

CARIBBEAN EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL

**REPORT ON CANDIDATES' WORK IN THE
CARIBBEAN ADVANCED PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION®**

MAY/JUNE 2013

HISTORY

**Copyright © 2013 Caribbean Examinations Council
St Michael, Barbados
All rights reserved.**

GENERAL COMMENTS

The 2013 examination in CAPE History retained the format established since 2009. The subject is examined in three papers for both Units 1 and 2.

Paper 01 is examined by 45 multiple-choice questions, 15 on each module and contributes 30 per cent to candidates' overall grade in each unit. The objective was to assess the range of content and skills covered by the syllabus. Candidates were required to answer all questions and each correct answer was rewarded, with no penalty for incorrect answers.

Paper 02 is examined by nine questions, three on each module and contributes 50 per cent to candidates' overall grade. The paper aimed at assessing depth rather than breadth of knowledge. Candidates were required to answer three questions one from each module, one of which had to be a document-based questions. Questions 1, 4 and 7 from Modules 1, 2 and 3 respectively were document based and required candidates to analyse extracts from documents on one of the themes in the modules. They were expected to bring knowledge specific to the issues raised from the general literature to bear in reasoned, clear, well-developed responses. The other six questions were extended essay questions and candidates were required to answer two of these with clearly stated theses and sub-theses and well-developed and structured arguments.

Papers 031 and 032 tested candidates' mastery of skills related to the discipline of history. These skills include interpretation and evaluation of sources by assessing the usefulness of the sources used in their research, collation and synthesizing of research data by providing the setting and the context of the topic, identifying the main historical data found and commenting on the significance of those findings. An important feature of these papers is the requirement that there should be proper referencing for all sources using the referencing style of the discipline of history.

Paper 031, the School-Based Assessment component, required candidates to submit a research paper of no more than 2200 words on a topic selected from one of the several themes in the syllabus. This paper contributed 20 per cent to the overall grade of candidates.

Paper 032, the alternative to the School-Based Assessment, was taken by private candidates who 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 candidates' overall grade.

DETAILED COMMENTS

UNIT I

Paper 01 – Multiple-Choice Questions

Candidates' coverage of all three modules in Unit 1 was tested by 45 multiple-choice questions, 15 from each module. They were required to have knowledge of the themes as well as use such knowledge in the interpretation and analysis of historical information. Candidates should be prepared to apply the skill of deductive reasoning and interpretation and analysis so that they can master higher order questions.

Paper 02 – Structured Document-Based Questions and Extended Essays

Paper 02 examined candidates' depth of knowledge of the content of the syllabus, their understanding of historical interpretation and debate, and their ability to present a well-structured, clearly expressed and coherent historical argument with supporting evidence.

Module 1: Indigenous Societies

Question 1

This question had three short extracts related to early contact between Europe and the Americas prior to 1492. Candidates were asked four questions, (a)–(d), related to the issues as developed in these extracts. They were expected to take a methodological approach to interpreting the extracts and answering the question. Specifically, they were expected to demonstrate an understanding of how historians make use of different types of evidence in making and supporting historical interpretations. Not many showed this capacity. Further, this was not a popular question. Candidates did not appear to have the tools needed to use the knowledge they had beyond recounting such knowledge.

It was also clear that candidates needed to pay attention to that part of the syllabus that speaks of the skills of the historian — evaluating evidence. The responses indicate the ongoing problem identified in the past with the document questions — the treatment of the extracts and related questions as comprehension exercises and the tendency to paraphrase the extracts as responses.

Question 2

This question required candidates to identify key features of an advanced indigenous civilization and provide evidence that these features existed in the indigenous societies before the sixteenth century. They were required to demonstrate that these societies were well-organized with a clearly identifiable social structure, a social welfare system as well as a philosophy for their existence. This was one of the more popular questions on this paper and most candidates had some information on the indigenous peoples of the Americas although some were not able to sufficiently distinguish between the several groups of indigenous peoples. Far too many found it difficult to use the knowledge to prove that the selected group was advanced; the answers in some instances were merely accounts of the life of the selected group.

Question 3

This question required candidates to discuss different forms of resistance, including cultural resistance and violent resistance employed by the indigenous peoples of the Americas to the Spanish attempts at domination up to 1600. Many of the candidates who attempted this question were not able to distinguish between resistance by enslaved Africans after 1600 and the ways in which indigenous peoples resisted. It was clear the candidates had limited understanding of historical timelines and historical context and setting.

Module 2: Slave Systems – Character and Dismantlement

Question 4

This question was based on three short extracts from primary documents that related to the institution of slavery in the Caribbean. Candidates were required to answer four questions, (a)–(d), on aspects of this theme as discussed in the extracts. The responses reveal that candidates not only lacked depth and breadth of knowledge on a core area of Caribbean history, but were unable to use what knowledge they had to explain issues related to slavery. Candidates were challenged in going beyond the recall of the usual information; for example, their knowledge of gender issues on the plantation was often limited to the role of women. Item (d), required candidates to call on their knowledge of the plantation system and their understanding of how the enslaved were organized in terms of labour. More importantly however it required them to engage in inferential thinking. They showed a general inability to do so.

Question 5

Candidates were expected to discuss the ways in which the conditions under which the enslaved lived and worked in slavery adversely affected life expectancy on the plantation. They were required to examine the causal relationship between reproduction practices on the slave plantation and mortality of the enslaved. This was a very popular question. It was clear that most candidates who attempted this question had satisfactory knowledge of the topic and were able to appropriately apply it to the demands of the question with reasonable coherence.

Question 6

Candidates were expected to discuss what the selected rebellion achieved, stating whether or not it achieved its goal, how the ruling class responded to it, how it affected the attitudes to the enslavement of Africans, as well as examine the impact of the revolt on the system of slavery. A significant number of candidates attempted this question and demonstrated some knowledge of the selected revolution. However, many responses pointed to a recurring problem; candidates are challenged by questions which required them to distinguish between the cause of an event, the course of an event and the impact, outcome or consequences of an event. Candidates who selected the Berbice revolt showed by their responses that they had not mastered the complexities involved in this particular revolt and the challenges involved in discerning the consequences of the actual outbreak as these emerged both during and as a result of the outbreak of the revolt itself.

Module 3: Freedom in Action

Question 7

This question consisted of three short extracts from primary documents that related to the establishment of the peasantry in the Caribbean in the nineteenth century. Candidates were asked to answer four questions, (a)–(d), related to the extracts. This was the most popular question. The responses indicated that while candidates had some knowledge of the peasantry, that knowledge was limited; most candidates relied on general information on the peasantry when the questions required specific knowledge of the different territories — Barbados, Jamaica and British Guiana — as treated in texts recommended at the CSEC level.

They were best able to write about the impact of the peasantry on the Caribbean, the (d) component of the question.

Question 8

Candidates were required to identify the strategies used by the people of the British colonized Caribbean to establish independence movements from the 1930s. They were expected to address the formation of the trade union movement, political parties, demonstrations, strikes and protests and other initiatives aimed at political reform. While a significant number of candidates attempted the questions, the responses demonstrated that they lacked the knowledge required to answer the question. Some candidates were not clear about the difference between emancipation of the nineteenth century and independence of the twentieth century. They also confused independence with integration movement.

Question 9

Candidates were required to examine the policy of France towards her colonies at the time of decolonization in the region, the conditions which existed in the French Caribbean which encouraged the decision as well as the reasons the people of Martinique and Guadeloupe chose to accept departmentalization rather than independence. This was the least popular question and the responses demonstrated that candidates were ill-prepared in this section of the syllabus.

Further Comments

The general performance on this paper indicated that candidates have limited knowledge of some areas of the syllabus and have not improved their general knowledge beyond CSEC knowledge, especially in relation to deepening the level of their analytic skills. They were not prepared for Module 3 of Unit 1 of the syllabus. It is also clear that candidates were not fully conversant with how to use the diverse pieces of historical knowledge to formulate an argument around a central idea or thesis. This is compounded by what appears to be the practice of candidates preparing and being prepared for the examination by focusing on the questions from past examinations rather than on the specific objectives of the themes.

UNIT 2

Paper 01 – Multiple-Choice Questions

The multiple choice items were designed to test candidates' knowledge of the syllabus across all three modules of the syllabus and their ability to apply the interpretative and analytic skills of the discipline of history. There were 15 items on each module for a total of 45 questions

Paper 02 – Structured Document-Based Questions and Extended Essays

Module 1: Atlantic World - Interactions

Question 1

This question was based on three short extracts on European settlement and rivalry in the Americas up to 1600. Candidates were required to study the extracts and then answer four questions, (a)–(d), on issues raised in the extracts. There were some fairly good responses but

there were some concerns since many candidates were not able to identify the different phases of the conflict between the interlopers and the Spaniards. Candidates were not able to distinguish between the reasons for attacks on Spanish fleet from attack on Spanish colonies.

Question 2

This question required candidates to assess the impact of the American War of Independence on the continental USA and on the wider Atlantic World. Candidates were required to demonstrate an understanding of how the War of Independence contributed to the continuing rivalry among European nations in the Atlantic World and how that informed the outcome of the war. They were expected to examine the outcome/impact on the 13 colonies and England and other European nations with interest in the Americas. This was the least popular question for Unit 2, Paper 02 and some of those who attempted the question discussed the causes of the War of Independence although the question specifically asked for the impact. Those who dealt with the impact of the war focused mainly on the impact on the wider Caribbean with limited knowledge of the impact on the continental USA itself beyond the achievement of independence. Candidates tended to apply generalized knowledge of the relationship between Britain and her colonies to decide on the impact of the war.

Question 3

This question required candidates to discuss how the ideas of the European Enlightenment contributed to the outbreak and development of the French Revolution of 1789. Candidates were required to demonstrate an understanding that the Enlightenment gave birth to ideas that had a far-reaching impact, providing ideas which challenged the existing political, economic and social practices in France. They were expected to examine how specific ideas were applied to France's *Ancien Regime* and caused the overthrow of the then government as well as shaped the revolutionary government. This was the most popular question in the module but candidates' performance varied. While a few candidates confused the Enlightenment with industrialization, some demonstrated a total grasp of the requirements of the question, making a clear link between Enlightenment and the French Revolution. While some candidates were well informed about the ideals of the Enlightenment and the causes of the French Revolution, they failed to make the link between the two. They tended to treat the question as if it required an evaluation of the several causes, rather than an examination of one factor. They wrote responses that had appropriate information but fell short on the use of that knowledge to treat with the specific requirements of the question.

Module 2: Atlantic Development – Identity and Industry

Question 4

This question had three short extracts from primary documents related to industrialization and economic growth in the United States up to 1900. Candidates were required to answer four questions, (a)–d), on the issues raised in the documents. The question was fairly popular but the responses point to the challenges candidates faced in understanding the distinction between the concepts of the 'nature of work' and the 'conditions of work'. The candidates' responses suggest a lack of knowledge of the work of individuals such as Thomas Edison. Some candidates found it difficult to apply the principle of Social Darwinism to the question and so included information on biological factors in the responses. As with other document questions, candidates struggled to make inferences from the documents.

Question 5

This question required candidates to explain how the concept of Manifest Destiny led to continental expansion in the United States up to the 1860s. Candidates were expected to demonstrate an understanding of the origins and meaning of the concept of Manifest Destiny and how it became both the motivation for, and the justification of the USA's quest to incorporate the lands, settled and unsettled by the European migrant nations into the union. It was expected that the responses would include knowledge of specific information on the progressive incorporation of different parts of the continent by 1867. Candidates demonstrated that they had a clear understanding of the concept of Manifest Destiny but many were unable to explain its justification. They knew about the expansionism of the USA but were not always able to select the data specific to the continental USA and diverted to a discussion of the USA's expansion into the Caribbean.

Question 6

For this question, candidates were required to explain the main feature of the independence movement in either Brazil or Venezuela. Candidates were expected not to merely describe the course of the movements for independence but also demonstrate their understanding of what constitutes the main/defining characteristics and events of the movements. Most candidates attempted the question on Brazil with only a few attempting the question on Venezuela; those who wrote on Venezuela had very little knowledge. Most candidates had knowledge of Brazil but were challenged to move the responses beyond providing information in a descriptive or narrative way to an explanation of the information as a factor or significant feature of the independence movement.

Module 3: International Relations – Conflict and Liberation

Question 7

This question consisted of three short documentary extracts related to Mohandas (Mahatma) Gandhi and the nationalist movement in India. Candidates were asked to answer four questions, (a)–(d), related to the extracts. The responses indicated that while candidates had some knowledge of Gandhi's contribution to the nationalist movement, especially his non-violent approach, they lacked knowledge of other important aspects of his work, for example, his support for the Khalifat movement. Too many candidates quoted directly from the documents in their answers. They found the questions which required more than recall challenging as they were unable to draw inferences from the documents in the (d) component of the question.

Question 8

In this question, candidates were required to discuss the conditions which led to the outbreak of the Russian Revolution of 1917. They were expected to provide details of the main factors and interplay of factors which led to the Russian Revolution and show their relationship in causing the revolution. Candidates were conversant with the course of the Russian Revolution of 1917 and responses showed satisfactory interpretation, however too many candidates settled for writing narrative accounts.

Question 9

In this question candidates were required to discuss the extent to which the Treaty of Versailles in 1919 led to the outbreak of World War II. Candidates were expected to give a thesis statement which indicated the extent to which the Treaty of Versailles may have created some of the conditions which contributed to World War II. They were expected to make it clear that there were other contributing factors and to indicate the relative significance of these factors. This was a fairly popular question and candidates were not only conversant with the required knowledge, but some were able to give reasonably good analysis. In quite a number of cases however, candidates literally rewrote the thesis embedded in the question itself by writing too little on the contribution of Versailles to World War II, and discussed at length other factors which were also linked to the war. In doing so they failed to demonstrate convincingly the significance of Versailles to the overall outbreak of World War II.

Further Comments

This year's performance in Unit 2 was in keeping with the pattern established over the years as candidates seem more prepared for this paper than they were for Unit 1. There was greater coverage of the syllabus as reflected in how candidates selected questions and how they performed. The challenges however are generally the same as those identified in Unit 1 — the absence of the skill sets needed to treat the document questions in a satisfactory manner, the lack of depth of knowledge of some themes, the challenge in interpreting questions, deciding on what questions require and the tendency to apply model responses to questions on a given topic without taking note of the specific demands of the question.

For both units, there appeared to be some improvement in the overall quality of the language skills of candidates although there continues to be weaknesses in general expression, spelling, choice of words and paragraphing. A persistent problem is the issue of comprehension which affects candidates' ability to interpret questions.

Paper 031 – School-Based Assessment

This aim of this paper was to assess students' ability to conduct independent research under the guidance of teachers. Projects submitted should demonstrate students' understanding of the processes involved in doing basic historical research as well as their use of the conventions of the discipline of history. Projects continue to demonstrate that sufficient attention is not being given to conventions of the discipline. Students continue to demonstrate that they

- are unclear about what constitutes a thesis and what distinguishes it from a title for the project or a research question
- are not able to integrate critique of the sources used in their project
- are not informed about how to use quotations
- are not fully conversant with how to write about historical context and setting
- do not know how to provide evidence specific to the thesis, develop an argument through discussion of diverse issues
- do not understand how to link the conclusion to the thesis

- are not sufficiently conversant with the conventions of the discipline as it relates to providing end/footnotes and compiling a bibliography
- continue to limit the quality of their analysis and depth of knowledge by the continued dependence on texts created for the CSEC syllabus.

This paper continues to be fraught with challenges as the submitted projects

- are not always correctly matched to the unit for which they are submitted
- are not properly proofread before submission
- exceed the limit of 2200 words and sanctions are not applied for projects that do
- use the rubric for grading (meant for the teacher) as a template for the project
- are photocopies of the original.

Paper 032 – Alternative to School-Based Assessment

This aim of this paper was to test the ability of private candidates to carry out independent research. Only a few candidates registered for this paper and the responses reflected the ongoing challenges candidates face in clearly stating the topic of their research, writing a rationale in keeping with the discipline for the topic selected, understanding what is meant by ‘source’ with full bibliographic details, assessing the usefulness of sources, and explaining the historical setting. This year there were a few responses which met the requirements but candidates need guidance in preparing for this paper.