm, *Age of Extremes*, AbacusQuestion 1 Extract B: D. Dimbleby & D. Reynolds, *An Ocean Apart*, BBC BooksQuestion 1 Extract C: *The Decline and Fall of the British Empire* by Piers Brendon, published by Jonathan Cape, reprinted by permission of The Random House Group Limited.

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