

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 2012

**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 each from the three sections, for a total of 75 marks. Candidates performed moderately on this paper.

For Paper 031, the School-Based Assessment project, students, with the guidance of their teachers, were required to select a topic and write a project report. This year's performance was fair and consistent with that of 2011.

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. There was weak performance generally on this paper.

DETAILED COMMENTS

Paper 01 — Multiple Choice

Paper 01 assesses the Knowledge and Comprehension profile. Questions were distributed evenly across the areas of the core with ten questions set on general trends. Performance across all areas tended to be fairly good. The mean on this paper was 35 out of 60 marks.

Paper 02 — Structured Questions and Essays

Section A — Theme 1: The Indigenous Peoples and the Europeans

Question 1

This question set out to test candidate's knowledge of the art forms of the Indigenous Peoples in the early Caribbean. This was a popular question but candidates, in general, did not understand what was meant by the term *art forms* and many were unable to go into details about the intricate art work done by the Tainos.

In Part (a), candidates were asked to name four materials which were used by the Tainos of the Caribbean to construct their home. Candidates responded best to this section often using the vernacular language, for example, 'trulli palm', 'tibusiri' and 'carat palm'. They were able to name at least three of the materials used even though naming the fourth one was at times a challenge.

For Part (b), candidates had difficulty outlining the ways in which sculptures were used in the religious practice of the Taino. Generally, they were able to give at least one reason, but sometimes repeated themselves when attempting to give the other two reasons. In this section, they tended to use the terms 'zemi' and 'sculpture' interchangeably.

In Part (c), candidates were asked to describe three ways in which the indigenous art forms were used in the buildings and craftsmanship of the Tainos. This section posed the greatest difficulty for candidates who wrote on the end product, for example, baskets, hammocks, without referring to the art form (weaving) that was used to produce the item.

Candidates should be encouraged to develop a familiarity with such key concepts as *craftsmanship*, *art forms* and *sculpture*.

Question 2

This question targeted candidates' knowledge of the effect of European labour demands on the Indigenous Peoples and the response of these peoples to these demands. This question was not popular, but some candidates were able to earn fairly good scores. The mean was 13 out of 25 marks.

In Part (a), where candidates were tested on their knowledge of the labour provided by the Indigenous Peoples for the Europeans, they were able to demonstrate the requisite knowledge base and many of them were able to list *four ways* including *work in mines*, *sugar estates*, *cattle ranches* and *domestic work*.

In Part (b), where candidates were asked to give three reasons why this labour was required most of them were able to give a fairly sound response. A few candidates had difficulty distinguishing between the time periods and spoke of the Indigenous People and the enslaved Africans interchangeably. Acceptable responses could have explained *the attitudes of the Spaniards to labour*, *insufficient numbers of Spaniards*, and *unfamiliarity with cultivation and preparation methods for foods grown in the Caribbean*.

For Part (c), candidates were asked to explain three factors responsible for the withdrawal of indigenous labour. Many who clearly understood the question were able to answer appropriately and produced very good responses. The better responses detailed action other than violent resistance and explained conditions which provoked the indigenous response.

Section A — Theme 2: Caribbean Economy and Slavery

Question 3

Candidates' knowledge of the sugar revolution in the British Caribbean was the focus of this question. This was the most popular question in Section A. However, Part (c) posed a problem for some candidates who were unable to differentiate between social and economic reasons for the change.

In Part (a), candidates were asked to outline two reasons for the changeover from the production of tobacco to sugar. Many mentioned the fact that *West Indian tobacco could not compete with the Virginia product* and *the demand for sugar as a sweetener in Europe*. Few mentioned *support from the Dutch who provided the necessary skills, equipment and credit*.

For Part (b), candidates were asked to describe three economic outcomes of the changeover to sugar. This part did not pose a serious challenge to most candidates who provided a number of good responses, including the *increased demands of manufacture*, *increased acreage*, *reduction in the number of farms* and a *change in labour demands*.

In Part (c), candidates were asked to explain three social changes that resulted from the introduction of sugar. This section proved most challenging to some candidates who did not understand the term *social changes* fully. Nevertheless, some candidates produced some very interesting responses. *Major demographic changes*, *social stratification* and a *fractured society* were implicated.

Question 4

Candidates' knowledge of the increasing demand for enslaved Africans in the Caribbean after the 1500s was targeted in this question. This was a fairly popular question which produced some very good responses. Overall, candidates seemed to be comfortable responding to the question. However,

some areas of concern remain. Not least of these is the persistence of arguments that Africans were able to withstand the hot sun coupled with harsh labour conditions because, for example, they were 'used to prolonged exposure to the sun, laboured and did not die'.

In Part (a), candidates were asked to outline two reasons why the Spaniards first imported captive Africans into the Caribbean. While there were some candidates who were able to give the reasons why the Spaniards first imported captive Africans into the Caribbean, there were some who tended to focus more on the sugar plantation and neglected to concentrate on why the Spaniards were the *first* to ferry captive Africans to the Caribbean. A few wrote on why the Africans were brought in a general way, out of context, and not within the appropriate time frame.

For Part (b), candidates were asked to give three reasons why there was only a small number of enslaved Africans in the Caribbean in the early 1500s. Most candidates were able to give the reasons. A popular response was that *the sugar revolution had not started and so a large number of Africans were not needed. The initial limited nature of the trade and limited exploration of the Caribbean* were cited. Such responses were well argued.

In Part (c), candidates were asked to examine three factors responsible for a rapid increase in the number of enslaved Africans in the British Caribbean by the end of the 1600s. This demand produced some well-developed responses as candidates did a very good job in answering the question. *The expansion of cultivation of labour intensive crops* as well as *the profitable nature of the trade* and *the accessibility of the West Coast of Africa to European traders* were arguments made by candidates.

Section A — Theme 3: Resistance and Revolt

Question 5

This question tested candidates' knowledge of the increasing demand for enslaved Africans in the Caribbean after the 1500s. Candidates seemed quite comfortable with this question which was the second most popular question in this section. The responses for Part (c), in particular, were impressive displaying some higher level reasoning among candidates. The mean for this question was 16 out of 25 marks.

In Part (a), candidates were asked to list four types of methods, other than those dictated by law, which were used by sugar planters to control enslaved Africans on a typical sugar plantation in the 1700s. Many were able to list the four different methods required but some offered examples of treatment rather than categories. These included economic, physical, cultural and psychological.

In Part (b), where candidates were asked to describe any three of the methods used by sugar planters to control enslaved Africans on a typical sugar plantation in the 1700s, they were able to describe the methods in full details and earned high marks.

In Part (c), candidates were asked to explain three reasons why methods of control did not always succeed. This section posed a serious challenge to some candidates and it was obvious that many of them did not fully comprehend the requirements of the question. They were unable to explain specifically why the methods of control did not always work. The most popular response was the desire for freedom which prompted the enslaved to either run away or to rebel. Other possible reasons might have been the fact *that refuge was available, the plantations' dependence on the Africans to subsidize their upkeep.*

Question 6

In Part (a), candidates were asked to identify four territories in which major revolts were staged by enslaved Africans in the Caribbean. This section was well handled. Candidates were able to list all

the major revolts in the Caribbean and so the majority of them were able to get full marks for this part.

For Part (b), candidates were asked to give three reasons for the early success of the 1816 revolt. This section was generally well done, even though too many candidates applied knowledge of the general causes of revolts, such as the desire for freedom or harsh treatment rather than causes specific to the 1816 incident which would have earned them higher marks. Weaker candidates seemed unaware that British troops were garrisoned in Barbados and therefore suggested that officials had to wait for outside assistance because of weak military presence in the island. Some candidates confused details with those of other revolts.

In Part (c), where candidates were asked to explain the reasons for the defeat, many of them were able to mention *the death of the leader of the revolt, Bussa, which caused the enslaved to be discouraged, that Africans were slaughtered during the military operations to put down the revolt* and the fact that *the military was better armed than the Africans*.

Section B — Theme 4: Metropolitan Movements Towards Emancipation

Question 7

This question tested candidate's knowledge of the amelioration policy introduced by the British government in the 1820s. In this question, candidates were asked to imagine that they were Jamaican sugar planters in 1825. They were required to write a letter to their banker in Britain, explaining the amelioration policy (including reasons for its introduction) and why most planters were unhappy with it.

This proved to be quite a popular question but unfortunately candidates were not always able to provide outstanding responses. In terms of structure, a number of them were able to provide an appropriate letter format but many failed to observe/adhere to the time periods and so placed inaccurate dates. Though not many points were allotted to the format, it is still something that candidates are encouraged to pay close attention to.

Candidates struggled in their understanding of key terms such as *planter* and *apprentices*. They were quite literal in their interpretation of the word *planter* and often confused the planter with the enslaved African or interchanged the word planter and apprentice at times. Some candidates also confused the terms apprenticeship and amelioration. Both systems demanded similar focus, planter response, and many of the less able students were unable to perceive the distinction between the two events and ended up combining aspects and issues from both in their responses.

Question 8

In this question, candidates were asked to imagine that they were members of the London Missionary Society on a visit to the Caribbean in 1837. They were required to prepare a report to the Society explaining what the apprenticeship period was intended to achieve and why it was failing to do so. They were expected to include three relevant clauses of the 1833 Act, the sections beneficial to the apprentice and to the planter, and the dissatisfaction of both the planter and the apprentice.

This question was relatively popular. Candidates seemed knowledgeable about the topic and the responses were fairly good. The weakness of some candidates in relation to completing this question came when they presented facts about the amelioration proposals instead of the apprenticeship system. Some candidates began by explaining the apprenticeship system, but then they went off task and discussed issues relating to the amelioration. A few were able to go back on course while others continued their discussion off task.

Common mistakes identified:

- Apprenticeship was designed to improve the living conditions of the slaves (this is more typical of the amelioration proposals).
- Some candidates stated the amelioration proposals where they were required to state the relevant clauses of the 1833 Act or incorrectly explained that the amelioration was a period which followed the abolition of slavery.
- Some candidates also tended to write the same statement as a benefit to both the planters and apprentices which could not be correct.
- In a few instances candidates referred to the apprentices as ‘planters’ clearly illustrating a lack of knowledge of historical concepts or key terms.

Section B — Theme 5: Adjustments to Emancipation, 1836 –1876

Question 9

This question’s focus was candidates’ knowledge of the problems experienced in the sugar cane industry in the years immediately after Emancipation. Candidates were asked to imagine that they were planters of a named English-speaking Caribbean territory. They were required to write a letter to the governor discussing some of the problems facing the sugar cane industry between 1838 and 1854.

This was the most popular question. It was better answered and the scores were high. Some candidates however, misinterpreted the question to be asking about the sugar revolution instead of the post-emancipation period and too many candidates used the terms planters/slaves/farmers interchangeably.

Generally, these responses were better organized and well written. About 20–30 per cent of the scripts marked fell in this category, many earning maximum marks. It must however be noted that some candidates answered the question without taking on the role of a planter as was required of them.

A few candidates were able to identify all the problems faced by the industry while for others the entire essay was based on the labour problems. These candidates expanded far too much on immigrants. They discussed the problems the immigrants (Chinese and Indians) faced. Some also did a lengthy discussion on how the resistance methods of the enslaved affected the industry. These candidates did not pay attention to the date in the question (1838).

Some candidates seemed to have difficulty defining a planter so their discussion was based on the planter being the person who planted the crops. Some of the candidates also tended to refer to the freed African as slaves.

Question 10

This question tested candidate’s knowledge of the reasons for the change over from the Old Representative System of Government to Crown Colony Government in Jamaica in the 1860s. In this question, candidates were asked to imagine that they were colonial secretaries in Jamaica in the 1860s. They were required to write a letter to the colonial office arguing the case for the adoption of the Crown Colony System of Government on the island, in place of the Old Representative System.

This question was unpopular and had very poor responses. Candidates rambled and only a few were able to discuss more than two points clearly. Although the demands of this question were very reasonable, candidates appeared to find the question difficult as they did not know the difference between the Old Representative System (ORS) and Crown Colony Government. They were unaware of the problems associated with the Old Representative System and as a consequence there was no analytical approach in answering the question.

The objective was not achieved as responses given were not pitched at the critical level but at the basic level of simple recall of knowledge. The question required that candidates have knowledge of the Jamaican Assembly. They should have been able to:

- Differentiate between the ORS and Crown Colony Government
- Be familiar themselves with the problems associated with the ORS
- Have in-depth knowledge of the colonial office and its roles and functions
- Be aware of the social, political and economic conditions of Jamaica after Emancipation that led to the 1865 Morant Bay Rebellion
- Be aware of the advantages of the Crown Colony Government

Section B — Theme 6: Caribbean Economy, 1875 –1985

Question 11

This question tested candidate's knowledge of the growth of the Barbadian Tourist Industry in the 1980s. In this question, candidates were asked to imagine that they were living in Barbados in 1980 and the island had experienced growth in the tourist industry. They were required to examine the reasons for and the consequences of the development of the tourist industry in Barbados.

This question was not a popular one. While the question appeared to be quite straightforward, candidates appeared to have difficulty. The first part of the question was interpreted as why/how the development of the tourist industry benefited Barbados. The second part seemed to be interpreted as solely negative. The consequences listed were generally long term and farfetched consequences. Overpopulation was very often cited as one such consequence.

Because of the misinterpretation of the requirements of the question, the performance was not generally impressive and candidates' scores ranged from 10 to 16.

Question 12

Candidates' knowledge of the factors responsible for the expansion of the Cuban sugar industry in the second half of the 19th century was tested in this question. Candidates were asked to examine the factors which led to the growth of the Cuban sugar industry between 1850 and 1890. They were required to imagine themselves as US investors in the second half of the 1800s.

This was not a frequently answered question. Those candidates who attempted the question provided mostly well written responses. Only a few seemed to have misunderstood the question. Candidates seemed to have a good grasp of factors which led to the growth of the sugar industry in Cuba. As such, essays were comprehensive and well organized. Responses were clear and easy to read.

Section C — Theme 7: The United States in the Caribbean, 1776 –1985

Question 13

This question tested candidate's knowledge of the American invasion of Grenada in 1983. Candidates were asked to discuss six factors that caused the United States of America to invade Grenada and remove the Revolutionary Military Council (RMC) in 1983.

Candidates seemed to understand the questions, but a lack of knowledge prevented some of them from giving appropriate responses. It is clear that some of them had gaps in their knowledge. Candidates who knew the information handled the questions well. They showed adequate knowledge of the Revolution and the US concern for their citizens.

Most were familiar with Eric Gairy's rule in the 1970s, but they failed to discuss the reasons for the US intervention. In spite of this, there were a number of candidates who obtained perfect scores.

Many candidates gave four explanations of the US Intervention policies in the Caribbean while ignoring the reasons for the intervention in Grenada in 1983. Where some candidates tried to give reasons for the intervention, their discussion lacked substance.

The excellent responses presented details of Bishop's overthrow by the Revolutionary Military Council. A few even mentioned the OECS' appeal to the United States for help in the invasion. Not many mentioned that the overthrow was a threat to the Caribbean Basin Initiative.

Question 14

In this question, candidates were asked to discuss the effects of Fidel Castro's Cuban revolution between 1958 and 1985. The focus in this question was the influence of the Cuban Revolution on the Caribbean region and the United States' responses. The political and economic influence of both the Cuban Revolution and the devices used by the United States to prevent the spread of socialism in the region were targeted.

This was a very popular question in this section and it was evident that many candidates had knowledge of the Cuban Revolution but were unable to analyse the information they knew sufficiently to give accurate responses to the question. Candidates were not sufficiently grounded in the influence of the revolution on the Caribbean. Too many did not have adequate information about the Cold War to properly interpret this section of the question.

Candidates' responses were diffused all across the Caribbean and unfortunately lacking in focus, content and consequently, analysis. In the main, candidates focused on the Cuban Revolution and the political and economic reforms of Fidel Castro. Many candidates did not have any idea about the 'cold war'. Some thought it was a physical war. This is an indication that certain terms need to be reinforced.

Section C — Theme 8: Caribbean Political Development up to 1985

Question 15

This question was designed to test candidates' knowledge of the arguments responsible for the establishment of the Leeward Island Federation and the factors responsible for the failure of this early attempt at unification. Candidates were asked to examine three arguments used to promote the unification of the Leeward Islands in 1871 and three reasons why the attempt at unification ended in failure.

There were few responses to this question. Many of the responses contained generalizations which could be applied to the West Indian Federation. The first part of the question was not handled well. Many candidates could only identify one reason for the unification of the Leewards. Some were not familiar with the time of the Leeward Islands unification. As a result of this, they spoke about the territories wanting independence over federation.

The reasons for establishing the Leeward Islands Federation were confused with the reasons for the British West Indies Federation. Many candidates were unable to identify the islands in the Leeward Island Federation and often referred to Barbados and Trinidad as member states in their responses. Few seemed aware that the Federation was organized by the British imperial government.

This was a question which was unpopular among candidates and offered strong indication that the various attempts at federation/unification should be taught in the classroom.

Question 16

Candidates were asked to examine at least two of the economic, political and social factors which contributed to the collapse of the British West Indies Federation in 1962.

This was the best answered question in this section, and it was relatively popular. There were several relatively good and very good responses. Candidates could argue factually the reasons for the failure or collapse of the West Indies Federation. However, some tended to confuse Michael Manley with Norman Manley while many of them quoted Eric Williams' statement 'one from ten leaves zero' as a cause for the collapse. Reasons such as *a defective or weak constitution, problems of insularity, fear*

of freedom of movement and the lack of a strong sense of loyalty were reasons which would have been argued.

Section D — Theme 9: Caribbean Society, 1900 –1985

Question 17

This question was designed to test candidates' knowledge of the employment situation in the British Caribbean during the 1930s and the efforts made by colonial governments to ameliorate the situation.

Candidates were asked to examine and discuss at least three employment problems in the British Caribbean during the 1830s and at least three measures adopted by colonial governments to deal with them.

Candidates were able to identify the problems. Some candidates however, were vague in their response to the measures adopted by the colonial government and failed to discuss the recommendations of the Moyne Commission. Some candidates had a problem identifying the correct time period. Some looked at problems during slavery or the immediate post-emancipation period. There was the perennial problem of chronology. Candidates continued to be unable to identify the dates of important events in Caribbean History.

Some candidates misinterpreted the question to mean labour problems in the Caribbean immediately after emancipation. As a result, they argued that the planters went to India and China to obtain labourers. Other candidates were quite comfortable discussing the social conditions in the British Caribbean in the 1930s. They spoke about *health issues, lack of education and poor housing. Limited job creation, job insecurity, low wages and long working hours* were also implicated.

Overall, many candidates understood the problems relating to employment. Additionally, they demonstrated adequate grounding in the measures that were adopted by the colonial government to deal with the problems.

Question 18

This question tested candidates' knowledge of the role and function of women in early 20 century Caribbean society, their gradual drift towards urban centres and the role of women's organizations in championing their cause and correcting their situation. Candidates were asked to examine and discuss at least three reasons why young women in the British Caribbean tended to move out of the country districts and into the towns between the 1920s and 1930s and at least three ways in which women's organizations tried to help them.

Candidates interpreted this question well. They needed, however, to put more detail in the content of their responses. They often were able to say that the women left rural areas because they were looking for jobs or education, but did not explain the reason why these were problems peculiar to the rural areas in this period. Candidates were very general in their responses on the work of women's organizations. Many did not identify the name of organizations or influential women in this era.

The absence of job opportunities and decline in self-employment opportunities in the rural areas were reasons that could have been advanced.

Some responses focused on the society's sexual stereotyped image of women. Some candidates were convinced that women moved into the towns to escape sexual assaults, to find a rich spouse and to escape a multitude of other abuses. Too few candidates were able to discuss the push and pull factors. Education and greater occupational opportunities were two of the most common responses. Some candidates had no idea what the organizations were and so many of their responses were very vague.

Paper 031 — School-Based Assessment (SBA)

There were some good SBA submissions but very few were outstanding. The quality of the SBA assignments indicates that problems persist both in teacher and student understanding of the regulations and requirements. There were far too many instances of non-compliance with the CXC regulations regarding SBA projects. These were reflected in the following areas:

Format

1. In the first instance, too many SBAs were written in the Social Studies format. Some students even labelled their projects as Social Studies.
2. Some questions had multiple parts. In addition to being too onerous, such questions limited the ability of the students to be analytical in their responses.
3. In a number of instances both the length and scope of assignments exceeded the SBA requirement. The former caused students to lose marks and the latter made it difficult for them to earn marks.

In addition, many questions were poorly worded and did not lend themselves to the promotion of higher order skills. These deficiencies made it difficult or impossible in some cases for students to earn many marks for their assignments.

Presentation

1. Some students had problems writing a proper rationale and as a result lost the opportunity to earn the full marks allotted.
2. Some students did not follow the conventions for writing a research paper. Again, such students lost the opportunity to earn marks.

3. Many students did not make maximum use of their sources as text references were limited and, where provided, were often incorrect. Too many students depended on limited sources (sometimes only one or two). There were also cases where, despite having a list of three or more sources, it was evident that the student relied very heavily on only one of them.
4. Very often sources were not referenced correctly in the bibliography.
5. While the use of illustrative material is to be commended and encouraged, these must be fully incorporated into the body of the assignment and their sources must be provided. Very often photographs, tables and other illustrations were included in assignments without any attempt to use them to support arguments.

Plagiarism

This is a *major* problem. Plagiarism is on the increase, in some instances entire pages were downloaded from websites or copied from history texts. Teachers must make themselves more familiar with the regulations for the SBA. All teachers must be more vigilant with regard to plagiarism.

Paper 032 — Alternative to School-Based Assessment

This paper, which was poorly done, continues to be a challenge for candidates. The quality of the responses suggests that many were ill prepared for this paper. Many displayed a lack of basic knowledge and a majority of the candidates earned less than 50 per cent of the total mark allotted to this paper. Many of the responses did not address the specifics of the questions and only one candidate was able to score total marks.

Candidates had much difficulty with Question 5. The question required candidates to discuss the problems encountered in recruiting immigrants in China but the majority discussed problems encountered by immigrants in the Caribbean.

It is clear that candidates need to be specifically prepared for the types of questions that are posed in this paper.

Recommendations

In general, too many candidates' performance indicated inadequate, and, in an unfortunate number of cases, faulty preparation. Candidates are encouraged to spend a little more time in preparation for the exam. It is important that adequate time be devoted to the preparation of all the objectives of any chosen theme.

It must be noted as well that the extended essay has now been introduced into the two sections of the paper where candidates would normally experience the greatest challenges. Candidates should therefore be given additional opportunity to develop a facility in the construction of this type of response.

Another concern is the inability of candidates to manipulate key words in the questions. These all reflect a serious vocabulary deficiency which undermines candidates' ability to grasp the real demands of the questions and to produce high scoring responses. Many of these words/terms appear in the content section of the respective themes in the syllabus and should not therefore be as unfamiliar to candidates as now seems the case.

Teachers are encouraged to:

- Make full use of the new syllabus to integrate the specific objectives and content demands of the theme in their teaching strategy. This should produce greater focus in the preparation of the student, facilitate a more relevant knowledge base and enable the student to make better use of his/her knowledge base.
- Aim for the acquisition of knowledge, the use of that knowledge and the skills that help students to better communicate that knowledge.
- Provide practice in answering the extended essay question.
- Focus on the glossary/vocabulary of history questions.