

CARIBBEAN EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL

REPORT ON CANDIDATES' WORK IN THE CARIBBEAN ADVANCED PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION

MAY/JUNE 2004

HISTORY

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CARIBBEAN ADVANCED PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION MAY/JUNE 2004

DETAILED COMMENTS

Unit 1: The Caribbean in the Atlantic World

PAPER 01- Short Responses that Test Coverage

Module 1

This Module focused on Indigenous Societies and their encounter with the Iberians.

Question 1

This question required candidates to explain two ways in which the agricultural activities were different for two groups of indigenous peoples from different categories listed in the syllabus. Some responses were fairly informed but too many neglected to explain the differences, listing them instead. Also, candidates provided general information about settlements and crops without contrasting them as required by the question. Candidates need to pay special attention to approaching questions requiring comparisons.

Question 2

This question asked for a description, with examples, of two types of evidence that support Nordic presence in the Americas in the pre-Columbian period. Many responses highlighted archaeological evidence, though not always with clear examples, and less included sagas and legends of Nordic explorations. Some candidates failed to differentiate between types of evidence and wrote at length about archaeological evidence and others incorrectly included evidence of African presence. This could suggest incomplete preparation of this topic in the syllabus.

Question 3

This question required four reasons why Spanish colonisation in the sixteenth century was successful despite the resistance of the indigenous Americans. Most of the response were well informed, reflecting good preparation for this aspect of the syllabus. Nonetheless, the fact that some candidates confused motives for colonisation with reasons for its success, indicates that candidates need to be more vigilant in reading questions.

Module 2

This Module focused on the nature and decline of slave society.

Question 4

This question asked for four reasons for the high mortality rate among enslaved Africans in the Caribbean during the eighteenth century. Several relevant reasons were provided, such as poor and inadequate diet, harsh treatment, contagious diseases, severe work regime and high infant mortality. However, some candidates were unfamiliar with the word “mortality” and misread the question and so included the conditions of the middle passage as well. The importance of carefully reading the question cannot be overemphasized.

Question 5

This question required candidates to explain two reasons why either the British or the Spanish invaded St Domingue in 1793. Some responses reflected the concern about the spread of revolutionary ideology to other slave colonies and how St. Domingue would be a fine addition to the British empire. Few students understood Spain’s desire to regain the western end of Hispaniola or how intervention in St. Domingue provided the opportunity to settle old scores with France. Many of the responses indicate that this aspect of the Haitian revolution that relates to Touissant and other black leaders’ various dealings with other European powers has been neglected.

Question 6

This question asked for an outline of four factors that undermined the sugar economy in some British Caribbean territories between 1776 and 1834. While there were several good responses that included the impact of the American War of Independence, poor estate management, soil exhaustion, growing competition and falling sugar prices, some students disregarded the time frame of the question and included issues after 1834 such as the Sugar Duties Act. Candidates are again encouraged to pay particular attention to dates in questions since they provide the context of the answer.

Module 3

This Module focused on post-slavery adjustments and nation building.

Question 7

This question required the candidates to outline four reasons for tensions between

the African and Portuguese communities in British Guiana during the nineteenth century. Some candidates were clearly familiar with relevant issues such as the competition for labour, cultural and racial tensions, as well as the conflict between the groups in retail business matters. However, some candidates disregarded the time frame and mentioned conflict over slave trading practices. Candidates are urged to focus on what is asked.

Question 8

This question required students to explain two difficulties that hindered the development of independent Haiti up to 1826. Candidates were most familiar with the issues of political instability and international isolation while others mentioned social conflict between the blacks and mulattoes and the impact of the revolutionary war on the economic infrastructure. However, other candidates confused the time frame and included issues that related to the period before independence in 1804. It is clear that candidates need to be guided as to how to approach questions focusing on the relevant time frame.

Question 9

This question asked for an outline of four reasons why the Revolutionary Government of Fidel Castro survived, despite the hostility of the United States of America. The responses were fairly well informed and the candidates emphasized Cuba's relationship with the Soviet Union and Castro's strong support among the masses who benefitted from social programmes. Others mentioned that the exodus of Castro's major opponents also aided his consolidation of power, as did strong controls against internal dissent.

PAPER 2 - Structured Document Questions and Extended Essays

Module 1

Question 1

This question consisted of four short documentary extracts on the theme of Spanish settlements and Empire in the Americas, and the candidates were asked five questions(a-e) related to the theme as developed in these extracts. Many responses were fairly well informed with candidates demonstrating a good understanding of why Spaniards settled in the Americas and how the indigenous population resisted the Spanish presence. Since candidates still tend to list relevant formation without considered explanations, candidates are reminded that the CAPE level requires higher skills of analysis and explanation than at CSEC.

Question 2

This question required an examination of the factors that assisted the development of advanced social and political structures of one mainland indigenous group in the Americas in the pre-Columbian period. This was a popular question but several of the answers were unfocused and descriptive, providing outlines of the achievements of the respective group, rather than explanations for the foundations of these advances. Very few responses discussed issues such as the availability of land resources, surplus agricultural production that allowed for specialization in labour and the development of social and political infrastructure, architecture, and large powerful armies that extended empire and enforced tribute collection. Essentially, candidates lacked an analytical approach and relied on listing information.

Question 3

This question asked for an evaluation of the evidence of West African presence in the Americas in the pre-Columbian period. Generally, the responses were informed but not always sufficiently analytical. While it is clear that candidates have been exposed to relevant information, too many answers described the various pieces of evidence without any serious attempt to evaluate them. The importance of analytical skills cannot be over emphasized.

Module 2

Question 4

This question consisted of four short documentary extracts that focused on European abolition, and the candidates were asked five questions (a-e) on the respective themes in the documents. The responses suggested that candidates were fairly well informed on the economic criticism of slavery put forward by abolitionists, but were less prepared to handle the actual stages and process of the abolitionist movement in Britain. Accordingly, questions (c) and (d) attracted inadequate responses. Teachers should ensure that students approach this theme more analytically and thoroughly.

Question 5

This question required the candidates to discuss the similarities and differences between the systems of labour that characterized the encomienda and European indentureship. Several of the responses were disappointing because candidates confused European and Indian indentureship and they failed to approach the question comparatively, tending to list the features of each system of labour. Candidates must give special attention to how to approach questions.

Question 6

This question required candidates to select any one of four slave rebellions mentioned in the syllabus and to discuss the extent to which ineffective leadership may have been responsible for its failure. The problem of analysis and interpretation of the question surfaced again for several responses demonstrated knowledge of the course of events, but few addressed the core of the question that required a discussion of how the outcome may have been influenced by the leadership. One would have hoped that by this level, the candidates would have demonstrated better analytical skills.

Module 3

Question 7

This question consisted of four short documentary extracts on the peasantry in the British Caribbean, with five questions (a-e) related to the extracts. This was the most popular question and many candidates were familiar with the issues that influenced the emergence of the peasantry after 1838, though the answers to questions (c), dealing with the economic strategies of the peasant family, and (d), that referred to the governments' hostility towards the peasantry, were sometimes uninformed.

Question 8

This question required the candidates to discuss the view that Indian immigration transformed Caribbean society and economy between 1845 and 1900. Generally, the candidates were better informed about the social impact of Indian immigration than the economic one. In keeping with comments above, one was struck by the extent to which candidates have not progressed beyond the CSEC level thereby providing information without demonstrating developed analytical skills. This is an area that candidates are urged to pay particular attention to.

Question 9

This question asked for a discussion of the view that the efforts at political and economic integration in the British Caribbean between 1958 and 1980 had mixed results. The responses suggested more familiarity with the ill fated West Indies Federation between 1958 and 1962 than with the economic stages represented by CARIFTA and CARICOM. Even then, factors that undermined the West Indies Federation such as rivalry among political leaders, uneven economic and political development, disagreements about the powers of the federal government and disagreements about the freedom of movement were not properly explored. This reflects a general lack of full

syllabus coverage and candidates are reminded that the structure of the examination requires that they attempt questions from the three Modules.

Unit 2: The Atlantic World and Global Transformations

PAPER 01- Short Responses that Test Coverage

Module 1

This Module focused on interactions of the Atlantic World.

Question 1

This question asked for an outline of four factors that encouraged European settlements in the Americas up to 1763. There were several informed answers that indicated good familiarity with issues such as political and religious persecution, economic hardships in Europe, prospects of wealth, both agricultural and mineral. It is encouraging to see that candidates' horizons have been stretched beyond the narrow confines of the Caribbean in approaching this topic.

Question 2

This question required two explanations of the causes of the American Revolution. The answers were very mediocre with candidates failing to clearly explain another cause beyond the imposition of onerous taxation such as the Stamp Act. It is important that candidates be exposed to a broader perspective on this theme, appreciating that other issues such as the cost of defense in light of the decline of the French and Indian threat after 1763, British restrictive trade practices and restrictions on territorial expansion also weakened ties between the North American colonies and England.

Question 3

This question required an outline of four consequences of the French Revolution. There were good responses that highlighted the overthrow of absolutism, the abolition of slavery in the French colonies and the establishment of the republican form of government. Still, some responses focused on the causes or course of the revolution that suggests that the topic is not being fully covered. Candidates are reminded that full coverage of the syllabus is required.

Module 2

This Module focused on issues of identity and industry in the Atlantic World.

Question 4

This question required an outline of four factors that contributed to the economic transformation of the United States of America between 1865 and 1900. Several responses were focused and informed which strongly indicates that this part of the syllabus was covered.

Question 5

This question asked for an outline of four arguments used in the late nineteenth century to justify the United States' acquisition of territory overseas. Some candidates failed to focus on overseas acquisition and wrote instead about Manifest Destiny and internal expansion in the nineteenth century. Candidates need to ensure that close attention is paid to the question asked.

Question 6

This question required an explanation of two factors that led to the independence of either Venezuela or Brazil. Although there were good responses, particularly on Brazil, some students seemed unaware of the respective independence dates since they mentioned issues that were more relevant to the mid and later nineteenth century. This may well indicate that this theme in the syllabus is still neglected.

Module 3

This Module focused on global conflict and liberation movements in the 20th century.

Question 7

This question asked for an outline of two immediate consequences of World War 1. The responses focused primarily on the devastation caused by the war and the Treaty of Versailles. Few mentioned the emergence of Japan as an important imperial power in China and the Pacific or the emergence of the USA as a world power. Still, some candidates, either from misinterpreting the question or from ignorance, focused on the causes of World War 1. The importance of paying close attention to the question must be emphasised.

Question 8

This question required the candidates to outline four strategies used by Mohandas (Mahatma) Gandhi in his campaign for Indian independence. Candidates were well prepared for this area, emphasizing his gospel of non-violence and acts of civil disobedience, his broadening of the base of the Indian National Congress Party and his opposition to communal hostilities. It is very encouraging to see that teachers and candidates are covering well this aspect of the syllabus that was not previously covered by the Cambridge 'A' Level syllabus.

Question 9

This question asked for an outline of four features of the economies of the poorest nations in the South. Many of the responses were poor and unfocused, indicating that students were not well exposed to this aspect of the syllabus. Candidates are reminded that full coverage of the syllabus is required.

PAPER 2 - Structured Document Questions and Extended Essays

Module 1

Question 1

This question consisted of four short documentary extracts on the theme of European settlement and rivalry in the Americas, and candidates were asked five questions(a-e) related to the theme as developed in these extracts. The responses were generally satisfactory. However, the responses to section (c) were often confused with some candidates writing about measures used by Spain to protect her monopoly instead of how Spain's rivals challenged this monopoly. Also the mediocre responses to (e) asking for comments on what the documents suggested about the nature of European rivalry in the Americas up to 1763 suggest that candidates have not analyzed the relevant details and ideas with which they are familiar. Candidates are reminded of the importance of analysis and context above the mere accumulation of information.

Question 2

This question required an essay assessing the impact of the Atlantic slave trade on West Africa up to 1800. This was a very popular question and several of the responses were quite competent, reflecting that candidates had been well exposed to the material. Nonetheless, since some essays were either descriptive or repetitious, without really assessing the points introduced, candidates are reminded to pay atten-

tion to how essay questions are approached.

Question 3

This question asked the candidates to explain the political principles of the European Enlightenment. The candidates who attempted this question handled it reasonably well. However, some incorrectly concentrated on the impact of the ideas rather than on the principles underlying them. Candidates are reminded of the importance of proper essay writing skills.

Module 2

Question 4

This question consisted of four short documentary extracts on industrialization in the United States of America and the candidates were asked five questions (a-e) on the respective themes in the documents. While candidates were familiar with the material, few offered analytical answers and many paraphrased the extracts. Questions (b) and (e) that required more analytical answers were not well done. This could suggest that candidates are learning details without internalizing their significance. Therefore, candidates are encouraged to spend more time on the correct approach to document questions and on developing analytical skills.

Question 5

This question required an essay that examined the impact of the Industrial Revolution in Britain on the Atlantic economy. Several responses were unfocused because candidates wrote about the impact of the industrial revolution in Britain and neglected its impact on the Atlantic economy. This strongly suggests either poor essay writing skills or that this part of the syllabus is inadequately covered. Again, candidates are reminded of the importance of covering the topics in the syllabus and in developing good essay writing skills.

Question 6

This question asked the candidates to discuss the factors that influenced industrial development in either Venezuela or Brazil, from independence up to 1900. Brazil featured in most of the few responses, and too many of these neglected the time frame of the question, writing instead on the factors that led up to independence. It is clear that this part of the syllabus is still only partially covered and candidates are not being exposed to the post-independence developments.

Module 3

Question 7

This question consisted of four short documentary extracts on apartheid in South Africa, with five questions(a-e) related to the extracts. There were some well informed responses, but sections (c) and (d) were not well done because candidates did not know fully why the ANC adopted the armed struggle after 1960 and what was the ANC's attitude towards white South Africans. It is clear that candidates have to be more exposed to the core issues surrounding the struggle against apartheid.

Question 8

This question required candidates to comment on the view that it was Lenin's leadership that was mainly responsible for the Bolsheviks' success in 1917. The responses were informed as to the details of the context of the revolution, but few weighed the relative factors and the examiners were left to assess the importance of Lenin's leadership. Again, candidates need to address the skills of essay writing.

Question 9

This question asked for the students to comment on the view that Nazism triumphed in 1933 because German society was experiencing deep crises. This was a popular question and several of the candidates demonstrated that they had been exposed to some of the relevant information, but poor essay writing skills affected their performance. Accordingly, narrative and not analysis was more common.

Internal Assessment: Unit 1 and Unit 2

Presentation of Paper

There was continued improvement in the presentation of the research papers, with many of them being typed and therefore more reader friendly. Also, it is clear that candidates were properly guided in the use of footnotes and bibliography, though there were still instances where these important conventions of the historical method were not followed. Accordingly, candidates are reminded that the relevant requirements are clearly set out in the syllabus and a percentage of the total marks will be allocated to conforming to those requirements. The problem of an over- reliance on CSEC textbooks persists and candidates' are reminded that more recent publications that relate to various aspects of the syllabus are available. In this regard, it is the

responsibility of candidates to access school and other libraries that invest in resource materials and various recent publications.

Moreover, the use of primary materials are strongly encouraged. The length of the papers remained a problem, the result of unfocused introductions which contributed to the disregard for the word limit of between 1500 and 2000 words. These matters must be monitored as candidates must avoid rambling and descriptive papers. In addition, effective from the 2005 examination, a penalty of 10 per cent of the candidate's mark will be deducted from any paper that exceeds the word limit by more than ten per cent of the maximum word limit.

Content and Discussion

Candidates and teachers also have the important task of ensuring that the topics for the research paper are **relevant to the themes in the syllabus**. Also, topics must not be too general and unfocused because candidates will be hard-pressed to stay within the word limit and to present well-structured papers. Still too many papers were descriptive and not sufficiently analytical and there was clear evidence that some projects were rushed. Nonetheless, many candidates deserve to be congratulated for displaying good research skills and teachers for providing good guidance.

Administrative Forms

Most teachers submitted the relevant Record Cards: The Internal Assessment Mark Sheet and Moderation Form, as well as the Research Paper Cover Sheet which were completed in accordance with CXC requirements.