



Geography

GCSE 2012

Geography A

Candidate Style Answers
A731/02 Contemporary
Themes in Geography
(Higher Tier)

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INTRODUCTION

These support materials are intended to support teachers in their marking. There are four candidate style responses with accompanying commentary. These exemplars are based on the published Specimen Assessment Materials (SAMs), which can be downloaded from the relevant OCR webpage for the specification.

The exemplars and commentaries should be read alongside the specification which is available from the website.

OCR will update these materials as appropriate.

Centres may wish to use these support materials in a number of ways:

- teacher training in interpretation of the marking criteria
- departmental standardisation meetings
- exemplars for candidates to review.

EXEMPLAR AND COMMENTARY

ANSWER 1

Japan is on a plate boundary where the Pacific plate and the Eurasian plate meet. The plates are moving along a constructive plate boundary and Japan gets stuck. The oceanic plate on the Pacific plate is forced down beneath the Eurasian plate. When the plates move an earthquake happens and all the buildings fall down. It can also cause a tsunami like in Japan 2011.

COMMENTARY FOR ANSWER 1

On the face of it this is a good answer but careful analysis of the mark scheme shows that it can only score two marks.

There is one mark in the first sentence for stating that 'Japan is on a plate boundary' which is highlighted in the first sentence of the indicative content of the mark scheme but no marks for naming the plates. In the second sentence it is clear that the candidate has confused the key words, constructive and convergent, so this can be awarded zero marks.

There is a second mark for the idea of subduction in the third sentence but no further marks can be awarded. The idea of plates moving needs further explanation and they do not say how the plates moving cause an earthquake. The end of the final sentence is correct but irrelevant.

EXEMPLAR AND COMMENTARY

ANSWER 2

The movement of the Pacific plate under the Eurasian plate close to Japan is the reason it has so many earthquakes. The two plates meet on a convergent plate boundary and as the Pacific plate is subducted it might stick. The plates will continue to try to move and this will cause pressure to build up. Eventually the plates will slip causing a series of waves called an earthquake.

COMMENTARY FOR ANSWER 2

This is a correct summation of the topic and would score three marks.

There are marks available for the idea Japan is on the edge of a plate boundary and the idea that the plates are moving towards each other and one is forced under the other. The candidate explains that the build up and release of pressure is the actual mechanism that causes an earthquake. The use of language is accurate and key words are used appropriately which may have an impact on the SPaG available throughout the paper.

EXEMPLAR AND COMMENTARY

ANSWER 1

In Haiti there was an earthquake. It knocked down over a million houses in the capital Port-au-Prince. This would have a big affect on people as it means that they would have nowhere to live. They also had no clean drinking water in the shanty towns so they were more likely to get diseases in the temporary housing that they were living in. The roads and ports were destroyed so it was hard for the aid to get to people so they went hungry. The road to Jacmel took ten days to clear.

The economy was also affected as a lot of shops and other buildings fell down in Port-au-Prince. This means people lost their jobs and couldn't get any money for supplies. If no-one has any money then the local economy could go down and cause problems in the future.

COMMENTARY FOR ANSWER 1

This is a Level 2 answer. It has a sound description of the impacts and has some place specific details naming some areas and using facts about the place.

There is enough evidence to suggest that the candidate knows about the earthquake in question and that they are not writing in general terms however there is not enough detail to award a Level 3. The quality of the answer also moves from one idea to the next without fully explaining the answer or linking it directly to the question. There are also a few areas of imprecision in the answer. Phrases such as 'supplies', 'could go down' and 'problems' are not specific and do not convey their meaning clearly. The quality of the written communication is good so the top mark in the level can be considered.

The response would therefore gain Level 2, 4 marks and a further 2 marks for SPaG.

EXEMPLAR AND COMMENTARY

ANSWER 2

In January 2010 an earthquake struck Haiti. It killed approximately 300,000 people and destroyed 40% of the houses in the capital city Port-au-Prince. The people that were left homeless had to live in temporary accommodation made of plastic sheeting in a shanty town on the edge of the city. They had no running water and in October 3000 had died due to a cholera outbreak. The impact on the people was particularly severe because Port-au-Prince port and Toussaint L'Ouverture International Airport were destroyed and it was difficult to unload supplies such as medicine and fresh water. The road network was also disrupted with aid struggling to use the Port-au-Prince to Jacmel road 10 days after the earthquake meaning aid was slow to reach rural areas increasing the impact on the local people.

The earthquake also had an impact on the economy. The collapsed buildings included 30,000 commercial buildings, the port and airport. This stops people shopping and trade with other countries slowing down. This means people lose their jobs and the Haitian Government estimated that 20% of jobs were lost permanently. This means that there is less money going into the local economy meaning that there are fewer jobs and starting a negative multiplier.

COMMENTARY FOR ANSWER 2

The examiner needs to take a holistic approach meaning that they need to consider the quality of the whole answer rather than look at each sentence individually and judge it without reference to the context it is written in.

In the above answer the candidate addresses both people and the economy and in doing so uses place-specific information as evidence in answering the question. In the first half of the answer the candidate uses the names of a variety of places and facts that are directly relevant to the question. The fact that the candidate uses the facts does not in itself mean that they reach Level 3 but more it is the way that they are used to support an argument that is clearly linked to the original question. Just writing a couple of sentences that have place-specific detail without context in it would not be enough to reach Level 3 on its own. The candidate is also able to link together ideas to form more complex ideas rather than stopping after making one good point on a specific topic.

In the second part of the answer trade is linked to jobs, which is linked to the economy and then back to jobs. This allows the answer to be awarded a Level 3. The quality of written communication is also high so the top mark in the level can be considered. Therefore, this response would be awarded Level 3, 6 marks and a further 3 marks for SPaG.

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