

CARIBBEAN EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL

**REPORT ON CANDIDATES' WORK IN THE
SECONDARY EDUCATION CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION
MAY/JUNE 2008**

CARIBBEAN HISTORY

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CARIBBEAN HISTORY
GENERAL PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION
MAY/JUNE 2008

GENERAL COMMENTS

Performance in this year's examination was moderate. The percentage of candidates achieving Grades I - III was 66.12 compared with 68.45 in 2007. As in past examinations, performance on themes in Sections A and B was better than on Sections C and D.

Paper 01 – Multiple Choice Paper

This paper tested the core of the syllabus and candidates demonstrated a good grasp of the content tested. Performance across the profiles was similar.

DETAILED COMMENTS

Paper 02 – Structured Questions and Essays

SECTION A – Theme 1: The Indigenous Peoples and the Europeans

Question 1

The first half of the question tested candidates' knowledge of gender relations in either Kalinago or Arawak society. Answers were expected to range from issues of political succession, status, family life and marriage. With respect to the Kalinagos, candidates were expected to respond with comments on the subordination and separation of females, the role of women in agriculture, the enslavement of women and the role of men as warriors and traders. Many candidates did not understand the word 'gender, non gender relations'. Some candidates gave physical descriptions of the indigenous population.

Section (b) required a description of the social organization of the Maya, including leisure, social structure, occupational status, diet, organization of agriculture, religion, and daily life. Candidates confined themselves to generalities rather than to specifics. For Section (b) like Section (a) the responses were disappointing.

Question 2

This was a popular question which tested candidates' knowledge of the impact of conquest on indigenous society in terms of demographic decline, impact on culture and religion, the collapse of the indigenous economy and labour relations. Section (b) tested candidate's knowledge of the impact of the 'discoveries' on Europe. Candidates were expected to discuss immigration opportunities, the expansion of opportunities to acquire bullion, geographical knowledge, flora and fauna. Performances were in both sections very good.

Theme 2: Caribbean Economy and Slavery

Question 3

This question, required for Section (a) that candidates explain why captive Africans were brought to the Caribbean in the sixteenth century. Candidates were expected therefore to have some knowledge of the Spanish imperial economy, the relationship between the decline of the Indigenous population and the demand for sources of labour for both mining and agriculture, as well as the tradition of African enslavement on the Iberian Peninsula. However, the tendency was for candidates to place great store on the supposed physical strength of Africans, experience of farming, ability to cope with the climate rather than discuss the economic demand for labour. Candidates were making no clear distinction between the importation of labour in the 1500s and the later (seventeenth century) large scale importation of Africans for labour in the sugar plantations of the British and French Caribbean – the focus of Section (b). Knowledge of the ‘Sugar Revolution’ of the seventeenth century was surprisingly limited. The problem of chronology continues to affect performance.

Question 4

This question sought to assess candidates’ knowledge of the relationship between race and social relations on the sugar plantations of the Caribbean in the 18th century. Answers were expected to include how colour gradation and race affected class, status and the opportunity structure of society. Other areas included the role of mixed bloods; the impact of race on military and religious organization, social tensions resulting from race; sexual relations and the abuse of black women.

Section (b) continued the discussion of plantation society, this time focusing on gender relations and family life. Responses were expected to include the separation of families, the minimising of family life, punishments inflicted on women during pregnancy, the inability of women to perform their traditional gender roles, the contrast between white and black females, and the role of older women. Candidates were unable to separate the data needed for sections (a) and (b). Generally, candidates found this question difficult.

SECTION B: Theme 3 – Resistance and Revolt

Question 5

This question was the most popular question in Section B. Divided into three parts, the question tested candidates’ knowledge of slave resistance to the plantation regime under the terms ‘active’ and ‘passive’ resistance. Candidates were also required to outline modes of resistance that were confined to women. While some candidates found it difficult to distinguish between ‘active’ and ‘passive’ there were many excellent answers, which demonstrated a thorough acquaintance of candidates with the theme of slave resistance.

Question 6

This essay question required candidates to discuss the effects of the Haitian Revolution on Haiti itself and on the Caribbean generally. Answers were expected to include the political, economic, and social impact of the Revolution on Haiti, including the expulsion of the French planters, the freedom of the enslaved Africans, land/agrarian reform, emergence of coffee as the major export, relations with the western world which isolated Haiti diplomatically and commercially **or** the impact on the Caribbean. Candidates were expected to note the impact on the sugar industry in the Caribbean, fear of revolts in

imitation of the Haitian experience, the migration of French planters to other parts of the Caribbean and the spread of coffee technology by the migrating French. Here again the problem of chronology arose, instead of a discussion of the impact of the Revolution on Haiti, many candidates described the state of St. Domingue society before the revolution. Responses on the impact of the Haitian Revolution on the rest of the Caribbean were well below expectation. The overall performance was unsatisfactory.

Theme 4: Movement towards Emancipation

Question 7

Divided into three parts, the question assessed candidates' knowledge of the background to, the lack of success of post 1807 slave revolts and the relationship between these slave revolts and the abolition of plantation slavery. The weakness of the answers to part (a) rested on the fact that candidates failed to pick up the significance of the date of the abolition of the slave trade. They were generally stronger on section (b) for the simple reason that the lack of success after 1807 was comparable to the period before 1807. There was very little discussion of the belief of enslaved Africans that freedom had been granted but was being withheld; or that slave masters intensified repression; or that the successful Haitian Revolution encouraged hopes of freedom among the enslaved population. There was little discussion on the role of missionaries, the fear of generalised revolt or the strengthening of the humanitarian campaign.

Question 8

This was the least popular question in the section. The question was divided into three parts. The first and second parts sought to test candidates' knowledge of the similarities and differences between the British and French anti-slavery movements, while part (c) asked students to explain the factors responsible for the success of the British anti-slavery movement. As usual, there was some resistance to the question by candidates who tend to avoid questions on the French Caribbean (except for Haiti). Section (a) anticipated such responses as similarities in development, late 1700s beginnings, led by organised Abolitionist movements, role of prominent personalities, influence of 1800 revolts and change of administration. In section (b) students were expected to explore the degree of militancy in the groups, consolidated strength of the movements, reach of public campaign and the consistency of pressure from the enslaved. Finally in section (c) students failed to sufficiently explore the existence of a climate of reform in Britain, earlier formation of the first anti-slavery society, early success in 1772, 1788 and 1807, the massive literacy campaign, and the consistency and gravity of the self liberating influence of the enslaved. Although it was not a popular question several candidates who responded produced very good answers.

Theme 5: Adjustments to Emancipation, 1838-1876

Question 9

This question tested candidates' knowledge of the factors that led to the introduction of indentured labour, and the contribution of Indian indentured workers to the sugar industries of Guyana and Trinidad in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Candidates commented on the perception that there was a shortage of labour, or irregularity in supply, the exodus from plantations, and the determination of planters to keep wages down. For the second half of the question candidates made valid points on the strengthening of the Guyanese and Trinidad sugar industry and cane-farming. Some candidates discussed rice cultivation, though the question did not assume a discussion of rice cultivation in Guyana and Trinidad. The performance was satisfactory.

Question 10

Candidates found this question on the role of missionaries and missionary groups less attractive than Question 9. In part (a) candidates were asked to describe the assistance of missionary groups and churches in the development of free villages and of the free persons in part (b). In response to part (a) they were expected to indicate the extent to which the religious bodies provided finance, secured land, promoted self-help, employment opportunities, education, mutual aid societies and village settlements. In part [b] they were expected to explore such enabling actions of the Church, as the Christianising activity, role models, teaching and training in important life skills, guidance and counselling, leadership and effective representation, in their desire to assist the former ex-slaves to adjust to their 'free' condition. Some candidates found it difficult to separate what was being asked in part (a) from what was being asked for in part (b).

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

Question 11

This question was extremely popular. Part (a) asked for a discussion of the difficulties [within the British Caribbean] faced by the sugar industry in the late 19th and 20th centuries. Candidates generally failed to discuss the impact of production costs, technological backwardness, soil exhaustion, natural disasters as factors within the British Caribbean that adversely affected sugar. In section (b) where they were asked to explain the external factors that affected the sugar industry most candidates were able to point to competition – whether from beet sugar or Cuban and Brazilian cane sugar. They were however extremely limited on capital availability and access, increasing shipping costs, high dependence on imports and uneconomic pricing of Caribbean sugar on the European market. The confusion among candidates is evident in their discussion of the economics of slavery. Chronology continues to be a major problem. The performance on this question – so frequently tested – was disappointing.

Question 12

Continuing the theme of diversification, Question 12 (a) and 12 (b) asked for the general factors that encouraged diversification from the 19th century and promoted industrial enterprises in the British Caribbean since 1945. Although there were some good responses, the performance was not altogether satisfactory. Most candidates were able to note that the problems of the sugar industry helped to encourage diversification, but there was only limited discussion of market opportunities for products such as cacao, citrus, bananas, especially in the USA. The internal marketing system in countries such as Jamaica, linked to diversification of production by the freed people was not touched for the most part. Since the question opened up the chronological possibilities for the twentieth century, candidates could have taken the opportunity to discuss bauxite/alumina and petroleum. As for the post-1945 period, some candidates recognised that War conditions helped to promote import substitution, but there was not much discussion on official policies of import substitution, nationalism, incentives to foreign capital, or the influence of Puerto Rico's Operation Bootstrap.

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

Question 13

The question required candidates to outline five methods used by Marcus Garvey and the UNIA to improve the condition of Blacks in the Caribbean and in section (b) to give three reasons why many people were opposed to Garvey. On the whole the responses were disappointing. There was little knowledge of the conditions that he sought to change, no serious discussion of the Negro World, the role of Garvey in promoting small business, the Negro Factories Corporation, the Black Star Line, the formation of the PPP, the incorporation of women into the movement, the advocacy of Black consciousness throughout the world. The poor performance in Section (a) was followed by an equally weak performance in Section (b). Candidates displayed little familiarity of Garvey's race first policy, his imprisonment which fed the perception that Garvey and the UNIA were dishonest, local resentment of Garvey's Back to Africa Movement and the strong pro-imperial sentiments among some sections of the Black elite in the Caribbean.

Question 14

The question required an analysis of the factors that encouraged the growth of trade unions in the Caribbean – including legal reforms, workers' protests, institutional assistance from the British TUC, the activities of labour leaders such as Alexander, Bustamante, Bird and Joshua and the role of international labour organisations. Instead candidates focussed their discussion on poor working conditions. The second half of the question was more competently done. In section (b) where candidates were required to outline four ways in which labour laws have benefitted Caribbean workers, candidates saw them mainly as 'corrective' to the dire working and living conditions and were familiar with the wide range of benefits which moderated living and working conditions in the Caribbean.

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

Question 15

This was a relatively popular question and the descriptions of the steps taken by the USA to acquire land across the Isthmus of Panama to construct a canal were fairly well handled. Here students were quite familiar with the various treaties and political and military interference of the USA in establishing the state of Panama. Less satisfactory was part (b) where candidates were required to explain the reasons for the U.S. Occupation of Haiti in 1914. Here candidates did not explore the perception of Haiti's strategic geopolitical location in the Windward passage, the island's potential as a military base, US commitment to political stability in the area and especially the non-involvement of European powers in Caribbean affairs, the US desire for investment opportunities and heightened sensitivities during World War I.

Question 16

This question required candidates to outline four reasons why Cubans were unhappy with the role of the US in Cuba between 1898 and 1959 and in section (b) reasons why Cuba/US relations worsened between 1959 and 1962. Candidates were happier with part (b) which tested candidates' knowledge of relations between Cuba and the USA following the emergence of Fidel Castro to the leadership of Cuba in 1959. Part (a) which should have elicited comments on U.S.-Cuban economic relations, social and political consequences of U.S. domination, the dictatorship of Batista and the issue of democracy in Cuba, did not receive enough attention. Some candidates could not properly locate the events, once again displaying problems of chronology.

SECTION D – Theme 9: Movements towards Independence and Regional Integration up to 1985

Question 17

This was an essay type question, and there were several excellent answers. Candidates were required to explain the failure of the 1958 West Indian federation. They showed familiarity with most of the issues—insularity, leadership, funding, differences in economic potential, conflict between Jamaica and Trinidad on the vision of the Federation, the Jamaican referendum, the withdrawal of Trinidad and the collapse of the ‘Little Eight’.

Question 18

This question tested candidates’ knowledge of the popular discontent with Puerto Rico’s colonial status between 1900 and the 1940s. Candidates were expected to examine the lure of outright independence, US domination of the Puerto Rican economy, concentration of sugar at the expense of coffee, absence of autonomy, cultural penetration, and violation of the 500 acre law. On the other hand, part (b) asked candidates to discuss any advantages derived from Associated Statehood after 1947 including freedom of access to the US employment opportunity, access to US capital, the development of tourism, industrialisation through Operation Bootstrap, reduction of unemployment and greater political autonomy. This was not a popular question but there were some satisfactory answers.

Question 19

The question, in part (a) asked candidates to comment on the attitude of public officials to non-Christian cultures in the Caribbean. Candidates were expected to explore the Eurocentric notion that if it were not Christian, then it was bad: the negative perception of the Hindu pantheon of several gods, the practice of child marriages, strangeness of the dress, the languages, the ceremonies/festivals and images. In part (b) candidates were required to explain the change in attitude after the 1960s. Here they were expected to explore proximity resulting in familiarity, influence of political advance and greater acceptance of cultures other than traditional Victorian, the success of others in commerce, education and the professions. The responses were broadly satisfactory, though in Section (b) there was a bit of preaching.

Question 20

This was a relatively popular question which required candidates to explain the initial unpopularity of Rastafarianism and its growing acceptance after the 1960s. In part (a) candidates related unpopularity to rough appearance—locks and beard, criminal activity, drugs, outstanding colours, worship of Emperor Haile Salassie, Rastafari [man god], representation as the underprivileged, the outcast and association with violence. In part (b) the acceptance of Rastafari was seen as a consequence of an evolving ‘black consciousness’ and black nationalism, the role of Bob Marley and other Rastafari artists, conversion of intellectuals and scholars and the elevation of adherents to high political, social and economic positions.

CARIBBEAN HISTORY (SBA) 2008

PAPER 03/2 – ALTERNATIVE TO SBA

Most questions were clearly structured and the sources drawn reflected a wide range of historical experiences within the theme.

Questions 4 (b) and 5 required students to go outside the sources provided and draw on their background knowledge.

Question 1

- (a) Most candidates were able to answer this question satisfactorily.
- (b) Most candidates were able to provide satisfactory answers to this question. Some students did not know the meaning of the word “status.” Such students seem to associate it with “aged” so they provided as their answer, “the elderly.”

Question 2

Most candidates attempted Parts (a), (b) and (c) with satisfactory answers.

Part (d) was not well answered. Few students could identify the Deficiency Laws. Many did not seem to understand the question.

Question 3

- (a) Most students were only able to give one correct answer. Most candidates knew that they enjoyed a better quality of life.
- (b) Candidates were knowledgeable about the Maroons.

Question 4

- (a) Students were unable to outline three attitudes from the sources. This question was generally badly done. Most candidates did not seem to understand the word attitude.
- (b) This question required information that was not provided in the sources and about 50% of the candidates could not identify the leader of the 1831 rebellion in Jamaica.

Question 5

This question was not answered as well as was expected for a topic as popular as The Haitian Revolution. Some candidates could not make the connection between St. Domingue and Haiti and treated these as different entities. There were many instances of poor writing skills.

Communication of Ideas

This was poor in most cases. Candidates' responses included either a restatement of the sources or chunks of irrelevant material without showing any understanding of the material. In some cases, there was a clear lack of knowledge of the topic and in other instances, candidates did not seem to understand the question. Generally candidates seemed to be ill prepared for source based questions. They experienced difficulties with comprehension and displayed a very limited knowledge base.

General Comments

1. Most candidates were obviously weak in grammar, spelling and expression.
2. From their responses it seemed that candidates did not have enough experience in answering questions based on primary sources.
3. Answers in many instances were not fully developed, well reasoned and expressed in clear grammatical language.

Recommendations

Candidates should be prepared with more detailed information on the format of the Alternative paper. Candidates should be more thoroughly prepared for this type of examination.

Texts with documentary extracts, such as Augier and Gordon, Sources of West Indian History are recommended for class room use.

School Based Assessment

Generally assignments were well structured and clear. The majority were relevant to the theme suitable for research and met the CXC level of difficulty. However there were assignments that were too demanding given the word and page limit.

Some assignments were too factual requiring students to recall rather than analyse information. There were a few assignments which required too low a performance level by the students and did not challenge them to higher level learning activities.

The CXC History Syllabus ends at 1985. Assignments encompassing the present day are clearly outside the syllabus. There were a few which fell into this category,

Several assignments were set without a specific time frame. These permitted students to extend their answers outside the boundaries of the CXC Syllabus. There were also a few assignments with multiple parts. These are unsuitable for SBA.

Some candidates' assignments/projects reflect effort, time, guidance and careful allegiance to the guidelines for marking. Many candidates used a variety of illustrations to enhance their responses. Some of these were misplaced and lacked documentation and made no reference at all to the illustration in the text of the assignment.

The use of illustrative material should be encouraged, however, students should be advised that to be effective, these must be relevant to the topic; appropriately placed and documented.

There were some instances where it could be observed that the work was not that of the candidates.

Presentation was generally very satisfactory but there were a few candidates whose handwriting was illegible. There were some cases where the assignment was not written on the script.

There were instances when fractional marks – $8\frac{1}{2}$; $10\frac{1}{2}$; 15.5 – have been recorded. The CXC mark scheme, which must be applied at all times, makes no provision for fractional marks.

There was some confusion regarding the mark scheme for assignments and that for projects. The correct mark scheme must accompany each assignment or project. In a few instances, it appears that the teacher was not guided by the appropriate mark scheme.

Recommendations

- Students must be encouraged to provide proper referencing in their assignments. This would help to discourage plagiarism.
- Teachers must insist that students cite information in the accepted manner.
- Teachers must ensure that they send the correct range of samples.
- Students must be reminded that handwritten assignments must be legible and written in BLUE or BLACK ink. It is preferred that hand written assignments be written on one side only.
- Teachers should ensure that a typed version of the assignment is sent with all samples and that students state the assignment on the front of their submission.
- Teachers should ensure that the mark allocation scheme accompanies all samples so that it is clear to the moderator how the final mark was arrived at.