

A LEVEL

Examiners' report

HISTORY A

H505

For first teaching in 2015

Y113/01 Summer 2023 series

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Introduction

Our examiners' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on candidates' performance in the examinations. They provide useful guidance for future candidates.

The reports will include a general commentary on candidates' performance, identify technical aspects examined in the questions and highlight good performance and where performance could be improved. A selection of candidate answers is also provided. The reports will also explain aspects which caused difficulty and why the difficulties arose, whether through a lack of knowledge, poor examination technique, or any other identifiable and explainable reason.

Where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report.

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Paper Y113/01 series overview

Y113 is one of thirteen units in Paper 1 for the revised A Level examination for GCE History. This unit tests an extended period of History of about fifty years through an Enquiries or source-based option and an essay. The paper is divided into two sections. In Section A candidates have to answer a compulsory source question based on four written primary sources. The question requires them to use all four sources to assess the validity of a view. In Section B candidates are required to answer one essay question from a choice of two.

To do well on Section A, candidates need to be able both:

- consider the provenance of the sources, and
- apply contextual knowledge to the content of the sources

This allows them fully to answer the question set by reaching a judgement **about the sources** in relation to the issue in the question.

It is important that the judgement reached is based on an evaluation of the reliability of the evidence given, and that it is not merely the candidate's own judgement on the topic based purely on their own contextual knowledge.

In order to reach Level 6, a good strategy is to make a judgement at the end of the analysis of each source, with an overall judgement in the conclusion.

To do well on Section B, candidates need to address the issue in the question, using detailed supporting knowledge. In order to reach the higher levels candidates will need to assess the issues they discuss and reach a supported judgement at least in the conclusion. To reach Level 6 candidates should also make an overall judgement as well as interim judgements when assessing each factor.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • considered the provenance of the source(s) and used relevant contextual knowledge • clearly linked the contextual knowledge to the source being discussed to show whether the view of the source was valid or not • reached an overall judgement as to the extent to which the sources supported the view in the question • discussed at least two relevant issues in depth • wrote supporting detail that was both accurate and relevant to the question set, not just the topic • reached a supported judgement about the issue in the question 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • did not consider the provenance and use contextual knowledge to evaluate the sources • wrote an unbalanced response in their treatment of the sources, with very little consideration of one of the sources • reached a judgement based on their knowledge rather than the sources • showed a poor understanding of the major issues relevant to the essay • were unable to support their response with relevant material • did not focus on the precise wording of the question

Candidates who did well on this paper generally:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">made a series of interim judgements about the issues discussed in relation to the question.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">made unsupported comments about issues which were assertions.

Section A overview

The Enquiry section in this unit examines the reasons why Churchill was in the wilderness during the 1930s with the focus of the debate about conflict with his party and leaders. The question requires candidates to critically assess evidence and reach judgements. The critical evaluation of sources is the central theme in this section with all marks given against AO2.

Question 1

Churchill 1930–1951

- 1 Using these four sources in their historical context, assess how far they support the view that Churchill was out of office in the 1930s because he was in conflict with his own party and leaders. **[30]**

This was a well-known topic and the sources elicited a range of suitable responses. The majority of responses showed good knowledge of the period and were able to analyse the content of the four sources. Candidates could then reach a well-reasoned conclusion regarding those which supported the premise in the title and the sources that didn't. Many candidates displayed a sound understanding of technique and so understood the need to use both context and provenance when evaluating the sources. Candidates should be reminded of the need to reach an appropriate judgement on the provenance of the sources as this was omitted in many responses. Less successful responses tended to describe parts of the sources that agreed with their points without clear analysis and tended to either ignore the provenance of the sources or fail to evaluate the sources in context.

Source A was generally used to show how Churchill was in conflict with his own party by using the content to show how he felt that the Government of India Act removed the British guidance India needed. In terms of contextual support, there was some excellent knowledge of Churchill's views and history in India, with the majority of candidates aware of his previous roles and experience. There was also good knowledge of his view of Gandhi, as well as his imperial beliefs. With provenance, candidates were able to discuss the purpose of his speech and made profitable use of this.

In terms of Source B, the majority of candidates demonstrated how this showed Churchill was out of step with party leadership with Churchill opposing Baldwin on the issue of the abdication. They demonstrated Churchill's frustration at not being allowed to discuss the issue in Parliament. Contextually there was much knowledge applied, although not always well-linked to this passage. Candidates wrote quite generally about Edward VIII and Wallis Simpson, and this needed to be more focused at times. Similarly there were many sweeping assertions made about religious sentiment in Britain at the time. Better responses focused on the nature of Churchill's relationship with the King and the public nature of the statement was the focus of much of the evaluation of provenance.

With Source C, candidates tended to focus on provenance heavily, with many valid comments made about the private nature of Chamberlain's letter to his sister. Some candidates pointed out how he may well have been trying to justify his position, which was again valid. In terms of content there was much discussion of the Grand Alliance, although there was some confusion about its membership at times. Some candidates wrote more generally about appeasement without dealing specifically with the Grand Alliance. There was much use of hindsight from the Grand Alliance in WW2 to show that Churchill was obviously correct without showing how Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union changed things. Better responses focused on the idea of Czechoslovakia being a 'far away country' and used contextual knowledge of rearmament and the national feelings about peace to demonstrate this.

Finally in Source D, there was some confusion about Colville's position when examining provenance, with some candidates thinking he was already Churchill's private secretary when he wrote this. When applying context for evaluation, there was good support demonstrating how Churchill could be seen as untrustworthy because of crossing the floor, or because of previous actions such as in Gallipoli or returning to the Gold Standard. Some candidates wrote about the bombing of Dresden or about his relationship with his generals in WW2 which was outside the scope of the question and not relevant to Colville's view here.

Exemplar 1

Source A supports the view that Churchill was in conflict with his own party over the issue of granting India Dominion status, which the Prime Minister, Baldwin, disagreed with Churchill over. Therefore, this source shows that this was a major reason for Churchill's being in the 'wilderness'. In this speech, Churchill states that Britain had provided India with 'New wealth, new food, new facilities', and this reflects his view that the Indian people would not be able to survive without British help and guidance, against the more expert advice of Lord Irwin, who argued against Churchill, and was arguably in a better position to know as the viceroy of India. Churchill thought of the Indian people as lesser than white people, shown by him stating 'Such a vast helplessness mass of people requires extra British guidance. Churchill believed that should the Indian people be allowed Dominion status, as South Africa and Australia had been allowed, the Hindus and Muslims would fight and the dominant caste, the Brahmin caste, would gain dominance. Churchill ~~was~~ ^{partly} ~~was~~ ^{partly} funded the India Defense League, an organisation against allowing them, led by the pacifist Gandhi, Dominion status, and this went against the government view.

This can be seen by the Baldwin allowing in 1935, India to hold democratic elections and to have local government with the Government of India Act. This shows how Churchill was in conflict with the Conservative PM, Baldwin, and thus was kept out of office. The fact that this source is a speech shows how Churchill was trying to persuade the government to change their stance on India, especially as he was known as a skilled and powerful orator. ^{*} Indeed, the fact that it is Churchill saying this shows that he believes he is right, but that his view on the matter is highly subjective. Overall, this source agrees with the fact that he was kept out of office because of his conflict with Baldwin.

Source B also supports the view that he was kept out of office because of his conflict with the Conservatives, as Churchill argues in support of Edward VIII, when the majority of the government was against his marriage to Wallis Simpson. ~~to~~ Churchill argues that this abdication was "hastily extorted", which reflects his support of Edward VIII marrying a divorcee, even though the Archbishop of Canterbury would not marry a divorcee in the Church.

Churchill calls the king "gifted and beloved", which reflects their close personal friendship stemming from when the king was the Prince of Wales, and Churchill's ardent support of the king can be seen by how he was a member of The King's Friends. The majority of the government did not support this view, shown by the boos Churchill received when he attempted to say a speech in support of him in the House of Commons. The fact that this source is written at the time of the abdication and takes the form of a public statement shows that Churchill is attempting to persuade the public and the government on their opinions about the abdication, and the need to say this at all shows how he is yet again ~~or~~ of an alternative opinion to the rest of the government. Therefore, this source also supports the view that Churchill was out of office because he was in conflict with his own party and readers, as the fact that he feels the need to persuade them at all shows their difference of opinion.

* It was said in the House of Commons against the Government of India Act, showing that Churchill was using this speech as a

last ditch attempt at changing their minds.

Source C is perhaps more nuanced in its outlook towards the question of if Churchill was in conflict with his leaders, as Chamberlain, the PM since 1937, says that he did consider the Grand Alliance. The fact that he did consider it shows that Churchill was not in complete disagreement, however, Chamberlain says it is not practical. As this is a private letter to his sister, there Chamberlain may be more truthful in his view as there is no need to convince anyone and he can say everything he truly feels, perhaps explaining his slight agreement with Churchill. Chamberlain said that the idea for the ~~the~~ Grand Alliance "occurred to [him] long before [Churchill] mentioned it", showing how they are in partial agreement. However, it is not 'practicable', as which can be seen in how France had 15 elections where they decided against rearming, and did not support Czechoslovakia, despite how signing an alliance with them in 1924. This shows that a 'Grand Alliance' was not practical, as does the fact that the US was isolationist and their Neutrality Act of 1935 stopped them from selling weapons to countries at war, suggesting

that they would not be willing to join a Grand Alliance. Also, in 1938, when this source was written, there was a real concern amongst British experts that the USSR would not be able to help militarily due to Stalin's purges of the military, where he killed 40% of the top echelon, therefore this too was seen as unpractical. Chamberlain states that "You only have to look at a map to see there is nothing Britain or France could do", which is true, especially at this time, especially considering the fact that many much of the British public did not want a war and were still haunted by WW1, where over 750,000 British soldiers died. Therefore this source shows that Churchill was ~~not~~ in conflict with his own party and leaders. As Chamberlain was Prime Minister, he would be in the position to speak to "chiefs of staff and foreign office experts" that Churchill, as a ~~to~~ person in a lesser position, would not be able to do so, perhaps further showing how much Churchill was in conflict with his leaders, as Chamberlain ~~was~~ had already dismissed a 'Grand Alliance' by this point. Therefore, while this source is more nuanced in its depiction as an outsider because Chamberlain did agree

with him in theory, overall it agrees that Churchill was out of office because he disagreed with his own party and leaders.

Source D argues that is also more nuanced on this matter, as Colville says that Churchill is both untrustworthy but also commands respect, suggesting that he was in conflict with the government but was also in a different position by October 1939. As Chamberlain's private secretary, the author was in a position to know Churchill, ~~or~~ and Chamberlain's views on him, on a personal level and so may be able to create a true, if somewhat subjective due to his role as Chamberlain's secretary, opinion. Additionally, he wrote this in his diary, suggesting that this is his true view and is not exaggerated for affect like ~~as~~ Source A and B might be. The source argues that Churchill has a "record of untrustworthiness and instability", seen early on in his changing from the Conservatives to the Liberals and then back again in 1924. This suggests that Churchill was out of office in the 1930s because of his views, due to his "instability", but also due to his "untrustworthiness", that led to conflicts with his party leaders. The source also says that he has "universal respect", and at this

time, October 1939, the ~~two~~ second world war had started and Churchill was in office as Lord of the Admiralty, ^{showing} suggesting that by this point, he wasn't out of office and had less conflicts with his party leaders, due to the fact that he was given a political position. Therefore, this source is rather nuanced in its view that Churchill was out of office because of his conflict with the party, as by this point he was respected and given a political position, but the source also draws attention to his instability, suggesting that it ~~did~~ Churchill did cause conflict before this point. Therefore it both agrees and slightly disagrees with the view that Churchill was in the wilderness because he disagreed with his own party.

To conclude, these sources ultimately suggest that Churchill was out of office in the 1930s because of his conflict with his own party and leaders. The fact that sources A and B are Churchill attempting to change the minds of the government supports the view that he was therefore in conflict with them. Source C is the most convincing however, due to its originally private nature, and the fact that Chamberlain is more nuanced in his view and does agree

with Churchill to a certain extent. Overall, the sources show that Churchill was in the 'wilderness' because of his conflict with his own party and leaders.

Exemplar 1 demonstrates a response that has judgement in the conclusion and reached the top of Level 5.

Assessment for learning



To achieve the higher levels, candidates must evaluate the four sources using context and provenance and reach a judgement on the reliability of the sources.

Section B overview

Two essays are set, each from a different Key Topic. Here the candidates were asked to assess the reasons why the Conservatives won the 1951 election or how successfully Heath's government dealt with the problems it faced. The questions set required candidates to analyse causes and consequences of major historical issues.

Question 2*

Britain 1951–1997

2* Assess the reasons why the Conservatives won the 1951 election.

[20]

This was the more popular of the two essays and was reasonably well-answered by the majority of candidates. Many candidates wrote about Labour weaknesses, Conservative strengths and the workings of the electoral system. When assessing Labour weaknesses, the majority of candidates had a good understanding of the issues of austerity, party divisions, the need for prescription charges and the impact of the Korean War. Better responses linked these issues with the impact of some frontbenchers having been in government since 1940 and the Labour Party running out of steam. In dealing with Conservative strengths, the decision to support the post-war consensus figured heavily as did promises to build 300,000 houses and a promise to end rationing. Churchill, as a government figurehead, was a strong feature of most responses, while many candidates acknowledged the work of Woolton and the emergence of younger MPs such as Maudling. The best responses looked at the electoral system. However, there was some uncertainty as to what the difference between the popular vote and the seats won actually demonstrated for the Labour Party. Many candidates were able to show how the Conservatives won many marginal seats and were also able to explain how the decline of the Liberals directly impacted them.

Exemplar 2

The Conservatives ~~got~~ under Churchill won the 1951 election for a multitude of different reasons, including the recent poor performance of Attlee's Labour government, as well as the strong Conservative party, which had modernised since the 1945 loss. However, the most important reason for why the Conservatives won is because of the changes to the electoral laws, which made it easier for the Conservatives to gain more seats compared to Labour.

The changes to the electoral laws were the most significant reason for why the Conservatives won the 1951 election. The 1948 'Representation of the People Act' meant that the boundaries for ~~the~~ the seats changed, upsetting Labour 'safe' seats, and meaning they would have to win 17,000 more votes per seat in order to gain the same amount of seats as they had in the 1945 election. The fact that Attlee's Labour party received 2 million more votes than

they had in 1945 and the fact that this was an incredibly large turnout for an election further proves how important the changes to the boundaries were. The 'first past the post' system allowed the Conservatives to target areas like Bolton and Wellingborough, which allowed them to win the election with a seventeen seat majority. However, ~~one could argue that~~ the fact that Labour received ~~49.7%~~^{33.9%} of the vote compared to the Conservatives, who only received 19.3% of the vote, shows that it was the electoral system that allowed for the Conservative victory.

Another reason, although less important than the changes to the electoral system, ^{was} were the Conservative's successful campaigning strategy. The Conservatives had modernised since their disastrous 1945 loss and ~~and~~ with Lord Woolton improving party finances and membership, and new and dynamic members, such as Reginald Maudling, making the party seem more accessible. The Conservatives campaigned under promising 'more red meat' directly attacking Labour's rationing policies, which had introduced bread rationing in 1946, and was associated with

hunger and austerity, while the Conservatives were promising a better future. Additionally, Churchill promised to build 300,000 houses a year, compared to Labour's 200,000, and also promised to keep funding the immensely popular Welfare State. ~~Therefore,~~ ^{shows} this ~~suggests~~ that the Conservatives did capitalise off of Labour weaknesses in order to win the 1951 election. ^{* continuation booklet.} However, they did also campaign off of their own strengths, as many voters felt as though they owed Churchill the victory due to his role in the Second World War, showing that while the party mostly used Labour's weaknesses against them, they also had reasons for their victory that showed support ~~of~~ for them, instead of merely a rejection of Labour.

Another reason, although ~~not as significant as~~ the Conservatives ~~campaigning~~ or the changes to the electoral system is the fall of the Liberal party.

Additionally, the weaknesses the Labour party had shown in the years leading up to the election were also another key reason for their defeat, as the Conservatives were able to use their weaknesses against

them. Attlee's government was beginning to appear old and weak, tired, and also it appeared like it was splitting apart, with Harold Wilson and Bevan leaving the party after prescription prices were introduced. This led the electorate to believe that they were weak and would not be able to govern Britain for much longer. Also, Attlee had entered Britain into the Korean war in 1950, an unpopular decision in Britain as it caused economic grievances, which, were added to the fact that the Labour government was associated with austerity, shows that many voters were not happy with Attlee's government and therefore voted against them. The fact that the Conservatives agreed to continue with the Welfare State meant that many, especially those who were middle class and were negatively affected by Britain's poor economic status, wanted to vote for the Conservatives instead as they saw no difference to the Welfare State. Therefore, the various Labour weaknesses were collated ~~by~~ the Conservatives into a large part of the reason for why the Conservatives won the 1951 election. ~~At~~ However, the fact that they received 200,000 more votes than Churchill and received one of the

		largest amount of votes in British history, shows that it was not truly Labour's weakness which lost them the election, but rather the changes to the electoral system. Therefore that is the most significant reason for Churchill's win with a majority in 1951.
continuation from page 11		The conservatives largely fact that the conservatives largely took ideas from Labour's weaknesses and then promised to continue the welfare state shows that it was not the conservative electoral campaign that won them the election, but rather their ability to can use Labour's weaknesses against them. The fact that Churchill only won with a majority of 17 seats shows this as it highlights the

fact that the win was more a rejection of Labour and not as much an endorsement of the Conservatives. Additionally, the Conservatives were also able to capitalise off of the Liberals, as they were not able to run for many seats, and their vote fell from 2.8 million to 730,000. This led many middle class voters who were not willing to vote for Labour to vote for the Conservatives, again showing the Conservative campaigning strategy, while efficient and successful, was not the main reason for their victory in this election.

To conclude, the main and most significant reason^{ed} why the Conservatives won the 1951 election is the changes to the electoral system, which made it much more difficult for Labour to gain the same amount of seats they had in 1945 and 1950. The Conservative campaign also capitalised off Labour weaknesses, while also having their own unique points, like the modernisation of the party and Churchill's leadership. However, as they did receive 290,000 fewer votes than Labour, it is clear that the electoral system was the most significant reason for their victory in 1951.

Exemplar 2 is an example of a Level 6 response covering most of these features and demonstrating both interim and a concluding judgement.

Question 3*

3* How successfully did the Heath government deal with the problems it faced?

[20]

A slightly less popular essay, candidates found this essay more challenging and there were a number of misconceptions with candidates confusing the 3-day week with the later winter of discontent. Stronger responses highlighted the major issues and then demonstrated whether Heath's government successfully dealt with these. They considered a range of issues including industrial relations, inflation, the oil crisis of 1973 and the U-turn on supporting failing industries as evidence of areas where Heath's government performed less successfully. In terms of successful policies, evidence here was more limited although joining the EEC was used to support this view. Knowledge of other areas including welfare spending and education improvements were not widespread.

Misconception



Several misconceptions on this question. The 3-day week was confused with the later winter of discontent. Some candidates also thought it was Heath's government that secured the IMF loan of 1976.

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