



AS-LEVEL HISTORY

Component 7041/1F
Report on the Examination

Specification 7041
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Component 7041/1F

Industrialisation and the People: Britain, c1783–1885

Component 1F: The impact of industrialisation: Britain, c1783–1832

General Comments

It is pleasing to report on the popularity of this new breadth study option on British political and socio-economic history. Most students had clearly learned a good deal about the period, particularly the political elements of the specification and they were able to deploy this knowledge effectively in their responses. Teachers had been able to engage students in the issues raised by the specification and student responses were often thoughtful and not mechanical. Nearly every student showed that they had taken the exam seriously and even those who were not able to provide a detailed understanding or knowledge of the subject made lengthy efforts to try to respond to the questions.

Most students were able to deal with the demands of the examination. Very few students ran out of time and most of the answers showed evidence of planning and structure. Nearly all of the responses to Question 01 showed that students had read the content of the extracts with some care and discrimination. In tackling the essay questions many students wrote balanced answers and were well-schooled in making a point, explaining it, providing evidence and linking points into a coherent argument. The few and relatively weak responses to Question 03 suggested reticence among students in addressing social and economic aspects. Social and economic questions will be examined regularly at both A-level and AS level on this component and students must be prepared accordingly.

Section A

Question 1

Most students made a basic introductory comparison and then considered the two extracts in turn. Many explained their views of the first extract and then made comparative comments when dealing with the second extract which were further developed in the comparison further in their conclusion.

Examiners were looking for three key elements in the answers:

i) An understanding of the interpretations in the two extracts

Better students identified the general thrust of each of the extracts and then used individual parts of the extracts to discuss which fitted into this general overview. They consistently referenced their own knowledge to show how the interpretation could be supported or rejected. Weaker students tended to cherry pick quotes from the extracts which were not always fully understood due to partial reading. For example, in Extract A some claimed that Bryant was balanced in his view of Liverpool as an 'ideal leader'. Many also missed that the question asked for an interpretation of Liverpool as Prime Minister and engaged in lengthy discussions of the events of the storming of the Bastille. Equally in Extract B, most students failed to note that Gash was commenting on Liverpool's speeches rather than his government's actions and that Gash was claiming that at the end of his premiership,

Liverpool's government was more popular than at any other time in his administration. Thus criticisms of Gash based on comparisons to Pitt's popularity or Liverpool's own unpopularity earlier in his premiership were not effective.

(ii) An understanding of the historical context

The best students not only understood the tenor of the times but also provided evidence both to support and to reject the interpretations being considered. Some very efficiently – as the extracts were so clearly in opposition – used direct comparisons between extracts to prevent any duplication of material. Thinner answers were more generalist or one-sided or indeed only talked about the content of the extracts without introducing any own knowledge. This may be due to lack of own knowledge or an approach too focussed on the extracts' content.

(iii) Comparison between the two extracts

Many students showed an excellent understanding of the two extracts, drawing some effective comparisons between them, but then finished with a very weak comparative overview. Equally many students paid little attention to this element and merely commented on only one extract's merits – often based on level of factual support. Many students also adopted an approach more suited to Component 2 sources and made extensive comparisons of the provenance and tone of the extracts which limited their opportunities for exploring the interpretations. Better students drew together their intermediate comparisons into a well-integrated comparison using understanding of the interpretations and contextual knowledge to form a substantiated judgement. One final small point; some students used the word 'invaluable' to mean 'not valuable'; this misuse of the term led to some confusion in responses.

Section B

Question 02

Most students chose this question and showed good knowledge of Pitt's Terror and used other ways of trying to measure how serious was the threat posed by radicalism to the government. Many failed to mention the period 1783–1789 although of course the more serious challenge was posed after 1789. Some used Fox as a way of addressing the threat of radicalism before 1789 which was credited. Better students tended to find a variety of ways of measuring the seriousness of radical threat and producing some evidence of numbers of members and so on which gave their argument much firmer evidential support. Better students also were prepared to provide balanced answers and engage in evaluating the two views of the question rather than a 'Yes it was' and 'No it wasn't' approach.

Question 03

Relatively few students chose this question although it was broad in scope and offered a wide range of possible approaches to the impact of changes in agriculture upon the British people. The examiner was left with the suspicion that the emphasis on teaching had been on the political side of the course. Future exams will inevitably test students' knowledge and understanding of socio-economic elements of the specification to ensure coverage. As it was, this question seemed to be the refuge of the weaker student with little knowledge. Only a few students knew in detail any of the changes which took place in agriculture over the time and could then discuss how these did or did not benefit the British people. Far too many knew of no changes at all or tried to get balance by

comparing the impact of changes in agriculture with that of better known changes in industry and transport which missed the actual focus of the question.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.