



History

Paper 1D (AS) Specimen Question Paper

Question 01 Student 1

Specimen Answer and Commentary

V1.0 11/11/15

Specimen Answer plus commentary

The following student response is intended to illustrate approaches to assessment. This response has not been completed under timed examination conditions. It is not intended to be viewed as a 'model' answer and the marking has not been subject to the usual standardisation process.

Paper 1D(AS): Specimen question paper

01 With reference to these extracts and your understanding of the historical context, which of these two extracts provides the more convincing interpretation of James' court?

[25 marks]

Student response

I believe that extract B is the more convincing interpretation as it offers a more balanced image of James' court, whereas extract A only just mentions both sides of James' court and only develops points about the negative side.

Extract B includes James' character and how it impacts his court. James was a very generous person which could be seen through "the cultural life of his court." Extract A agrees with this as it mentions his court to be a "Literary court which patronized major writers." Both extracts are accurate in these statements as James was a great lover of the arts and often had written and plays performed in his court. Although both extracts agree on this point, extract B is still the extract I believe to be more convincing as it highlights more about the negatives and positives of James' court.

Extract B also includes vague details on the negative side of James' court. It describes his relationship with the Duke of Buckingham, George Villiers as one of the "much less attractive developments" or the court, implying that it was bound to bring the court into disrepute. "This is referencing the affair he was said to be having with Villiers. Villiers was known as the King's favourite, but many people commented that the two were having an affair as James would often show Villiers affection during meals in court. This was seen as a downfall of the court which is another reason why extract B is the more convincing extract.

However, extract B isn't totally convincing as it doesn't mention his wasteful nature. James would often have ante suppers, which was when a 'show-off' meal would be brought out, only to be thrown away, to make way for the real meal which was to be eaten. The source doesn't mention anything about the waste of ante suppers, just saying "the harmful effects of his extravagance cannot be denied". This makes extract B less convincing as it doesn't go into any details on this downfall of James' court.

Extract A is less convincing than extract B as it isn't as balanced as extract B. In this extract it shows James to be a really wasteful and extravagant King. It includes that the "Jacobean court was corrupt, drunken, promiscuous and wasteful." I know this to be true as James used to have his ante suppers which would waste double the money of any other meal. This point is consolidated as it is also mentioned in extract B: "extravagance cannot be denied".

Also, extract A mentions the fact that the news of Jacobean court spread throughout the country. This was even more of a problem when James wanted to keep everyone peaceful as the rest of the population saw how much James was wasting. This makes extract A more convincing as it fully explains the downfall of James' court.

However, extract A isn't convincing as it doesn't give James credit for the positive side of his court. It only gives one sentence as to the positive side of James' court. It was a literary court which patronized major writers. This makes the extract less convincing as it doesn't show a balanced interpretation of James' court,, whereas extract B gives a more detailed explanation of both the negative and positive sides of James' court.

To conclude, I believe that extract B is the more convincing interpretation as it offers the more balanced image of James' court. Extract A gives accurate information on James' court, but it doesn't give all the information, so it is not balanced. Whereas extract B gives accurate information and is more balanced than extract A.

Commentary – Level 3

The answer clearly recognises the differences of interpretation, but the point becomes repetitive, made in the introduction, the main body of the answer and in the conclusion and credit cannot be given three times for essentially the same point. The assessment of extract B is effective on the whole, with some deployment of knowledge of context in relation to James and Buckingham and James' extravagance and other points. The assessment of extract A is less effective, with very limited deployment of knowledge of context. Whilst quotations from the extracts to illustrate points of interpretation are effective, they cannot be used as evidence as to whether the interpretation is convincing: this is the role of knowledge of context. The assessment of the impact of the court on the wider Political Nation is very vague and assertive.

Given that the differences are understood, that B is effectively if not fully assessed, but that the assessment of A is limited, the answer would be placed in mid level 3.