

C A R I B B E A N E X A M I N A T I O N S C O U N C I L

**REPORT ON CANDIDATES' WORK IN THE
CARIBBEAN SECONDARY EDUCATION CERTIFICATE® EXAMINATION**

MAY/JUNE 2014

**CARIBBEAN HISTORY
GENERAL PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION**

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GENERAL COMMENTS

Paper 01 consisted of 60 multiple choice items, which tested knowledge and comprehension. Performance on this paper was fairly good.

Paper 02 consisted of six short answer and 12 essay questions, testing the nine themes of the syllabus. Each question is worth 25 marks and candidates are required to answer three questions, one from each of the three sections, for a total of 75 marks. Candidates performed only moderately on this paper and this is a source of concern.

Overall, candidates displayed knowledge of most of the topics covered in the paper. However there were some topics where a dearth of information predominated. These were primarily located in Section C and the latter part of Section B. In addition, some candidates were unable to earn maximum marks for their knowledge because of their inability to apply it to the specific questions. The problem for a number of candidates is not simply a lack of knowledge but an inability to apply the knowledge they possess appropriately.

The candidates' scripts also reflected some undesirable practices. Responses tended to be very general and lacking in analysis. There were few instances when concrete examples were provided to support points made in the responses. Some candidates also provided unsolicited information in their responses. For example, in Question 4 several candidates described the groups which made up the typical social pyramid (that was provided in the stimulus) in the Caribbean and some devoted an entire paragraph to this before attempting the question. Also, some candidates wasted time restating the question before stating "I will now explain why (question stated)..."utilizing time and space in a useless activity. Some candidates repeated the same information in different sections of their answers reducing their capacity to earn marks. In addition, there were language problems, weakness of expression and instances of words used out of context.

Some essay responses were not properly organized with introduction, body and conclusion and some of the paragraphs included several points which were merely mentioned rather than developed. Too often candidates did not heed the task word in the question and provided much more information than was necessary and which could not earn them any marks. This was very evident where candidates were required to list information. Some candidates neither understood that a list does not require long explanations nor were guided by the marks allocated for the activity. As a result, despite the knowledge they possessed, some candidates were unable to position themselves in the higher mark-earning category.

For Paper 031, the School-Based Assessment, students, guided by their teachers, were required to select a topic and write a project report using the guidelines provided in the syllabus. This year's performance shows an improvement over the previous year.

Paper 032, the Alternative to the School-Based Assessment, is designed specifically for private candidates. It is a written paper and candidates are required to answer five questions based on a specific theme identified in the syllabus. The performance on this paper showed an improvement over past years but remains generally weak.

DETAILED COMMENTS

Paper 01 — Multiple Choice

Paper 01 assessed the Knowledge and Comprehension profile. Questions were distributed evenly across the areas of the Core with ten questions set on chronology and general trends. Performance tended to be fairly good with similar performance on all topics on the paper. The mean score was 36 marks out of 60.

Question 1

This question tested candidates' knowledge of the reasons for European exploration in the 15th century and Spain's role in this activity. In Part (a) (i), candidates were asked to name the "coveted land" that Columbus was seeking; at Part (a) (ii), to identify the items produced in the "coveted land"; at (b) to explain the reasons for the demand for the items and at Part (c) to discuss the ways in which the King and Queen of Spain thought they could benefit from Columbus' proposal. This was the most popular question in this section.

Some candidates were unable to answer section (a) of the question correctly as they were unable to specify the "coveted land"— Asia — and identify the items produced there. Some responses named New World items such as cotton, tobacco, and coffee instead of gold, spices, silks and perfumes. Others were not specific with their examples stating "fabric" rather than "fine Eastern textiles" or "silks." However, a large number of candidates were able to identify the items produced in response to Part (a) (ii). Some candidates did not specify the names of the countries and gave vague responses such as 'The East' or they confused it with the West Indies or the New World.

For Part (b), some candidates did not adequately explain reasons for the European demand for the items named in (a) (ii). The responses were general and limited to wealth as the main reason for the demand. Also quite a number of candidates gave explanations that would have been better suited to Part (c) such as spreading their civilization and empire building. This section was fairly well done as many responses highlighted the need to sell for profit and to gain prestige. The best responses were given at Part (c) with students being guided by 'Gold, God and Glory'.

Most were able to explain the ways in which the King and Queen of Spain thought they could benefit from the proposal. These included the opportunity to compete with Portugal and the chance of extending their empire with the new lands promised.

Question 2

This question tested candidates' understanding of the impact of the Europeans on the Indigenous People, particularly the factors that contributed to the decline of the Indigenous population after the Europeans came, the ways in which they were affected by Europeans and their cultural impositions and the reasons for the economic changes that the Indigenous People faced as a result of the European presence. This was a fairly popular question. In Part (a) candidates were able to identify the factors that contributed to a decline of the Indigenous population, however many were not sufficiently mindful of the task word "list" and provided lengthier explanations than were necessary. Some listed infanticide and suicide as separate points although they are two examples of the same practice. Additional factors for the decline were forced migration to work on mines, estates and missions as well as disease and starvation.

In Part (b), some candidates were able to identify relevant aspects of cultural imposition though they did not clearly explain how it occurred. The term "cultural imposition" posed challenges to some candidates. Many candidates faced difficulty at Part (c) in explaining the reasons for the economic changes. Some discussed European economic and socio cultural activities. In some cases, it was clear that the candidates possessed more information on the sociocultural aspects but it is also clear that candidates were unable to distinguish between economic, social and cultural features. The most popular response was based on the fact that trading stopped and indigenous crops were trampled. Generally, the responses to this question were limited and the explanations were weak. Complete responses would have elaborated on the forced change in land use patterns and new ways of claiming land rights which deprived the Indigenous Peoples of any rights.

Question 3

This question tested the objective in the syllabus which relates to the Slave trade and the reasons given for the enslavement of Africans. Candidates were required to demonstrate knowledge of Western European nations which were directly involved in the trade in captured and enslaved Africans on the West African coast before 1600 and provide the reasons that the French and British gave for increased importation of Africans in their Caribbean colonies. It required the candidates to highlight previous labour/agricultural practices and settlement patterns.

Many candidates responded by stating nationalities rather than names of the countries involved in the slave trade on the West African coast. Some candidates gave the names of Slave trading ports and Spain was commonly named, inaccurately, as being directly involved in trading in enslaved and captured Africans on the coast of West Africa during this period. Candidates should have named Portugal, France, England, Holland and Denmark among others.

Section (b) was satisfactorily answered. Candidates were able to give the main reasons for the small number of enslaved Africans before 1600, such as the use of Indigenous and bondservants' labour and that tobacco cultivation did not require many labourers. Some candidates did not pay attention to the time period specified so they included the Indigenous People in their responses. There were some excellent responses at (b) and (c).

Question 4

This was a popular question in which some candidates were able to attain full marks. The question tested candidates' ability to identify factors that determined ranking within the "social pyramid," the qualities which might determine the status of enslaved men and women in the eyes of the other enslaved men and women and to examine the features of housing on the sugar plantations during enslavement showing how this reflected social status. Some candidates misinterpreted the intent of the stimulus diagram. The question required that candidates provide the reasons for the categorization but some candidates described the categories instead. Some candidates focused on the enslaved population rather than on the society as a whole.

At Part (b) some candidates misinterpreted the question and looked at status in the eyes of the whites instead of the enslaved. However many candidates were able to identify occupation/colour/skill/leadership/privileges and African lineage as appropriate answers. The majority of the responses were limited to work/jobs, colour and place of birth and were generally lacking in their descriptions of the qualities. Most candidates found Part (c) of this question challenging as they were unable to identify the features of housing particularly the housing of the white employees. Some could identify only two groups- the plantocracy and the enslaved to the exclusion of other white groups such as overseers and bookkeepers. Some candidates did not realize that housing referred to living quarters and their responses included boiling house, curing house and other factory buildings. Candidates who responded well made the connection between the housing arrangement and social status.

Question 5

This was not a popular question. The question tested candidates' knowledge of the French and Spanish slave laws in the 17th and 18th centuries, the Caribbean territories to which they applied directly, the reasons why they were introduced and the ways in which planters in the British Caribbean sought to control the economic activities of enslaved men and women. While many of the candidates who attempted this question were able to identify the territories that were ruled by the French and Spanish, some were unclear as to which territories belonged to France and Spain. French territories were Martinique, Guadeloupe, Haiti, Marie-Galante and French Guiana. Spanish territories were Hispaniola/Santo Domingo, Puerto Rico and Cuba.

Section (b) was poorly done. Many candidates stated the various laws in the French and Spanish colonies but they did not give the reasons why they were implemented. Most candidates could only provide one reason — avoiding revolts. Other reasons included the need to protect investment, the give the appearance of protection for the enslaved and to maintain white superiority.

Section (c) was also poorly done. Most candidates did not pay attention to “economic control” but stated all forms of control — social, psychological and physical.

Many candidates referred to the fact that the planters stopped the enslaved from going to the market without explaining how a single market day permitted planter control of the enslaved. Some candidates did not fully grasp the meaning of “economic activities”.

Question 6

The objective of the question was to test candidates’ knowledge of the economic effects of the Haitian Revolution on Haiti and the benefits of this revolution to the wider Caribbean. This was a popular question.

At Part (a) (i) candidates were able to identify at least one of the major crops grown in St. Domingue in 1791. The crop most commonly identified was sugar cane, which some simply referred to as “cane”. A few candidates identified coffee and cotton and even fewer, indigo.

At (a) (ii), many candidates identified, white, blacks, slaves as the social groups in St. Domingue in 1791 and only a few correctly referred to the grand blancs, and petit blancs. Few of the candidates who attempted this question, performed well on this part of the question.

Some candidates failed to answer Part (b) of the question accurately because they did not recognize that the question was asking them to focus on the economic effects of the Haitian Revolution on Haiti. Some correctly identified: destruction of Haiti’s infrastructure, disruption of trade, the embargo and the fall of sugar production. Some candidates went on to discuss the social and political effects of the revolution and were not able to earn maximum marks on this part of the question.

For Part (c), the response of candidates was satisfactory. Most were able to state that Haiti was a symbol of hope for other Caribbean territories. Candidates were also able to identify the benefits in terms of the transfer of skills in sugar and coffee production as well as in basketry, but hardly anyone mentioned the increase in the Roman Catholic population in Jamaica. This was by far the most popular question in this section.

Question 7

This question tested candidates’ knowledge of Emancipation in the Spanish territories. It was not a popular question and most responses were very poorly done. Many candidates confused the emancipation movement in the British colonies with that in the Spanish and missed the operative focus on Cuba. They described the British emancipation movement instead of focusing on Spanish efforts hence there was little reference to Cuba gaining emancipation later than the British and French territories. Also some candidates wrote mainly of US intervention, Batista and Castro and a few responses focused on how enslaved men and women responded to enslavement. The bulk of the responses to this question were low scoring.

Question 8

This question tested candidates' knowledge of the operations of the Apprenticeship system. This was a relatively popular question that was fairly well done. Those candidates who did not perform well concentrated on the problems of the Apprenticeship system as they related to the apprentices and not to the challenges faced by the Stipendiary Magistrates in carrying out their duties. Some candidates could not make the connection between the difficulties that magistrates faced with the structure of the Apprenticeship system itself. Additionally, some confused the Apprenticeship system with the Amelioration proposals of 1823. While most candidates were knowledgeable about the problems of the Stipendiary Magistrates, some candidates failed to mention the aims and clauses of the Apprenticeship provisions so there was little focus on the central problems of Apprenticeship. The problem for some candidates was their inability to select the information that was relevant to the question.

Question 9

This question tested the impact of Indian Immigration on the Sugar industry and candidates were required to present their responses in essay format. Most candidates wrote on the cultural and religious aspect of the Indians' contribution to Guyana and the impact of immigration on the Indians instead of how they helped the growth of the sugar industry. Some wrote on the reasons why the immigrants left India.

Some candidates were unable to identify five effects of Indian immigration on the sugar industry in Guyana. A few compared the Indians with the Africans in Guyana. Aside from the misinformation, the essays were not properly organized. Economic effects such as its contribution to an increase in sugar production, a reduction in the cost of production and the improvement in labour prospects which helped in the introduction of new improved methods of production could have been cited.

Question 10

This question tested candidates' knowledge of the peasantry in the Caribbean. Candidates demonstrated basic knowledge of the contribution of the peasantry to the economic development of the British Caribbean.

However, the candidates were not as specific as they ought to have been in their ideas and examples. Some candidates were not clear on the contribution in the area of trading, while many of them made no mention of cooperatives and their contribution to the economy. Although some candidates referred to the peasants as a group of individuals or as the name of a person, most candidates were able to provide a definition of peasants. Some wrote on the social rather than economic contribution of the peasants to the region, again demonstrating a lack of understanding of some basic concepts. Economic contributions were appropriate were the development of an independent economic orientation, diversification of the economy through efforts to employ themselves, expansion of the internal marketing system and the stimulation of inter-island trade. Changes to land use patterns and expansion of settlement and cultivation into new areas was also a contribution to be noted.

Question 11

This question tested candidates' knowledge of the difficulties of the sugar industry. It was a relatively popular question; however some candidates did not pay attention to the time frame given in the question. As a result, they wrote more on the immediate post emancipation period rather than on the later period, which was specified in the question. Some candidates were able to provide up to three difficulties which the sugar industry encountered between 1875 and 1897. These included competition with beet sugar, backwardness and lack of capital. Many emphasized immigration and labour issues. However, most candidates were unable to make reference to the collapse of firms, increased operating costs, falling prices, competition from Cuban cane sugar. Most candidates failed to develop those points they did mention into a critical essay response.

Question 12

Testing candidates knowledge of Caribbean economic development during the period 1875–1985 with reference to industrialization, this was not a popular question and most responses were poorly done. Candidates demonstrated very limited knowledge of this topic and many responses tended to be journalistic and outside of the specified time period. Some misinterpreted the question and discussed it in a general way, rather than relating it to the industrial activities that occurred in the Caribbean during 1875–1985. Some did not seem to understand the meaning of industrialization. Receiving financial assistance from their parents was the main thrust of most of those who attempted the question, rather than on the role of industrialization in the economic prospects of the Caribbean, as the question intended. Most were unable to use the prospects for industrialization as the means to convince their parents to invest. Some wrote about the sugar industry. Most responses lacked both content and analysis and as a result were the lowest scoring of the entire paper.

Question 13

The question required candidates to discuss the economic and political consequences of US investment in Cuba. Approximately 40 per cent of the candidates who attempted this question seemed to have a general knowledge of the economic consequences of US involvement in Cuba, but their knowledge of US political involvement was considerably less. A few were able to discuss the Platt amendment and the embargo placed on Cuba by the US. Despite their knowledge, candidates did not present the information in a structured manner. They tended to provide a vague description of US involvement in Cuba without placing this information in its proper chronological order. Some candidates were not sure which consequences were economic and which were political. The majority of the candidates failed to complete this question and earn high marks. Economic consequences which could have been discussed were job creation for Cubans as a result of US investment and increased trade and infrastructural development. Political consequences included growing resentment by Cubans against American intervention and control and protests and resistance and political instability.

Question 14

This question tested candidates' knowledge of US activity in the Caribbean. Specifically, it required candidates to discuss the political and cultural effects of US involvement in the English speaking Caribbean. Many candidates seemed to have a wider knowledge of the cultural effects than the political ones. While they demonstrated some knowledge of cultural effects of the US they were unable to provide specific examples and where they did, discussions were brief. For example, some candidates stated that a cultural effect of the US on the region was that American music was popular, but they failed to discuss US impact on different types of music or to mention popular music genres that were of US origin, for example, country and western, jazz and rock and roll. Instances of American culture also to be provided should have included food and drink, fashion and clothing and books, films and cinemas.

Some candidates did not heed the question focus on the English speaking Caribbean and made references to Cuba, Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico. Most responses were general and did not specify which points were political and which were cultural. Political effects included the US policy of strengthening the military defense of the region by establishing air and navel bases in several territories and its involvement in pressuring for the removal of the government in Guyana in 1953, as well as its pressure on the Michael Manley government in Jamaica.

Question 15

This question required candidates to discuss the similarities among British West Indian territories which supported the establishment of a federation. The majority of the candidates lost sight of the question. Instead of discussing the similarities among the territories, they focused on factors that gave rise to the federation or to the imposition of federation by Britain on the British West Indies. The candidates seemed to be very knowledgeable on the topic of Federation in general, but their responses did not address the regional similarities that gave rise to the Federation. And as a result these responses could only earn mid range marks. The similarities included a common historical experience and system of government, common social systems, language and services.

Question 16

This question required candidates to discuss the role of either Theophilus Albert Marryshow or Sir Grantley Adams in the formation of the British West Indian Federation. The responses were poor as they lacked knowledge of the work of these individuals. Some were able to give a brief description of the federation and the withdrawal of Jamaica and Trinidad from the federation. Most candidates who attempted this question however, chose to discuss the contribution of Grantley Adams but these responses did not provide details of Adams' specific contribution to the Federation. Scores on this question were very low. Adams' contribution as Prime Minister and his efforts to hold the Federation together despite numerous problems and limited legislative power needed to be discussed.

Question 17

This question, which tested candidate's knowledge of social conditions, required candidates to discuss the social conditions in the British West Indies under the subheadings, housing and health. There is evidence in the responses that candidates possessed some knowledge of social conditions in the Caribbean, however, this information did not include health and housing in any detail. Some candidates focused on areas such as education and working conditions, which were not required by the question, but where their information was strongest. Others wrote about 21st century conditions with their discussions highlighting improvement in these two areas in today's society. There was also considerable repetition of points in the responses. This was a popular question but most candidates were not able to earn marks at the highest level. The responses could have cited the dilapidated condition of houses, with poor ventilation and overcrowding and little privacy. Poor sanitary conditions and high vents, development of slums in town and cities were aspects of the problem. Health issues included inadequate medical services, a shortage of doctors and nurses, wide spread poverty and limited access to clean water which resulted in ill health and disease.

Question 18

This question required candidates to discuss examples of social and political interaction between Hindus and the wider society in Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago. Approximately three per cent of the candidates attempted this question. Many candidates did not seem to understand the expression "social and political interaction" and were unable to make a distinction between these two types of interaction. Some candidates simply discussed the Hindu religion or made comparisons between Hindus in Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago. While some candidates were able to discuss the conflicts Indians experienced in the region prior to the specified period, they did not identify any political interaction between these groups. Scores on this question were low. Instances of social interaction were seen in markets, public schools, public sector jobs and communal activities. Political interaction was evidenced in village leaders, religious leaders who emerged as influential personalities and as leading politicians.

Paper 031 – School-Based Assessment (SBA)

There was some improvement in the quality of the SBA in terms of student performance. There is still too much teacher acceptance of plagiarism which is often rewarded with high grades. Many students are still writing descriptively, without much analysis. Some of the topics approved do not invite analysis.

Paper 032 – Alternative to School-Based Assessment

Candidates' performance on Paper 032 was better this year than in years past, but only a small percentage of candidates managed to score over 50 per cent of the marks. There was one instance of notable improvement in the performance on this paper. Question 5, which carries the most marks, whilst still proving to be challenging to most students was better answered by more students this year than before. Candidates continue to be inadequately prepared to answer specific questions on documentary sources and are still treating the entire paper as a comprehension paper rather than using previous knowledge to answer questions appropriately. Generally, candidates writing this paper display a lack of analytical skills.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TEACHERS

While there is evidence of a lack of information in some areas of the syllabus, students should be able to maximize their mark earning capacity using the information they possess. This depends on, strengthening their answering techniques, providing a good understanding of basic terms — such as social, economic, political — and the ability to distinguish between the different categories and careful reading of the questions.

Teachers are therefore encouraged to:

- Place more emphasis on defining categorizing terms so that students understand their meanings.
 - Break down content into social, economic, political and cultural where applicable, to help candidates to write information accordingly.
 - Pay attention to details for example, the time period when each European group came to the Caribbean, the European countries that were directly involved in the Trade in Captive Africans etc.
 - Emphasize the importance of chronology so that individuals, groups and events are discussed in their correct time periods and appropriately referenced. Too many candidates refer to “slaves” in the 20th century Caribbean.
 - Insist that students provide examples and supporting evidence in their responses.
 - Provide more comparative class exercises so that students can appreciate the differences in developments in the Spanish, French, Dutch and British Caribbean and between groups in the territories.
- Encourage students to collect biographical information on significant historical figures and their contribution to regional development. This information is usually available in the national newspapers at the times of independence or other anniversary celebrations/commemorations.
- Infuse debates into classroom exercises.
- Stimulate critical thinking.
- Allocate time for examination preparation during which answering techniques are discussed.
- Utilize past papers and the relevant subject reports to enhance teaching.
- Strengthen essay writing skills with attention to organization, provision of background information and argumentation; format in the case of letters, and perspective in the case of “Imagine” questions.
- Formulate SBA projects that encourage critical writing.
- Be vigilant with regard to plagiarism in SBA assignments.
- Pay close attention to CXC regulations.
- Make a valiant effort to complete the syllabus.