

CARIBBEAN EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL

**REPORT ON CANDIDATES' WORK IN THE
SECONDARY EDUCATION CERTIFICATE EXAMINATIONS
MAY/JUNE 2005**

CARIBBEAN HISTORY

**Copyright © 2005 Caribbean Examinations Council ®.
St Michael, Barbados.**

All rights reserved.

CARIBBEAN HISTORY

GENERAL AND BASIC PROFICIENCY EXAMINATIONS MAY/JUNE 2005

GENERAL COMMENTS

Paper 01 – Multiple Choice Paper

This paper consists of sixty multiple-choice items, thirty of which test knowledge and thirty test the use of knowledge.

Performance on this paper was generally satisfactory. The mean score at the General Proficiency level was 35 out of 60, with scores ranging from 9 - 60. At the Basic Proficiency level, the mean score was 12 out of 60, with scores ranging from 0 - 46.

Paper 02 – Essay Paper

This paper consists of twenty extended essay and structured essay questions, testing all themes in the syllabus.

Each question is worth 25 marks, and candidates are required to answer four questions for a total of 100 marks.

Performance on this paper was satisfactory at the General Proficiency level though there were several areas of weakness. The mean score was 35 out of 100 and scores ranged from 0 - 96. At the Basic Proficiency level performance was weak with a mean score of 32 out of 100 with scores ranging from 0 - 84.

Paper 03 - School Based Assessment

This paper consists of three assignments or one project. Candidates, with guidance from the teacher, are required to select a topic for research and write a project report or three assignments based on their research. Teachers mark the assignments and submit a sample of candidates' work to CXC for moderation.

Performance on this paper was good. The mean score at the General Proficiency was 24 out of a maximum of 40, with scores ranging from 0 – 40. At the Basic Proficiency, the mean score was 18 out of 40, with scores ranging from 8 – 36.

Paper 03/2 – Alternative to School-Based Assessment

This paper is the alternative paper to the School-Based Assessment for private candidates and is offered at the General Proficiency only. It is a written paper, and candidates are required to answer five questions based on a specific theme identified in the syllabus.

Performance on this paper was weak. The mean score was 17 out of a maximum of 40, with scores ranging from 4 – 34.

DETAILED COMMENTS

Paper 02 – Essay Paper

General Proficiency

Section A Theme 1: The Indigenous Peoples and the Europeans

Question 1

This question, which required a comparison of Taino and Kalinago political and social institutions, was fairly popular, and the performance was commendable. Again, responses were very sketchy on the Maya. Detailed knowledge of the Mayan institutions, economy, commerce, architecture, mathematics, calendar, system of writing was lacking.

Question 2

In this question, candidates' knowledge of the impact of the Spanish conquest on the native populations was being assessed. Generally, this was not a popular question. However, those who did do the question performed well in terms of explaining the impact of the Spanish conquest on the native population – diseases, destruction of crops, suicide, various forms of physical abuse, coerced labour. They did not do as well on the second section, which required them to note the factors in Indian culture that would have impressed the Spaniards. Candidates should be aware that impressions do not necessarily have to be favourable.

Section A: Theme 2 – Caribbean Economy and Slavery

Question 3

This question was intended to test candidates' knowledge of the kind of preparation that went into a slave trading voyage and there were several excellent answers, particularly with respect to sections (a) and (c) of the question. Section (c) tested their knowledge of the reasons for the high mortality aboard slave ships. In this case the answers were very full and knowledgeable. Section (b), which tested their knowledge of the impact of the slave trade on Africa itself, was generally poorly handled. Perhaps because candidates have been educated into having an entirely negative view of the trade, they have tended to overlook the fact that Africans (political leaders and traders), benefited materially from the slave trade. Many candidates received full marks for this question, however.

Question 4

This question tested candidates' knowledge of the division of labour between male and female slaves, and of land use on a sugar estate. Candidates did particularly well on section (d), land utilization.

Section B: Theme 3 – Resistance and Revolt

Question 5

This question was popular but not well done. Candidates have difficulty doing comparative questions, and this weakness was demonstrated in section (b) of the question which required a comparison of the causes of the 1763 rebellion in Berbice and the 1831 revolt in Jamaica. Efforts in section (c) to explain the early success of the revolt in Berbice were better than at (b). The efforts to explain the collapse of the 1831 rebellion in Jamaica suggest that a large number of candidates had not been well prepared for that topic. Generally, it seems that candidates were selective in the revolts they prepared, so that a question requiring an analysis of three separate revolts proved too much for them to handle.

Question 6

Section (a) of this question asked candidates to discuss the effects of the Haitian Revolution on the Haitian economy. The tendency was for candidates to discuss the general effects – political, economic and social – of the Revolution on Haiti. Many answers, therefore, did not include the effects of the Revolution on the economy as such. Candidates did better on section (b) which asked for a discussion of the impact of the revolution on the wider Caribbean. Even here, however, too many candidates answered at the level of broad generalization – such as the intensification of the desire for freedom – without illustrating how slave disaffection was demonstrated. Many, however, recognized the impact of the St. Domingue/ Haitian exiles on the wider Caribbean, and the stimulation of sugar and coffee production in the Caribbean outside Haiti.

Section B: Theme 4 – Movement towards Emancipation

Question 7

This was the least popular question in section B. Those who did attempt the question gave good responses, however. The major weakness was in the comparative section, (b). Knowledge of the French Caribbean was as usual very weak. Section (c), which was specific to the British anti-slavery movement, was generally good.

Question 8

This question tested candidates' knowledge of the Apprenticeship system, 1834-38. There were many very good answers. Candidates were able to demonstrate knowledge of the plight of the apprentices, including the restrictions on their movement, the problem of wages and the introduction of new forms of punishment. (Weaker responses confused the Abolition Act of 1833 with Amelioration Legislation). Candidates who were better prepared were aware of the role of Stipendiary Magistrates and their inability, despite good intentions, to defend workers from planter abuse.

Section B: Theme 5 – Adjustments to Emancipation, 1838-1876

Question 9

Although this was a straightforward essay question worth twenty-five marks, candidates did not handle it very well though it was a popular question. The question was designed to test the candidates' knowledge of the general contribution of Indians to Caribbean societies. The question called for a discussion of the cultural and religious contribution and contribution to the economy, by way of diversification, for example. Most candidates emphasized the cultural aspect at the expense of all other aspects. When the economic contribution was considered at all, the candidates fell into simplistic and historical declarations which suggested that the sugar industries in Guyana and Trinidad were saved from collapse by Indian immigration. No attempt was made to establish statistically such a correlation. There were also several answers which made the inaccurate suggestion that family life did not exist in the Caribbean before the Indians came. Weaker candidates confused 'Indians' with 'Amerindians'. There was another tendency to view Indians in Trinidad & Tobago and Guyana in terms of twentieth and twenty-first century Indian society and culture. The question specifically referred to the period up to 1876.

Question 10

This question tested candidates' knowledge of the reasons for the growth of free- villages by the ex-slaves, and also the consequences for the provision of labour for the sugar estates. This was a relatively popular question, which was well handled especially in section (a), where candidates explained the role of missionaries, co-op societies and the withdrawal of freed people from the estates during the 1840s. Section (b), on the impact on the plantations, was also fairly well handled, but there was a tendency to fall short of discussing meaningfully the effect of a peasantry on the 'supply of estate labour'.

Section C: Theme 6 – Economic Diversification, 1875-1985.

Question 11

This was a relatively popular question, and there were some excellent answers for which several candidates gained full marks. The question was designed to test candidates' knowledge of the problems of the sugar industry at the end of the nineteenth century, and the efforts made by planters and colonial authorities to extract the sugar industry from the doldrums. Most candidates were able to point to competition from other cane producers (such as Cuba) and beet sugar producers, to the absence of capital, as some of the factors that created a crisis in the sugar industry. Unfortunately, some candidates discussed diversification of the economy as a response to the sugar crisis, when the question specifically asked for a discussion of the measures taken to solve the problems of sugar, such as amalgamation of estates, establishment of central factories, modernization of factories, continuation of immigration policies, experimentation with new breeds of cane, scientific farming, and establishment of botanical gardens and other institutions that could make more effective use of the newest and most available technology.

Question 12

Candidates generally avoided this question, which was based on economic diversification during the late nineteenth century and the twentieth century. Those who did it engaged in guess-work. In preparing candidates for the examination, sufficient emphasis must be placed on the fact that the theme 'Economic Diversification' extends chronologically from 1875 to 1985. Teachers should remember, therefore, that the theme 'Economic Diversification' now covers a much broader period. Several candidates discussed cacao, citrus and bananas, rather than the manufacturing industries during and after the 1950s. Without the proper orientation arising from section (a), candidates were unable to handle the impact of changes in the economy to the changing occupational roles of women.

Section C: Theme 7 – Social and Economic Conditions in the 20th Century

Question 13

This question was based on the Theme, Social and Economic Conditions in the 20th Century and tested candidates' knowledge of the low wages in the Caribbean and the unemployment crisis in the 1930s. Both sections (a) and (b) assumed a knowledge of the socio-economic backdrop to the crisis of the 1930s. Several candidates referred to the Great Depression but failed to establish the connection between the economic Depression and the problem of wages and unemployment. Few discussed the fact that West Indians were returning from the Spanish Caribbean in the 1930s, thereby making an unemployment situation more serious. Unemployment had been eased by outward migration; but the situation was reversed in the 1930s. Jamaicans were returning from Cuba, Kittitians from the Dominican Republic, for example.

Question 14

This question sought answers to the work of the UNIA, and required a discussion of the reasons for the hostility to Marcus Garvey. One would have expected to see responses that would include Garvey's economic organizations (Negro Factories Corporation, Black Star Line among others); the UNIA as a self-help organization; the founding of the *Negro World*, Garvey's African policy and the formation of the PPP. Knowledge of the work of Garvey and the UNIA was sketchy. Section (b) was also disappointing. Candidates ignored elite resistance to Garvey's concept of equality; his hostility to colonialism; his challenge to the status quo, including the status quo of imperialism; and the belief in some quarters that Garvey's teachings were racist.

Section C: Theme 8 – The United States in the Caribbean 1776-1985

Question 15

This question tested candidates' knowledge of the process by which the United States gained control of the Isthmus of Panama for the purpose of constructing a Canal and it was very well done. There were several candidates who scored between 20 and 25 marks for this question. The strategic interests of the United States, the relationships between the US and Britain (Clayton- Bulwer), the treaties agreed on between the US and Colombia, and the Panamanian revolt were well documented and discussed. This was a relatively popular question. What is particularly pleasing is that candidates have tended in the past to do poorly on questions asking for knowledge of US – Caribbean relations.

Question 16

This was not a very popular question, but there were very good answers among some candidates. Most were able to identify US Cuban problems as related to the dominant role in the Cuban economy, the Platt Amendment and the interference in Cuban political affairs, including the reoccupation of Cuba under Magoon. Candidates would benefit from giving more specific examples, rather than couching their answers in vague and general terms.

Section D: Theme 9 – Movements Towards Independence and Regional Integration up to 1985

Question 17

This question sought answers on the role of important figures in Caribbean history, starting with Jose Marti (section a), and including Norman Manley (section b) and Sir Grantley Adams (section c). Candidates did not seem to know very much of Jose Marti except that he led the independence movement in Cuba. Candidates knew very little about Manley and Adams. The failure to handle (b) and (c) is particularly disappointing especially in view of the fact that generally, candidates, in the past, have answered questions on Federation and regional integration quite well.

Question 18

Very few candidates answered this question. As usual, knowledge of the non-British Caribbean is sadly wanting.

Section D: Theme 10 – Social Life, 1838-1962

Question 19

This question tested candidates' knowledge of the development of transportation in the Caribbean. Many failed to note in the section dealing with difficulties in section (b), climatic and weather conditions, mountainous terrain and treacherous landscapes that affected people and animals. For the twentieth century, while discussing the importance of railroads and motor cars, many failed to note the importance of aviation.

Question 20

This question, which tested candidates' knowledge of the comparative role of women and men, as well as the factors that affected women's roles, was extremely popular. There were excellent answers based on sound empirical evidence; but there were too many that dealt with broad generalizations. Not many of the candidates were aware of the importance of economic factors.

BASIC PROFICIENCY

Section A: Theme 1 – The indigenous Peoples and the Europeans

Question 1

In this question, which sought responses to the political organization of Tainos and Kalinagos, candidates continued to show a lack of knowledge of the meaning of political as opposed to social, economic and cultural. It was also not clear whether the candidates understood the meaning of the word 'technology'. There was some general knowledge on Mayan pyramids, calendars, for example.

Question 2

The majority of candidates avoided this question, but those who attempted it made a good effort, particularly with respect to section (b) which tested their knowledge of the impact of the Spanish conquest and colonization on the native populations. Performance was not as good on section (c), which dealt with indigenous culture.

Section A: Theme 2 – Caribbean Economy and Slavery

Question 3

Not many candidates attempted this question. In section (a) most candidates could not name two British ports (though some got Liverpool). The best performance was on 3 (d) where the candidates discussed the high mortality on board slave ships; but they were unclear about the Africans who benefited from, and therefore helped to promote, the slave trade.

Question 4

This was the most popular question on the paper. Candidates had a good knowledge of land utilization on plantations, but with respect to the division of labour between men and women, there was a lot of guess work.

Section B: Theme 3 – Resistance and Revolt

Question 5

In section (b), there was some knowledge of the reasons for the early success of the Berbice Rebellion. Information on the Sam Sharpe Rebellion in Jamaica was very limited.

Question 6

There was some knowledge of the impact of the revolution on the Haitian economy. The points were, however, not well developed.

Section B: Theme 4 – Movement towards Emancipation

Question 7

This question on the Emancipation movement was poorly done. There was, almost expectedly, little knowledge of the French experience of anti-slavery.

Question 8

This question tested candidates' knowledge of the provisions of the Abolition Act. In fact, some candidates assumed that the word 'provisions' referred to ground provisions. In section (b), however, there was some acquaintance with the fears of the planters that abolition would be disadvantageous to them.

Section B: Theme 5 – Adjustments to Emancipation 1838-1876

Question 9

This question, on the background to immigration and the contribution of Indians, was very popular and quite well done. Apart from cultural contributions, many of the candidates mentioned racial diversity, the development of rice cultivation and diversification of the economies of Trinidad and Guyana.

Question 10

This question required a knowledge of the reasons behind the growth of Free Villages and responses were very disappointing. Candidates were not able to provide four effects that the establishment of the peasantry had on the supply of labour to the sugar estates in the British Caribbean, in section (c) of the question.

Section C: Theme 6 – Economic Diversification, 1875-1985

Question 11

This was a fairly popular question that asked for an examination of the problems of the sugar industry. Most candidates were able to identify competition, disease, capital, and falling prices. In assessing the solutions to the problem, however, many candidates discussed diversification, which does not respond to the question which required solutions to the problems of the sugar industry.

Question 12

Performance on this question indicated that there was little knowledge of the growth of manufacturing in the Caribbean. It is not clear that candidates fully understood the word 'manufacturing'.

Section C: Theme 7 – Social and Economic Conditions in the 20th Century

Question 13

In section (b) candidates were better able to explain why wages were low. However in section (c), they had difficulty explaining why unemployment increased.

Question 14

Performance on this question suggests that many candidates did not know what UNIA stands for. However, there was some knowledge of the work of the UNIA. Performance on section (d), which tested candidates' knowledge of the persecution of Marcus Garvey, was largely suggestive of guesswork.

Section C: Theme 8 – The United States in the Caribbean, 1776-1985

Question 15

This question required candidates to outline the US policy with respect to Panama and the Panama Canal. As with General Proficiency, candidates demonstrated good knowledge in both sections (a) and (b).

Question 16

Performance on this question indicated that several candidates were unable to name a US President for the period up to 1962. Knowledge of US-Cuban relations up to 1959 was extremely limited (in section (b)). Though there were more useful answers in section (c) which required some knowledge of relations between Cuba and the US after the Cuban Revolution, the performance was, generally, disappointing.

Section D: Theme 9 – Movements Towards Independence and Regional Integration up to 1985

Question 17

This question, which was not very popular, tested candidates' knowledge of independence movements in the Spanish Caribbean and English Caribbean. Only a few candidates were able to associate Jose Marti with the Cuban independence movement in 1895. Section (b), which required an explanation of the roles of Norman Manley and Grantley Adams in British Caribbean integration, was only marginally better. Section (c), which required candidates to name other political leaders who were involved with the integration movement, apart from Adams and Manley was poorly done as well.

Question 18

This question tested candidates' knowledge of the political experience of Puerto Rico and the French and Dutch Caribbean. Questions dealing with the non-British Caribbean have been traditionally unpopular among candidates, and this year was no exception. There were a few good answers, however, among those who attempted the question. Few candidates were familiar with the Tripartite Kingdom, and knowledge of the Commonwealth arrangement between the US and Puerto Rico was extremely limited. In section (c) however, most candidates were able to describe the arrangements between France and her Departments.

Question 19

This question tested candidates' understanding of Social Life, 1838-1962, particularly transportation and communication in the Caribbean. It was also the most popular question in the section. Section (a), which was very straightforward, was well done; section (b) which required a little more analysis, was well handled. It is probable that candidates were able to draw on the oral tradition. The third section, which required candidates to explain changes in Caribbean transportation between 1850 and 1962, was generally well done as well.

Question 20

This question tested candidates' understanding of class and gender issues in the British Caribbean. The question was not as popular as Question 19. Probably one-third of candidates offered good responses. Section (a), which addressed the working-class woman, elicited some good responses. Section (b) which asked for an explanation of changes in the position of women in the Caribbean proved somewhat more challenging. Responses to section (c) of the question which required distinctions between the roles of upper and lower working class women, drew more on candidates' personal experiences than on formal historical knowledge.

Recommendations

- All objectives in the syllabus should be covered.
- A special effort must be made to cover themes related to the Spanish, French and Dutch Caribbean.
- Candidates should be reminded that questions should be carefully read to ensure that the chronology is properly understood and that responses relate to the relevant period.
- Candidates should be reminded that questions may address economic as opposed to political or social issues.
- Teachers should be careful to note areas of the syllabus that address women's history.
- Candidates should be encouraged to note key words in questions and ensure that responses, where indicated, provide an appropriate level of analysis and not just recall of facts.

Paper 03 – School-Based Assessment

The overall performance on the School-Based Assessment was satisfactory. However, there was much evidence that several difficulties were encountered, particularly in the following areas:

1. Candidates' Work

As in the past, there was an encouraging number of excellent assignments and projects. The work of many candidates however, had several deficiencies. In some cases work submitted for moderation did not have the question being answered. Many assignments and projects were weak in analysis.

Furthermore, many candidates are obviously not aware of the conventions to be followed in producing papers, including the need for an appropriate introduction and a relevant conclusion and the proper presentation of a bibliography. Moreover, more attention needs to be paid to the provision of references. The sources of quotations, charts, statistical tables and illustrations were usually not given, as well as detailed information on internet sources. Many projects would also have been enhanced by the inclusion of a table of contents.

Two major concerns about work submitted for moderation were the frequent violation of the word limit and the incidence of plagiarism.

2. Topics for assignments and projects

There was some improvement in this area, with many more creative or imaginative topics being set by teachers. There are, however, still several sources of concern.

Firstly, teachers continue to set most of their assignments on topics related to themes in Sections A and B of the syllabus, largely to the neglect of Sections C and D. This emphasis may be partly responsible for the indifferent performance by many candidates in these last two sections in the Paper 02 examination.

Secondly, many topics, especially for projects, were too general. Topics should relate to more specific aspects of the general subject identified. Furthermore, projects on modern topics often did not have adequate historical content, tending to be more sociological in treatment. In short, they were more suited to a project for Caribbean Social Studies than for Caribbean History.

The major deficiency of many of the topics, especially those for assignments, was that for at least two main reasons they were unsuitable for SBA. Many of them were largely knowledge – based and provided little scope for the demonstration of the higher level skills of analysis, interpretation and evaluation which the SBA is intended to test.

Furthermore, numerous topics set for assignments could not be dealt with satisfactorily within the SBA word limit. Usually they were too broad in scope, especially in terms of the time frame and the number of parts comprising the question. In fact, many assignment topics were more appropriate for projects. In particular, teachers should be strongly advised to refrain from setting multi-part questions for SBA assignments, such as those that are usually set for Paper 02 of the examination.

3. Assessment

There was some improvement in this area, though several problems persist. There are still numerous cases of lenient or inconsistent marking, but comparatively few cases of severe marking. A small number of teachers continue to award fractions of marks, usually half-marks, and zero. While virtually all teachers used the prescribed mark scheme, a significant minority of them failed to record the marks awarded to each area of assessment and the profile scores and totals.

Perhaps the most disturbing aspect of teachers' assessment was the apparent failure to detect and penalize plagiarism. This problem is becoming more widespread, with extensive verbatim copying of information not only from texts, but also increasingly from internet sources.

4. Samples

There still continues to be numerous instances of the submission of incorrect SBA samples of the candidates' work. Some teachers failed to send five examples of work on the same assignment, while many submitted all three assignments for five candidates.

5. Record Keeping

In many cases no information about the assignments set was provided on the record of marks form submitted to CXC.

Recommendations

- Topics for SBA must be manageable and appropriate, and must focus on all four sections of the syllabus.
- The word limit for assignments and projects must be strictly adhered to.
- The prescribed SBA mark scheme must be used in assessment of all assignments and projects.
- CXC deals severely with plagiarism. Teachers must be vigilant, therefore, in detecting and addressing this problem.
- Marks must be recorded for each criterion and each profile.
- The SBA sample must be submitted in accordance with guidelines issued by CXC.