Examiners' Report

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Pearson Edexcel iGCSE
in History (4HI0) Paper 02

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IGCSE PAPER 2 2017

It was pleasing to see a good standard of responses from candidates in the third session of this examination. The paper requires candidates to answer questions from two different sections in one hour and 30 minutes. Many candidates managed to write at considerable length in this time.

However, it was noticeable that a small number of candidates failed to complete (in some cases even start) question c in Section B. This was due to mismanagement of timing 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.

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 given as an introduction to each section.

SECTION A

(a) Most candidates were able to make inferences from the source with a significant number additionally able to support these with evidence from the source. However, a minority simply summarised what they could see. Beginning with 'the source suggests' often helps to encourage inferences rather than simple comprehension. Others made inferences without giving support from the source.

(b) Candidates displayed impressive cross-referencing skills with many accessing Level 3 by showing similarity and difference. A weighted majority of candidates was able to quote material from the sources in support of their judgements. However, some focused only on agreement or disagreement and were consigned to Level 2. Remember they had to make supported statements on both to reach Level 3. Others explained similarities and differences but failed to make an explicit judgement about the extent of support between the sources. Judgement phrases such as 'strong support', 'very little support, 'only slight support', would help.

(c) Candidates also demonstrated the ability to construct reasoned answers making use of both source materials and own knowledge. At their best, candidates demonstrated the ability to weave both own knowledge and the sources into their answers to produce a balanced response which earned full marks. A minority of candidates remained over dependent on the sources producing source led answers that did not fully meet the demands of the question. Some candidates failed to make use of at least three sources in their answer. Own knowledge for this question does not have to about the reason identified in the question but could be about other factors.

1. (a) Candidates were generally able to make several inferences, although some simply described what they could see.
(b) Some strong cross referencing with candidates able to identify similarities and differences between the sources and support these with evidence from B and C.

(c) Some strong answers although a number were over-reliant on the sources and often failed to bring in own knowledge about other reasons for the execution of Louis XVI.

2. (a) A range of inferences not all supported from the source. A minority simply described what they could see in the photograph.
(b) Very well answered by a majority of candidates who were able to identify and make judgements on the similarities and differences between the two sources.
(c) Generally very well answered with many candidates able to integrate the sources and their own knowledge into a balanced answer. Few were wholly dependent on the sources.

3. (a) Most candidates were able to make at least one supported inference from the painting. Another popular and generally very well answered question.
(b) Many candidates were able to identify similarities and differences between the two sources but did not always make an explicit judgement about the extent of support.
(c) Some excellent essays in which the candidates gave a balanced answer using the sources and their own knowledge with excellent use of other reasons for the February Revolution.

4. (a) The photograph stimulated a range of very good supported inferences.
(b) Very well answered by the majority of candidates who were able to identify and make judgements on the similarities and differences between the two sources.
(c) Most candidates were able to make effective use of the sources to give a balanced argument. Some, however, failed to make effective use of Sources B and C to support their views. Others well too dependent on the sources. Some impressive on knowledge on the reasons for the economic boom.
5 (a) Very well answered. The cartoon encouraged a range of appropriate supported inferences.
(b) A number of candidates identified similarities and differences between Sources B and C. However, only a few made explicit judgements about the extent of support between the sources.
(c) Some strong answers which made use of most, if not all the sources, and used their own knowledge to challenge the view although a significant number were over dependent on the sources.

6. (a) The photograph elicited a number of very good supported inferences.
 (b) Generally sound answers identifying differences between Sources B and C although some candidates missed obvious differences and failed to make judgements about the extent of support between them.
(c) Most candidates were able to make effective use of the sources to give a balanced argument. Moreover, a number of candidates did make effective use of own knowledge about the reasons for the pulling down of the Berlin Wall.

SECTION B

(a) This was, in general, very well answered with many candidates achieving full marks. However, candidates should bear in mind that this is a comprehension question. They are not being asked to make inferences but to select three points from the source. In addition, they do not have to include contextual knowledge.

(b) The "key features" question was answered impressively with candidates making good use of both selected and contextual knowledge to produce developed points. The better responses were often structured and focused on cause, effect, consequence. However, a number of candidates simply describe the event and do not focus and make links between key features.

(c) Answers on change over time were of more variable quality. A significant number of students answered this question confidently, made use of the stimulus and/or their own factor, were able to bring in an additional factor and linked points explicitly before reaching judgement on the nature and extent of change. In this regard, there were many impressive answers on the History of Medicine, the Middle East, China and the changing nature of warfare in the twentieth century. To reach higher levels candidates needed to be aware of the 'change' element in the question but this was lost as some ploughed through the stimulus and wrote down everything that they knew.

1 Very few answers.
(a) There were very few answers to this question. Candidates generally identified at least three points from the source.
(b) Often generalised key features for both options.
(c) Candidates generally focused directly on change and made effective use of the stimulus points.

2. A popular option.
(a) Those that did answer this question, generally identified at least three points in the source.
(b) Some sound key features for both options, with Florence Nightingale by far the most popular.
(c) Generally well answered with candidates making effective use of the two scaffolding points as well as explaining at least one additional factor. Very strong on both Snow and Chadwick.

3. Another popular option.
(a) Candidates generally found at least three points of comprehension from the source although some made inferences rather than using their comprehension skills.
(b) Generally sound answers with the majority focusing on the UNESCO.
(c) Some very good answers which made effective use of the scaffolding points but were able to go beyond these and explain change and/or continuity in other aspects of the organisation of the League and the UN.

4. (a) Generally candidates achieved full marks on this question by identifying at least three points of comprehension from the source.
(b) Most candidates wrote at length about either of the options with a significant number able to give links between the features.
(c) Generally very well answered with candidates making explicit judgements on the extent of change and continuity in the Middle East in relations between Israel and its neighbours and were able to go confidently beyond the scaffolding and explain and analyse other factors.

5. (a) A minority of candidates made inferences. The majority, however, were able to extract at least three points of comprehension from the source.
(b) Both options were popular with very well explained and linked key features on both.
(c) Very well answered. Many candidates successfully explained key changes (and continuity) in support for Mao the CCP during this period.

6. Few candidates answered this question.
 (a) Those that did were generally able to extract at least three points of information from the source.
 (b) Candidates answered questions on both options. Key features were identified but links were not made between them.
(c) The handful of answers gave a narrative focused on the scaffolding rather than focusing on change.

7. A popular question.
(a) Generally strong answers with the majority of candidates able to achieve full marks. Some candidates made inferences and were still rewarded but this is a source comprehension rather than inference question.
 (b) Generally sound answers on both options although generally stronger on guerrilla warfare with several explained and linked features.
(c) Some excellent answers which focused well on change and continuity in methods of aerial warfare with most candidates confident in going beyond the scaffolding.