

GCSE (9–1)

Examiners' report

**HISTORY A
(EXPLAINING THE
MODERN WORLD)**

J410

For first teaching in 2016

J410/06 Summer 2022 series

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Introduction

Our examiners' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on candidates' performance in the examinations. They provide useful guidance for future candidates.

The reports will include a general commentary on candidates' performance, identify technical aspects examined in the questions and highlight good performance and where performance could be improved. A selection of candidate answers is also provided. The reports will also explain aspects which caused difficulty and why the difficulties arose, whether through a lack of knowledge, poor examination technique, or any other identifiable and explainable reason.

Where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report.

A full copy of the question paper and the mark scheme can be downloaded from OCR.

Advance Information for Summer 2022 assessments

To support student revision, advance information was published about the focus of exams for Summer 2022 assessments. Advance information was available for most GCSE, AS and A Level subjects, Core Maths, FSMQ, and Cambridge Nationals Information Technologies. You can find more information on our [website](#).

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Paper 6 series overview

In order to perform well on the non-British Depth Study, candidates need to display an understanding of the relationship between the people and the state and how key political, social and economic developments affected the people. Candidates' learning is examined through questions asking for knowledge and understanding and ability to explain and analyse, as well as use and evaluate historical sources. These skills focus on Assessment Objectives 1, 2 and 3.

Candidates' scripts spanned a wide range of ability, and it was clear that most candidates had been well prepared for the examination and demonstrated an understanding of the 'broad sweep' of this specification. Marks were given across the entire mark range for all six questions, although generally candidates performed less well on the questions requiring use of sources.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally did the following:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally did the following:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • used examples, issues and events relevant to the time periods examined by the questions • managed their time effectively, balancing their responses proportionally to the mark allocations for each of the questions (especially important for Question 5) • established clear explanatory links back to the issues in the questions (Questions 2, 3 and 5) • made effective use of the historical sources and addressed the questions given (Question 4) • had a clear grasp of the key concepts required from study of the specification. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • displayed less secure historical knowledge, for example about the reasons for Japanese internment, and offered generalised responses • described and identified issues without explaining them fully or by linking back to the issue in the question • left insufficient time to offer a fully developed response to Question 5 • offered responses to Question 5 that were unbalanced, whether by looking at only one side of the argument or offering more generalised responses that lacked specifics on one side of the argument • used the historical sources as stimulus material rather than addressing their value and responding to the question given (Question 4).

Question 1

- 1 Describe **one** example of discrimination against African Americans in the US military. [2]

Most candidates were able to give either one developed example or list two examples of discrimination against African Americans in the US military. Most identified segregation or lack of opportunity for promotion or being given the most dangerous jobs. Many were also able to identify specific issues, for example problems in the US Marines, or the Port Chicago incident. For a full range of the most common responses the mark scheme was updated in the light of student responses.

Question 2

- 2 Explain why thousands of Japanese-Americans were interned in camps in the USA during the Second World War. [10]

Most candidates responded well to this question. They were able to explain at least one reason why Japanese-Americans were interned during the war: many were able to explain that fear of spies or of another attack were the main reasons. Most articulated that Pearl Harbour was a major issue, or that the US and Japan were enemies in the Second World War. For an identified reason without detail, candidates achieved Level 2; if they went on to add support and description they achieved Level 3. Many could take this further, making the link between the reason and how this led to fear/hatred/concerns which resulted in internment, and thus explain one reason at Level 4. However fewer were able to explain a second reason: normally racism, contrasting the experience of German or Italian Americans with that of Japanese-Americans. Some successfully explained the important role of propaganda, but often this was a weaker afterthought that lacked solid explanatory detail.

Misconception



A surprising number of candidates talked about Japan as a Communist country and that this was a reason for internment. It would be worthwhile reminding students that this was not the case.

Question 3

- 3 Explain how American women's lives changed in the 1920s. [10]

On the whole, this question was not answered as well as Question 2. Many candidates were able to refer to flappers, and could describe what they were, and the associated fashions and behaviours. However, there was often no contrast with how this was a change from life before the 1920s. Alternatively, many were able to identify women receiving the right to vote, however, there was no explanation of the impact of this, for example, in securing the Sheppard-Towner legislation and forcing politicians to have more awareness of women's issues. Equally, with more women working than ever before in the 1920s, there needed to be explanation of how this changed their lives, what the money was spent on, how greater availability of labour saving devices facilitated this, etc. That said many candidates were still able to achieve at least Level 3 for their responses, suggesting they had been well prepared for this exam.

Exemplar 1

Another reason why women's lives changed was due to the fact they had more freedom. In ~~the~~ 1900s up until 1920, women were expected to behave properly, they had to be chaperoned when they would want to go anywhere and were expected to be housewives and look after men. However, in the 1920s during the economic boom, women began to stray from these stereotypes and became more independent. One example of this was a flapper. Women were told to dress and act appropriately but flappers were women who smoke, drank, kissed and wore what they wanted in public. The introduction of flappers showed America that women were becoming more independent and that they could do anything a man could. Women were also more unlikely to stay in unhappy marriages. In 1914, 100,000 divorces were filed whereas in 1929, the files had doubled. This meant women's lives changed because they became ~~more~~ more independent.

The full response gained 10 marks. Exemplar 1 shows just the second paragraph. It achieved full marks within the level for explanation and is a good example of how to explain change. The candidate identifies the change 'more freedom', then describes life before the 1920s, before going on to explain the emergence of flappers and their behaviour. The paragraph concludes with some solid factual support to further exemplify this freedom, that the divorce rate increased but this is in a sense 'icing on the cake': the change had already been very well explained. Despite framing their response as explaining 'why change happened' in fact this is a very successful response to the question of how life changed.

Advice for centres preparing for impact/change questions

Impact and change questions can often be more difficult for candidates to secure high marks on than causation questions. Centres should give their students enough preparation for these. For change questions, candidates need to establish change from what, to what. For impact, it is essential to concentrate not on the cause of impact but on how it affected people's lives, and why in that way.

Question 4 (a)

- 4 (a) Study **Source A**. How reliable is this source about the US government's attempts to enforce Prohibition? [5]

This question focuses on AO3 analysis, evaluation and use of historical sources. Candidates are expected to interpret an historical source, in this case, a magazine article written by a government lawyer, and evaluate it for reliability.

Many candidates were able to achieve Level 2, typically with some reference to the context of the 1920s and how criminal activity caused by Prohibition made this source unreliable. Most had good knowledge of Prohibition and the gang warfare and criminality it bred. Some were able to go further and reflect on the author of the source and how his/her personal position speaking for the government would make the view unreliable. To achieve in Level 2 or Level 3 this needed to go beyond simply labelling the writer as biased, but identify why it would be in his/her interest to be positive.

Exemplar 2

4	a	<p>On the one hand, source A is reliable as it prohibition did not take very long to take place and but it is not reliable in the fact that it says 'there is an increase in law breaking', but it has no connection with prohibition as we kn there was an increase in gangsters due to the Volstead act. For example, a people began to make and sell moonshine and there were bootleggers who stole transported alcohol over the borders. Furthermore, gangsters such as Al Capone opened their speakeasies which generated big large profits and overall more ordinary people got involved in organised crime. As a result, the USA was filled with organised crime due to prohibition. So source A is not reliable. It is also not reliable as its purpose was to make the government seem better by supporting prohibition as it was made by a lawyer of for the government. This means that</p>
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This response to Question 4(a) demonstrates effective use of contextual knowledge to evaluate the claim made by the source, that the rise in criminality was not linked to Prohibition. It then goes on to consider the authorship of the source and why the lawyer would have a vested interest in a positive portrayal of the law. This was a Level 3 response.

Question 4 (b)

(b) Study **Source B**. Explain why this source was published in the USA at this time. **[5]**

Like 4(a), this question focuses on AO3 analysis, evaluation and use of historical sources. Candidates are expected to interpret an historical source, in this case, a political cartoon and explain its purpose, in other words, why it was published then.

This source was a good piece of evidence for candidates to get to grips with, but many were able to simply assert a message, supported by detail, rather than hammer home the purpose. As a result, very few reached the top level. This was surprising as the source was obviously highly critical of Prohibition and candidates are usually ready for 'Explain why' questions looking for purpose when linked to sources. That said, most did achieve within Level 2 which showed some ability to handle historical sources.

Exemplar 3

4	b	<p>This source was published in the USA at the time because it describes the gangsters that ruled the cities. Gangsters would make huge amounts of money from bootlegging which was the illegal sale and manufacture of alcohol. The most renowned gangster was Al Capone, who made \$50 million a year from his speakeasies. The cartoon shows how the gangs are above the law and untouchable by justice. Corrupt politicians or police officers would received receive bribes from the gangs in order to turn a blind eye. This would have been published to raise awareness and call down on the injustice experienced in cities across the USA.</p>
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This response to Question 4(b) shows very good contextual awareness and seamlessly links this into an evaluation of the cartoon. The purpose is drawn out at the end of the response: the intended impact of forcing the government to crack down on levels of injustice caused by organised crime and Prohibition. This was a Level 3 response.

Advice for centres preparing for source questions

Both of these source questions seem to have been answered less well than in the past. Whether this is the impact of the pandemic and time away from school/dislocated learning, is unclear, but it was surprising that candidates did not respond well to the prompt 'Why was this question produced then'. It is important that students continue to have exposure to a range of historical sources in their study of these periods and maintain their critical evaluation skills through practice.

Question 5*

5* 'The New Deal had achieved its aims by 1939.'
How far do you agree?

[18]

Question 5 requires candidates to use their historical knowledge and understanding to consider a statement and offer explained examples of how it could be both supported and challenged. Three explained examples covering both sides of the argument opens up the highest mark band.

This question was answered fairly well, despite it being the final question on the paper. Candidates clearly had knowledge of the alphabet agencies and had been well prepared to answer questions on the New Deals. The approach they took to answering the question was also notable, as many set out clearly the context of the depression and the need for remedial action, many even identifying aims. From there, most were able to achieve at Level 2 or 3 by identifying how Roosevelt addressed these aims, through several of the alphabet agencies. The best responses linked back to the aim or issue being addressed and made a judgement about success so achieved explanation for each response.

That said, some candidates fell into the trap of writing paragraphs that seemed more like lists than explanations; they clearly had good knowledge about what FDR did, but either did not add enough detail about any one or link the list of achievements to success. More candidates struggled with the other side of the argument, although some also did well here by pointing out the limitations of the AAA, or the actions of the Supreme Court impeding FDR. Opposition like Huey Long and Father Coughlin or even Republicans was often cited on this side of the argument, however, this was only creditable if linked to failure to achieve an aim, or impeding his progress. Some candidates did expand the other side of the argument by explaining the limitations of reform, evident by the 1937 recession, which showed FDR was not tackling the heart of the malaise in the US economy. This was certainly creditable, as were responses that could give a figure for unemployment in 1939 and offer some explanation of what was wrong with FDR's approach, for example, offering short-term opportunities only.

Generally centres can be very pleased with how their students performed on this question.

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