



General Certificate of Secondary Education

Geography 4035

Specification B

40352F Hostile World

Report on the Examination

2010 examination - June series

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General Comments

The paper proved to be an effective discriminator of geographical ability. It allowed candidates of all abilities at this tier to demonstrate positive achievement. The majority of candidates gave good responses to the range of data provided. Geographical skills such as interpreting bar graphs, line graphs, pie charts, climate graphs, maps of various scales and diagrams were good. Opportunities for extended writing were given in one or more parts of each question, and the least able candidates were able to offer a response, which demonstrated some geographical understanding. The more able candidates were able to offer developed responses, demonstrating good understanding of geographical issues, backed up with some correct use of geographical vocabulary and some use of case study examples. They were able to apply their knowledge and understanding in unfamiliar contexts.

There were differing numbers of candidates completing Sections A and B of the examination paper. A vast majority of candidates opted for Section A - Living with Natural Hazards, whilst few chose Section B - The Challenge of Extreme Environments.

The vast majority of candidates completed the paper and there were relatively few parts of questions that were not attempted.

Section A - Living with Natural Hazards

Question 1 was well answered, the subject matter appearing to be the most familiar to the majority of candidates.

Question 1

For part (a)(i) most candidates were able to accurately complete the graph. Part (a)(ii) did not prove problematic for a vast majority of the candidates.

In part (b)(i) the majority of the candidates were able to interpret the map. In part (b)(ii) a significant number of candidates did not follow the command to use Figure 2 and gave general effects of volcanic eruptions, or merely stated that there was an ash cloud without giving the effects of this, but the majority of candidates were able to use the resources to good effect and gain two marks. Part (b)(iii) elicited a range of responses. The majority of candidates seldom gave more than a simple idea of plate movement and/or named the tectonic plates with a lack of knowledge of physical process and use of geographical terminology. More successful candidates referred to the processes taking place at a destructive plate boundary, with some referring to similar plate boundaries they had studied. A considerable number of candidates ignored the command to explain why **either** earthquakes **or** volcanic eruptions occur in Alaska and explained both, often superficially and failing to get a Level 2 mark.

Part (c) produced a range of responses. Some candidates were able to offer only simple explanations such as 'strengthen buildings to make them earthquake proof'. However, most were able to develop responses to give a clear explanation of actual schemes with good use of case study examples and many candidates were able to sustain this and reach the maximum mark. Some candidates continued to describe damage or give the causes of the damage, when these were not asked for in the question. Some candidates failed to score as they described methods used to prepare for a tropical storm or a flood. There remains a misunderstanding amongst a significant number of candidates that earthquakes can be predicted within a very short time frame and that sufficient early warning systems can be set up to enable the evacuation of entire cities.

Part (d) was well answered by a vast majority of candidates.

Question 2

In part (a)(i) less than half of the candidates were able to recognise both of the areas of the world in which tropical storms are common and in (b)(ii) there was widespread confusion, with only one third of candidates able to correctly sequence the four stages in the life cycle of the tropical storm. These are areas for future development.

Parts (c) (i) and (ii) were well answered by a vast majority of candidates, with most being able to interpret a detailed map of the storm path very well. In part (c)(i) most candidates were able to offer only one simple suggestion as to why people should or should not evacuate their homes, very few were able to interpret the zone of uncertainty well and apply their own knowledge and understanding to this unfamiliar context and gain both marks.

In part (d) many candidates were only able to offer vague statements such as *it will help them to know what to do in a tropical storm, or it will help them to know where to go in a tropical storm* and consequently almost one quarter of candidates failed to gain any credit for their answers. Most candidates were able to make at least one valid suggestion as to how the methods listed would help people prepare for a tropical storm, with most correct answers being given when 'listen to the radio' was chosen. Fully correct answers tended to be gained when 'protect your home' was also chosen.

Part (e) generated a wide range of responses. Many candidates were able to offer only simple reasons for their chosen viewpoint; these were often taken directly from the data provided or were references to global warming. These were valid statements and many candidates were able to gain a top Level 1 and score 4 marks. However, a number of candidates did develop these ideas further to gain a Level 2 mark through good use of the resource along with the application of their own knowledge and understanding, constructing an argument for or against the issue. At Level 1, some candidates gained some credit for mentioning global warming, but then went on to discuss the wider issues of sea level rise, instead of focusing on the demands of the question.

Question 3

An error was found to be contained in Figure 8, which made Question 3(a)(i) and (iv) unanswerable. After careful consideration, AQA determined that the most appropriate way to protect the interests of all candidates who had attempted this question would be to discount it and scale candidates' marks appropriately. Errors such as these are very rare. We apologise sincerely and assure you that we have taken steps to ensure that this type of error does not occur again.

Part (a)(ii) was well answered with a vast majority of candidates being able to interpret the map, whilst many candidates found part (a)(iii) more challenging and could only identify one true statement. However, the majority were able to identify two true statements and gain the maximum two marks.

Part (b)(i) did not prove problematic for a vast majority of the candidates with most being able to interpret the bar graph, but fewer candidates gained the mark on part (b)(i) with approximately 30% failing to score. This was generally due to candidates referring to one element of the graph or giving reasons why the number of wildfires may increase during the spring or summer, rather than stating the relationship between the two data sets.

In part (c) only the better candidates at this tier were able to give two reasons for the increasing cost of damage from wildfires. Almost half the candidates were only able to offer one valid reason and many lost marks as a result of giving vague statements such as *the population is increasing*, or *there are more buildings*, without reference to location.

Section B - The Challenge of Extreme Environments

Question 5 was well answered, the subject matter appearing to be the most familiar to the majority of candidates.

Question 4

Part (a)(i) was attempted by most candidates. Of those candidates, only half were able to accurately complete the graph and in part (b)(ii), some candidates could not read the temperature value from the climate graph. This basic skill is an area for development. Part (a)(ii) did not prove problematic for a majority of the candidates.

Part (b)(iii) elicited a range of responses. A majority of candidates seldom gave more than a list of simple problems such as *oil spills* or, *animals will be threatened* without further elaboration. Only a minority of candidates gained a Level 2 mark by developing these answers further. These tended to focus on case study examples.

In part (c) a majority of candidates were able to offer at least one valid threat to the environment of Antarctica, with almost half giving two correct responses. Many lost marks as a result of giving vague statements in which the threat was not clear, or one word answers such as *tourists* or *ships*.

In part (d) a majority of the candidates could only identify one true statement. However, one third of the candidates were able to identify two true statements and gain the maximum two marks.

Part (e) was not well attempted with the vast majority of candidates gaining a Level 1 mark. Very few candidates were able to develop responses to give a clear description of actual schemes and there was very little good use of case study examples. Where this was the case, candidates showed some understanding of the role of the Antarctic Treaty, fishing quotas, limiting tourist activity and the role of the ANWR, but none of the candidates who sat Section B were able to sustain the development of points and reach the maximum mark. Most listed simplistic ideas without referring to examples of actual schemes.

Question 5

Part (a) was well answered by a majority of candidates with over half being able to correctly identify two areas in which tropical rainforests are found.

Part (b) was also well attempted with a vast majority of the candidates being able to correctly sequence the daily pattern of weather in an area of tropical rainforest.

In part (c)(i) a majority of candidates only gained one mark and a minority were unable to interpret the maps and failed to score. This is an area for future development. Reading the pie chart in parts (c)(ii) and (c)(iii) did not prove problematic for most candidates. Many candidates found part (c)(iv) challenging and only a quarter scored any marks by referring to the risk of

mudslides or landslides, most concentrated on the effects on the tropical rainforest itself and failed to score any marks.

Part (d) was well answered with most candidates showing a good understanding of methods such as reforestation and conservation, but ecotourism and ethical shopping were less well understood.

Part (e) produced a wide range of responses. Many candidates were able to offer some simple reasons for their chosen viewpoint, these were often taken directly from the data provided or related to the effects of deforestation on the tropical rainforest or the need for less developed countries to *earn money*. These were valid statements and many candidates were able to gain a top Level 1 and score 4 marks. However, 12% of the candidates did develop these ideas further to gain a Level 2 mark through good use of the resource along with the application of their own knowledge and understanding in constructing an argument for or against the issue. This was often through a case study example of damage to/exploitation of a named location in an area of tropical rainforest.

Question 6

In part (a) there was good use of the resources with most candidates being able to interpret the climate graphs and the map, with the majority gaining maximum marks.

Part (b)(i) was also well answered, with most candidates being able to read the pie chart. Only half of the candidates were able to interpret the scatter graph in part (b)(ii). In part (b)(iii) most candidates were able to offer at least one simple suggestion as to why many places in Africa have a very high risk of desertification, but far fewer were able elaborate on these and gain the second mark, with only a quarter of the candidates scoring 3 or 4 marks on this question part.

In part (c) majority of the candidates gave two valid changes in climate that could increase the risk of desertification; those who failed to score were often offering responses that were not linked to climate.

Some general points for development

The resources used in the examination papers for Unit 2 are designed to act as a stimulus for candidates to help them respond to questions. They are also provided as prompts for candidates to enable them to apply their knowledge and understanding to unfamiliar contexts and also to assess their understanding of geographical skills.

Unit 2 is one of four components upon which the overall assessment of candidates following Specification B is based. The Assessment Objectives for the course and individual units are found on page 42 of the Specification.

It is worth noting that for Unit 2, only 10 of the 50 marks available are for AO1 (recall, select and communicate their knowledge and understanding of places environments and concepts), whereas 20 marks are for AO2 (apply knowledge and understanding in familiar and unfamiliar contexts) and 20 marks are for AO3 (select and use a variety of geographical skills, techniques and technologies to investigate, analyse and evaluate questions and issues).

For all of the GCSE Geography B papers, candidates are instructed at the beginning of each section to ‘Use your case studies where appropriate.’ We do not repeat this instruction on every question part where candidates *can* use their case studies. We do include the instruction ‘use your own knowledge’ where candidates *must* do this in order to access marks. However, candidates can introduce their own knowledge in to any written response.

Centres should encourage candidates to become comfortable with using a range of resources such as maps, photographs, tables of figures, graphs, diagrams and text etc. They should encourage candidates to be able to explain patterns, trends, relationships, causes, opinions etc by applying their own knowledge and understanding to these contexts.

There is a need for accuracy when answering skills questions e.g. reading graphs and pie charts. Where appropriate, figures should be cited and units should always be given.

The best answers directly address the demands of the question. A well focused, planned answer helps to avoid the inclusion of peripheral information, or giving causes when effects are required by the question. A long preamble is not necessary e.g. the causes of an earthquake do not have to be described before the candidate goes on to describe the effects, or the effects do not have to be described before the candidate goes on to explain how damage can be reduced. This leads to the excessive use of additional writing sheets. When additional answer sheets are necessary it should be clear which question part is being answered.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.