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Examiners' Report June 2010

GCSE History 5HB03 3B

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Introduction

This was the first opportunity candidates had to sit this Schools History Project Source Enquiry paper of the new specification. Most candidates were able to produce responses to questions that were worthy of at least some credit. Few candidates failed to achieve less than ten marks but none were able to achieve maximum marks. Many candidates found it difficult to access the highest levels in response to questions 4 and 5. In this first series there was some evidence that candidates experienced some difficulty with time especially so with question 5. In many cases this was because candidates wrote excessive amounts in response to earlier questions which carry significantly fewer marks. Candidates should allocate the amount of time they spend on an individual question to the mark tariff the question carries. Experience of tackling questions under examination conditions would help improve the ability of candidates to respond appropriately.

Question 1

Question 1: In the majority of cases this was answered reasonably well. Many candidates were able to make one or more inferences and use details from the source in support. Weaker candidates tended to paraphrase the source or repeated what was written in the source. The more perceptive responses focused on the desire of the TUC to avoid any form of extremism and wanted to avoid alienating the public by calling out health care workers. Those who identified the significance of the TUC being anything but revolutionary despite some extremists who may have wanted to bring the government down, were able to access the full mark range available. However some simply relied on regurgitating the details of the source without making any effective inference. To do well in this question candidates need to provide one or more inferences with support from the source itself. Many identified the need to be peaceful rather than violent, others that the TUC was determined to be seen as moderate with moderate aims and methods.

This was typical of responses that focused on the tactics of the TUC during the strike which trying to balance conflicting aims weakened the effectiveness of the strike. It achieved the top Level.

Answer ALL questions.

Look carefully at the background information and Sources A to G in the Sources Booklet and then answer Questions 1 to 5 which follow.

1 Study Source A.

What can you learn from Source A about the General Strike?

(6)

Source A tells us that the trades union congress didn't use all of its strength throughout the strike. It explains that if public health workers were put on strike, this would ~~have had a big impact~~ provoke the government to act, therefore gaining more publicity and adding more pressure. The TUC leaders also felt that a peaceful protest was how the strike should be carried out, therefore the workers ~~also~~ lost more publicity and missed opportunities to get their message across to the mine owners, and the country. Also in the TUC were some extremists. It was believed that they wanted to bring down the government.

This meant that some TUC leaders were not ~~to~~ making decisions based on the benefits it would have to the workers on strike. Source A shows us that the General Strike's failure may have been caused by the TUC's attitudes and ~~the~~ decisions.

The failure of the general strike was caused by the drop out of the TUC after their strike funds ran low. This meant that all support from other industries was lost and the miners had to strike alone, and lost several months later. The fact that the TUC wanted a peaceful strike meant that within the 9 days of the strike, not enough publicity was gained and the strike didn't stay in the news. The extremists' attitudes towards the government restricted the ~~the~~ TUC, as they would have to satisfy those extremists whilst trying to make decisions to benefit the strikers. Overall the TUC did lose the strike, and may have won it if they had reached their full potential and used every tactic they could to win the strike for the workers.

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Examiner Comments

Here the candidate makes several valid inferences and supports these with good support from the source.

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Examiner Tip

Avoid just describing detail from the source as this is unlikely to get any more than the basic minimum of marks. Use the source to support your inferences as just making an inference will not get a candidate beyond Level 2.

Question 2

Question 2: In this question those candidates who achieved good marks recognised that the cartoon was directed against the Miners leader AJ Cook and not on his side. Most candidates produced a perfectly satisfactory description of the key features in the cartoon. Those who were also able to give an adequate assessment of the nature of the image provided were able to access the higher level marks. Few really showed understanding that a cartoon is a comment rather than a depiction of reality or a statement of fact. There were many perceptive comments on the cartoon itself such as the relative size of Parliament and Cook, the miners' leader who sees himself as more important and powerful than the government. Others commented on the sad expression on the face of the Parliamentary clock and the smirk on Cook's face. Most also were able to comment on Cook's comment about "it aint gonna REIGN no more" though some thought it was connected with bad weather. Others used the evidence of the words to indicate that the cartoon shows Cook as ignorant and uneducated. Few were able to comment on the nature of the source itself and the likely bias of the "Daily Herald" although a few informed candidates identified that the cartoon was produced before the General Strike was called.

This response makes a valid comment on the message of the cartoon with some support from the source

2 Study Source B.

How does the artist get his message across in the cartoon? Explain your answer, using Source B.

(8)

A.J. Cook was a leader of the miners and this poster shows him leaning on the Houses of Parliament and squashing it. Buckling under his weight he seems very relaxed while leaning on the building and chuckling to himself. The speech bubble of 'it aint gonna reign no more' has a double meaning rain is spelt how the government reigns and show how A.J. Cook thinks of them as putting a bleak sky over Britain. The speech bubble also looks like it is clearing the sky. The way the Parliament is seen to

be crumbled by his hand looks as though it will fall to the feet of A.J. Cook and the miners what look like banners come from his hand, they say 'Direct' and 'Action' Showing the miners are serious and will use direct action. Just how A.J. Cook with the Parliament building

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Examiner Comments

Level 2 was given as although the candidate appreciated the message of the cartoon this was not sufficiently developed or explained with support from the source to quite reach level 3

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Examiner Tip

Identify the message and then use detail or treatment of content to explain how the message is put across.

Question 3

Question 3: Many candidates failed to make an overall judgement on “How far” the three sources supported the view that the General Strike was peaceful. Many responses were by nature methodical with Source B says, Source C says and Source D says. Having gone through each source individually there was a tendency to attempt to cross reference at the end. However, although many appreciated the need to cross reference, fewer were able to do so confidently or effectively. Very few offered an opinion as to why Source C could be trusted more than the others. Generally there was little in the way of valid comparison of which source(s) were more or less useful or reliable than the others. Many emphasised the limitations of photographs as source material and yet ended up by regarding it as better than verbal or written comment. While many analysed each source in turn cross referencing was often focused of the nature of each source. Again much of this was of the simplistic learnt response variety. Historians such as the author of Source C are not, it would seem, very useful or reliable. In many responses they are secondary sources and they were not there and therefore can not be relied upon.

This response demonstrates an ability to cross reference, identify details of support or lack of it and an awareness of the reliability of the evidence.

3 Study Sources C, D and E.

How far do Sources C, D and E support the view that the General Strike was peaceful?
Explain your answer, using these sources.

(10)

Of the three sources, only D describes the General Strike as being peaceful, and D cannot be fully trusted as it is an extract from the T.U.C's own newspaper and is likely to be biased. Source D 'praise(s) the workers' for their 'strict obedience in avoiding all conflict'. This shows that the strikers were trying to avoid conflict and protest peacefully. However Source E - the Sunday Pictorial - shows a photograph of the mounted London police 'engaged in cleaning the streets' of 'smaller disturbances', suggesting that there were, in fact, other worse disturbances. Again, this source is likely to be biased as most newspapers during the General Strike supported the Government. It does show, however, that not all of the protesters were peaceful - meaning they could not have been following the T.U.C's orders. The T.U.C's praise was published the day after the Sunday Pictorial, which also shows volunteers wrapping barbed wire around buses in an attempt

to protect themselves. If such action was necessary then the strike could not have been peaceful.

~~The TUC~~ In Source D, the T.U.C also praised the strikers' behaviour which was 'a great example to the whole world.' However, Source C, published in 1973, says that 'popular accounts of the strike have perhaps exaggerated the lack of violence, and goes on to list how protesters damaged

property and that, in the last days of the strike, many people were injured in a rising number of violent clashes. This, obviously, does not show the General Strike as peaceful and contradicts Source D, although source C specifically refers to the last days of the strike whilst source D was published mid-way through.

Overall both sources C and E show that the general strike was not ~~peep~~ peaceful and that there were many violent clashes between the protesters and the government. Source D - the T.U.C newspaper, claims that the strikers were peaceful, but is biased and undermined by the evidence given in sources C and E.



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Examiner Comments

A good balanced argument that achieved the top level 3. Unlike responses that went through each source in turn, this demonstrates the ability to cross reference.



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Examiner Tip

Avoid just paraphrasing what each source shows. Identify where sources agree or support each other and areas where they don't.

Question 4

Question 4: “Is Source E more useful than Source F to the historian?” type questions. Sources should be evaluated here in terms of their usefulness in answering a specific question as well as commenting on their nature, origin and provenance. This type of question did cause some candidates real problems. This question requires the evaluation of evidence in context in order to achieve higher-level marks. Questions require candidates to examine the nature (type of source), origin (who produced it and when) and purpose (what reason explains why it was produced). Candidates who did well tended to see sources having value but some more than others. Some candidates spent time on the identification of primary and secondary sources accompanied by rather simplistic learnt responses concerning value. A disturbing number regard contemporary sources as being more reliable and useful than those written years later by historians. Overall responses varied a great deal but this was generally one of the weakest responses made by candidates on the paper. Many candidates just dealt with one source only, or wrote a list of what was in the sources without linking it to the question asked. Judgements, if present were often simplistic “Therefore I think Source is more useful because it is primary” or “secondary sources are useless because they weren’t there”

Many candidates did little more than produce a good deal of paraphrased source material. Most students seemed to be in the L2 range for analysis of content but tended to struggle with the evaluation of its nature, origin and purpose. In terms of Source F many commented on the fact that it came from an eyewitness, but written later he may have forgotten. Rarely did any candidate raise the question how typical was it. For Source C many mentioned hindsight, the fact that it could be checked and was researched. Candidates would do well to consider what a historian needs to do and bear in mind when investigating an aspect of the past. Students would benefit from an examination of a wide range of sources and are encouraged to comment on their strengths and limitations to any historical investigation.

This extract of a candidates response to Question 4 demonstrates a response that sees value in terms of what a source shows together with a simplistic evaluation of Source F in terms of its nature.

4 Study Sources E and F.

Is Source E more useful than Source F to the historian enquiring about the actions taken by the authorities during the General Strike? Explain your answer, using Sources E and F.

(10)

I think both sources are very useful for different reasons. Source E is useful as it shows how serious the police were and also the amount of police involved as the scattered from the police on horseback. The picture below it shows the extremes

they were going to, to prevent anymore damage to the busses and their drivers. Also bashed were would seriously hurt some one and it just showed the feelings and emotions between the strikers.

Source F is very useful because it is an eye witness account and will be much more reliable than other sources.

Showing the sheer brutality of the police as many people did nothing wrong and nothing to ~~provise~~ provoke police. But they suffered a great deal due to the police and it says of how there we broken arms due to the police battering them with buttons.



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Examiner Comments

The candidate attempts to evaluate the sources combining content and nature. Unfortunately only F was dealt with in this way. Furthermore the comment on the value of an eyewitness account was somewhat one dimensional. The triangle at the top of the script indicates where the candidate continued their answer. Unfortunately this was on the end of question 3. This makes assessment of the candidates work more difficult. Candidates should turn the page to continue their answers in the spaces provided for them.



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Examiner Tip

Make use of each sources provenance to establish its nature, origin and purpose. Use this information as well as the content of the source to comment on the usefulness of the source to the historian.

Question 5

Question 5: Seeing as this was the last question it was often tackled reasonably well though some showed signs of running out of time. Many candidates answered this question purely on what was in the sources but failed to get to even level 3 because they failed to offer any valid judgement on whether they thought there was a real chance of revolution. Too many responses were of the nature of “yes, there was a chance of revolution because it says so in Source C. However, source D says there wasn’t a chance, so maybe there wasn’t”. Candidates were generally weak in explaining why they thought there was/wasn’t a realistic chance of revolution. Better responses made effective use of their own knowledge as well as the sources but many tended to trawl through the sources one after the other. Far fewer candidates were able to merge content and nature in their source analysis in the extended question.

Too many responses on this question were very brief and were as a result, only able to access the lower ranges of the mark scheme; primarily, due to pressures of time. Time management in exam situations is a key factor in achieving the levels a candidate’s knowledge and understanding deserves. The best answers here demonstrated a sense of historical understanding, quality of judgement and writing skills that did the students proud.

This response which achieved level 4 was a sustained and well supported argument that made good use of the sources and some own knowledge to refute the view that the strike was revolutionary.

***5 Study Sources A, B and G and use your own knowledge.**

‘The General Strike did threaten revolution in Britain.’

How far do you agree with this view? Explain your answer, using your own knowledge, Sources A, B, and G and any other sources you find helpful.

(16)

It was commonly believed by the media and upper class people that the General Strike was a revolution and an attempt to overthrow the Government. For example the Daily Mail said 'The General strike is not an industrial dispute. It is a revolution-ary movement.' They present this line it is a fact, when it is only an opinion. However The Daily Mail and other magazines and newspapers led people to believe the strikers were trying to start a revolution.

However the TUC did not want a violent protest. It is true that some members were militants who wanted to overthrow the government but this was not the main aim of the strike. The TUC did not let the strike get out of control like they would have if it were a revolution and they certainly did not use unnecessary violence. In fact they

barely used violence, if at all.

The TUC were not trying to bring the country to a complete stop either. Source A states 'Public health workers were deliberately not called out on strike' if they were trying to cause a revolution then surely they would have wanted to bring the country to a complete standstill.

However over 9 days 3 million people went on strike. This is a huge number and from the point of view of the government it would have looked like a major protest, probably against them. Cartoons such as source B would not have helped the government's state of mind. They would have been terrified that something like the Russian Revolution would have happened to them.

The TUC gave the government no indication they wanted a revolution. In their eyes the only reason they were striking was because of the terrible working conditions and poor pay of the miners.

'A social and economic history of modern Britain' was published in 1984, years after the strike had ended. By this point people were able to objectively view the strike and unbiasedly come to the conclusion that 'The leaders were most certainly not revolutionaries.'

Overall I totally disagree with the statement. In my opinion the only reason people went on strike was the reason they said, the terrible pay and working conditions of the miners. I feel the media and the Government read too much into the actions of the strikers and the conclusion of a revolution they came to is ridiculous. Using my own knowledge and the sources I can recall find no evidence to support a revolution at all. I feel that cartoons, like in source B sent the non-striking public into a frenzy over nothing. However the TUC's attitude that the Government's response to them was trying to weaken the working class is over-exaggerating a little. I think that the Government were so paranoid after

what happened in Russia they would have thought any protest was a revolution. I feel the government totally over-reacted, and to an extent so did some members of the TUC, by this I mean the militant members. But it is likely that they only joined once the media had created the frenzy over the 'revolution' they were probably misinformed on what the TUC stood for when they joined.

Therefore I think the statement is false and that the strike was solely to gain better working conditions and pay for the miners.

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Examiner Comments

A good response that was stronger on use and support from the sources but also made use of own knowledge putting the strike in the context of the impact of the Russian revolution.

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Examiner Tip

Allocate adequate time to answer this question effectively. Make use of relevant sources (not all of them) and combine with knowledge of the topic or its context.

Grade Boundaries

Grade	Max. Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
Raw mark boundary	50	39	35	31	28	24	20	16	12	0
Uniform mark scale boundary	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20	0-19

A* is only used in conversion from raw to uniform marks. It is not a published unit grade.

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