



GCE AS/A level

1232/05

HISTORY – HY2

UNIT 2

IN-DEPTH STUDY 5

BRITAIN, c. 1929-1939

A.M. THURSDAY, 19 May 2011

1½ hours

1232
05/0001

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

In addition to this examination paper, you will need a 12 page answer book.

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

Use black ink or black ball-point pen.

Answer **one** question.

INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

The number of marks is given in brackets at the end of each question or part-question.

The time you spend on a question should be in proportion to the marks available.

The sources and quotations used in this unit may have been amended or adapted from the stated published work in order to make the wording more accessible.

You are reminded that assessment will take into account the quality of written communication used in your answers.

UNIT 2

IN-DEPTH STUDY 5

BRITAIN, c. 1929-1939

Answer one question.

1. *Study the sources below and answer the questions that follow.*

Source A

‘On the basis of national averages, infant and maternal mortality rates are, in 1939, lower than ever before. The survival rates for infants are significantly higher than they have ever been before and there is no evidence pointing to a link between economic hardship and ill-health. We conclude that the same situation is true in the Special Areas.’

[From an official government health department report published in 1939.
This was the outcome of a six month investigation in London into
the link between poverty and death rates]

Source B

‘To believe that the 1930s can be seen as a period of major improvement of the health of mothers and infants in Britain is wrong. There is clear evidence of poverty, hunger and hardship from social surveys and personal accounts of the period. These caused premature deaths and immense suffering and hardship.’

[M Mitchell, an academic feminist historian specialising in the social history of Britain,
speaking in a lecture given to the Historical Association titled
The effects of unemployment on women and children in the 1930s (1985)]

Source C

‘Harry stood in a long queue of shabby men, hands in pockets, staring fixedly and unseeing at the ground. At street corners, leaning against house walls or squatting on the kerb stones, were more men, clothes stinking of age, waiting for one queue to disappear so that they could start another one. And all through the day fresh faces would come to sign the unemployed register at their appointed times.’

[Walter Greenwood, a novelist and author, writing in the story, *Love on the Dole*,
a fictional account of unemployed life in a northern town in England (1933)]

Source D

‘One morning, the wait at the employment exchange was long and chilly, and the ragged queue of weary men began to mutter, and fill my father in on how to stay alive under almost impossible circumstances. They told him how he could keep his family alive on the rubbish from the streets, old shoes, paper, twigs, wooden boxes and potato peelings.’

[Helen Forrester, recalling her life as a child in Liverpool in the 1930s, in her autobiography, *Two pence to cross the Mersey* (1974)]

Source E

‘I saw a man crouching over a stove in a dark room, the light of a fire touching his features as he coughed and coughed. One woman sank in a chair, her form wasted and death written more plainly on her face than I have ever seen it. Her unemployed husband stood by, trying with a tattered shawl to warm a baby, three months old. He smiled proudly down at it – his teeth were rotten with decay.’

[Percy Cudlipp, writing in an editorial comment in the *Evening Standard*, a conservative supporting newspaper, following a week in which he lived with the unemployed in London (1934)]

- (a) Study Source A. Use the source **and your own knowledge** to explain the meaning of the phrase “the Special Areas”. [4]
- (b) Study Sources C and D. Use these sources **and your own knowledge** to explain the significance of unemployment in the 1930s. [8]
- (c) Study Sources D and E. How reliable are Sources D and E in explaining life in the major cities during the 1930s? [16]
- (d) Study Sources A and B. How far does Source A support or contradict the interpretation of the effects of poverty given in Source B? [20]
- (e) How useful are these sources in understanding Britain between 1929-1939? [32]

(You are advised to use in your answer relevant background knowledge from the depth study as well as information derived from the sources and the attributions.)

2. Study the sources below and answer the questions that follow.

Source A

‘In the so-called depressed regions there is a growing number of young men who are living off the Unemployment Assistance Board and are no longer trying to live independent lives. They have all refused work and they supplement their money with undisclosed pickings from the market, the docks or the gambling industry. Under the current system there is nothing to disturb their complacent acceptance and they are nothing more than parasites lacking in moral fibre and the will to look for work.’

[An editorial comment in *The Times*, a newspaper which supported the government and the establishment (1938)]

Source B

‘I was one of a gang of lads from Lancashire. We used to stay in bed late so as to not need breakfast. I would have a cup of tea and then go down the library to read the papers. We would then go to the billiard room where we could watch people play for nothing, and then to the pictures of a night. That’s how we spent our dole money. In the end it was driving me mad as well as the other lads - we wanted work, but we just couldn’t get it.’

[From a report written by the Pilgrims Trust, an organisation that investigated and reported on social conditions in England. This report was called *Men Without Work* (1938)]

Source C

‘When my father bought the house it had no electricity. My father had electricity installed for lighting and plugs for lamps and electric fires. In 1935 we had an electric heater installed in the water tank and we got a refrigerator installed in the pantry. Mother discovered she was the first of her friends to do so. We had two live-in servants, a cook and a housemaid who had their own accommodation. They were only fourteen and sixteen years old but they still had a monthly wage of 15 shillings each.’

[Dick Cunningham, a child during the 1930s, recalling his middle class upbringing in a book of recollections, *The Hungry Thirties* (1986)]

Source D

‘Rugby was a Welsh game - it’s a game which really portrays the character of the Welsh in my view, in South Wales in particular. Somehow it fits into the framework of the tough steelworker and the tinsmith and the coalminer. It was important to everyone to play a good, hard game and then go into the bar for a pint or two. During the Depression, sport meant a good deal to the Welsh nation, South Wales in particular, where it had a tremendous social influence.’

[Wilf Wooller, a Welsh international rugby player in the 1930s, recalling the importance of rugby in a television documentary about the history of sport (2001)]

Source E

‘During the 1930s the lack of money all but saw the demise of organised sport in many areas of Wales. There were more important things in life than sport. The daily grind of finding money to feed the family meant that such frivolities like sport and socialising down the pub became a luxury few could afford.’

[Gareth D. Williams, an academic historian specialising in the history of sport, writing in his general history book, *The Fields of Welsh Dreams - history and sport in Wales 1800-1960* (1965)]

- (a) Study Source A. Use the source **and your own knowledge** to explain the meaning of the phrase “Unemployment Assistance Board”. [4]
- (b) Study Sources A and B. Use these sources **and your own knowledge** to explain the significance of unemployment in the 1930s. [8]
- (c) Study Sources B and C. How reliable are Sources B and C in explaining people’s lives during the 1930s? [16]
- (d) Study Sources D and E. How far does Source D support or contradict the interpretation of the importance of sport in the 1930s given in Source E? [20]
- (e) How useful are these sources in understanding Britain between 1929-1939? [32]

(You are advised to use in your answer relevant background knowledge from the depth study as well as information derived from the sources and the attributions.)