

GCSE (9–1)
Candidate Style Answers

HISTORY B

(SCHOOLS HISTORY PROJECT)

J411
For first teaching in 2016

J411 – Migrants to Britain, c.1250 to present

Version 1



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Introduction

This resource has been produced by a senior member of the GCSE History examining team to offer teachers an insight into how the assessment objectives are applied. It illustrates how the sample assessment questions might be answered and provides some commentary on what factors contribute to overall levels.

As these responses have not been through full moderation, they have not been graded and are instead, banded to give an indication of the level of each response.

Please note that this resource is provided for advice and guidance only and does not in any way constitute an indication of grade boundaries or endorsed answers.

Question 3

What was the impact of Commonwealth migrants on Britain in the period after 1947? Support your answer with examples.

High level response

Commonwealth migrants had an impact on Britain's economy, as well as on people's attitudes, which led to government action.

Commonwealth migrants had an important impact on the economy, helping to rebuild Britain after the Second World War. Famously 492 West Indian migrants arrived in Britain from Jamaica on the SS Windrush in June 1948. They came in the hope of finding work, many of them in the transport industry and the newly set up National Health Service. Sam King was one of them. He went on to be the first black Mayor of Southwark, showing that the post-war migrants were able to integrate and eventually play a role in public life. However, for the majority their impact was not political, but economic. Post-war labour shortages meant that many more migrants from former colonies followed the Windrush migrants and helped in the rebuilding of Britain's economy in the post-war era. Commonwealth migrants continued to come to Britain freely until 1962 from the Caribbean, Africa, India and Pakistan, following those countries' independence from the British Empire. Up until this point, when the economy was doing well in the late 1940s and early '60s, there were more jobs than people and so many migrants continued to arrive in Britain to fill them. This highlights the huge importance of migrants to the British economy after 1947.

However, 1962 marked a turning-point. The automatic right to work in Britain ended with the Commonwealth Immigrants Act 1962. Although many white migrants had come from New Zealand, Canada and Australia it was the black migrants that were seen as a 'problem', there was an increase in racism, with signs like 'No Colours' placed in shop windows. Governments responded with controls on migrants like the 1962 Act, and the 1971 Immigration Act which introduced work permits that limited the period of time people could work. Governments also responded by trying to improve race relations through the 1965 Race Relations Act, which made it illegal not to serve someone on the grounds of race, but there were weaknesses in the Act which lots of people exploited, and so the government had to introduce another Act to close the loopholes in 1968. This shows that racism was a real problem because people were using the loopholes. So, another impact of Commonwealth migrants was changing attitudes and beliefs, which led to political changes by British governments.

Therefore, as well as an economic impact overall, the commonwealth migrants also changed people's attitudes, sometimes making them more racist. However, the response to the commonwealth migrants differed. White migrants were often accepted more than black ones. Not everybody was racist, as shown by governments passing legislation to make racism illegal. In the short-term the impact of Commonwealth migrants was on the British economy, which was particularly important in the post-war period. In the long-term these migrants also changed attitudes, at first leading to wider prejudice, but later, following government action, to great integration and acceptance.

Examiner commentary

This answer demonstrates strong knowledge of migration with a secure grasp of both migrant groups and legislation. Key features of the period include an appreciation of the consequences of the ending of Empire and the need to rebuild Britain's economy after the Second World War. As well as the explanations showing a sophisticated understanding of the second-order concept of consequence it similarly does so for change within the period specified by the question, including turning points and pace of change in relation to short and long term changes. The answer also uses similarity and difference. It is not necessary to use more than one second order concept to access the highest band, however, this student has used a variety of concepts to demonstrate their secure understanding of the knowledge.

Medium level response

After 1945 the British Empire gradually came to an end. Lots of countries like India and Pakistan became independent. But migrants could still come to Britain from these Commonwealth countries to Britain. People came on the SS Windrush in 1948. They came to work in transport jobs as well as the NHS and on the buses. Britain needed workers to help rebuild Britain after the war so they welcomed them as the 'sons of Empire' to the 'mother' country. These migrants made an important contribution to Britain's economy.

They brought with them lots of their own cultures and religions, settling in the East end of London and other port cities. Sikhs from India worked in a rubber factory in Southall. These kinds of jobs nobody wanted to do so nobody minded. But attitudes changed as more and more came. Partly in response to these concerns the government limited the number of Commonwealth migrants that could come. This shows that one impact of the Commonwealth migrants was to change people's attitudes, and make them more racist. Shopkeepers put up signs in their windows saying 'No Blacks'. However this was not everybody. As well trying to control migration the Government also passed laws in the 1960s that made it illegal to treat coloured people differently to white people.

Overall Commonwealth migrants had an impact, doing important jobs nobody else wanted, they also changed people's beliefs and attitudes leading to growing fears. This impacted government action as they tried to limit migration but also lead to laws against racism.

Examiner commentary

This student demonstrates sound knowledge of key features of Britain after the Second World War in ways that shows some understanding, particularly in terms of the economy and changing relations with the rest of the world. The answer considers the impact on the economy and increasing racism and the need for race relations legislation.

The explanation is coherent and organised. The answer is supported, however it lacks the depth of support to be described as 'well-supported'; for example, legislation is referred to in general terms rather than by specific examples or dates.

The explanation shows a sound understanding of the second order concept of consequence and change, but could not be described as a 'strong'; for example there is no appreciation of turning-points or the pace of change, or when changes specifically came, except for the rather vague in this context '1960s'.

Question 4

'Changing communications has been the most important factor influencing migration to Britain'. How far do you agree with this statement? Give reasons for your answer.

High level response

Changing communications have had a major influence on migration to Britain, although it may be argued not earlier than the 16th century, as regular communications with the wider world only developed alongside world trade from the early modern period. Overall, the economy and trade has been most influential in bringing migrants to Britain, although changing communications through shipping and later air travel have made migration increasingly possible.

In every period, the growth of the economy has encouraged many foreigners to permanently move to Britain in search of a better life, from medieval Flemish weavers to Eastern Europeans in recent years. However, economic forces are linked to changing communications, and therefore also Britain's connections with the wider world. For example, the East India Company set up in 1600, built ships and developed trading links with the wider world. They employed Lascars on one-way passages to Britain, who were then forced to settle here.

Perhaps the greatest example of changing communications is linked in with Britain's Empire in the 19th Century. As more ports and docks were built across Britain (e.g. Liverpool, Cardiff East London, etc.) migration numbers rapidly increased, especially with the influx of Irish migrants coming into Liverpool due to the port being accessible to Ireland. Arguably though, these 1.3 million Irish migrants didn't come to Britain just because the communications and transport were in place, they came for Britain's economic power and industrial opportunity, having been desperate and starving from the potato famine 1846-8. Many Irish came in-order to work – often in manual jobs such as 'navvies' building the canals, railways and roads, which had a lasting impact on Britain's industrialisation. Therefore, we can see in this case that communications was only a supporting factor but not the main one for this mass migration; they were pulled to Britain by the job opportunities open to them and pushed out of Ireland by the threat of starvation, both a result of economic forces.

One could say that Britain's economy has been attractive to many entrepreneurs because of its acceptance of new developments. An example of this is in 1476, William Caxton introduced a printing press to England as he knew the profits he could make from monasteries. Similarly, the German migrant, Paul Reuter, came to Britain in 1852 to set up a newspaper agency after developing telegraph communications back in his home country.

Communications are tied in with Britain's wider world connections as shipping was central to the company's success. But the growing connections and gradual increase in migrants was because of economic forces; the company existed to make a profit. Similarly, Britain's role in the slave trade (established in the 1560s) was because of economic forces. Connections with the wider world and communication by shipping made it possible – but it happened because money could be made from slaves. Some black people forced to migrate as slaves settled in Britain. Alternatively, you could argue that without key communications such as ships, ports and outposts across the globe – the slave trade wouldn't have been possible. However whilst this was an enabling factor it was the economic trade in slaves that was the underlying factor for their migration to Britain, and therefore the most influential.

Flemish weavers were at the heart of Britain's growing trade in the medieval period and their migration was mainly down to the economic development occurring rapidly in Britain and the opportunity for these skilled foreign workers to come and start a legacy over here with their work. On top of this, the government under both Henry III and later Edward III even invited Flemish migrants over in order to oversee a change in Britain's economy – proving that communications were not a very key role in this migration, of course it was part of the process but it was not the main factor in their arrival.

In conclusion, changing communications has played a key role in migration to Britain but it only started to really leave an impact from the 17th Century onwards as boats and other modes of transport were improved. Government and Britain's connections to the wider world have also played a role. However, through all periods economic forces have played an important role. Therefore, I believe that changing communications was an enabling factor in the process of migration and increased it, but economic forces were the most important underlying factor influencing migration to Britain from the Middle Ages to the present.

Examiner commentary

This student demonstrates strong knowledge of key features and characteristics of a range of periods in ways that show very secure and thorough understanding of each period.

This student shows sophisticated understanding of causation, prioritising and characterising causes, for example as enabling, push, pull or underlying causes.

His well-supported points reveal an understanding of causation in the context of particular issues. His use of connectives shows an awareness of similarity. The student sets out an argument in their introduction, with a focus on two of the five factors set out in the specification. The student then sustains and consistently returns to them throughout the essay. It is a convincing explanation and reaches a very well-supported judgment on the issue in the question, it uses specific examples throughout to both agree and disagree.

There is a well-developed and sustained line of reasoning which is coherent, relevant and logically structured.

Medium level response

Changing communications has led to an increase in migration to Britain.

I think that changing communications was a big factor for migration during the Industrial and Imperial period as thousands would come from places like Asia to England because they could travel on trading ships between India and Britain. For example, Lascars from India, Yemen and Aiden settled in 'Tiger Bay' in the growing port city of Cardiff. Often Asians would be employed for the passage from India but not the return journey, and therefore ended up staying even if they hadn't expected to.

Others came from India and meant to stay like the eminent Indians who had success in politics. Their acceptance as MPs would make others want to come over too, hearing about them and because travelling was possible with improved communications across the British Empire it increased migration.

Communications link with economic forces as people in poor areas like Ireland in particularly where there was a potato famine in 1846, heard about how much better life in England was and so travelled over on ships to Liverpool. Economic forces of poverty made them leave but changing communications in shipping and hearing about English jobs encouraged them too. This would also link with another factor, Government, as the law allowed landlords to evict poor Irish peasants, forcing them to give up their land.

Another factor for why people came was beliefs and attitudes because in the early modern times thousands of Protestants had come over to Britain because they heard how Britain was a safe haven for Protestants, 50,000 Huguenots came in the 1600s. Also Jews in 1881 came because attitudes towards Jews and the laws were positive in Britain compared to Eastern Europe. This shows government again was important as well as beliefs and attitudes. However I believe that Britain's connections with the wider world was important in increasing migration as during industry and empire a lot of migrants had come over from places like India where the British had developed trade. The British Raj began in 1857 when the British government took over direct control of India from the East India Company and made Britain the dominant force in India, this increased migration as thousands could now migrate to Britain on growing numbers of trading ships.

In my opinion I think that communications was a big factor for increasing migration because if the migrants couldn't travel easily to England then they wouldn't have come over, but it was not the only reason. For example in the early modern Protestants came because of our beliefs and attitudes and Britain was seen as a safe haven for them, there was also skilled work that the Huguenots could do, which meant that economic forces were important. Lots more migrants came because of changing communications, but they came for jobs. However, without improving communications, growing trade and economic forces would not have been possible, which obviously links to Britain's connections with the wider world.

Examiner commentary

The answer demonstrates sound knowledge of key features and characteristics of different periods in ways that show secure understanding, such as explaining growing connections with the wider world and the British Empire in the nineteenth-century, supported by specific examples such as the Lascars. The student includes examples of migrant groups from a range of periods in order to reach a supported judgement. There is a sustained and generally convincing explanation about changing communications as 'increasing' migration, but implicitly suggests other factors caused it. This can be described as a 'developed line of reasoning' which is clear, relevant to the question asked and logically structured. The knowledge could not be described as 'strong' as in places it mentions events without any specificity and is thus just 'sound'. In places the knowledge is strong, but not always in support of the issue in the question, for example giving specific impacts – which is not entirely relevant - of migrant groups, such as for the Italian migrants, but not specific causes for migration, for example in the case of the Windrush migrants. In this sense the answer is 'generally convincing' and 'supported' but not 'convincing' or 'well-supported'.

The answer shows a strong understanding of the second order concept of causation, characterising causes and implicitly prioritising causes. There is also a strong understanding of continuity, demonstrating for example that people migrated for reasons of belief and attitudes in Britain during both the early modern and industrial periods.

Overall, a sustained and generally convincing explanation that reaches a supported judgement on the issue of changing communications as a reason for migrations to Britain.

Question 5

How far do you agree that the experience of migrants to Britain in the period 1750–1900 was positive? Give reasons for your answer.

High level response

To some extent the experience of migrants in the period 1750 to 1900 was positive, however the experience of different migrant groups varied between one group and another, and so too did the individual experience of particular migrants within certain groups; making it difficult to either agree or disagree. Economic forces as well as changing attitudes and beliefs help explain these different experiences.

The Jewish community in Britain increasingly became well integrated and often wealthy playing an important role in banking. Laws discriminating against the Jews were also removed during this period. In 1830 Jews were allowed to trade in the city. From 1833 they could serve on juries and from 1856 it was possible for Jews to go to university. In 1855, Sir David Salomons became the first Jewish Lord Mayor of London, and in 1867 a Jew, Benjamin Disraeli, became the Prime Minister. These changes were the result of changing attitudes during the nineteenth-century towards other religions, Britain became known for religious tolerance.

However, anti-Semitism was still a problem. After 1881, this became even truer as poor Jewish migrants began migrating from Eastern Europe and particular Russia. These Jews spoke Yiddish, wore traditional Jewish clothing and were orthodox in their religious beliefs. These Jews tended to live in inner city enclaves, often doing menial jobs like making clothes for British working class people. Whilst this had a positive impact on working class British people, it was a negative experience for the Jews. However, many of these Jews were escaping persecution in Russia, and Britain with its religious tolerance and opportunities to work seemed positive compared to their previous experiences. Despite having a positive impact, many people, including the established Jewish community were frightened by the new Jews. Anti-Semitism and prejudice was the negative experience of many of these migrants.

Whilst the Jews came because they were escaping persecution, the Irish came because they were escaping poverty and the 1846-8 Potato Famine. However similarly to the Jews, the Irish migrants took on menial jobs and were often poor. Also like the Jews they had a positive impact on Britain but their experience was negative. Between 1750 and 1900 they worked as 'navvies' building canals, roads and railways. This was important work that helped build the British economy, but like the Jews, despite having a positive impact it was also a negative experience as it was 'back-breaking' hard manual work. The Irish lived in overcrowded poor living conditions, for example living in damp cellars near the docks in Liverpool with no sanitation or clean water. Cholera was common. Also like the Jews they experienced religious prejudice because they were not Protestants. They were also blamed for disease, but this was because they lived in such poor conditions. Other workers also resented the Irish because they were willing to work for lower wages people thought they were undercutting them and taking their jobs. All this meant that the Irish experience was largely negative as a result of prejudice.

On the other-hand however some migrant groups were widely accepted, such as the Germans. These migrants tended to be wealthier and better educated and so were able to more easily establish business and to be accepted. For example Paul Reuter had developed telegraph communications in Germany, and so was able to set up a news agency in London in 1852 which became the main source of newspaper stories. There are many more examples of successful German migrant businesses established in the nineteenth-century.

The experience of different migrant groups varied, they were not all positive, but neither were they all negative. The Irish and Jewish migrants generally had a negative experience. Economic forces such as poverty and low education as well as people attitudes towards those from another religion helps explain their experience. On the other hand Germans, Italians and Asians generally had a positive experience. On the whole these were higher skilled and better educated so accepted. But some of these would also have experienced prejudice. Every migrants experience was different, some positive some negative.

Examiner commentary

This answer develops a line of reasoning which is coherent and relevant to the issue in the question from the introduction. It neither agrees nor disagrees, but sustains its line of the reasoning between the two positions throughout the essay. It consistently focuses on the positives or negatives of migrant experiences during this period, as such it is a relevant, logical and convincing explanation that reaches a well-supported judgement by the conclusion. It demonstrates strong knowledge of key features and characteristics of the period, such as the integration of migrants into British society as a result of connections to the wider world through Empire. The answer is able to access the two highest levels because it considers both positive and negative experiences.

Medium banded response

Overall, the experience of migrants to Britain in the period 1750 to 1900 was positive. As the Empire and Industry grew it created lots of jobs that enabled migrants to come here to set up businesses or work in factories or build railways, etc.

Asians became successful traders and merchants which helped the growing economy thrive. In 1858 the firm of Cama and Company became the first Asian merchant house to open in London. And many middle-class Asians worked in a variety of other professions, for example George Edalji became a solicitor in Birmingham. However, many wealthy Asians came to Britain to study; for example Prince Ranjitsinhji came as a student but ended up staying and playing cricket for Sussex.

It wasn't just Asian men who came to Britain it was also the women. In 1911 some Asian migrants became members of the Women Social and Political Union, the Suffragettes. Some Asians were powerful political speakers, e.g. Saklatvala who made a difference to Britain's working class. However, lots of Asians came as poor servants or Ayahs, at first many were abandoned once in Britain, but most eventually found work, some as street sellers, and others in better paid jobs.

The Chinese migrants also had quite a positive experience as they started small businesses at the end of the 1800s. They created Chinese shops, restaurants, lodging houses and opium dens. These lodging houses were often to cater for visiting Chinese sailors. The most important business was the laundry, because they helped do peoples laundry with a cheap and efficient service. Lots of Chinese people moved to Britain and integrated because of good business opportunities. However, many of these businesses were separate and did not integrate with other British people. They didn't make a massive impact to the economy, and didn't socialise a lot with other British people.

European migrants from Germany and Italy were also able to set up business and become successful in Britain. Many Italians worked in the growing nineteenth-century food industry or as street musicians, entertaining the British working class. Similarly Germans set up important technical businesses like Reuters or the General Electric Company in 1888. Both Germans and Italian were able to integrate, using their skills. These migrants overall had a positive experience.

Many migrants came to Britain in the nineteenth-century because of all the trade that came from its Empire and because of Industrialisations. These new industries provided jobs for migrants from Europe and the wider world, even poor ones like the Irish who built canals, roads and railways for British Industry. The Irish lived in poor places, but had a better experience than starving in Ireland.

So overall, I think migrants had a positive experience.

Examiner commentary

This answer does not adequately address the negative experiences of migrants and therefore could not access the two highest levels.

It does demonstrate sound knowledge of key features of the period such as industrialisation and Empire. It shows secure understanding of these ideas through a range of specific examples. It sustains a line of reasoning based on the positive experiences associated with economic forces, but this could only be described as 'generally convincing' and not entirely 'convincing'. It provided a wide range of accurate and supporting knowledge that is relevant to the issue in the question in order to reach a supported judgement. It shows a strong understanding of economic forces as a cause of positive experience as well as some awareness of similarity and difference, for examples in the distinctions it makes between the experiences of rich and poor Asians. There is some material from outside the period.

Overall there is a developed line of reasoning – if not consistently convincing – which is clear, relevant and logically structured - considering different migrant groups in turn.



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