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Examiners' Report January 2011

GCSE History 5HB03 3D

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Introduction

This was the second opportunity for candidates to sit this Schools History Project Source Enquiry paper on the work of the historian. It was handled in the main much more effectively compared to the June 2010 series. Few candidates were unable to produce answers that were not worthy of at least some credit and some were able to achieve the highest levels in questions 1-4. Fewer candidates were able to achieve Level 4 in response to question 5, but more than in the previous series.

There were fewer problems with time management compared to the previous series, but it is still an issue for some candidates where responses to questions 4 and 5 show signs of undue haste, or in the case of question 5 sometimes not answered at all. Candidates should spend more time answering question 5 which is worth 16 marks, than question 1 which is only worth 6. However, it was pleasing to note the progress made by this cohort of candidates, who seem to have benefited from the experience of and lessons learnt from the first series.

Question 1

For the great majority of candidates this question did not produce any real problems. Many candidates were able to produce an inference, although there was a tendency to repeat the information from the source along the lines of: servants working their way up, preferring to work in the house, and pay rates. Those who made inferences recognised a promotional structure, that a head housemaid could be well paid, although you had to work hard to get to that level, and that cooks (and servants in general) could be valued, as a threat to leave could result in a pay rise. To achieve the highest level marks it is necessary to support inferences with detail from the source itself.

Answer ALL questions.

Look carefully at the background information and Sources A to F 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 life as a domestic servant in a big house?

(6)

From Source A it is clear that working as a domestic servant in a large house is was controlled by a strict hierarchy. Scullery maids at the bottom, working up through promotions that each time increased the wages. At the lowest levels the pay was derogatory and the work menial. However it seems that perseverance paid off. "girls who 'went in to the kitchen' began as scullery maids... they became under kitchen maids and worked their way up". The highest level servants, such as a lead housemaid or cook were much better paid. "A good cook could get as much as £50 [per year] and even get another 5 by threatening to leave." From this we can infer that they were valued at this level, and difficult to replace.



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Examiner Comments

This candidate was able to make several inferences and use details from the source in support.



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Examiner Tip

Two inferences are better than one, and a supported inference is better than one that is not.

Question 2

Candidates generally achieved marks at either Level 2 or Level 3 on this question. Most candidates could see that the pictures were linked with recognition of a 'before and after' effect, often making use of the source's caption. A large number of candidates were able to identify that the illustration was aimed at potential employers who might rescue a poor female. Some candidates thought that the article was an advertisement encouraging young, poor females to get a job. A number of candidates misinterpreted the message as 'domestic exploitation' or slavery.

Candidates who gained Level 2 often stuck with only explaining the 'before and after' transformation. A number of candidates were confused by the expression on the 'hard-working little housemaid's' face, as she isn't smiling, and this was interpreted in a variety of ways: that the artist was attacking both poverty and the exploitation of housemaids; that the second girl was at least well fed and dressed and earning money, but wasn't exactly happy; that it was just about better to be a housemaid than on the streets; and a few candidates said that it was better the other way around.

Stronger candidates gained Level 3 by explaining the message well. In doing so they made effective use of the visual impressions of the two illustrations, the provenance of the source and the additional information in the caption.

2 Study Source B.

What message are these illustrations trying to give about the effects of domestic service? Explain your answer, using Source B.

(8)

The message given in both illustrations are that if you became a maid you can look like this. The article is promoting domestic service. The word 'rescued' suggests that the message is that domestic service can save you from a life of poverty. That if you choose this job you will lead a better life. Also in the first picture the girl is sad, and dirty and wearing black clothing which gives off a message of negativity. Whereas the right picture the girl is transformed, she looks new and is wearing

a white apron which gives of a message of purity. If you take upon a life of domestic service the effects will be unbelievable. The effects of domestic service will be wonderful, clean, healthy and will lead you to a brighter hopeful future. This would be very appealing to women wanting to see these effects but not knowing how to get them. ~~they make~~ The illustrations make being a domestic servant seem like a dream job.

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Examiner Comments

The candidate shows clear understanding of the message of the source and the transforming power of domestic service. Good use is made of the caption and details from the illustrations in support. Overall, a solid Level 3.

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Examiner Tip

Nature, origin and purpose (NOP), if used effectively, can be important in answering these questions on portrayal well.

Question 3

Many candidates were able to achieve a higher Level 2 mark by identifying support and challenge, based on either matching details from the sources or focusing on reliability issues using the sources well in support. Some candidates cross-referenced confidently, using the nature and contents of the sources to discuss and highlight points of support and challenge. The strongest candidates were able to sustain cross-referencing, commenting on the extent of support within and between sources. The best answers were also able to give a balanced overall judgement reflecting the analysis given.

This question produced an interesting range of answers and a pleasingly large number of candidates did debate the issue, recognising that the answer was not necessarily conclusive and was a matter of judgement. Some candidates were able to see similarities between Sources A and C in that both mentioned hard work, although Source A also talked of rewards, while Source C actually expressed no opinion, unless you read between the lines and saw the description of the work as a complaint. Some candidates even recognised that Source C was a brief extract from a diary and we cannot tell from this what is said elsewhere. Candidates did link promotion in Source A with the 'before and after' aspects of Source B, and saw Source C as saying something different. Some candidates brought in Source D to support the fact that the job of a domestic servant was not a good one for women.

3 Study Sources A, B and C.

Does the evidence of Sources A, B and C support the view that being a domestic servant was a good job for a woman? Explain your answer, using Sources A, B and C.

(10)

Sources A and B suggest domestic service was a good job for a woman, as source A shows that promotion was likely after only a year or so of work and that the pay was good, particularly for the most senior positions - a good job because it could lead to high pay relatively quickly. Source B shows that it was a simple and effective way of escaping poverty - a good job because any woman could do it. However, Source A was written in 1945 as part of a novel - we cannot tell how truthful it is, so source A isn't such good evidence. Also, source B was written in an article about helping poor women, so the benefits of domestic service may well be exaggerated in order to persuade more people to help poor women.

Source C suggests domestic service wasn't a good job for women. It shows that there are few prospects, as the woman has been working for 30 years and still ~~works~~ works very hard every day. She gives a long list of everything she needs to ~~do~~ do a day, which shows that it is a very demanding job. Source C is likely to be accurate as it comes from a diary of a housemaid in January 1871.

Overall, I would say that the evidence suggests domestic service wasn't a good job for women. While sources A and B both suggest it was good, source A was written many years later and for the purpose of entertainment before informing and source B was probably exaggerated so that more poor women would come off the streets and into work. Source C, however, comes from the diary of a housemaid from the time which means all the information in there comes from first-hand experience, which means that we can trust it more when it suggests service was a bad job for women.

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Examiner Comments

This response makes good use of source content and gives some useful comment on nature to make a valid judgement. As a result it is a good Level 3 response.

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Examiner Tip

Avoid trawling through the sources in isolation without reference to the question.

Question 4

As with question 2, candidates tended to be divided between Levels 2 and 3. Many candidates talked only about the content of the sources, although often doing that well, recognising the range and variety of jobs mentioned in Source D, while Source E only showed one job. Often those candidates who did talk about provenance recognised that Source E was a photograph, not likely to be faked, but that it could be staged, and that we are not given anything about its purpose or origin. A lot of candidates pointed to the different dates of the sources and some were able to make the point that there may have been improvements in women's conditions between 1874 and 1910. Some candidates even noted this in the context of the comment in the letter from Mrs Peel in the background information; that servants could be hard to find in 1902.

On Source D, those candidates who considered provenance often noted that the source was a magazine wishing to please its readers, but some noted that the author was a woman and therefore more likely to understand women's needs and aspirations. Some candidates even went as far as to suggest that as the author was employed in a new occupation herself, this would give her a particular and informed perspective; she may even have been a champion of women's rights. Throughout answers to questions 2, 3 and 4, there were occasional references made by some candidates to the absence of male employees and that women did jobs that men would not do.

Whilst many candidates evaluated the strengths of Source D as greater than Source E, some failed to explain how this might affect their value.

4 Study Sources D and E.

Which of Sources D or E is more valuable to the historian who is enquiring about new job opportunities for women? Explain your answer, using Sources D and E.

(10)

Both sources D and E suggest show an amount of reliability to them. For instance, source E evidently shows woman taking part in a new line of work which would have not have been offered to them in previous times as their only option would have been to work as a domestic servant. The fact that the picture was taken in 1910 also suggests that it was quite a recent thing, women hadn't had this opportunity for very long and that the rate of new women employees for this line of work in this time period was quite high as it shows to have quite a number of women working there. Source D

also shows a lot of ~~what~~ evidence of new job opportunities for women as ~~firstly~~ the ~~source~~ account was written by one of the first female journalists in 1876, showing that already a change was beginning to happen so ~~from~~ so early on. Also, the source also lists a number of jobs in which women were allowed to work as ~~new~~, obviously showing that new opportunities are coming forward because jobs such as, shop assistants, dress makes, telegraph operators, upholsters and paper makes were just not available to women before.

Though source E does clearly show evidence that women were offered and taking up on the chances of new jobs, it doesn't in any way suggest that the change was very big, that women were allowed, in the job industry, to do so much more than before. Also, source D shows a degree of unreliability as though it does list all of these new jobs that women are supposedly now allowed, it doesn't actually give any data or ~~source~~ accounts as to whether these women actually received these jobs.

In conclusion, I think source D is more valuable to a historian enquiring about new job opportunities for women. This is partly because the source came from a woman journalist, something quite rare as it wouldn't have dominantly been a job offered to women. Secondly because it offers variation, it tells you more than one different and new job offered to women, showing that the change was obvious and some what a big deal. Finally because it also tells you what the women liked about the new jobs, although it doesn't say if any one got any, it tells you that the women were interested, this is because they were finally offered the freedoms they never had before.

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Examiner Comments

A very good response that comments effectively on value, making good use of both content and nature, origin and purpose. As a result, this response achieved Level 3.

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Examiner Tip

Avoid simplistic learnt responses such as 'it is a primary source therefore it is reliable' or 'it is a photograph and the camera does not lie'.

Question 5

While many candidates responded well to the first four questions, question 5 responses were more problematic.

Many good candidates bottomed out at the top of Level 3. Only a very few reached Level 4, and then only to the mid-points. A large number of candidates took the question as requiring them to look at each of the sources in the paper and see in what way they supported Source F. Some would then tack on the end a short paragraph listing some general sources that might help. These candidates and others often came up with an unexplored list which included diaries, newspapers, museums and a rather general mention of interviews and the internet. Some candidates thought that ex-servants could still be found alive. Here, as elsewhere on the paper, there was a tendency to see bias as a short-coming, which ended all debate.

There were however some quite sophisticated responses. Candidates often recognised the value and limitations of diaries: that there would not be many, that servants might be afraid to reveal their true feelings as they were living with an employer or that they did not have the time or the resources to keep them. There were also mentions of family letters and the recollections of people still alive who may have had parents or grandparents who were servants and who had talked about their experiences. Probably the most often mentioned source that was handled with a degree of sophistication was the census. Candidates could often see that one could trace occupations over time using it. Candidates also referred to house records in general terms and pay slips which could be compared to factory workers' pay and conditions via business records. Some candidates mentioned existing stately homes which would give a sense of servants' living conditions.

Higher level answers were well written and reflected the two strands of the question. These answers showed good use of the sources given in discussion of problems and research and how it could be used. They were also often able to suggest a range of problems from their own knowledge. These answers showed a wider knowledge of avenues of research with detailed explanations of how they could be used to solve the problems.

***5 Study Source F and use your own knowledge of the work of the historian.**

This source suggests that women chose to avoid working as a domestic servant because they wanted a better life.

Explain the difficulties in finding evidence to support this and suggest other research the historian could do to check this claim about why many women no longer wanted to work as domestic servants in the years c1870–c1914.

(16)

It is difficult to be able to find evidence that supports this statement as only the people at the time will truly know if they chose to avoid working as a domestic servant or not.

It is also difficult to find information, as there might not be much written down. Maids may have not been able to write as maid jobs generally don't

require my skill so there might not be a high level of letters or diaries.

It would also be difficult to find out if they ~~servants~~ avoided to be a servant to get a better life. With hard work you could find out if people ^{maybe} avoided becoming a domestic servant, but you might not know why they avoided it, as they could of done for many reasons. As changes in society take place women have the freedom to do more, so might of avoided it for that not because of wanting a better life.

The historian could research to try and find letters ~~of~~ ^{of} many of personal experience ~~of~~ ^{of} them. They could do this because people might of told about dreams and ambitions of jobs and why they wanted to do that job.

The historian could also look at government and employment records. He could look at the records to see the difference in people ~~to~~ being a domestic servant before 1870, and then being a servant in the period of 1870-1914. This will show if people changed or chose different jobs but won't tell us why.

Another thing the historian could research is media, for example newspapers, news headlines etc. They could do this as it they might have personal ~~det~~ ^{own} experiences and show different views of what happened. They should be careful and only use newspapers ~~with~~ ^{with} accurate information as it could be bias.

The historian could also research with other historians' books, but should take into account the author's views as the book would be written from his point of view.

The historian could also look for information at places where these domestic servants worked as people living there now might ~~not~~ or have information to give.

Overall, there are many limitations to ^{finding evidence to} ~~the~~ support the judgement as ~~we~~ we report the people living at the time, there might be a lack of written materials and we don't know why people choose to do what they do.

To collect research the historian needs to look at what significant changes happened in society at the time e.g. women's freedom and rights acts. Also needs to

collect research from diaries, letters, government records, census, employment records, media e.g. newspapers, radio, ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~books~~ ^{and} visit places they would have worked.

All of the time taking into account who wrote the piece and for what purpose. Collecting a lot of information could give an overall view to see if the judgement is true or not.



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Examiner Comments

Among those who responded well was this good answer that combined both aspects of the question and identified problems and the research that would help resolve them.



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Examiner Tip

It is important to manage your time in the examination effectively to leave enough time to do this last and high mark question justice.

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