



A Level **History**

7042/2F

Report on the examination

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Overall summary

The responses to the questions on this year's paper illustrated the full ability range of students sitting the examination. All levels of the mark scheme were used for both Section A and B, with some students progressing to the very top of Level 5. These responses were highly sophisticated and very impressive. Whilst there were some answers which were awarded Level 1, these were quite rare and there were very few students who had little to write on the questions.

Both Sections A and B were marked according to the respective generic levels mark schemes. The indicative content was also referred to, but any answer worthy of credit was awarded the appropriate mark, regardless of whether the information provided by the student was detailed in the indicative content as this is not prescriptive. Adjustments to the marks within these levels were made according to how well the student's work matched the level requirements. The mid-point of the band was always used as a starting point, with students reaching the top of the band demonstrating some evidence of the level above even if most of the response was firmly in the level below. Equally, students fell towards the bottom of the level if the answer did not consistently meet all the criteria of that level throughout the response.

Overall, there was little difference seen in the quality of the responses to the different areas of the specification content, and, to this extent, the questions proved effective at differentiating between students.

Question One

The source question was appropriately challenging and clearly differentiated between students when it came to their ability to assess value in relation to the question. Some students did this very well and were able to clearly explain why points were either valuable or limited in value in relation to the specific question set. These responses used contextual knowledge and were able to explore both value and limitations before reaching a judgement on each source in turn, which was very impressive. Other students were implicit rather than explicit in their assessment of value.

Some students were quite mechanical and would claim that a point was valuable without really explaining why – asserting rather than demonstrating value. Others would dismiss points as 'biased' whilst others argued whether the sources were or were not convincing rather than valuable. It is worth reminding students of the different question stems used for Component 1 and 2 and the differences in approach to these questions. Nevertheless, most students were able to assess all three of the sources and provide at least some limited comment on each.

Some students tried to compare the sources, which was not credited as the question is asking for an assessment of the value of each of the sources rather than for a comparison between them.

When assessing Source A, lots of students commented on the fact that the source came from Fénelon and suggested that this would be valuable due to his connection with the French court

and his outspoken attitude towards Louis XIV. Stronger students linked this to the content and referred to the fact that Fénelon is recounting a conversation with the former finance minister, suggesting that his sources are reasonably well informed when it comes to discontent in France. The majority of students were able to highlight war as a key cause of discontent in the later period and were able to put this into context successfully. It was also common for students to comment on Fénelon's exile and either use this to suggest value as he is able to comment on discontent in France from a place of protection, or, to suggest that his exile might limit the value of the source as he may be trying to place blame on Louis from a place of resentment.

Source B also seemed accessible to most students, and nearly all were able to engage with the fact that the source is directly from Louis XIV. Less successful answers engaged with this but dismissed the source as 'biased' as a result. Stronger answers considered the purpose of this source and why it was necessary for the King of France to make such a public statement. Stronger answers explained that the need for this source provided firm evidence of the state of discontent in France during the latter years of Louis XIV's reign. In regard to the content, the majority of students were able to put the continuation of the War of the Spanish Succession into context to explain why this was a valuable portrayal of the nature of discontent in France.

Source C also seemed accessible to students, with the majority identifying value in the fact that the source is from a bourgeois citizen living in France at the time. The majority of students were able to comment on the fact that this citizen was well placed to comment on the discontent experienced by those living in the provinces towards the end of Louis XIV's reign. The source refers to the lack of food available and lots of students were able to put this into context, either due to the impact of war or due to the famine that took place during the latter years of Louis XIV's reign.

When considering all three sources, stronger answers reached an overall judgement on the value of each source individually. Some students attempted to convey an overall judgement at the end of the answer, but this tended to be more of a comparison with the judgement centring around which source was the most valuable, which is not what the A Level source question requires.

Question Two

Most students seemed to be able to access this question. There was lots of knowledge regarding the problems faced by the Regency government in France with the majority of students being able to assess the key factor stated in the question. Lots of students were able to give examples of financial policies which weakened the Regency government and were able to compare and contrast with other challenges, such as the unpopularity of Mazarin and the Thirty Years War. Some students commented on the outbreak of the Fronde and either used this as evidence of a reaction to financial policies or as a separate challenge the Regency government faced. Occasionally, some students tried to incorporate evidence from the Fronde of the Nobles, which was not credited as it was outside of the time frame stated in the question.

Question Three

Most students seemed able to access this question. The majority of students seemed to understand the terms of the Treaty of Nijmegen and were able to use it to both argue that France was strengthened and/or weakened by the Dutch War, depending on how points were deployed. This provided a good opportunity for stronger students to show conceptual awareness as they were able to comment on the significance of any gains/losses. For example, some students would acknowledge that Louis XIV gave back territory at Nijmegen but kept Franche Comté which had important strategic significance. Other students considered the wider cost of the Dutch War, both financially and in regard to the reputation of Louis XIV.

Question Four

Most students seemed able to access this question. The majority of students seemed aware of the events post 1685 which led to the outbreak of the Nine Years War and were able to comment on Louis XIV's actions whilst comparing and contrasting with the actions of other European rulers. Some students assessed whether Louis XIV's actions were aggressive or defensive in order to determine whether or not he should be blamed for the conflict, which was a good way of showing conceptual awareness. A number of students commented on the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes as a key factor in support of the question. This worked well if students were able to comment on the consequences of this policy, such as the emigration of 200,000 protestants to neighbouring countries and how this encouraged Francophobia. However, some students didn't make this explicit link meaning that it was difficult to credit the point.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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