

**CARIBBEAN EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL**

**REPORT ON CANDIDATES' WORK IN THE  
CARIBBEAN ADVANCED PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION  
MAY/JUNE 2009**

**HISTORY**

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**HISTORY****CARIBBEAN ADVANCED PROFICIENCY EXAMINATIONS****MAY/JUNE 2009****GENERAL COMMENTS**

The format of the examination in CAPE History is similar for Units 1 and 2. The year 2009 marked the first examination in which Paper 01 in both Units was examined by 45 multiple-choice questions, fifteen on each Module. Candidates were required to answer all questions and each correct answer was rewarded with no penalty for incorrect answers. Paper 01 contributed 30 per cent to the candidate's overall grade in each Unit. The questions aimed at assessing the range of content and skills covered by the syllabus.

Paper 02 comprised nine questions and candidates were required to answer three. This paper contributed 50 per cent to the candidates' overall grade and assessed depth rather than breadth of knowledge. Three of the questions, one from each Module, required candidates to analyse extracts from primary documents on one of the themes in the Modules. Candidates were required to answer one of the three document-based questions. The responses were to be reasoned, clear and well-developed. The other six questions were extended essay question and candidates were required to answer two of these with clearly stated and well-developed arguments.

Paper 03A, the Internal Assessment component, required candidates to submit a research paper on a topic selected from the syllabus. This paper contributed 20 per cent to the overall grade of the candidate.

Paper 03B was the alternative paper to the Internal Assessment for private candidates. These candidates were expected to demonstrate that they had carried out a research activity on a topic related to one of the six themes in the three Modules. This paper contributed 20 per cent to the candidate's overall grade.

**DETAILED COMMENTS****UNIT I****The Caribbean in the Atlantic World****Paper 01****Multiple-Choice Questions**

This paper represents a change in the format of the examination. Prior to 2009, candidates were required to provide short responses to nine questions covering the three Modules. In 2009, the paper assessed candidates' coverage of the syllabus with multiple-choice questions which tested their recall of content, as well as their interpretive and analytical skills. There were fifteen questions on each of the three Modules for a total of forty-five questions. The performance was satisfactory though candidates' content coverage of several themes seemed to have been limited.

## Paper 02

### Structured Document-Based Questions and Extended Essays

This paper examined candidates' depth of knowledge, their ability to understand and analyse historical data and their ability to communicate using a well structured argument.

#### Module 1

##### Question 1

This question consisted of three short documentary extracts on the early contact between West Africans and Europeans up to 1492 and the Spanish settlements in the Americas up to 1600. The candidates were asked four questions, (a) to (d), related to the themes as developed in these extracts. Candidates too often treated this and other similar questions as if they were comprehension questions. The questions required the candidates to use each extract as a stimulus and bring their own knowledge of the issue/event addressed by the extract to answer the question.

##### Question 2

This question required an analysis of the view that the technological superiority of the Spaniards did not fully explain the conquest of the Aztecs and Incas between 1519 and 1533. Generally, candidates demonstrated knowledge of the encounter between the Europeans and the indigenous groups and some were able to debate the relative importance of the different factors of the conquest, taking the analysis to a higher level.

##### Question 3

In this question, candidates were required to compare the political organization of two indigenous groups, one from each category (Category 1: Aztec, Inca, Maya); (Category 2: Kalinago, Taino, Tupi). Most candidates had a general knowledge of the groups selected though they almost all ignored the Tupi. However, too many candidates wrote generally of the lifestyles of the groups instead of focusing on their political organization. It was obvious that the candidates were not only relying on Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) knowledge, but also that the prevailing tendency was to narrate instead of collate or classify historical data.

#### Module 2

##### Question 4

This question comprised three short extracts from primary documents on slave resistance and planters' control. The candidates were required to answer four questions, (a) to (d), on the theme as represented in the document. The candidates, while not ignorant of issues of resistance, found it difficult to apply such knowledge to the questions asked.

##### Question 5

This question required an essay that discussed the similarities between chattel slavery and European indentureship in the Caribbean. Too many candidates focused on Indian (and to a lesser extent Chinese and Portuguese) indentureship and addressed the similarities between slavery and the conditions of the Asian immigrants when the question required a discussion on 'European indentureship'. The responses suggested that candidates did not study topics with an understanding of which Module covered that theme. Candidates also seemed to have prepared questions and on

recognising a term from the prepared question, proceeded to write the prepared response instead of carefully reading the actual question asked. In reference to this particular question, while the concepts used were lifted from the syllabus, candidates did not seem to recognise the context from which they were taken.

### Question 6

This essay question required a discussion of the view that the disintegration of the system of enslavement was the result of forces from within as well as from outside the Caribbean. Candidates offered responses which tended to generalise about causes of emancipation and were skewed towards the emancipation movement in the British Caribbean.

## **Module 3**

### Question 7

This question consisted of three short documentary extracts on the Cuban Revolution and its impact on Cuba and Cuba's international relations up to 1970. Candidates were asked to answer four questions, (a) to (d), related to the extracts. This was a popular question but candidates used CSEC information on Cuba from the theme on the USA in the Caribbean and demonstrated a lack of knowledge of the 1959 revolution and its aftermath as covered by the documents. They clearly did not read the documents carefully and/or did not have adequate knowledge of the period cited or the persons referred to in the documents.

### Question 8

This question required an essay discussing the claim that the challenges faced by Haiti in creating a free society after independence were due mainly to external factors. Candidates had knowledge of Haiti leading up to independence but were not very conversant with the events that occurred immediately after. Once again, inadequate preparation could have led candidates to fall back on previous but irrelevant knowledge. The question reflected the wording of the syllabus objective which deals with attempts to "create a free society" and the time frame of the question is reflected in the theme in the syllabus which refers to Haiti after independence: 1804 – 1825.

### Question 9

This question asked candidates to discuss the movement towards regional integration in the British Caribbean between 1947 and 1974. Too many candidates demonstrated a lack of knowledge of this theme which requires specific knowledge on the topic. The question lifted a sub-theme from the syllabus for this question. The sub-theme set out clearly the categories to be addressed, which meant that, with adequate preparation, the question could have been very well answered.

## **UNIT 2**

### **The Atlantic World and Global Transformations**

#### **Paper 01**

#### **Multiple Choice Questions**

This paper represents a change from nine short-answer questions to 45 multiple-choice questions. As in Unit 1, there were fifteen questions on each of the three Modules in the syllabus. The specific nature of some of the questions could have proven a challenge to those candidates who were

unprepared for the breadth of the knowledge required. Candidates are advised that satisfactory performance in this paper requires adequate coverage of all themes in the syllabus.

## **Paper 02**

### **Structured Document-Based Questions and Extended Essays**

#### **Module 1**

##### Question 1

This question comprised three short documentary extracts on the theme of European settlement and rivalry in the Atlantic up to the seventeenth century. The candidates were asked four questions, (a) to (d), related to the theme as developed in these extracts. The responses suggested that candidates were generally not very conversant with how to answer document-based questions.

In responding to document-based questions, candidates are expected to demonstrate relevant skills and knowledge over and beyond that contained in the extract. Hence, document-based questions should not be viewed as a comprehension exercise.

##### Question 2

This question required an essay discussing how West African societies were affected by the contact with Europeans from the mid-fifteenth century to the end of the eighteenth century. Candidates tended to focus on the traditional perspective of the negatives of the contact and the theory of underdevelopment.

##### Question 3

In this question candidates were required to discuss how the ideas of the Enlightenment shaped the birth of the American republic between 1775 and 1787. Most candidates had general knowledge of the ideas of Enlightenment but only some of those who attempted this question were able to apply that knowledge to show how the ideas were reflected in the birth of the American republic. That there were some exceptional thinkers among the candidates was evidenced in the thorough and comprehensive responses from regrettably few candidates.

#### **Module 2**

##### Question 4

This question consisted of three short extracts from primary documents which sought to test candidates' understanding of Manifest Destiny. The candidates were required to answer four questions, (a) to (d), on the theme as represented in the documents. Many candidates had difficulty in providing the required response to Question (a); they clearly did not grasp the principles underlying the concept of Manifest Destiny even though it is explicitly identified in the theme. Nevertheless, some knew the specifics of the actions motivated by Manifest Destiny.

##### Question 5

This question required an essay on the events which led to the achievement of political independence in either Brazil or Venezuela in the 1820s. Most candidates chose to write on Brazil but the question was not well done; candidates were unable to identify specific events and make the link between such events and the achievement of independence. Responses spoke of the 'influences' as opposed to the 'events' as required by the question. Some events were not recognised as such. Once again,

responses suggested that candidates prepared questions rather than general themes which impacted on their ability to respond adequately to various aspects of particular themes.

### Question 6

This question was based on a quotation and required an essay on the claim that the Industrial Revolution contributed significantly to the Atlantic economies with reference to the developments in Britain after 1750. The question proved challenging for many candidates as they seemed to have been accustomed to approaching the theme from a different perspective. Some candidates misinterpreted the question and wrote on the developments in Britain without relating them to the contribution that such developments made to the Atlantic economies. Where a causal link was seen between the developments and the Atlantic economies, the usual approach to them was taken – that is, the contribution of the Atlantic economies to the developments in Britain (the Eric Williams thesis).

In responding to this question, therefore, some candidates generally ignored the quote and misinterpreted the question which they apparently read in isolation from the quote. This led them to write in a single-minded way on the Industrial Revolution itself rather than on how it contributed to the Atlantic economies.

## **Module 3**

### Question 7

This question consisted of three short documentary extracts on the liberation struggles in South Africa. Candidates were asked to answer four questions, (a) to (d), related to the extracts. Some candidates lacked specific knowledge of various aspects of the topic, for example, the Soweto uprising. Some candidates managed to obtain a few marks for Part (d) which tested their knowledge of the factors responsible for the overthrow of the Apartheid system in the 1990s. However, they provided general current knowledge with limited or no historical context.

### Question 8

This question required an essay assessing the factors that led to the outbreak of World War II in relation to the assertion that the Treaty of Versailles brought a formal end to World War I and paved the way for World War II. Candidates wrote generally about the causes of the war and did not examine the clauses of the Treaty of Versailles which led to the outbreak of the second war. This suggested that candidates prepared for specific questions and did not attempt to understand what the current question required.

To perform satisfactorily on this examination, candidates should understand all aspects of each theme in the syllabus and not rely on the recall of prepared questions.

### Question 9

This question asked candidates to discuss the view that Germany had become a racial and fascist state by 1945. The candidates who attempted the question obviously studied the topic and were reasonably familiar with the issues. They were able to identify the issues related to the categories identified in the question – ‘racial’ and ‘fascist’.

## **General Comments**

While the papers were set with careful attention to the objectives being tested in each Module, some candidates seemed ill-prepared to address any question that did not follow the established pattern of previous years. In some instances, it was evident that the responses proffered by candidates were for

questions for which they had prepared rather than for questions actually asked, although the content of their responses related to the particular theme. Candidates and teachers are urged to use the syllabus to prepare so that all possible interpretations of a theme as guided by the stated objectives can be explored and examined.

### **Paper 03A**

#### **Internal Assessment**

This paper is the Internal Assessment component for Units 1 and 2. In general, candidates adhered to the word limit stipulated by the syllabus, and produced work of acceptable quality. However, there were instances where the following weaknesses were evident:

- (a) the poor construction/conceptualization of thesis statements ;
- (b) the over-reliance on CSEC texts;
- (c) the limited knowledge displayed by candidates regarding the conventions for writing a History research paper;
- (d) failure to provide the historical setting for the research papers, giving instead personal reasons for doing the research;
- (e) the overuse of headings and subheadings in the body of the work which distracted from the flow of the work, and the preponderance of narrative at the expense of analysis;
- (f) failure to demonstrate an understanding of what goes into the conclusion of a paper by introducing new information at this point, for example;
- (g) the overuse of pictures in the body of the research.

With regard to the administrative requirements of the Internal Assessment, it is evident that most teachers followed the stipulated criteria for marking the research papers and that documents submitted were accurately and fully completed.

### **Paper 03B**

#### **Alternative to Internal Assessment**

Paper 3B is the alternative to the Internal Assessment for private candidates and was written by a very small number of candidates. Questions were based on the research that would have been conducted by these candidates. However, performance on this paper was extremely weak. Candidates were clearly not aware of what was generally required and this was particularly evident in the responses to Question 4 which required a summarisation of the findings of the research and an assessment of the significance of those findings. In addition, candidates provided no evidence of specific sources. It is obvious that the preparation done by the candidates was inadequate to meet the demands of this paper.