



14-19 CHANGES  
A LEVEL

# ***Support Materials***

## **GCE History B H108/H508: Teacher Support Booklet**

**AS/A Level History A**

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# 1 Introduction

The new structure of assessment at Advanced level has been introduced for teaching from September 2008. The specifications are designed to provide candidates with an introduction to History B.

These specifications are set out in the form of units. Each teaching unit is assessed by its associated unit of assessment. Guidance notes are provided with these specifications to assist teachers in understanding the detail necessary for each unit.

It is important to make the point that the Teacher Support plays a secondary role to the Specification itself. The Specification is the document on which assessment is based and specifies what content and skills need to be covered in delivering the course. At all times, therefore, this Teacher Support should be read in conjunction with the Specification. If clarification on a particular point is sought then that clarification should be found in the Specification itself.

OCR recognises that the teaching of this qualification will vary greatly from school to school and from teacher to teacher. With that in mind, this Teacher Guide/Notes for Guidance is offered as guidance but will be subject to modifications by the individual teacher.

## 2 AS Units

### Units F983 and F984: *Using Historical Evidence*

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#### Using Historical evidence

- What is required by the examination:

Candidates will need to interpret, analyse and evaluate a set of historical sources.

Candidates will need to use their contextual knowledge of the period in interpreting, analysing and evaluating these historical sources.

Candidates should treat the sources as a set, for example cross-referencing and grouping the sources.

Candidates will be asked to test an interpretation, judging the extent to which it can be sustained on the basis of the evidence deduced from the set of sources provided.

Candidates will be asked to reach a judgement in which they justify either retaining the provided interpretation or amending or replacing the interpretation, on the basis of evidence deduced from the provided sources.

Candidates will be asked to identify the strengths and limitations of the set of sources provided; besides identifying what the sources, interpreted in context, can reveal about the issue. This might include identifying significant omissions, explaining difficulties in interpreting a particular kind of source, or in interpreting the meaning of the source because of contextual issues.

In the second question it would be appropriate for candidates to use their wider knowledge of the period to identify significant omissions in the sources provided, for example in arguing that the provided sources result in a skewed interpretation because of the way they have been selected.

In evaluating the sources, candidates should show an understanding of the generic issues associated with particular types of sources and should demonstrate the ability to apply this understanding to the particular sources provided.

Candidates will be expected to show an understanding of the main changes, developments and continuities within their chosen Study Topic.

- What is not required by the examination.

Candidates do not need to display extensive and detailed knowledge of the period.

Candidates should avoid using contextual knowledge to test the interpretation provided; they should use evidence deduced from the sources for this purpose. The question does not require this approach and it is likely to distract the candidate from the task in the first question.

#### The interpretation, analysis and evaluation of a set of sources

The teaching of the Unit should start with a short introduction in which consideration is given to a range of issues involved in using historical sources. The purpose of this introduction is that students should become self-aware practitioners in the skills and understanding involved in using historical sources, so that they are better equipped to apply their understanding of source-related skills to an unfamiliar set of sources and questions in the examination. Teachers may use examples from their chosen Study Topic, but should also consider the benefits of using a range of source material drawn from familiar periods, for example from the content areas covered at GCSE or from topical issues. In this way the students can build on their

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understanding of the issues involved in using sources without the pressure of acquiring new content and contextual knowledge at the same time.

The issues to be considered concern the interpretation and evaluation of individual sources, the use of sets of sources and, at a more basic level, approaches to testing historical interpretations in terms of their nature, status and purpose.

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The issues to be considered are listed in the specification as follows:

- the distinction between historical sources and historical evidence, and between primary and secondary sources;
- the wide range of different types of historical sources e.g. written, pictorial, statistical, and the different issues they raise as well as the different uses they have;
- understanding that historical sources do not speak for themselves, they have to be interpreted;
- appreciating that historical sources do not have a fixed and unalterable meaning - they can be interpreted in many different ways;
- the disciplined use of informed imagination when interpreting historical sources;
- an understanding that interpretations of historical sources must be based on, and consistent with, the content of those sources, and with their historical contexts;
- the importance of the questions asked about historical sources;
- the importance of the purposes, interests and the intended audiences of the authors of historical sources;
- reading historical sources 'against the grain', and ways in which sources can be useful as evidence in ways not intended by the authors;
- historicism and the reading of historical sources; hindsight and the use of sources (the regressive method);
- using historical sources together and cross-referencing between them;
- understanding how and why different interpretations of the past are constructed;
- understanding how interpretations of the past can be amended in the light of evidence;
- using historical sources to test the validity of interpretations.

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These issues may be taken in any order; teachers will wish to construct a scheme of work for this element of the Unit that is appropriate to the level at which their students are currently working and which is adapted to the range of sources available for their chosen Study Topic. For example, the completeness of evidence is an issue that is more relevant to some topics than others while a detailed study of sources produced using advanced forms of technology would be redundant for those studying medieval topics. Nonetheless, it should be noted that students will revisit these skills in both A2 Units, so it is inadvisable to follow too narrow a programme of study at this stage.

Some of the skills listed may appear to be low-level skills that students should have mastered at an earlier stage. It is, nevertheless, important to revisit these skills so that candidates acquire a clear understanding of what is required, consciously adopting a systematic approach to source analysis, interpretation and evaluation.

Teachers may wish to cover the issues concerned with the analysis, interpretation and evaluation of sources first, followed by some work on the content of the chosen Study Unit. They may then wish to focus on issues concerning the nature of generalisations interpreting the past and the use of sources to test interpretations of the past before applying this understanding to examination-style questions on the chosen Study Topic.

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In addressing the issues listed in the specification, teachers may wish to consider the following points:

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- Many GCSE candidates have acquired, and not yet rejected, misconceptions regarding the relative value of historical sources. For example, they claim that sources written by 'someone who was there' are preferable to those reporting events by 'someone who was not there' on the grounds that the author of the former 'knew what happened' so is more truthful; the camera is deemed never to lie. The rejection of generalisations such as these should be addressed in teaching students how to interpret and evaluate sources at this level. For example in questioning the usefulness of labels such as 'primary source' and 'secondary source' students should take into account that a source may provide both first and second-hand evidence, depending on the questions asked of it.
  - Visual sources are more difficult to interpret than written ones for many students as there are no clues as to what evidence should be deduced from them and often more contextual knowledge is needed to interpret them. For example, portraits of Renaissance princes contain a significant amount of imagery; the messages about the patron given by the materials used in Renaissance paintings, such as lapis lazuli, would have been obvious to the contemporary viewer but need to be pointed out to the modern viewer. Hence it is more important to establish a range of questions to ask of visual sources than of written ones, and for students to become familiar with the different genres of visual material available as sources in a given period.
  - Statistical material often presents a challenge to students. It can be difficult to interpret and hence use as evidence because its value may depend on the evidence base from which it is generated. Hence students need to be aware of the strengths and limitations of the sources from which evidence has been derived. For example, figures for the numbers who died in the Black Death may be distorted because of the nature and extent of the institutions and settlements which kept records of deaths. The numbers involved in Tudor rebellions may be difficult to gauge as they are based on estimates. However the number executed after unrest was recorded more accurately by the authorities.
  - The extent to which archaeological evidence is used will vary from one Study Topic to another and its interpretation will depend largely on the period from which it is drawn, and the extent to which conclusions drawn from it can be corroborated on the basis of evidence from other types of source material and from the extent and interpretation of similar objects. For example, historians' ideas about the use to which coinage was put in the Viking period depend on the incidence and circumstances of finds.
  - Sources such as political cartoons or literature intended to convey a message, and which therefore require students to understand the attitudes and ideas of the intended audience, are more difficult for students to interpret than those where the author or artist addresses his or her audience more directly. For example, late 18th and early 19th century British cartoons about radicalism often contain references to the symbolism of the French Revolution or to the Napoleonic wars. These references would have been readily understood by contemporaries, but require students to have a wider knowledge of the period if they are to be grasped. First World War poetry is often studied, but students would need to beware of making simplistic assumptions about attitudes to war when using it as source material.
  - In the examination, candidates will be expected to use their contextual knowledge of the period to interpret and evaluate sources. Students will therefore need a sound knowledge of the kind of sources that can be used to study the chosen Study Topic, and the strengths and limitations of these sources for historians. They will also need a general understanding of the context of the period in order to interpret the sources historically.
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- In using sources as a set, students should take into account their evaluation of individual sources. They should then go beyond this, to cross-reference and/or generalise from the sources. Conclusions that rely on an interpretation of a source that has been rejected as invalid or flawed are themselves unsatisfactory.

### Change, Development and Continuity

In helping students to gain an understanding of the main changes, developments and continuities, teachers might find it useful to familiarise students with relevant terminology associated with the concepts. This is based on the premise that students understand more readily what they can identify with a name or term. Terms should include turning-point, false dawn, and dead end to refer to specific events or actions. Terms such as trend, continuity and discontinuity are useful in describing the pattern of change. It would also be useful to consider appropriate terms for different rates of change.

The interpretations in the questions set will be couched in these terms, so students will need to acquire a sound understanding in order to test the interpretation provided effectively. If the nature and status of the interpretation is not recognised, then attempts to criticise, amend or replace it are likely to founder. For example, some interpretations in the Specimen Assessments Materials are expressed as general statements implying continuity across the period of around one hundred years. Examples include: 'The contribution of women in war had little impact on attitudes to their role in society in the twentieth century.' 'Tudor rebellions were caused mainly by economic problems.' Other interpretations imply gradual change: 'The lives of ordinary people improved as a result of the Black Death.' It would be reasonable to expect questions in which the interpretation referred to a turning point or discontinuity. In this case at least one of the sources would directly concern the event or action identified. Candidates' ability to respond to the question should not depend on detailed knowledge or understanding of a particular event or action.

Besides this, students should learn to recognise the nature of the claim being made in the interpretation. In the Specimen Assessment Materials, some interpretations apparently allow for no exception: 'The lives of ordinary people improved as a result of the Black Death' and 'German and Italian unification and the states that emerged from unification were the creations of Bismarck and Cavour.' Others, however, allow for some exception: 'In the period 1780 to the 1880s radicalism was mainly concerned with economic and social issues' and 'The main factor affecting the rights of African Americans in this period was Federal Government action.' The ability to recognise exactly what claim the interpretation is making will be important to students in reaching a conclusion in which they justify either retaining the provided interpretation, or adapting it, or replacing it.

It should be noted that if students do decide to replace the provided interpretation with a new one, the new interpretation should focus on the same issue as that provided in the question.

### The Study Topic

In covering the Study Topic content, the main focus in the classroom should be on an inquiry-led approach, using a range of sources to make deductions about and test interpretations of the topic. In order to do this effectively, students will need to have an overview of the main issues and developments and this may be acquired initially through the use of secondary material such as textbooks and appropriate web-sites. Thereafter their knowledge and understanding may be developed through a range of approaches with the stress on source-based investigation.

While the emphasis in this Unit is on the interpretation, analysis and evaluation of sources, knowledge is also being tested. Students will need to have a sound understanding of the themes and issues in the Specification. In particular they should focus on change, development

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and continuity within the Study Topic. While knowledge of specific events or actions will not be required, candidates will be expected to show knowledge and understanding of themes and issues. For example, in covering African American Civil Rights, candidates would not be expected to know the details of Supreme Court judgements, such as Plessey vs. Ferguson and Brown vs. Board of Education, but they could be expected to know that the interpretation of Civil Rights set out in amendments to the Constitution in the 1860s and 1870s changed over time. Students will also need to be aware of the range of sources generally used by historians in studying the chosen Study Topic. They should apply the techniques learned in the introductory section of the Unit to these sources. Teachers will want to ensure that their students have an adequate understanding of the uses that may be made of particular types of source and of the limitations, drawbacks and problems associated with these types of source in relation to the chosen Study Topic.

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The types of Sources likely to be used include:

**The impact and consequences of the Black Death in England:**

- Chronicles
- Manorial records
- Monastic records
- Central government documents such as ordinances and statutes

**Protest and Rebellion in Tudor England 1489-1601**

- Chronicles
- Legal records
- Private papers such as letters
- Documents published by the rebels

**Radicalism, Popular Politics and Control, 1780-1880s**

- Private papers such as letters
- Newspapers, including illustrations
- Government documents such as legislation and letters
- Published records such as autobiographies
- Recorded speeches
- Photographs

**The impact of war on British society and politics since 1900**

- Government and other official documents such as reports, statistics and legislation
- Personal views as recorded in letters, autobiographies, literature etc.
- Visual evidence such as posters, advertisements and photographs
- Newspapers and magazines

**The Vikings in Europe 790s-1066**

- Chronicles
- Sagas and other forms of literature
- Official government documents
- (Photographs of) archaeological remains and sites

**The Italian Renaissance c1420-c1550:**

- Contemporary commentaries and histories
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- Diplomatic records and letters
  - Records from businesses, including contracts
  - Church records, including those of confraternities
  - (Black and white photographs of) works of art and architecture

#### **European Nationalism 1815-1914**

- International treaties
- Writings on political theory
- Government documents including letters and diplomatic records
- Personal private and public documents such as memoirs, diaries and letters

#### **Race and American Society 1865-1970s:**

- Government documents such as constitutional documents and judgements, federal and state legislation
  - Speeches and documents written by key individuals
  - Photographs of people and events
  - Newspaper reports
  - Records of key institutions such as the NAACP
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## 3 A2 Units

A2 History B is designed to enable candidates to build on the History B understanding acquired at AS History B.

### Unit F987: *Historical Significance*

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*Information regarding coursework can be found in the separate Coursework Support Booklet which will be loaded to this website in January 2008.*

## 4 Resources for AS Units

### Units F983 and F984: Using Historical Evidence

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#### **Resources – Introductory materials**

Hodder Murray: Doing OCR History B

#### **Protest and Rebellion in Tudor England 1489-1601**

Nicholas Fellows

Anthony Fletcher

#### **Radicalism, Popular Politics and Control, 1780-1880s**

Chartists and Chartism, Hodder and Stoughton

#### **The impact of war on British society and politics since 1900**

Britain 1900-45, Hodder and Stoughton,

#### **The Vikings in Europe 790s-1066**

Martin Arnold, *The Vikings, Culture and Conquest*, Hambledon Continuum, 2006

Peter Sawyer (ed.), *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Vikings*, OUP, 1997

John Hayward, *The Penguin Historical Atlas of the Vikings*, Penguin Books, 1995

Angus Konstam, *Historical Atlas of the Viking World*, Mercury Books, 2004

Else Roesdahl, *The Vikings*, Penguin, 1998

Judith Jesch, *Women in the Viking Age*, The Boydell Press, 1991

Chartrand, Durham, Harrison and Heath, *The Vikings: Voyages of Discovery and Plunder*, Osprey, 2006

Penguin Classics publishes a large number of texts, including *The Vinland Sagas*, *Egil's Saga*, *King Garald's Saga*, *The Saga of Grettir the Strong*.

#### **The Italian Renaissance c1420-c1550**

Alison Brown, *The Renaissance*, Longman, 1999

Robert Hole, *Renaissance Italy*, Hodder and Stoughton, 1998

Nancy G Siraisi, *Medieval and Renaissance Medicine*, University of Chicago Press, 1990

Penguin Classics publishes a large number of texts including Machiavelli, *The Prince*, the *Discourses*. The former is available in a range of editions, sometimes with other of his writings.

#### **European Nationalism 1815-1914**

Alan Farmer and Andrina Stiles, *The Unification of Germany 1815-1919*, 3rd edition, Hodder Murray, 2007

Vyvyan Brendan, *The Making of Modern Italy 1800-1871*, Hodder and Stoughton, 1998

Andrina Stiles, *The Unification of Italy*, Hodder and Stoughton, 2001

#### **Race and American Society 1865-1970s**

Paterson, Willoughby and Willoughby, *Civil Rights in the USA 1863-1980*, Heinemann, 2001