

GCSE
History
8145/2A/X

Report on the examination

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2A/A Britain: Health and the people: c 1000 to the present day

Question 1

The source for use with this question was an American magazine advertisement from a small drug company about its role in the production of penicillin in 1944. Most students interpreted it correctly and realised that it represented the discovery, development and production of a revolutionary antibiotic that would fight infection especially in wounded soldiers and save their lives.

Level 1 answers provided basic information often featuring source description and straightforward assertions drawn from it. They focussed on lives being saved and soldiers recovering and returning home. Answers here made use of the source ascription but did not build on it with contextual knowledge.

At Level 2 students drew inferences from the source or started to use their contextual knowledge in relation to it. Some offered very straightforward comments on its provenance received credit at this level. Contextual knowledge included the story of the discovery of penicillin by Fleming and/or Albert Alexander's influence on its development. Higher marks at this level saw links made between Fleming and Florey and Chain, and the mass production of penicillin including Florey and Chain going to the US to seek funding for mass production. Some answers devoted excessive attention to the story of Fleming's discovery which tended to limit marks at this level.

At Level 3 students showed developed knowledge particularly related to Florey and Chain's work first in Britain and then in the US to mass produce penicillin, and by referring to things like its impact on the D-Day landings. More developed comments on the provenance of the source at this level saw students referring to the propaganda value of it at the time or its value as a morale booster.

At Level 4 students combined developed contextual knowledge with provenance to show a complex appreciation of the utility of the source to an historian studying the development and role of penicillin during the Second World War and afterwards. Points made, for example, linked references to US government support for penicillin, and the development of US drug companies after 1945. Students recognised and explained the purpose of a drug company advertising its contribution to the war effort to the wider US public.

Question 2

This question asked about the significance of the work of Louis Pasteur in the development of medicine, a key figure from the Thematic with whom most students were familiar. However some confused him with Paré providing answers that could not be credited.

At Level 1 students made simple or basic statements such as Pasteur discovered Germ Theory to explain the cause of disease.

At Level 2 one explained area of significance or two or three simpler ones were looked for. Many students explained the development of germ theory here and the significance of it in

disproving miasma or the spontaneous generation theories of the cause of disease. On occasions however too much time was spent on the story of the experiments Pasteur carried out which diverted attention from the particular focus of the question. Other areas of significance were simple statements about inspiring other scientists to work on microbes and seek cures for diseases. Reference to Pasteurisation mentioned by many students was of limited relevance as that did not contribute directly to the fight against disease and the specific development of medicine.

At Level 3 students provided two developed areas of significance often linking Pasteur's work to wider areas of medicine such as Koch's work in identifying different microbes that caused different diseases (further proving Pasteur's theory) and the wider development of vaccines. Detailed references to the development of vaccines were found here though the highest awarded answers referred to human disease vaccine development (such as rabies or anthrax) rather than Pasteur's work on Chicken Cholera.

Level 4 awards went beyond level 3 and recognised answers that not only provided developed understanding of the significances of Pasteur's work but also, for example, considered the long- and short-term significance of it. Points made discussed the revolutionary nature of Pasteur's work leading to such things as Lister's work on antiseptic surgery or Ehrlich's on the development of magic bullets. Points about the significance of Pasteur's resilience in the face of initial criticism were seen here, as well as the further significance it had for the development of environmental health in addition to the specific fight against disease.

Question 3

This question was answered satisfactorily by most students. They mostly avoided confusing the eighteenth century with the later 1800s though knowledge of surgical practice in the eighteenth century tended to be less secure than that in medieval times. It continues to be evident that opportunities are taken during teaching to consider continuity as well as change in the development of medicine over time.

At Level 1 students showed some basic knowledge of surgical practice in medieval and eighteenth-century Britain often focussing on the severity of its procedures. At level 2 simple explanations of at least one point of similarity were made usually related to a lack of effective pain relief during surgery or the risk of post operative infection in both periods. Many described incidences in both periods of patients being held down due to a lack of anaesthesia and some dying from surgical shock. Students also referred to patients suffering from post-operative infection due to a lack of a clean surgical environment. Students described in general terms the pain or unclean conditions associated with surgery in both periods. Inability to control blood loss was also referred to by students in both periods and the use of cauterisation which was valid and the tendency of practitioners to rely on amputation as a surgical remedy for many ailments.

For a Level 3 award two developed points of similarity between medieval and eighteenth-century surgery were needed. Again, many students cited a lack of effective anaesthetics, with detail provided on the use and dangers of physical restraint, alcohol, or opium to deal with pain. Students recognised at this level and explained the risks of patient movement during surgery, uncontrolled blood loss and the speed of surgery which led to mistakes. Details

about an inadequate understanding of infection control in both periods saw references to the use of unsterilised equipment and the bloodstained clothing of surgeons which was perceived as a sign of skill and expertise rather than a danger to recovery. They also noted that deep surgery was difficult in both periods due to inadequate knowledge of physiology and the concentration on surface surgery and amputations. Some correctly pointed out that in both periods' germ theory was unknown, not coming until at least 1861. Some students at this level offered useful points about the work of Theodoric or Hugh of Lucca and later Paré. Knowledge of their work to try to combat pain and infection was available in both periods but the success rate of their ideas was limited.

Level 4 awards built on details provided at level 3 and some added more positive developments such as beneficial surgeon training, while being very limited in both periods, saw some improvement with a few surgeons trying to be more professional. They referred to improved training in both periods represented by factors like some barber surgeons serving an apprenticeship in the medieval period and some eighteenth-century surgeons benefitting from John Hunter's research and teaching.

Question 4

Most students answered this question and showed in their response that they understood how different factors have affected the development of Public Health in Britain, especially in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. However, it was evident that some students confused events and individuals relevant to the development of Public Health with those relevant to the fight against disease and infection, treatments, and the development of surgery. This was not relevant and so limited their reward.

Most students were aware of the named factor in the question and demonstrated an understanding of government law making, funding of developments and the commissioning of Inquiries especially after 1800. Many also referred to Medieval and Renaissance responses to epidemics, often in specific places, which were correct and relevant. Some, however, condemned government's 'laissez-faire' attitudes while not sufficiently showing how attitudes changed over time, and that this led them to ignoring or downplaying relevant developments. Most students correctly cited the role of the individual in the development of Public Health with examples, and some discussed Science and Technology's contribution to its improvement. The role of Religion, however, was less successfully dealt with, with too much emphasis placed on care of the sick in Medieval Monasteries and their clean environment which was either not relevant to Public Health or did not generally impact it. Warfare as a factor was relevant in respect of, for example, the impact of the Boer war on Public Health. However too often students diverted their attention to discussing the development of X-rays and plastic surgery which were not relevant to Public Health. Communication as a factor could be helpfully referred to but simply citing the invention of the printing press rather than for example explaining the impact of mass circulation of reports in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries limited the gaining of marks.

At Level 1 students made basic statements related to such things as governments bringing in Public Health Acts with no further detailed support. Responses recognised at this level lacked relevant knowledge of Public Health developments or provided answers more focused on the

development of treatments, the fight against disease or beliefs about its causes and cures over time.

At Level 2 responses either developed one factor only, often government, or covered several factors but with brief details. Many mentioned Public Health Acts of the nineteenth-century without detailing provisions and impact. Individuals such as Snow and Bazalgette were often referred to in a simple way with, for example, the straightforward story of Snow's investigations often taking precedence over discussing the impact of his work. Finally, the Liberal Reforms of the early twentieth century and the Beveridge Report and development of the NHS were often referred in a simple way. There were broad references to such things as free school meals and old age pensions or free access to doctors but without explaining their wider impact or significance on the health of the nation.

Level 3 responses considered at least two factors that were developed and supported with accurate knowledge and an understanding of the impact of those developments on wider Public Health. Specific references to measures in Coventry and London in the Medieval and Renaissance periods, especially during epidemics, gained credit at this level in addition to the provisions of Public Health Acts of the nineteenth-century and their relative successes and failures. The effect of cholera epidemic after 1831 and the impact of Edwin Chadwick's reports on the scale of poverty were well made and credited at this level. Additionally, the importance of Snow's discovery of the transmission of cholera on clean water provision in London was noted. Examiners were pleased to see explanations of sanitary improvement and sewer construction in Britain after 1875 noting Bazalgette's work in London. References to the Booth, and Rowntree Reports on poverty at the end of the nineteenth-century and beginning of the twentieth were also well made. This included developed detail and some recognition higher in the level of how they influenced government policy through to the Liberal Reforms of the early twentieth century. Housing developments following the Artisans Dwelling Act and 'Homes for Heroes' campaigns of the twentieth century after the World War were also strong points in responses and were often marked at this level.

Level 4 responses went beyond level 3 and moved into making developed links between factors. They showed, for example, in a coherent argument how government supported individuals with funding or made something compulsory; at the same time, individuals prompted governments to act by providing evidence of what was happening to the people due to poverty and the unhealthy environmental in which they lived. The best responses to the question built such thinking throughout the answer rather than leaving it just to a final concluding paragraph

2A/B Britain: Power and the people: c1170 to the present day

Question 1

The source, both in its detail and caption, appeared clear to most students. It was possible for the majority of students to demonstrate understanding that might be rewarded at Level 1, by selecting details from the source. Several students made simple inferences such as commenting on the reactions of the crowd and the mix of emotions on display or indicating provenance for Level 2 such as the author having based his painting on eye-witness accounts. A significant proportion were able to link the source to the broader topic of the English Civil War and demonstrated sound knowledge of its causes and events leading to the execution of Charles and were familiar with concepts such as 'the divine right of kings'. More able students were able to express that this marked a change or shift in power, or a new era. The number of students dismissing the source for not being useful continued to decline.

Question 2

Many students responded to this question with comprehensive knowledge of factory reformers such as Robert Owen, Lord Shaftesbury, Michael Sadler, Titus Salt and social reformers such as Elizabeth Fry, and Josephine Butler. They were able to link this to legislation such as the 1833 Factory Act and 1842 Mines and Collieries Act. However, there was a misunderstanding of the question by several students who saw the word 'reform' in the question and proceeded to write about the Great Reform Act often following this with Chartism and women's fight for the vote or the campaign for the abolition of slavery, which could not be credited without a link to the question.

However, students achieving Level 4 were able to make the comparison between the factory workers and the enslaved people. Additionally, they could identify those in the upper classes with a social conscience fighting against the prevailing laissez-faire attitude. Students who tried to approach this question with a 'short term and long term' model often struggled when it came to the long term. This approach had worked for previous questions but not this one and it should be noted that this was not the only approach for this question type.

Question 3

Most students demonstrated a good understanding of both the Peasant's Revolt and the Pilgrimage of Grace. The majority of students were able to identify a similarity. There were a range of approaches. Several students addressed similarities in terms of key individuals, lack of successful outcomes, grievances aimed at the king or key officials, economic or religious aspects. Important understanding that secured reward at Level 3 was often displayed in answers which had specific knowledge of both events in terms of the Peasants objected to poor treatment due to the Statute of Labourers and the demands of the Poll Tax, whereas

Pilgrims objected to the dissolution of the monasteries, or what happened to the leaders, Wat Tyler and Robert Aske. Students demonstrating Level 4 understanding could analyse the economic motivations of the protesters.

Question 4

A substantial number of students demonstrated in their answer to this question that they understood the importance of Parliament in Britain over a thousand years of history. Nearly all students addressed the factor named in the question, the role of ideas such as representation and democracy, in their answer.

Students achieving Level 1 demonstrated, usually briefly, some knowledge and understanding of events. Responses at Levels 1 and 2 showed some understanding that ideas was only one factor that might have influenced Parliament. Several students used the idea of bringing the commoners into Parliament by Simon de Montfort, increasing representation in the Great Reform Act, the work of the Chartists and the women's suffrage movements to good effect. Examiners noted that answers often lost focus on the key aspect of the question, which was about the development of Parliament, when students chose examples that linked to other themes such as democracy or protest but lacked links to Parliament. Some students may have based their answer on the question that they wanted rather than the one set. There was also still a tendency to include introductions, some of which were rather detailed. This was not a necessary requirement, and students should be discouraged from doing this due to the time constraint of the papers.

As a Thematic Study, 'Power and the people' covered over a thousand years of history. Thematic Studies are distinct from Period and Depth Studies and in this question, given the large period they covered, it was expected that to reach Levels 3 and 4, responses would use examples to support an argument from at least two of the four parts of the specification. Many students met this requirement though the level of development varied. Responses demonstrating Level 3 understanding clearly explained the identified factor. Answers showed how students had reflected on their knowledge and then related it to show how 'ideas' led to the development of Parliament. Answers at this level were based upon a consideration of at least two factors, one of which was the factor stated in the question. A significant proportion of students appeared to find this straightforward to do and numerous students used individuals as a second factor such as Simon de Montfort, Oliver Cromwell, Emmeline Pankhurst. Some students however, made up their own factors rather than keeping to the eight outlined in the Specification though this happened less frequently than in previous years. Some answers at Levels 3 and 4 used a model of a point, explanation, and evidence to good effect and to ensure that they developed their examples in relation to the question. The question clearly invited students to consider the 'main factor' and answers that did that directly, with some substantiated judgement, were rewarded at Level 4. The more effective examples at Level 4 considered how the relationship between factors might have operated to develop Parliament and were able to interweave their examples, coming to a valid judgement.

2A/C Britain: Migration, empires and the people: c790 to the present day

Question 1

This question was answered satisfactorily by many students. The source attribution added important information, which supported students to interpret the source accurately. However, students at Level 1 might have been able to exploit it further to develop their answers rather than just repeating the detail of it. At this level, a small number of students described the image in basic terms, namely the size differences between the large man representing Britain and the smaller Boers. At Level 2, students correctly wrote about Britain's struggles in Africa, with several noting the challenges Britain faced against a committed opposition in the Boers. Whilst some students began to assess the utility of the source, others needed to develop a better understanding of the concept of utility.

For Level 3, students connected comprehensive knowledge to the source. Detailed knowledge of the Boer War 1899-1901 was common, with students well prepared to discuss the military strategies of both sides. In addition, knowledge relating to the British Empire in Africa more broadly was common, with numerous students showing good knowledge of Cecil Rhodes and the Suez Crisis. When discussing provenance some students were unable to grasp the motive behind the political cartoon and the American magazine's role in undermining the position of its former colonisers. Students should pay closer attention to the source attribution, including the time and origin of the source provided. Those that were able to discuss provenance effectively were generally placed in the Level 3 or 4. There were some commendable Level 4 responses that addressed the content and the provenance of the source impressively.

Question 2

This question was answered satisfactorily with some very effective responses. Students possessed comprehensive knowledge of the East India Company (EIC), with several offering a strong focus on trade and the EIC's private military capability. It was notable that weaker answers were narrative about the EIC, which deviated from a sharper focus on significance. Some basic answers at Level 1 often just told a story with some simple knowledge offered. Level 1 responses were more common than expected. Answers at Level 2 referred to a wide range of significances, most commonly the economic benefits brought by the EIC and its far-reaching role in governing India.

At Levels 3 and 4 students showed an awareness of a range of additional significances including the social and economic impacts of EIC, both within the British Empire and India specifically. Some effective answers addressed the EIC's role in the development of Indian infrastructure and the negative impact on Indian culture and religion. There were numerous responses that considered a range of significant battles and individuals, with particularly impressive analysis of the political impact of the Battle of Plassey 1757, and the Indian

Rebellion, 1857. Several students examined the broader cultural significance of key individuals like Robert Clive and Warren Hastings. These were often awarded Level 3 or Level 4 marks.

Question 3

This question was answered effectively by many students. Several students showed a depth of knowledge about both the gaining of independence by Britain's colonies in America and Britain's colonies in Africa. There were various responses that noted the role economics played in both campaigns for independence, as well as the role of violence. Numerous students astutely compared the vital role played by individuals in the successful campaigns for independence. Students were able to compare the actions of George Washington in America with those of Kwame Nkrumah in Ghana and Jomo Kenyatta in Kenya. The better answers to this question showed a good grasp of the concept of similarity and effectively discussed a wide range of causes. It was noticeable at Level 1 and 2 that pupils were likely to grasp a better understanding of the gaining of independence in America, with less developed understanding of movements that gained independence in Africa. Unfortunately, some students focussed their answer on the independence movement in India which gained no credit. At Level 1 and 2, the exploration of similarity was less developed and simple. Effective teaching of how events, periods and people may be similar continues, with examiners noting that students were generally successful in answering this type of question in the examination.

At Level 3 a more developed understanding was evident in answers where students focused on the economic and political motives for independence, often relating Britain's exploitation of colonies through taxation, violence, and ideological disagreements. The inspirational role of individuals in the fight for independence were well argued, with very detailed knowledge on display. In addition, several students explained in depth the violent impact of the British on American and African people, often comparing the Boston Massacre and the Mau Mau Rebellion in Kenya. Some students, impressively, could discuss the similar role of ideas relating to cultural superiority in both America and Africa, with these responses often placed in Level 4.

Question 4

Examiners noted that numerous students had been adequately prepared to discuss factors contributing to the movement of people to and within Britain. Most students could offer examples of why people moved to and within Britain from across the Thematic Unit. Several students referred, with a good range of examples, to the named factor of economics. Weaker students tended to focus solely on the stated factor, often accompanying it with less developed alternative factors that achieved lower Level 2 marks. A small number of students focussed their answers on the development of Empire and did not engage effectively with the concept of the movement of people. These answers were usually limited to Level 1.

Migration and the People is a thematic course, covering over a thousand years of history. It requires students to show knowledge of the earlier Medieval and Early Modern periods, as well as the Modern period. To reach Level 3 and Level 4, students had to provide examples

from at least two of the four parts of the Specification. There was no expectation that all examples would be developed to the same level of detail but some knowledge and understanding of two or more parts of the Specification was required for the higher levels. Notably, numerous pupils offered an impressive range of relevant examples from the course.

Nearly all students addressed the factor named in the question, economics, in their answer. At Level 1 students showed a weaker understanding of factors, occasionally employing factors that were of their own design. It is expected that students will have had an opportunity during this study to consider all the named factors in the Specification. At Level 2 students began to show a better grasp of how economics drove the movement of people to and within Britain. The most common examples cited by students were the Viking migrations and those of the Windrush Generation to Britain. Whilst some knowledge was accurate, examiners noted that the level of supporting detail at Level 2 was simple. Level 2 responses often lacked a range of examples.

It was at Level 3 and beyond that students began to show a clear understanding of the identified factor, as well as displaying detailed knowledge of other factors. Answers that were given Level 3 marks chose examples from at least 2 parts of the Specification. At Level 3 and 4, several students included comprehensive knowledge of the economic motives behind Irish migration to Britain, and the impact of the Highland Clearances on migration within Britain. Various students chose religion as their second factor, with impressive knowledge of the Huguenots, and Jewish migration to Britain, as well as the migration of Asians from Africa. A small number of answers discussed the role of individuals in causing migration to Britain, most notably Idi Amin.

Level 4 could only be achieved with effective Level 3 responses which sustained a line of reasoning that was sharply focused and led to a substantiated judgement. There were impressive arguments by some students relating to how a given factor could both cause migration to Britain, as well as within Britain. Some Level 4 responses cleverly argued the importance of one factor throughout their response, with detailed acknowledgement of the factor's relationship with others. Some students at Level 2, and more commonly at Level 3, displayed an argument and attempted to make a judgment but it was not substantiated by knowledge or based on an understanding of the relative importance of factors in either isolation or working together.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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