

Examiners' Report
June 2012

GCSE History 5HA03 3C

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Introduction

It was pleasing to see a good standard of responses from candidates in the fifth session. The paper requires candidates to answer five questions in 75 minutes and some candidates managed to write at considerable length in this time. However, it was noticeable that a number of candidates failed to complete (in some cases even start) question 5. This was due to mismanagement of time often as a result of writing over-long answers to previous questions. Centres should note that the amount of space provided in the booklet for answers, is more than we would expect any answer to take, not a recommendation of the amount candidates should write.

There were strong answers to all questions although, in some cases, there were formulaic responses which did not directly address the question. For example, some answers referred to the reliability of the sources in questions 3 and 5 without directly relating this to either the strength of support or challenge for the cross referencing or the hypothesis.

There was also a noticeable increase in the number of candidates who wrongly labelled the source they were referring to especially in question 4 with Source E being confused with Source D.

An example response from the examination is given for each question in the report. Please note that in some cases part answers only are given as exemplification, not full answers. However, a general summary for improvement in the approach to question types (which are common across the three options) may prove of benefit to centres and is included at the end of the report.

Question 1

Candidates were asked to make inferences about the USA in 1954. Most candidates were able to make supported inferences from the source although there was some variation in the quality of inferencing. A minority of candidates misunderstood the source or focused on McCarthyism or Truman rather than the USA as required by the question.

The key to answering this question is to make the inference and use the wording of the source only as the *support* for the inference. An inference should not be made using the words of the source, as that is likely to produce paraphrasing. So candidates who stated that 'the USA has abandoned its belief in fair play'

were copying the source, not making valid inferences and were marked at Level 1. Those who suggested that 'The source suggests that McCarthyism has corrupted the USA' and then added "I know this because the Source says 'McCarthyism is a horrible cancer which is eating away at the USA' " were making a valid inference and supporting it from the source. Such answers were rewarded at Level 3.

1 Study Source A.

What can you learn from Source A about the USA in 1953?

(6)

Source A suggests that the USA has become a country of no justice or moral, this can be seen when ~~from~~ former president of the US Harry S Truman says '... The USA have abandoned its belief in fair play and the proper use of the law. Source A also suggests that ~~the~~ the USA is now turning into a corrupt country due to McCarthyism because President Truman also states that 'McCarthyism is a horrible cancer... eating away at America... destroying the great belief in freedom.'



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This is a level three answer as the candidate has made two supported inferences. The first is that the USA has no justice and the second is that the USA is a corrupt country. Notice how the candidate signposts the inferences with the phrase 'Source A suggests'.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

To gain higher marks you must make two inferences supported with evidence from the source. Why not say 'I know this because the source says...'? Do not write too much although, if you have time, do include three supported inferences.

Question 2

This question asks candidates to explain the purpose of a statement by Ed Murrow on a TV programme. The majority of candidates were able to identify the message and support it from the source, that McCarthy has gone too far in the methods he is using and now is the time for people to stand up to him. The source insists that he has repeatedly stepped over the line and persecuted people and is threatening the American belief in freedom.

However, to reach Level 3 candidates had to explain the purpose of the source - what it was intended to make people think or do. The purpose of the broadcast is to expose the methods used by McCarthy and to encourage powerful people in the USA to stand up to him. This is shown in the source when Murrow suggests that McCarthy has repeatedly stepped over the fine line between investigating and persecuting. The televised programme about McCarthyism was produced at a time when there was growing opposition in the media to McCarthy and his methods.

A minority of candidates confused the message of the source, (the point it is trying to put across), with its purpose, (what the message is trying to achieve). The best candidates made effective use of discourse markers such as 'suggests', 'persuade'.

Ed Murrow was the host of an extremely popular TV show, *See it now*. This demonstrates that he possessed great power in addressing issues in America and influencing citizens' opinions. Therefore, when he talks about how bad or negative McCarthyism is, a lot of publicity and support is gained of the view.

The purposes of this statement are varied. Firstly, I think that one of the purposes, and the primary purpose, is to rally viewers into taking a stand against McCarthy's bullying tactics and trying to help them see that they do not have to live a life compounded with the fear of being blacklisted or imprisoned.

The statement also tries to expose McCarthy for who he was - a power hungry senator. It states that people who "oppose senator McCarthy's methods" should not keep "silent". This displays there was a hidden opposition to McCarthyism, but people were too scared to speak up about their views.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This is part of a Level 3 answer. The candidate begins by placing the TV programme in the context of the USA in the mid 1950s. In the second paragraph the candidate clearly states the purpose of the source and then supports it with evidence from the source in this and the next paragraph.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

The key to Level 3. Why not go straight to the purpose of the source? Remember, however, that this must be explained fully by reference to the source itself and/or contextual knowledge. Try to do both to ensure top marks.

Question 3

The question is asking candidates to decide how far Sources B and C support the evidence of Source A about McCarthyism. A number of candidates achieved higher Level 2 by identifying agreement and disagreement between the sources. The best candidates cross-referenced Source B to Source A and Source C to Source A and made reference to the content of the source to establish the extent of agreement and disagreement. Again, well prepared candidates were able to make skilful use of discourse markers ('similarly', 'on the other hand', 'by contrast', 'to some extent') to get their point across. Candidates who were able to cross-reference effectively and comment on the extent of agreement/ disagreement were able to access Level 3 and could achieve Level 3 (9 marks) or even full marks.

Some candidates, however, gave formulaic comments on reliability and did not use these to address cross-referencing and the extent of support. Others compared each source to the view given in the question and showed little or no evidence of cross-referencing between the sources. Such candidates were able to access Level 2 but not Level 3. This question specifically asks candidates to cross- reference and to make comparisons between the sources.

Again, a minority of candidates demonstrated a tendency to make comments on the provenance of the source without focusing on the question. While candidates are not penalised for doing this it often resulted in time management problems later on in the paper. Comments on the provenance of the source must compare the attitude and motives of the writers of the sources to be credited.

Quite a common issue with this question was candidates getting side-tracked into assessing how far B and C disagreed rather than cross-referencing A - C and A - B.

Source B supports source A to a great extent as they both state that McCarthyism has gone too far and taken the red scare so seriously that it has created a sense of terror in the U.S.A, something which is paralleled with the fear caused by the red scare. They also both state that the persecutions were unjust and that action should be taken against it as it is destroying freedom, another point both Source A and B agree on. They are also both very reliable as they are said by people in high places of power and so very knowledgeable.

Source A and B disagree on only a very small point however as Source B states that action should be taken to stop McCarthyism whereas Source A only describes it in all its glory, we can although infer from it that action should be taken but it does not directly say this. Another small weakness between B and A is that there are over 3 months between them, enough time for change in the extent of McCarthyism.



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Examiner Comments

This is part of a Level 3 answer. The candidate begins by making an explicit judgement about the extent of support between Sources A and B and then provides evidence from each source. At the start of the second paragraph the candidate makes a further explicit judgement which is supported with evidence from each source.



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Examiner Tip

Ensure that you cross-reference between the sources and give evidence of support and challenge. Remember to identify and explain agreement and disagreement between the sources. Make explicit judgements about the extent of support/challenge throughout your answer and especially in your conclusion based on the contents and reliability of the sources. Use judgement phrases such as 'strongly agree', 'partial agreement', 'totally disagree'. Ensure that reliability is used to judge the extent of support between the sources.

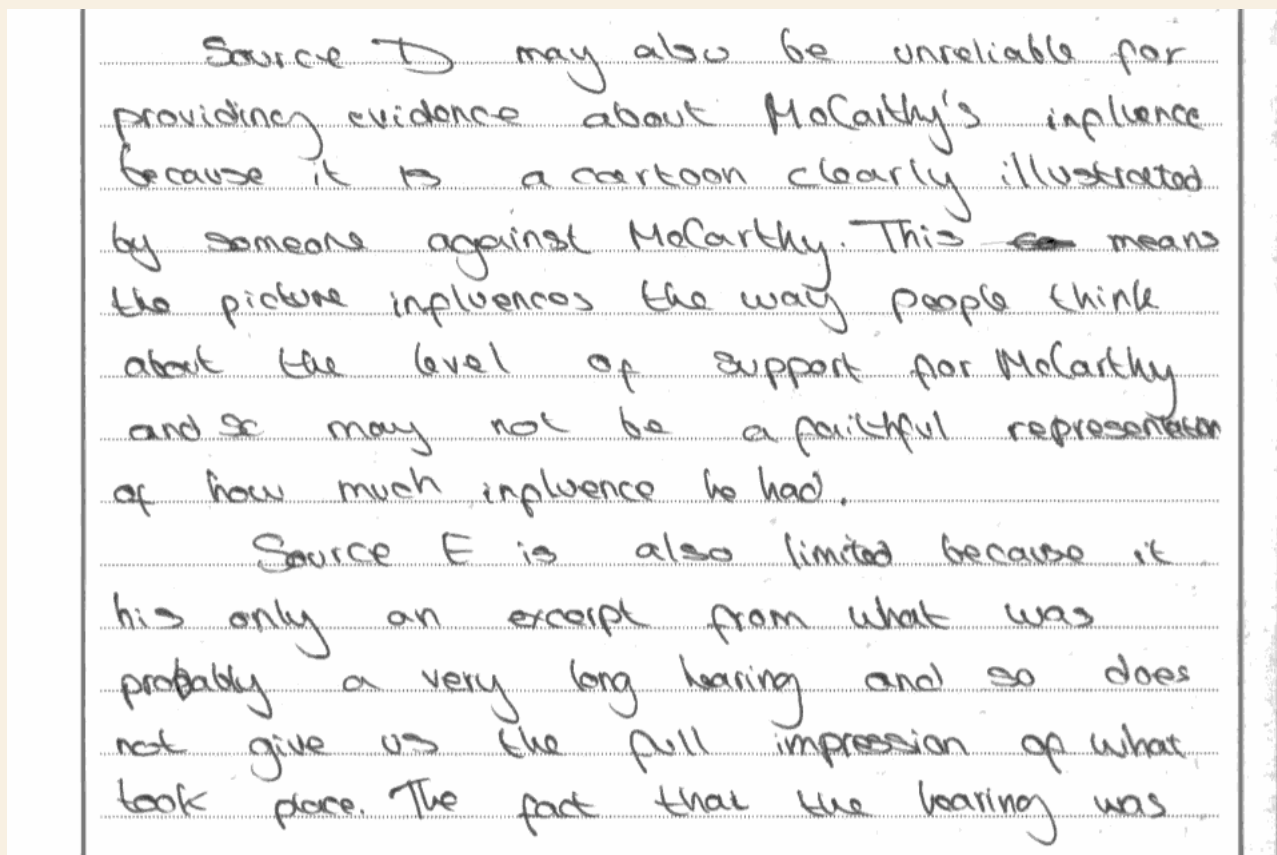
Question 4

For this question, candidates had to examine the utility of Source D, a cartoon from a national newspaper, and Source E, from the televised Army-McCarthy hearings in the Senate. Most candidates achieved Level 2 by examining the contents/information given in each source or commenting on the nature, origins or purpose of the sources. Many candidates were able to interrogate the sources effectively, commenting on both their content and provenance. Candidates who were able to do this effectively with both sources could score Level 3 (9/10) with full marks awarded to candidates who interrogated the sources most effectively. Candidates were generally confident with the provenance of both sources. However, a number of candidates used formulaic responses in which they went through the nature, origins and purpose of each source without making direct reference to how these affected utility. Others simply described the contents of each source - what they could see or read.

In general candidates handled source E more confidently than source D and did not always make effective use of the provenance of Source D 'A cartoon which was published in an American national newspaper'.

On the other hand, there were a number of strong and balanced evaluations. Weaker candidates paraphrased the sources or made simplistic comments or gave pre-learned responses about the sources, often referring to them as biased or as primary/secondary sources. Such responses were confined to Level 1. A number wrote at great length about the utility of the contents of the sources and compared this to their contextual knowledge about the decline of McCarthyism but failed to evaluate the nature, origins or purpose of either of the sources with reference to utility.

Finally, although utility and reliability questions require the application of similar skills -evaluating the contents and nature, origins or purpose of the sources, candidates must ensure that they focus on utility. The question is whether the two sources are useful and not reliable.



televised might also have influenced the way the defendant and McCarthy acted, and so might provide a slightly one-sided view of the influence McCarthy had at the time.

In conclusion, I think sources D and E are both useful and non-useful for providing evidence of McCarthy's influence because they reiterate the support McCarthy had at the time, such as 25 states bringing in anti-communism laws and the McCarran Act being passed, but they also do not faithfully show how influenced people were in terms of NOP.



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Examiner Comments

This is part of a level 3 answer. Notice how the candidate evaluates the nature, origins and purpose of Sources D and E and comes to a final judgement on the utility of the sources.



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Examiner Tip

Remember to mine and interrogate each source. Make judgements on the information/contents as well as the origins, nature and/or purpose of each source.

Question 5

There were a number of well structured answers to this question which asks whether the sources support the hypothesis that television brought about the downfall of McCarthyism. Some candidates were able to achieve at least Level 3 by addressing the issues inherent in the question and the extent to which the sources addressed them. At Level 4, candidates were able to select, draw inferences and use extracts from the sources to address the question set. The best candidates were able to weigh the evidence from each source, based on contents and/or reliability, and use their conclusion to make a final judgement based on the weight of evidence given in the sources for or against the hypothesis.

Use of provenance/reliability varied in quality and often was overtly mechanical making it difficult to ascertain the direction of an answer. The most effective use of provenance/reliability was woven into the wider argument of whether or not the source supported or challenged the hypothesis, with candidates making explicit judgements about whether the reliability of the source weakened or strengthened it as evidence.

In a minority of cases, time management issues undermined candidates' responses to this question. A small number of candidates failed to make sufficient use of the sources and used their own knowledge about the decline of McCarthyism to discuss the hypothesis. Remember that this is a source enquiry question. Candidates are being asked to evaluate the strength of the evidence in the sources themselves - in their content and reliability. Candidates should not bring in additional "own" knowledge to support or challenge the hypothesis but should use their contextual knowledge to identify the issues involved and to evaluate the provenance of the sources.

Sources B, E, and F all ~~disagree~~ Agree with the view that 'television brought about the downfall of McCarthy', whereas A and D disagree with the view. Source C agrees and disagrees.

Source B strongly agrees with the view that 'Television brought about the downfall of McCarthy'. It shows us that Ed Murray's statement on 9th March 1954 made McCarthy look like a bully because he didn't have any evidence. It also shows us that people were starting to stand up to McCarthy and not allow him to continue to make people look bad. From my own knowledge I know that no one had before showed up McCarthy like this and so was a huge moment in the downfall of McCarthy. It is reliable because it was on television so we know it happened however is unreliable because we don't know if this is what everyone else thought.



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Examiner Comments

This is part of a Level 4 answer. Notice how the candidate begins by organising the sources to support or challenge the view. Then the candidate makes an explicit judgement about the extent of support given by Source B to the hypothesis 'Source B strongly agrees' and supports this with evidence from the source.



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Examiner Tip

Ensure that you use the sources to make judgements on the hypothesis. Do not simply summarise each source or use own knowledge. Your overall judgement should be based on the weight of evidence given by the contents/reliability of the sources and not based on your own knowledge. Leave enough time to write an answer to this question; remember that it is worth 16 marks.

Paper Summary

The following notes are offered to centres to support future exam preparation:

Question 1. Candidates often wrote too much for inference. It is sufficient to make the inferences and support them from the source, often with a direct quote. The reliability of the source is not a relevant issue.

Question 2. Ensure that candidates identify the underlying purpose of the source, not just the message. This could be what the source is trying to make people think or do. This should be supported with evidence from the source itself and/or contextual knowledge. It is better to begin with the purpose and then support this with the message of the source.

Question 3. Ensure that candidates focus on the style of a cross-referencing question and actually cross-reference the sources. They should identify support and differences and make judgements on the extent of support based on the content and reliability of the sources.

Question 4. Candidates should avoid simply describing the contents of the sources. They should evaluate both the information/contents in the context of utility or reliability as well as the nature, origins and purpose.

Question 5. A small number of candidates made little or no reference to the sources and instead wrote extensively about the decline of McCarthyism.

Ensure that candidates focus only on using the sources to test the hypothesis. Highest marks require them to make judgements on the extent of support and challenge to the hypothesis based on the weight of evidence given in the sources and/or their reliability.

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