

# CONTENTS

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FOREWORD .....	1
HISTORY (CARIBBEAN).....	2
GCE Ordinary Level .....	2
Paper 2159/01 West Indian History .....	2

## FOREWORD

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This booklet contains reports written by Examiners on the work of candidates in certain papers. **Its contents are primarily for the information of the subject teachers concerned.**

# HISTORY (CARIBBEAN)

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## GCE Ordinary Level

<p>Paper 2159/01 West Indian History</p>
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### General comments

Although a minority of candidates produced scripts of good quality containing informed and well focused responses, the general standard was disappointing. The basic problem was that too many candidates were unable to reveal sufficient command of the factual material required to score well. It was not uncommon for candidates to answer a question of their own invention as an irrelevant response to the actual question set. This would often correspond with a question set last year.

### Comments on specific questions

#### **Question 1**

A very popular question which produced many answers of a creditable standard. Candidates showed good knowledge of the more brutal aspects of Spanish conduct towards the native peoples. However, a major weakness of many answers was their failure to earn the credit available by contrasting the way of life of the Arawaks and Caribs prior to 1492 with what followed. Many omitted this aspect entirely, while a few described pre-1492 life in great detail without explaining how this changed under Spanish rule, thus answering the question they preferred rather than the actual question. One example of the general weakness could be seen in the fact the almost all mentioned the Spanish conversion of these peoples to the Christian religion, but failed to contrast this with their traditional religious beliefs.

#### **Question 2**

Answered by approximately one third of candidates, this also produced many answers of a creditable standard. Details of Spanish organisation and protection of trade were often well known, but the advantages and disadvantages for settlers were less well answered. Some candidates lost question focus by offering details of the political administration of the empire rather than the organisation of trade.

#### **Question 3**

As with **Question 1**, this was answered by a majority of candidates. It produced many creditable and some excellent responses. The decline of tobacco and the role of the Dutch in the change to sugar were particularly well known. The various economic, social, and political results were less strongly in evidence, but some candidates were able to produce well-rounded answers.

#### **Question 4**

This did not prove such a popular question. The fact that it scored reasonably well was almost entirely due to candidates' knowledge of the Code Noir. The first part of the question was seldom well answered and often almost omitted.

#### **Question 5**

Answered by approximately three out of four candidates this question was comfortably the highest scoring of the Paper. Weaker efforts lost focus and strayed into descriptions of slave life or plantation land use, but many showed good knowledge of sugar cultivation and processing. The processing aspect of the question was particularly well done and maximum credit for this section was not unknown.

**Question 6**

Answered by a minority of candidates. All found it difficult to expand answers to any great length. Some weaker candidates vainly sought refuge in Governor Eyre and the Morant Bay Revolt by interpreting 1865 as being the eighteenth century.

**Question 7**

Few answered this question. Strong responses were rare. Most of the small minority who did attempt this question failed to find the correct focus. Irrelevant narrative concerning the war in the American colonies was quite common.

**Question 8**

Approximately one in four candidates attempted this question, but it was usually one of their lowest scoring answers. The first part of the question often earned very limited credit while the second part was beyond all but a small minority.

**Question 9**

A quite popular question, with some strong responses, but generally not well answered. Many wrote at some length on amelioration laws, which could be made relevant, and also on the Emancipation Act details which were not required. Full information on the anti-slavery movement and its methods was not forthcoming from most candidates. It provided a good example of candidates writing what they knew and had hoped to be the question focus rather than what was actually asked of them.

**Question 10**

Approximately a fifth of candidates answered. Many scored well, some very well. Only **Question 5** of the more popular questions scored higher. Many showed good knowledge of the work of Special Magistrates and their problems. Even stronger candidates occasionally used the letter form carelessly by omitting addresses or dates, using the date of the exam rather than an accurate historical date, or signing their own name rather than that of a supposed Special Magistrate.

**Question 11**

Approximately one in five candidates attempted this question. Most were able to gain reasonable credit, while the stronger candidates scored well. Both parts of the question were answered, but fuller credit would have been gained by many if more detail had been offered concerning the nature of indenture in the first part and if the second half had outlined a greater variety of effects.

**Question 12**

Answers to this question were rare and usually very weak. There was little sign that candidates had prepared themselves for such a question. Cuba and Panama received some mention but were seldom developed very far.

**Question 13**

Not the most popular question, but those who did answer provided some well prepared and focused responses. Bustamente, Garvey, and Michael Manley were among those earning good credit.

**Question 14**

More popular than **Question 13**, but far more weakly answered. Although the occasional well argued response appeared, the general standard was poor. It seems possible that the question was seen as a refuge by weaker candidates who could not find a fifth question for which they had prepared themselves. Many responses were very generalised with no clear development and often revealing a lack of understanding of what constituted social services.

**Question 15**

Very few answers seen. One or two good efforts which gained credit from knowledge of Castro, but the overall standard of response was weak.

**Question 16**

Probably answered by at least one in four candidates, but not answered well. It seems to have been the main refuge for the less well prepared candidates who lacked the knowledge to answer elsewhere. Although some focused and informed responses appeared, most were very generalised and uninformative. Sound, well prepared work on events leading to independence was extremely rare. Many candidates wrote more concerning eighteenth or nineteenth century events than those leading to independence in the second half of the twentieth century. The second part of the question often produced general assertions with little or no reference to events which would illustrate or justify them. Many candidates did not appreciate that such a question required the same disciplined historical approach as those posed on topics from earlier centuries.