
A-level HISTORY

Wars and Welfare: Britain in Transition, 1906–1957

Paper 2M

Specimen 2014

Morning Time allowed: 2 hours 30 minutes

Materials

For this paper you must have:

- an AQA 12-page answer book.

Instructions

- Use black ink or black ball-point pen.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer book. The **Paper Reference** is **2M**.
- Answer **three** questions.
In **Section A** answer Question 01.
In **Section B** answer **two** questions.

Information

- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- The maximum mark for this paper is 80.
- You will be marked on your ability to:
 - use good English
 - organise information clearly
 - use specialist vocabulary where appropriate.

Advice

- You are advised to spend about:
 - 60 minutes on Question 01
 - 45 minutes on each of the two questions in Section B.
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Section AAnswer Question 01.

Source A

Adapted from Seebohm Rowntree's study of lifestyles and poverty in York in 1936. Rowntree was an industrialist and a philanthropist.

The economic condition of the workers is better by 30 per cent than in 1899. Housing is immeasurably better, health is better, education is better. Cheap means of transport, the provision of public libraries and cheap books, the wireless, the cinema and other places of entertainment, have placed within the reach of everyone forms of recreation unknown forty years ago. However, if instead of looking backward we look forward, then we see how far the standard of living of many workers falls short of any standard which would be regarded, even for the time being, as satisfactory. Great though the progress made during the last forty years has been, there is no cause for satisfaction in the fact that in a country so rich as England, over 30 per cent of the workers in a typical provincial city should have incomes so small that it is beyond their means to live even at the stringently economical level adopted as a minimum in this survey, nor in the fact that almost half the children of working-class parents spend the first five years of their lives in poverty and that almost a third of them live below the poverty line for ten years or more. We have examined the causes of poverty. Every one is capable of remedy without dislocating industry or our national finances.

Source B

Adapted from a survey by George Orwell of living conditions in Lancashire and Yorkshire in 1936. 'The Road to Wigan Pier' was published by the Left Book Club.

The most cruel and evil effect of the Means Test is the way in which it breaks up families. Old people, sometimes bedridden, are driven out of their homes by it. The life for a single unemployed man is dreadful. He lives sometimes in a common lodging house, more often in a 'furnished room', for which he usually pays six shillings a week, finding for himself as best he can on the other nine. Of course he cannot feed or look after himself properly and he spends his days loafing in the public library or any other place where he can keep warm. There is no work to look for, and everybody knows it. You can't go on looking for work every day for seven years. To study unemployment and its effects you have to go to the industrial areas. In the South, unemployment exists, but it is scattered and queerly unobtrusive. There are plenty of rural districts where a man out of work is almost unheard of and you don't anywhere see the spectacle of whole blocks of cities living on the dole.

Source C

Adapted from JB Priestley's book 'English Journey' published in 1934. JB Priestley, a famous novelist, had travelled around the country making observations on what he saw.

I had seen England. I had seen a lot of Englands. How many? At once, three disengaged themselves from the shifting mass. The third England was the new post-war England, belonging far more to the age itself than to this particular island. America, I supposed, was its real birthplace. This is the England full of arterial and by-pass roads, of filling stations and factories that look like exhibition buildings, of giant cinemas and dance halls and cafes, bungalows with tiny garages, cocktail bars, Woolworths, motor-coaches, wireless, hiking and factory girls looking like actresses. You need money in this England, but you do not need much money. It is a large-scale, mass-production job, with cut prices. You could almost accept Woolworths as its symbol. Its cheapness is both its strength and its weakness. Unfortunately it is a bit too cheap. Too much of it is simply a trumpery imitation of something not very good even in the original. There is about it a rather depressing monotony. Monotonous but easy work and a liberal supply of cheap luxuries might between them create a set of people entirely without ambition or any real desire to think and act for themselves. Unlike nineteenth-century England, it is not politically minded.

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With reference to these sources and your understanding of the historical context, assess the value of these three sources to an historian studying living conditions in the 1930s.

[30 marks]

Section B

Answer **two** questions.

0 2

‘The Liberals introduced welfare reforms in the years 1906 to 1911 because they were afraid of the rise of Labour.’

Assess the validity of this view.

[25 marks]

0 3

‘The decline of the Liberal Party in the years 1916 to 1932 was mainly due to the First World War.’

Assess the validity of this view.

[25 marks]

0 4

‘The inadequacies of welfare provision highlighted by the Beveridge Report had been overcome by 1951.’

Assess the validity of this view.

[25 marks]

END OF QUESTIONS

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