



# GCSE (9-1)

**Examiners' report** 

# HISTORY B (SCHOOLS HISTORY PROJECT)

**J411** For first teaching in 201

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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 responses 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.

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# Paper 14 series overview

The thematic study and the depth study have now been reunited into one paper for this series and candidates seemed to cope well with this format. It is evident that many are aware of the demands of the different types of questions and many are approaching them in the correct manner. In particular Questions 4, 5, 8 and 9 reflect a clear appreciation that they are required to produce both sides of an argument and many of these were well explained. While candidates are aware of the need to use historical concepts in Question 2, some of them are struggling to place developments in their historical context or to select the correct information for the period. Another question that has proved to be difficult for some is Question 6; for both 6 (a) and 6 (b), candidates need to focus more on the techniques needed to produce a successful response. Many candidates seem unsure how to tackle this question which requires a different kind of approach from the others seen on the paper.

# Section A overview

Candidates studying Crime and Punishment, a thematic study, are required to know and understand its development over a specific time period, c.1250 to the present. They should understand that within that period there are periods of both continuity and change. To do well on this paper, candidates needed to demonstrate a sound knowledge and understanding of the topics and to use appropriate historical concepts to provide relevant responses to the questions. In this examination series, fewer candidates were attributing developments to the wrong period. This was evident in Question 3 where the majority of responses were relevant to the dates specified. Both Questions 4 and 5 proved to be popular with candidates. In their responses many candidates demonstrated knowledge that was appropriate for the question. However, some responses, particularly on Question 5, were far too general and lacked focus on the period. The question that was less successfully answered was Question 2 with many describing the early developments of policing before 1850. Many focused on how technological developments affected policing but were often vague about when these developments were first deployed.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally:
<ul> <li>made good use of second order concepts to provide a clear and organised summary of policing from 1850 – c.2015 with specific well explained examples (Question 2)</li> <li>demonstrated a good knowledge and understanding of the early modern period to identify new crimes and explain why they emerged (Question 3)</li> <li>made sure that they produced a balanced response with valid explained points (Question 4 or Question 5)</li> <li>focused on the purpose of medieval punishment and supported their responses with explained examples which related punishments to specific crimes (Question 4)</li> <li>set their response in the context of the period ensuring that their argument was relevant and specific to this period (Question 5)</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>wrote about policing before 1850 or identified points which were not developed using second order concepts (Question 2)</li> <li>provided general reasons for crime not specific to the period or identified crimes without providing a relevant explained reason for their emergence (Question 3)</li> <li>identified or described points or wrote general assertions (Question 4 or Question 5)</li> <li>identified or described punishments without linking the purpose to the crime. Responses tended to be repetitive, especially where humiliation was concerned (Question 4)</li> <li>identified relevant points with no development or wrote generalised descriptions of crime often not period related (Question 5)</li> </ul>

# Question 1 (a)

1 (a) Name one type of serious crime in medieval Britain (1250–1500).

[1]

This was answered correctly by the majority of candidates. Examples of popular responses include murder, treason, theft over 12d and homicide.

(b) Name **one** major religious, political or social change in the early modern period (1500–1750).

The religious changes of the sixteenth century proved to be a popular choice of response, along with the population growth and the belief in witchcraft.

# Question 1 (c)

(c) Give one reason why new crimes emerged after 1900.

Technology was given as an answer by many candidates but it was not deemed to be acceptable on its own. Marks were given to candidates who specified a certain development, e.g. the development of cars which led to the emergence of new crimes like speeding.

# Question 2

2 Write a clear and organised summary that analyses policing between 1850 and c.2015.

Support your summary with examples.

[9]

Candidates who responded successfully to this question realised that the early development of policing including the Bow Street Runners was not required and thus avoided producing an irrelevant response. Some candidates began by focusing on the County and Borough Police Act 1856 which made policing compulsory throughout England and Wales. They then often proceeded to summarise the changing nature of policing during the period in the question. Examples of good responses included ones in which candidates had a sound grasp of the topic and selected two clear examples that they were going to focus on. Two well explained examples could earn them full marks. More successful responses organised each example around a second order concept. Different approaches included, for example, analysing the impact of new technology on policing, considering the changing composition of the police force over time or examining the reasons for different attitudes towards the police during the period.

Less successful candidates struggled with their knowledge of the topic and often lacked the organisational skills necessary for this type of response. They often wrote about an earlier period including details, for example, on the hue and cry and Bow Street Runners. Many however, were able to attempt a basic summary of the impact of technology on policing but were unclear when these developments were made. Examples were undeveloped with statements asserting that technology made the job easier rather than providing some specific detail relevant to it. A minority of candidates focused their response on crime and courts rather than policing which could not be given marks.

[1]

# Assessment for learning Candidates should make sure that they are aware of the second order concepts and that they think about those that are appropriate for their answer. Examples include significance, cause and consequence, change and continuity, similarity and difference. It would be helpful for candidates to consider the historical concept that they are going to focus on before beginning their response and to be aware that description alone confines the response to Level 1. Some candidates seemed to struggle to organise their response over a long period of time and more successful techniques for dealing with this would improve their performance. They often tried to include too many aspects in their response instead of being more focused and providing a clear explanation.

# Question 3

3 Why did different types of crime emerge in the early modern period (1500–1750)?

Explain your answer.

[10]

Generally, the majority of candidates were aware of crimes that specifically emerged during this period. Good responses demonstrated a clear focus on the question with full explanations of why different types of crime emerged at this time Those candidates who had revised highway robbery and smuggling thoroughly were able to attain high marks on this question with two full explanations. Some candidates also successfully focused on the puritan influence to explain why witchcraft emerged as a crime or to explain the increase in moral crimes, others considered vagrancy and the reasons for its emergence as a serious crime.

Candidates who did less well were either not secure in the knowledge of the period or did not focus on the reasons why the crime emerged. Some would offer a partial explanation while others described a crime or simply identified a reason. A minority of candidates did not address the question and wrote general responses including linking poverty to theft and about crimes that could be applicable in any time period. However, there were far fewer candidates who wrote about the wrong period with only occasional references to the Industrial Revolution or the development of rail transport. Some candidates are trying to focus on too many crimes instead of trying to provide two good explanations.

# Exemplar 1

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This response shows an example of how the question can be developed.

The candidate identifies the crime – witchcraft. The reason is clearly based in the early modern period; political instability and famine of the 1580s and 1590s. Then the candidate is clear about how it led to the crime when they talk about blaming people for the problems (point 1 above). The specific example to make this Level 4 is the reference to King James I and demonology.

# Assessment for learning

- Candidates know what is required of them in this type of question but some do need to be reminded to focus more carefully on their explanation.
- Some responses were unnecessarily long, containing detail that was superfluous to requirement. It would be help for some candidates to know how to be more selective with what they include.
- Again, this year, some candidates chose to include a number of different crimes when focusing on two explained clearly would have earned them more marks. It is the quality of the explanation that is important.

# Question 4\*

4\* How far do you agree that the purpose of medieval punishment was to humiliate the criminal?

Give reasons for your answer.

[18]

Candidates who responded well to this question had a clearly organised argument and produced balanced responses with sound explanations. They were aware of the types of crimes that were punished using humiliation referring, for example, rogue traders who were placed in the stocks or to scolds who were punished with the cucking stool. In addition, they considered capital punishment as a deterrent and were aware that hanging was the sentence for a range of crimes from homicide to stealing goods worth more than 12d. They also included the fact that the punishment for those found guilty of treason was being hung drawn and quartered. Candidates were able to focus on the purpose of the punishment displaying a good knowledge of the topic. In addition, many were aware that fines were widely used as a punishment, especially for petty crime, and provided effective explanations on this. Some also considered the church's role in public humiliation. Those who produced four good explanations including at least one argument on both sides were usually able to attain 17 marks. Clinching arguments were rare as conclusions tended to be a summary of the response.

Less successful candidates did not consider the crime and lacked focus on the purpose of the punishment. Responses often contained descriptions of different types of punishment like the stocks, the pillory and the cucking stool but these punishments were rarely related to the crime and in each case the same argument was put forward that they were to humiliate the criminal. Even capital punishment tended to be linked more with humiliation than deterrence with the argument that public executions caused humiliation. Such responses rarely attained beyond Level 2. A number of candidates focused on the scold's bridle as an example of a punishment designed to humiliate the criminal writing a detailed description of it but it was not acceptable for this period. Many responses lacked explanation because candidates did not know the subject.

# Exemplar 2

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This response shows a clinching argument around the purpose of Medieval punishment.

The candidate had written three paragraphs; the first addressed deterrence with specific examples of how different punishments, e.g. hanging, were used to deter the public.. The candidate then addressed the humiliation of stock and pillories and how this was used in a village setting to discourage traders.

The conclusion shows how an argument can be clinched by revisiting the question and pulling it apart, making it less of a binary choice and seeing how the different purposes in this case link together.

# Assessment for learning

- Candidates should consider the question carefully. In a question that requires a balanced response, a one-sided response is limited to Level 4, however many explanations are included.
- One or two good explanations would get more marks than a series of brief points. Many are eager to focus on agreeing or disagreeing, ensuring that they have done this four times but description or identification limits them to Level 2 and a maximum of 6 marks.
- Most candidates have been well taught on the techniques for answering this question but some would benefit from learning how to explain their responses more fully.

# Question 5\*

5\* 'The reason that crime levels increased in the first half of the 1800s was the growth of towns and cities.'

How far do you agree?

Give reasons for your answer.

[18]

Candidates who demonstrated a sound knowledge and understanding of the period tended to be more successful on this question. They set their responses within the context of the Industrial Revolution referring to the specific social and economic problems of the period and reflecting their understanding of how the population growth and poor living conditions provided an ideal setting for the growth of crime, especially opportunistic crime. In addition, they considered the growth of theft as factories developed, the emergence of white-collar crimes, the impact of the ending of the Napoleonic wars as well as crimes brought about by the development of the railways such as fare dodging. Some included an explanation of how the lack of a good system of law and order encouraged crime and also referred to the beginning of the Metropolitan Police in 1829.

Candidates who did less well did not focus specifically on the period. There were many generalised responses about overcrowded conditions in towns leading to crime and bland statements that people were poor, had no money and therefore resorted to theft. Such general responses cannot attain higher than Level 2 and came from candidates whose knowledge of the period was limited. Some of these responses were long and repetitive but concentrating on poverty, violence and overcrowding in general will not score a high mark.

# Section B overview

To do well on the British Depth Study, candidates needed to be able to:

- analyse and compare interpretations
- devise historical questions
- recall and apply their knowledge to support and challenge a historical interpretation in an essaystyle question.

It was clear from the majority of responses that most candidates had been well-prepared for questions 6 and 7. In Question 7, they were able either to compare the overall impression given about the impact of The Norman Conquest, or else compare details between the two interpretations .

In the essay-style questions, most candidates opted for Question 9 and were able to accurately use their knowledge about the reasons for William's victory at Hastings in 1066, at least in part. There were fewer candidates who opted to respond to Question 8, and this question tended to be answered less successfully.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally:
<ul> <li>picked out a general feature in Interpretation A in relation to how the image made Norman castles appear threatening and intimidating, and then supported this with two points of development (Question 6 (a))</li> <li>used Interpretation A to ask a historical</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>pointed out different features/methods in Interpretation A instead of focusing on one way the image made castles look threatening/intimidating OR did not respond to the question about the interpretation, and instead just wrote generally about why Norman</li> </ul>
<ul> <li>Used interpretation A to ask a historical question (i.e. based on a second order concept such as causation, consequence or change), and gave some kind of indication of how that might help us to further understand Norman castles built in England between 1066 and 1087 (Question 6 (b))</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>castles were intimidating/threatening (Question 6 (a))</li> <li>did not actually ask a question or tell us something they wanted to find out from Interpretation A, instead telling us what they knew about Norman castles (Question 6 (b))</li> </ul>
<ul> <li>compared the overall message about the impact of the Norman Conquest in Interpretations B and C and went on to give a reason why they differed, on the basis of these specific interpretations (e.g. given the context of B or the purpose of C) (Question 7)</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>summarised Interpretations B and C separately; OR only compared the interpretations' provenance; OR wrote about how reliable each interpretation was (Question 7)</li> <li>made accurate but generalised points which</li> </ul>
<ul> <li>effectively deployed a range of knowledge in the essay question, using precise evidence to support their responses (Question 8 and Question 9)</li> </ul>	they were unable to support with precise evidence in the essay question, or else gave precise evidence but did not to explain how it helped to address the question being asked (Question 8 and Question 9)
<ul> <li>focused on the precise terms in the interpretation, i.e. whether Anglo-Saxon society was 'free, equal or democratic', in Question 8 specifically.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>did not stick to the terms in the interpretation, but instead offered a generic essay about whether or not Anglo-Saxon society was a 'Golden Age' (sometimes offering irrelevant material), for Question 8.</li> </ul>

# Question 6 (a)

6 (a) In Interpretation A, the image gives the impression that early Norman castles were threatening and intimidating.

Identify and explain one way in which it does this.

The aim of this question is to get candidates thinking about the methods used by writers, artists, filmmakers, etc to put forward a particular interpretation of a historical figure, period or event.

The vast majority of candidates were able to access the interpretation and they understood the question. Most scored 1 or 2 marks by picking out a specific feature (e.g. 'The tower is shown on top of a very high motte.') and then going on to develop their response by explaining how that feature made the castle look threatening or intimidating. Where candidates started with a very specific feature such as this, they sometimes struggled to make two points of development about their feature. The most successful responses were the ones which began with a more general point, e.g. 'The image suggests the castle is very heavily defended.', went on to give an example of this, e.g. 'For instance, there are soldiers and sharp, wooden spikes.' and then said how this made the castle look threatening or intimidating, e.g. 'This makes it seem like the castle was built to terrorise the Saxons.'.

Responses which picked out several features rather than one feature as the question asks were unable to move past 1 mark.

In this series, more so than in previous ones, many candidates did not always remain focused on the interpretation itself and the techniques used by its creators to give a certain impression. Instead, they drifted off into discussing the features of Norman castles more generally, and why they were intimidating. Where the focus on the interpretation was not clear enough, examiners were unable to give more than 1 mark for these responses.

# Assessment for learning

It is important that candidates are familiar with the concept of an interpretation and see this as an opportunity to explore briefly the methods used to create a certain impression. Therefore, it is important that candidates remain focused on the on the interpretation in front of them.

# Question 6 (b)

(b) If you were asked to do further research on **one** aspect of **Interpretation A**, what would you choose to investigate?

Explain how this would help us to analyse and understand Norman castles built in England between 1066 and 1087. [5]

The intention of this question was to test candidates' ability to come up with a genuine historical enquiry, using the interpretation as a starting point.

The vast majority of candidates were able to ask a question, or questions, or indicate something that they would like to find out. At Level 1, these were typically things such as finding out about how long it took the Normans to build these castles, whereabouts they were built, and which materials were used. Some questions focused on this particular castle rather than coming up with a wider historical question about Norman castles more generally.

More successful responses, rewarded at Level 2, framed a wider historical enquiry around a secondorder concept, such as causation, with the most frequent question being why castles were built by the Normans in this period, and what their main purpose was. Other lines of investigation that were given marks were how castle-building changed across the period, what the impact of castle-building was on the local Saxon population, and how similar/different Norman castles were in different areas. Fewer candidates were able to go on to indicate how this might help us to analyse and understand the topic (Level 3).

Some candidates told us things they knew about castles, or answered their own question, which is not what the question is asking them to do. Several candidates had clearly been told to use certain words such as 'significance' or 'diversity', but their attempts to place these within their response often betrayed a lack of understanding and came across as muddled or contrived.

# Exemplar 3

b I would choose to investigate how call the trip bailed would Usually beg. This is be cause
Low Eall the tit baileg would
USUALLY beg. This is befause
Knowing how for the normons
COULD See, and be Seen From,
WOUL allow US EO Under Stand
bow effective normer castles
Were in intimidating a
Large orea. The use of
Castles was ozten veg
to Preventing and Sestroying
Clellions, because of guist Unowing how far these
Unowing how far these
COSECES COULD GE SEEN FOM
Would help us to understand
What areas were seen
les tig having a brigh
GIGHLOR rebellion bl
willian.

This response is a full mark answer.

The candidate has begun with the feature about the height of the castle, and then links this to how far the people in the castle could see being able to help us work out where rebellions were in the country as motte and bailey castles were linked to rebellion and control.

# **Misconception**

This question does not require candidates to answer their question and it is not asking what candidates already know. Furthermore, although it is expected that candidates should be familiar with the concept of historical enquiry, there is no requirement that they use particular words or phrases and sometimes it is counter-productive to instruct them to do so. Candidates should also make sure that they consider the second part of the question, and explain how their question with help further understanding of X.

# Question 7

# 7 Interpretations B and C both focus on the impact of the Norman Conquest on England.

How far do they differ and what might explain any differences?

[12]

This question offers candidates the opportunity to show that they can identify the different ways that historical events, periods or figures are presented, and explain why they may differ.

The interpretations in this question, about the impact of The Norman Conquest, were accessible to most candidates. The vast majority of candidates were able to pick out individual points to show how they were similar or different and were rewarded at Level 2. Most frequently, this was pointing out that the interpretations both agreed that the Conquest was a significant event in England's history which resulted in a great deal of change. Differences at this level included B focusing more on changes linked to language and the people, while C focused on architecture. Some candidates did not quite get on to comparing how the impact of the Conquest was presented in each interpretation but did point out differences in how the Normans themselves were seen.

However, many candidates were able to explain the different overall impressions given about the impact of The Norman Conquest on England. Most typically, this involved comparing B's negative portrayal of the Conquest's impact with C's more positive or balanced one. Where candidates were able to support these comparisons using relevant detail from the interpretations, their responses were placed in Level 3.

Fewer, but still a fair number of candidates were then able to explain why B and C had portrayed the impact of the Conquest in these lights, and these responses moved into Level 4. Successful responses fully explained reasons for this difference, going beyond the lines given in the provenance. Responses which simply asserted, for example, that 'B is negative because Freedman believed in the superiority of the Anglo-Saxons so he would see the Conquest as negative' did not meet this criterion. More successful responses explained *why* this meant he would see the Conquest as negative, e.g. because it made 'slaves' of the Anglo-Saxons and brought 'foreign' influence on Anglo-Saxon 'blood'. Alternatively, many candidates explained that the reason C was more positive was that it was written by a heritage group whose main focus was more likely to be on the architectural impact on the Conquest. They were therefore trying to attract visitors to the 'spectacular castles and great abbeys' that they manage.

A minority of candidates' responses did not proceed beyond Level 1 because they either dealt with the interpretations separately, with no valid comparison, or else compared the provenance of the interpretations rather than their content. Only a very few candidates misunderstood the question and attempted to evaluate the interpretations by explaining how reliable they were, given what they had learned (this was not what the question was asking)..

# Assessment for learning

Candidates should take a moment before beginning their response to consider, 'What impression does the author (or artist, etc.) want to give me about X?' They should then select details from the extract (or image) to support their response. They should also be encouraged to consider specific reasons that a particular organisation or individual might want to give us that impression. Because these will be interpretation-specific, it is important that candidates are given numerous opportunities to 'bump into' historical interpretations to practise this kind of thing routinely. Generic or pre-learned responses will rarely make it to the higher levels.

# Question 8\*

8\* In his 2012 article 'The dark side of the Anglo-Saxons', historian Ryan Lavelle argues that late Anglo-Saxon society was 'certainly not free, equal or democratic'.

How far do you agree with this view?

[20]

This was a less popular question and, on the whole, was not answered as well as Question 9.

Candidates who chose this question had clearly studied Anglo-Saxon society and knew what the question was asking. Valid points raised included:

- how the position of women in Anglo-Saxon society (e.g. the legal right to own land, equal value in the Wergild system, and the ability to divorce an adulterous husband) challenges the interpretation because society could be considered 'equal'
- how the position of Ceorls (who made up the bulk of the population and took part in local decisionmaking and trials in local courts) also challenges the interpretation because society was in some ways 'free' or 'democratic'
- how the hierarchical nature of society (particularly the existence of thralls and the Wergild system) meant that Lavelle was correct in arguing society was not 'equal'
- how women's rights in practice rarely matched the theoretical sexual 'equality'
- how Ceorls were, by 1065, becoming more tightly bound to the Thegn they served, and were therefore not really 'free'.

At Level 2 and above, candidates included precise evidence to support their point and explained how it addressed the question of whether Anglo-Saxon society was 'free', 'equal' or 'democratic'. Responses which attained Level 5 put forward four explained points, with at least one point on either side of the argument.

However, there were a number of responses which fell back on generalised points about 'good things' and 'bad things' about Anglo-Saxon England or instead used their knowledge to address whether or not there was an Anglo-Saxon 'Golden Age'. This analysis, although of course related, is not what the question was asking. Some candidates attempted to include material which was not relevant to the question, such as the Church, culture or architecture in Anglo-Saxon England. These kinds of responses could not be marked beyond Level 1.

Less successful candidates tended to list facts they knew rather than make a wider point and then use specific evidence to support it, or else made accurate but vague assertions which did not demonstrate the knowledge required. Sometimes these responses wrote about modern democracy, suffrage and parliament, and then asserted that Anglo-Saxon society was lacking these elements. These responses were also generally placed in Level 1.

# Question 9\*

**9\*** The history website BBC Bitesize argues that 'William's victory at Hastings in 1066 owed much to his planning and experience'.

How far do you agree with this view?

[20]

This was, perhaps not surprisingly, the most popular choice of the two essay-style questions. On the whole, candidates seemed well-prepared for this question, which was asking why William won the Battle of Hastings in 1066.

The quality of the responses varied enormously. A wide range of valid points were given marks by examiners and included:

- how William's careful military planning and preparation in Normandy (such as building ships, moving supplies to the coast and negotiating support) increased his chances of success at Hastings
- how William's preparation could also be seen in the fact that he brought along pre-built parts of wooden castles, which allowed him to establish his position in Pevensey and prepare for battle
- how William's previous experiences in Normandy meant he was able to deploy a range of successful tactics (for example, goading Harold Godwinson into early battle by pillaging his lands once he landed, and the successful use of the 'feigned flight')
- how William's victory could equally be attributed to luck (for example, had he landed in England when he intended to he would have been faced with a full Saxon army, thereby decreasing his chances of victory, and it was only the wind which prevented this. Furthermore, it was lucky for William that Hardrada's and Tostig's army landed in the North first, drawing the Saxon army away, and meaning William could land unimpeded)
- how Harold's army was considerably weakened by their battle with the Norwegians at Stamford Bridge, along with their long marches, which worked in William's favour
- how Harold decided not to wait for longer in London to reinforce his troops, which ultimately benefitted William.

As with Question 8, candidates were rewarded at Level 2 and above when they included precise evidence to support their point and explained why it meant that William was victorious at Hastings. Responses which attained Level 5 put forward four explained points, with at least one point on either side of the argument.

One of the common misconceptions examiners came across in these responses was that a Norman army, with its use of cavalry and archers, was always going to defeat an Anglo-Saxon army fighting on foot, with many candidates assuming that the outcome was inevitable because the Norman style of fighting was 'superior'. More successful responses explained the impact of the use of archers or cavalry on the outcome of this particular battle. For example, many candidates explained how the Norman cavalry, although unable to make much impact at the start of the battle, became instrumental once the Saxon shield wall was broken.

Less successful candidates tended to produce a narrative of events of 1066 – sometimes muddled – rather than organise their responses into discrete points and direct their knowledge at the question, or else made accurate but vague assertions which did not demonstrate the knowledge required. These responses were generally placed in Level 1.

### Assessment for learning



As with Questions 4 and 5, candidates who have precise historical evidence at their fingertips will reach the high levels on essay questions, but they must also be able to deploy that evidence effectively, explaining how it answers the question asked.

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