

A LEVEL

Examiners' report

HISTORY A

H505

For first teaching in 2015

Y111/01 Summer 2023 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.

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Paper Y111/01 series overview

Y111 is one of thirteen units in Paper 1 for the revised A Level examination for GCE History. This unit tests an extended period of History of about fifty years through an Enquiries or source-based option and an essay. The paper is divided into two sections. In Section A candidates have to answer a compulsory source question based on four written primary sources. The question requires them to use all four sources to assess the validity of a view. In Section B candidates are required to answer one essay question from a choice of two.

To do well on Section A, candidates need to be able both:

- consider the provenance of the sources, and
- apply contextual knowledge to the content of the sources.

This allows them fully to answer the question set by reaching a judgement **about the sources** in relation to the issue in the question.

It is important that the judgement reached is based on an evaluation of the reliability of the evidence given, and that it is not merely the candidate's own judgement on the topic based purely on their own contextual knowledge.

In order to reach Level 6, a good strategy is to make a judgement at the end of the analysis of each source, with an overall judgement in the conclusion.

To do well on Section B, candidates need to address the issue in the question, using detailed supporting knowledge. In order to reach the higher levels, candidates will need to assess the issues they discuss and reach a supported judgement at least in the conclusion. To reach Level 6 candidates should also make an overall judgement as well as interim judgements when assessing each factor.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • considered the provenance of the source(s) and used relevant contextual knowledge • clearly linked the contextual knowledge to the source being discussed to show whether the view of the source was valid or not • reached an overall judgement as to the extent to which the sources supported the view in the question. This judgement is based on the provenance of the sources • answered the essay question writing about at least two issues in depth • gave supporting detail that was both accurate and relevant to the question set, not just the topic • reached a supported judgement about the issue in the question • made a series of interim judgements about the issues discussed in relation to the question. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • did not consider both the provenance and use contextual knowledge to evaluate the sources • wrote an unbalanced response in their treatment of the sources, with very little consideration of one of the sources. • reached a judgement based on their knowledge rather than the sources • showed a poor understanding of the major issues relevant to the essay • were unable to support their response with relevant material • did not focus on the precise wording of the question • made unsupported comments about issues which were assertions.

Section A overview

The Enquiry section in this unit examines the reasons whether economic and financial concerns were the focus of the debate about national efficiency in the period 1900-1918. The question requires candidates to critically assess evidence and reach judgements. The critical evaluation of sources is the central theme in this section with all marks given against AO2.

Question 1

England and a New Century c.1900–1918

- 1 Using these four sources in their historical context, assess how far they support the view that economic and financial concerns were the focus of the debate about national efficiency in the period from 1900 to 1918. [30]

The majority of candidates were able to analyse the content of the four sources and reach a well-reasoned conclusion regarding those which supported the premise in the title and the sources that did not. Most candidates displayed a sound understanding of technique and so understood the need to use both context and provenance when evaluating the sources. Candidates should be reminded of the need to reach an appropriate judgement on the provenance of the sources as this is something that was omitted in many responses. Candidates who were less successful described parts of the sources that agreed with their points without clear analysis. They also tended to either ignore the provenance of the sources or fail to evaluate the sources in context.

Source A was used to contradict the premise in the question, with the majority of candidates able to use the content to discuss the fact that health was a more significant concern, in particular the use of alcohol. Contextually, candidates were able to call on a variety of support including the aftermath of the Boer War and the physical problems encountered in raising an army. Some candidates pointed to the 1904 Licensing Laws and made profitable use of the context surrounding these. In terms of provenance, the majority of candidates relied on stock analysis of a governmental report, with better responses aware of the expertise involved in the committee.

When analysing the content of Source B, candidates were able to use it to both support and challenge the views in the question. Candidates who used it to support the premise in the title were able to argue that the country needed a stronger workforce to compete with the country's biggest international rivals. Some candidates were able to point to the idea of social cohesion and that the country needed stronger citizens if it were to remain united. Contextually, there was a variety of support offered, including the rise of Germany and the USA, the impact of New Liberalism, and the flaws of the existing Poor Laws. Candidates who referred to any of these in their evaluation were given marks. In terms of provenance, the best responses recognised the distinction between the Majority and Minority Reports and were able to discuss the divisions profitably. Some candidates noted the expertise of the Commission or commented on the disparaging tone of the report.

In terms of Source C, the majority of candidates used its content to demonstrate how it supported the premise in the question by showing how poor wages were having a negative impact on industry. Some candidates questioned whether this was more a moral or financial question and were given marks for this too. Contextually, there were a number of avenues that were profitably explored with some candidates evaluating the source in relation to the industrial relations of 1910-12, with references to various strikes, including Tonypandy, as well as Liberal reforms. Some candidates discussed the findings of Booth and Rowntree and were able to evaluate accordingly. Provenance was usually good, although, many candidates believed that the Fabians were a right-wing organisation. Some candidates focused on Ensor being dependable as he was a respected writer while the best responses considered his Fabian background as having more sympathy with the views he was advocating.

The provenance of Source D was generally well-known with candidates able to discuss Rowntree's expertise and background. A few candidates expanded on this with good knowledge of the welfare schemes available at his factory in York, although this was not widely known. The key points of the question were usually analysed correctly and the majority of candidates were able to discuss the specific context of WW1 and Rowntree's purpose in raising these issues.

Exemplar 1

Section A

The debate about national efficiency dominated much of the politics in the period from 1900-1918, as these 4 sources demonstrate. Whilst these debates were to some extent prompted by genuine humanitarian concerns for the welfare of the nation and the health of workers, as sources A and D indicate, it does seem that in actual progression of individual findings in government, the focus of this debate was to a much greater extent the economic and financial concerns of the nation - the view proposed more convincingly and revealingly in B and C.

Firstly, source B supports the statement that the focus of the national efficiency debate was the economic and financial concerns of Britain. The source is an official report from royal commissioners and they put forward the view that national efficiency must be improved so that Britain can "hold its own in the race of international trade" and "successfully perform the role of sovereignty beyond the seas", a reference to the British Empire which currently consisted of 25% of the world's population and crossed vast continents (such as India - acquired formally in 1876), which would need strong manpower to maintain ~~but~~ to hence progress the industrial

economy of Britain. This source is also historically accurate and we see reason for the concern to regain British international superiority from knowledge of the exploits of Germany and the USA, both overtaking Britain as leading in steel production at the turn of the century, and particularly the threat of Bismarckian reforms in Germany which saw German exports triple in 1900. The writers of the source emphasise that the people need to become better equipped to "combat this evil", and the provenance of the source from the commission on the Poor Laws suggests that these ministers have good knowledge about the condition of the working class and are aware of how best necessitates tackling concerns, which are evidently pressing. The reliability of this source in summary also gives credit to its proposal of economic and financial concerns as the focus of the national efficiency debate.

Source C similarly puts down the view that the focus of the national efficiency debate was economic concerns. This is from a member of the Fabian Society - an influential socialist group that was influential in progressing the Labour Party - and he writes in persuasion of a minimum wage in regard to national efficiency due to "a steep rise in the cost of working class living and scarcely any rise in

wages". Ensor also directly references the findings of Rowntree in York, who established a poverty line and found much higher levels of poverty - 28% - than previously documented. The fact that 85% of those living in "poverty" were so due to issues of employment, gives credit to Ensor's view that low wages is "in the strict economic sense, parasitic", and his final remark that "Underpayment tends clearly to the loss of the nation." Ensor's attention to the impact poor national efficiency has on the economy is directly due to economic writers, although as a socialist writer, appealing to the people as a respected author, he also mentions the concerns of "physical deterioration" and "moral degradation". Despite this element, this source is still on the whole in support of the view that financial concerns drove the debate of National efficiency, even if Source B has a slightly greater regard to the will of the working people, than C, which is more removed from ~~the~~ public issues and written in attempt to persuade public ministers to improve national efficiency, with the knowledge that especially in the 2/3 Tory dominated House of Lords, this would be a more convincing and persuasive angle in the debate to adopt.

On the other hand, source A disagrees

with the statement in suggesting that the focus of the national efficiency debate was instead the concern for the physical condition and health of the people. This was written earlier than the other 2 sources in 1904, perhaps before the economic pressing concerns of Germany and failing British industry had been fully realised. The report from the Committee on physical deterioration warns of the "fatal effects of alcohol" on efficiency and promotes education of children to "open...minds" and prevent the next generation from suffering from the same "physical ills." This source is historically accurate and seems credible as an official report, evidenced when it references the "influx from country to town" in increasing urban squalor and physical degradation and poverty; during this time, now 45% of the population were living in urban areas and combined with population growth to around 40 million at the turn of the century, this was a major concern of committees such as this as it exacerbated already poor living conditions. The source was also written in 1904 in the obvious wake of the Boer War, which revealed the inadequacy of British men to fight in humiliation (White investigated that 3/5 of volunteers in Manchester were turned away due to their

ill health). As a report presumably to the government, this source is likely to have extensive and credible knowledge of the condition of the population, and so certainly ~~so~~ proposes the view that the physical welfare of the people, not economic concerns, was the reason and focus of the national efficiency debate.

Finally, Source D adopts a similar view to source A and proposes that the focus of the national efficiency debate was not finances, but humanitarian concerns. Referencing the findings of a businessman in York 1901 – the time at which Rowntree conducted his surveys into the poverty debate – Rowntree now shares these findings in 1917 with the knowledge of the events of World War One, yet he still puts forward the pressing concern not for economic progression, but social welfare. Perhaps, due to the time this source was written, a year after the atrocity of the Somme and amidst a time of great national pressure, Rowntree here appeals to the people in an 'open letter', who would desire an end to the war and a boost in public morale, to urge the country forward concerning national efficiency. Rowntree writes that "low productivity is due to ... suspicion" and hostility, and promotes a need for "keen and

workly ambition "well developed in body and mind" to assist working co-operatively to further the nation. Though he does mention the need for adequate pay, this is in regard to bettering the welfare of workers "to the community", as opposed to only doing this to heighten the economic concerns and superiority of Britain. As a personal friend of Lloyd George and genuine supporter of liberal welfare change (evidenced in Rountree's support of the 1909 Old Age Pensions scheme), this source seems to express his genuine reliable view, although the time of the source's publication may suggest he was playing to contemporary national concerns of patriotism and war, to further his cause.

In conclusion, although A and D disagree with the statement and indicate that the focus of the national efficiency debate was humanitarian concerns, B and C ~~as official~~ are more convincing in their view that the focus of this was economic and financial concerns. Although perhaps initially findings of Booth and Rountree and the poverty debate emphasised the social necessity of national efficiency, in actually passing reforms in Parliament it seems that economic concerns consumed the government, especially in the

run up to the War outbreak in 1914. This is put forward convincingly in B as an official report, and also in C; despite the socialist provenance of the author, there is still a driving concern for economic issues, even if they are centred around social concerns. The threat of war at the end of this period meant that economic concerns would dominate British politics to a greater extent, prompting the real concern for national efficiency.

Exemplar 1 demonstrates a response that has judgement in the conclusion and reached Level 5.

Assessment for learning



To achieve the higher levels, candidates must evaluate the four sources using context and provenance and reach a judgement on the reliability of the sources. This exemplar shows a judgement on the sources that reached Level 5 with the candidate examining provenance of at least two sources here.

Misconception



A significant number of candidates felt that Ensor, a Fabian, was writing from a right-wing perspective and was determined to protect the interests of business owners.

Section B overview

In Section B, two essays are set, each from a different Key Topic. The candidates were asked to examine the role of Gladstone in the emergence of the Liberal Party or the success of Disraeli in tackling social and labour problems in his second ministry. The questions set required candidates to analyse causes and consequences of major historical issues.

Question 2*

Liberals, Conservatives and the Rise of Labour 1846–1902

2* 'The role and influence of Gladstone was the main reason for the emergence of the Liberal Party.'
How far do you agree? **[20]**

Question 2 elicited a reasonable number of responses, however, candidates generally answered less well than those who chose Question 3. Successful responses were able to compare Gladstone's role in the emergence of the Liberal Party with a range of other factors, including the role of Palmerston, the emergence of the Peelite faction as well as the emergence of the Liberal press and middle classes. The influence of Palmerston was generally well-known with good knowledge of his populist foreign policy, as was the split of the Peelites from the Tories. However, candidates were less certain of Gladstone's role in the emergence of the party. Better responses were able to discuss his attitude towards Italian nationalism and his willingness to work with Cobden and Bright as being influential, as were his attacks on the 1852 Budget. All candidates gave a range of reasons and while some concluded that Gladstone was significant, a number of candidates felt that Palmerston's role was more significant in the development of the Liberal Party.

Misconception



Many candidates wanted to discuss reforms from his first ministry and so were going beyond the scope of the question. It is really important that candidates need to stick to the specifics of the question as well as the timings of the questions.

Exemplar 2

1) Gladstone

2) Palmerston / Aberdeen

3) Split of Tories / Peel death

The role and influence of Gladstone was not the main reason for the emergence of the Liberal party although a strong factor. The strongest factor was the split of the Conservative party. ~~and~~ The Aberdeen Government which ~~probably~~ provided the basis for the Liberal party creation was also a strong factor.

Gladstone was a proven political force in British politics. He had demonstrated

as strong financial skills in his ~~1852~~
 destruction of ^{the} 1852 Israeli budget and
 had proven a strong leader and asset for
 the Peellites. His Liberal views also formed
 the basis for much of the Liberal party's
 party's future policy and direction. Gladstone's
 strong performance ~~as~~ as Chancellor
 of the Exchequer, lowering income tax and
 removing stamp duty also helped to prove
 the viability of Liberal political ideas in
 Britain. However, when it came to the
 Liberal party's creation at the Willis Rooms ⁽¹⁸⁶⁷⁾
 meeting he was not present ~~severely~~
 severely undermining the notion that his role
 and influence was the main reason the
 Liberal party formed.

The Liberal Party might best have been
 described as an anti-Tory coalition, hence
 the importance of the Aberdeen administ
 ration ^(coalition). It provided the framework with which
 Whig, Peelite and Radical co-operation
 could become unification. It also ~~importantly~~
 importantly saw the widely popular
 Lord Palmerston in cabinet with Gladstone,
 creating an opportunity for their agreement
 to work together. This was also facilitated
 by their shared love of Italy and
 desire for its ~~unification~~ unification ~~although~~

although ~~for~~ ~~completely~~ different reasons. The ~~for~~ Aberdeen administration also allowed for key figures such as Gladstone and Palmerston ^(Foreign Secretary) to gain the experience necessary for the Liberal party ^{creation} and the subsequent vote of no confidence in Lord Derby and the Conservatives to be politically viable. However, without the Conservative split in 1846 it is arguable none of this would have been possible.

The 1846 split over the Corn Law repeal is the key factor that enabled the formation of the Liberal Party. The split left the Conservative party virtually talentless with only Lord Derby, Disraeli and Lord Bentinck. This split also characterised a key principle of the Liberal party - free trade. The split also provided precedence for Peelite and Whig co-operation as the Peelites would often vote with the Whigs in order to vote against the Tories. The death of Peel ensured the split between the Conservatives and Peelites was ~~an~~ irremediable almost guaranteeing Whig and Peelite unification. The split of the Conservative party ensured the political climate necessary for the formation of the Liberal Party and allowed for Gladstone's influence ~~in~~ in

a smaller Peelite party, while also providing a space for his liberal views to develop in the 1850s and 60s. Therefore, the split of the Conservative party and Peel's death was the main reason for the emergence of the Liberal Party.

In conclusion, while Gladstone's role and influence was undoubtedly a factor in the emergence of the liberal party. The split ensured the political climate that allowed for Peelite and Whig co-operation and the Aberdeen coalition. It also allowed Gladstone to grow in influence and develop his liberal ideas and is therefore the main reason for the emergence of the liberal party.

Exemplar 2 shows a candidate has offered a range of reasons, but without judgement, the response is capped to Level 4. In order to achieve Level 6, candidates must make interim judgements at the end of each factor as well as offer a substantiated judgement in the conclusion. A list of explained factors alone will be capped at Level 4.

Question 3*

- 3* How successful were the domestic reforms of Disraeli's ministry, 1874–80, in dealing with the social and labour problems of the period? [20]

Question 3 was very popular with candidates and generally successfully completed. The majority of candidates had good knowledge of Disraeli's social and working reforms and were able to discuss the initiatives to improve housing, picketing, factory conditions and public health.

In countering his successes, most candidates understood the permissive nature of much of his legislation and were also able to discuss areas that were lacking, notably, unemployment and crime.

Most candidates were able to produce well-supported analyses of his reforms. While many candidates felt that Disraeli's reforms were numerous, the permissive nature of much of his reforms detracted from his overall success.

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