



B O A R D O F S T U D I E S
NEW SOUTH WALES

2006

**HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE
EXAMINATION**

History Extension

General Instructions

- Reading time – 5 minutes
- Working time – 2 hours
- Write using black or blue pen

Total marks – 50

Section I Pages 2–3

25 marks

- Attempt Question 1
- Allow about 1 hour for this section

Section II Page 4

25 marks

- Attempt Question 2
- Allow about 1 hour for this section

Section I

25 marks

Attempt Question 1

Allow about 1 hour for this section

Answer the question in a writing booklet. Extra writing booklets are available.

In your answer you will be assessed on how well you:

- present a detailed, logical and well-structured answer to the question
 - use relevant issues of historiography
 - use relevant sources to support your argument
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Using the Source, answer the question that follows.

Source

What's the use of history? We are always being told . . . that history is no use at all: that every generation writes its own history . . . I do not accept their analysis, which to my mind makes the past an adventure playground for the muscle-bound egos of the present. Nor, I admit, do I easily stomach the condescension. Humans learn from experience. What else is there? The historical record is our great shared reservoir of human experience . . .

Historians in this country, like historians everywhere, have become professionally implicated in the rise of public history. These days they are well instructed regarding their responsibility to the present, and to the future. They have been less well instructed as to their responsibility to the past. With public money increasingly spent on public history, it is easily assumed that history's true purpose is patriotic, or integrative: socially instrumental . . .

The distinction is between, on the one hand, sacred memory, the prized possession of a family, a tribe, a nation; and on the other the disciplined inquiry we call History. Particular episodes in the past were used by their participants to serve mythic functions. It is the historians' job to unscramble what happened from what the myth-makers were up to, not to play at myth-making too . . .

Source continues on page 3

Source (continued)

History as patriotism or as group therapy can have disastrous consequences both for the people who concoct* it and for those who are made to suffer for it . . .

[History] is a secular discipline, and in its idiosyncratic** way a scientific one, based on the objective analysis of that vast consultable record of past actions. Our role as scientists of the human is to increase the role of reason in human affairs: to arrive at 'useable truths' regarding the human condition. Whatever our particular subject, our core narrative ought to be the narrative of the inquiry; of our critical engagement with the sources, and what we make of them . . .

Looking back, we see the people, or some of them. We see the path they end up taking. We do not see the fog, the mistaken hopes, the disabling despairs, the misdirected energies. That makes judgement easy. It also makes it vacuous***. Only by reconstructing the fog of mistaken convictions, through which people in other times battled in the direction they hoped was forward, can we hope to dispel the mists which obscure our own vision.

INGA CLENDINNEN,
History Here: a View from Outside,
2003 Premier's History Awards Address

* concoct *make up; invent*

** idiosyncratic *distinctive*

*** vacuous *empty; meaningless*

Question 1 (25 marks)

Compare and contrast Inga Clendinnen's interpretation of the purposes of history with the views of at least TWO other historians you have studied. Make a judgement about the value of these viewpoints.

Please turn over

Section II

25 marks

Attempt Question 2

Allow about 1 hour for this section

Answer the question in a SEPARATE writing booklet. Extra writing booklets are available.

In your answer you will be assessed on how well you:

- present a sustained, logical and well-structured response to the question
 - use an appropriate case study
 - present a balanced treatment of the historians and the areas of debate selected for discussion
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Question 2 (25 marks)

The facts are really not at all like fish on the fishmonger's slab*. They are like fish swimming about in a vast and sometimes inaccessible ocean; and what the historian catches will depend partly on chance, but mainly on what part of the ocean he chooses to fish in and what tackle** he chooses to use – these two factors being, of course, determined by the kind of fish he wants to catch. By and large, the historian will get the kind of facts he wants. History means interpretation.

E. H. CARR, *What is History?*

* fishmonger's slab *fish seller's display table*

** tackle *fishing equipment*

Analyse the interpretation offered in this passage as it applies to at least ONE area of debate from your chosen case study.

Identify your case study at the beginning of your answer.

End of paper