
AS

History

7041/1J

Report on the Examination

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Section A

01

This question required students to identify the main interpretations of two extracts from books by historians and assess which of the two provided the more convincing interpretation of the impact of British rule on the economic development of its colonies in the years 1857-1890. In general terms Extract A offered an 'optimistic' interpretation that British rule acted a liberating force, removing restrictions on trade imposed by indigenous authorities, abolishing slavery, opening their markets and giving access to public and private investments. Extract B, on the other hand, offered a 'pessimistic' interpretation, emphasising the exploitation of the Empire and its inhabitants through forced labour, low pay and the distortion of colonial economies to fit the needs of the British economy. The extracts were generally accessible to students and many were able to identify the main interpretations, although some were confused by the 'restrictions on trade and production imposed by indigenous authorities', interpreting this to mean that it was the colonial authorities who imposed these restrictions.

The best answers were provided by students who focussed on the main interpretations and offered a balanced evaluation of their convincingness, with support and challenge backed up with well selected contextual knowledge. A comparison between the convincingness of the extracts is called for by this question and gives students an opportunity to show judgement which needs to be supported by factual examples. Less effective answers were those which deconstructed the extracts line by line, or those in which students showed extensive contextual knowledge but did not relate it to the main focus of the question. The date parameters of the question were ignored by some students, leading them to offer factual examples which were not relevant. e.g. the Opium War 1839-42 or the Boer War 1899-1902.

Section B

02

This question required students to evaluate the importance of British explorers in encouraging the increase in popular support for imperialism in Britain in the years 1857 to 1890. This question was generally well done as students showed good knowledge of a range of explorers and they were able to identify a range of other factors which helped to increase popular support. The date parameters for this question gave plenty of scope for students to select supporting evidence from across the period but a number of students included irrelevant information from the 1890s, including the Daily Mail's support for imperialism, the Queen's diamond jubilee of 1897 and the Boer War.

03

This question required students to assess the importance of the role of the British government in the breakdown of relations with the Boers in the years 1877 to 1902, and to balance this against a range of other factors. This question was generally answered well as students were able to identify a range of factors and provide supporting evidence for their argument. The interpretation of 'British government' could be limited to Lord Salisbury and Joseph Chamberlain or extended to include the British authorities in South Africa – as long as the British authorities in South Africa were included in some way, either approach was acceptable, but Cecil Rhodes and the government of Cape Province needed to be treated as a separate factor. The main theme of the question was the causes of the second Boer War and it was possible for good answers to ignore the years 1899 to 1902; credit was nevertheless given to answers which covered the whole period as long as

material from the war years was made relevant to the breakdown of relations between Britain and the Boers.

Use of statistics

Statistics used in this report may be taken from incomplete processing data. However, this data still gives a true account on how students have performed for each question.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.