

GCSE (9–1)
Candidate Style Answers

HISTORY B

(SCHOOLS HISTORY PROJECT)

J411
For first teaching in 2016

J411 - The Elizabethans, 1580 - 1603

Version 1



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Introduction

This resource has been produced by a senior member of the GCSE History examining team to offer teachers an insight into how the assessment objectives are applied. It illustrates how the sample assessment questions might be answered and provides some commentary on what factors contribute to overall levels.

As these responses have not been through full moderation, they have not been graded and are instead, banded to give an indication of the level of each response.

Please note that this resource is provided for advice and guidance only and does not in any way constitute an indication of grade boundaries or endorsed answers.

See <http://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/207081-unit-j411-12-the-people-s-health-c.1250-to-present-with-the-elizabethans-1580-1603-sample-assessment-material.pdf> for the sources referenced.

Question 6(a)

In Interpretation A the illustrator portrays the wealth and comfort of an Elizabethan gentleman's house. Identify and explain **one** way in which the illustrator does this. **[3]**

High level response

The illustrator shows servants at work in the house. This suggests the owner is wealthy enough to employ a large number of servants because there are four in this room alone. They also give the impression of comfort because they are all at work on different tasks, meaning that every job is being taken care of for the owner. For example, one of the servants is keeping the fire going to ensure that the room is always comfortable for the owner.

Examiner commentary

This response would receive all 3 marks because the candidate has identified one way in which the illustrator suggests wealth and comfort, then developed this by explaining how the illustrator this gives us this impression. They provide examples from the interpretation.

Medium level response

The illustrator shows servants at work in the house, the room is really large, there are lots of paintings on the walls and the room looks clean. The houses of the poor would not have looked like this.

Examiner commentary

This response would receive only 1 mark because the candidate has identified a variety of different features of the painting without explaining how one of the features helps to give the impression of wealth and comfort.

Question 6(b)

If you were asked to do further research on one aspect of Interpretation A, what would you choose to investigate? Explain how this would help us to analyse and understand daily life in Elizabethan England.

[5]

High level response

I would choose to compare the daily lives of the gentry (who would have been likely to own this kind of house) to the daily lives of poorer people. I would compare things like houses, food and family life to see how different their lives were. The labouring poor made up about half of the population but there is less known about their lives because they did not leave many written records. This interpretation suggests the owner of the house is well fed and comfortable but it would be useful to know how typical this kind of life was.

Examiner commentary

This is a Level 3 response because the candidate has used a second-order concept (diversity) to frame an enquiry (note that there is no need to specifically name the concept; indeed, this could lead to some rather mechanical and poor responses!). They have developed this line of enquiry by explaining what aspects could be researched and there is evidence of the relevant use of their contextual knowledge to help to frame the enquiry.

Medium level response

I would choose to research what kind of food the Elizabethans ate, how old the houses were and how they kept them clean. This would help us to understand how it was different from today. I know from my knowledge that Elizabethan gentry had lots of feasts and didn't have to do manual work. I'd also like to know how rich you would have to be to own a house like this and also how many people were that rich. Did everyone live like this?

Examiner commentary

This is a Level 2 response. It starts off by listing pieces of information to be acquired rather than framing a particular enquiry. However, a basic enquiry question is reached at the end, although this is not really developed and it is not explained how this would help us to analyse and understand daily lives. There is some knowledge present and although it is accurate, it is 'bolted on' rather than being used in a relevant way to help to frame an enquiry.

Question 8

In his 2012 book *The Watchers*, the historian Stephen Alford argued that the threat from Catholics created 'dangerous and uncertain times' in Elizabethan England. How far do you agree with this view? [20]

High level response

There are grounds for agreeing and disagreeing with this statement but the weight of the evidence lies with agreeing with the statement.

There is evidence that the Catholic threat did create dangerous and uncertain times. Firstly, the Act of Persuasions passed in 1581 raised the fine which recusants had to pay and allowed the imprisonment of recusants. The Act against Priests was also passed in 1585, and the Act Restraining Recusants passed in 1593. The passing of these laws shows us that the government must have felt threatened by the danger and persistence of Catholic recusancy, especially as the Pope had told Catholics that Elizabeth was not the rightful Queen of England and that they should disobey her laws. We also have evidence that Seminary and Jesuit priests (like Robert Persons) had arrived in England to lead Catholic Mass and to persuade people to become Catholics. To the government, this was undermining Elizabeth's authority. The Jesuit priests encouraged people to stand up against Elizabeth's religious laws and were therefore seen as challenging Elizabeth's rule. Francis Walsingham built up a network of spies and local JPs would search houses to find hidden priests, so people would certainly have felt like they were living through dangerous and uncertain times when their homes were searched. It was certainly dangerous and uncertain to be a priest at this time – over 100 died in prison or were executed in Elizabeth's reign, most when England was under threat of invasion from Catholic Spain.

The existence of Mary Queen of Scots also made for dangerous and uncertain times. If Elizabeth had died without children, Mary would have been the next Queen of England, and her presence in England as a Catholic figurehead gave English Catholics confidence to strengthen resistance against Elizabeth. Some Catholics were drawn into plots to release Mary. In 1583 and 1586, plots to kill Elizabeth and put Mary on the throne were exposed, leading to Mary's trial and execution. So these plots and Mary's presence in general meant that all English Catholics were under suspicion, adding to their danger and the general uncertainty in the country.

However, there is some compelling evidence against the statement as well. For example, there were actually very few Catholic plotters, probably never more than around two hundred. Although there were far more recusants, many of these, such as Thomas Tresham, still proclaimed complete loyalty to the Queen. Also, it was clear by the 1590s that the attempts to rebuild the Catholic faith in Britain had failed and the priests had achieved very little; some, like the Seminary Priests, were not very radical anyway. They bickered with the Jesuits and the threat to Elizabeth declined. As far as the Catholic plots were concerned, the extensive and successful Elizabethan spy network under Sir Francis Walsingham ensured that the plots were exposed. For example, the Babington Plot was discovered through the interception and decoding of secret messages that passed between Mary Queen of Scots and Babington.

In conclusion, the threat from Catholics did create dangerous and uncertain times in Elizabethan England. Even though the threats such as plots to kill the Queen and the Spanish invasions did not materialise, the threat was still very real, even if there were not more than a handful of plots. The work of the spies to expose the priests and the plots also meant that it was a dangerous and uncertain time to be a Catholic, even if one were not involved in such a plot.

Examiner commentary

This is a Level 5 response. The answer is well structured and there is a sustained use of relevant and detailed evidence, leading to a 'clinching' argument at the end, which would take this to the top of L5. Both sides of the debate are explored and well-developed through the sophisticated use of contextual knowledge. All contextual knowledge is relevant to the question being asked. The response shows a sophisticated understanding of the concepts of diversity, causation and consequence. Change and continuity within the 12-year period is also considered.

Medium level response

There are reasons to agree and disagree with the statement.

Elizabeth passed harsh laws against Catholics. Firstly, the Act of Persuasions passed in 1581 raised the fine which recusants had to pay and allowed the imprisonment of recusants. The Act against Priests was also passed in 1585 and allowed the death penalty for anyone shielding Catholic priests. The Act Restraining Recusants passed in 1593 meant land could be taken off those who had not paid fines. Seminary and Jesuit priests arrived in England to lead Catholic Mass and to persuade people to become Catholics. Robert Persons and Edmund Campion arrived in 1580 on a secret mission. They were in disguise. Jesuit priests were often hidden in 'priest's holes' in wealthy households. Sir Francis Walsingham had spies who tried to learn about the plans of the Catholic priests. Campion was captured and executed in 1581 but Persons managed to escape.

Also, Catholic Spain tried to invade in 1588. The Pope had said it would not be a sin to kill Elizabeth and Phillip II of Spain started to support plotters who wanted to replace Elizabeth with the Catholic Mary Queen of Scots. England and Spain were at war after England had sent men to fight against the Spanish in the Netherlands. Phillip II planned to invade England with a huge Armada in 1588. There were fights in the Channel and although the Armada was eventually defeated, this was a dangerous and uncertain event for the English and there continued to be a risk of Spanish invasion. There were further armadas in the 1590s.

On the other hand, the Spanish Armada was defeated and by 1603 only 1-2% of the country were Catholics so I don't think there was ever that much danger or uncertainty. So, on balance, there were dangerous and uncertain times, but only partly.

Examiner commentary

This is a Level 3 response. The answer has some kind logical structure, despite the imbalance. It demonstrates sound knowledge of key features and characteristics of the nature and extent of the Catholic threat. It deals with a range of different issues such as Elizabeth's laws, the plots against Elizabeth and the threat from Spain. However, although the first section contains extensive knowledge, it is very descriptive and not really made relevant to the question being asked. The second paragraph is far better as the contextual knowledge is precise and actually employed in such a way as to address the question so this improves the candidate's level and takes it into Level 3. The response shows a good understanding of the concepts of diversity and causation. However, the response only really develops one side of the argument and does not demonstrate understanding of the evidence for the counter argument.

Question 9

In his 1974 school textbook *Tudors and Stuarts*, R J Unstead stated that Elizabethan adventurers 'successfully increased English trade in all parts of the world'. How far do you agree with this view? [20]

High level response

Although there is evidence that Elizabethan adventurers attempted to take forward the vision of a 'British Empire' and did help to increase trade eventually, it's not the case that they were successful in increasing trade in 'all' parts of the world before Elizabeth's death.

Firstly, many of the Elizabethan adventurers failed in their expeditions or met with failure or only limited success. For example, the journeys funded by Walter Raleigh and led by Richard Grenville to North America may have built up useful knowledge of the continent, but the attempt at establishing an English colony at Roanoke in 1585 failed, the colonists being rescued by Francis Drake in 1586. Although the expedition almost certainly helped to inform and enable England's first successful colony at Jamestown Virginia in 1607, this was 4 years after Elizabeth died, so the expedition failed in the short-term. The adventurers also failed in other area of the world. Raleigh had hoped to find gold in Guiana in 1595 but no gold was discovered. Again, Raleigh's journey and experience may have assisted in the continuation of exploration and empire-building in the centuries which followed, but there was no immediate trade benefit. Lastly, Ralph Fitch attempted to set up trade links with India, South East Asia and China when he sailed to Syria in 1583. Fitch and his companions travelled through the Mughal Empire and into Burma and picked up valuable information about the sea trade with China and the Spice Islands. Despite this, by 1603, 74% of all imports still came from the Netherlands, the Holy Roman Empire and Spain. The impact of Fitch's discoveries wouldn't be felt until much later.

One adventurer who did help to increase trade was James Lancaster. In 1600, Elizabeth gave a charter to the East India Company to develop trade in the East. The Company's first fleet left England in 1601 under Lancaster and established England's first successful trading warehouse in the East on the island of Java in Indonesia. This meant that English ships could start to bring back lots of spices which were used in the preparation of food in Elizabethan England. Furthermore, earlier on in Elizabeth's reign, Sir High Willoughby and Richard Chancellor had crossed the Arctic Ocean and travelled to Moscow in one of the first attempts to find a North passage to Asia. Afterwards, the Muscovy Trading Company succeeded in exporting cloth, lead, and tin; and importing wax and furs.

In conclusion, there were important steps taken by the adventurers during Elizabeth's reign, but the effect of these in terms of trade would not be felt until afterwards. For example, the East India Company would later go on to open more warehouses on the East coast of India, become the biggest trading company in the world and rule vast areas of India. So the foundations for global trade were laid by the Elizabethan adventurers, although it cannot be claimed that they were successful in increasing trade in all parts of the world in this period alone.

Examiner commentary

This is a Level 5 response. The answer is well structured and there is a sustained use of relevant and detailed evidence, leading to a 'clinching' argument at the end, which would take this to the top of L5. The candidate has remained sharply focussed on the issue of increasing trade throughout the response. There is a clear focus on the word 'all' given in the interpretation. Both sides of the debate are explored and well-developed through the sophisticated use of contextual knowledge. All contextual knowledge is relevant to the question being asked – although the reference to Willoughby and Chancellor comes from before 1580, it would still be allowed as its impact in relation to the period being examined is assessed. The response shows a sophisticated understanding of the concepts of diversity and consequence.

Medium level response

Some Elizabethan adventurers were successful but others were not.

Francis Drake became a famous adventurer in this period. He was the first Englishman to sail around the world. He sailed to the Caribbean and attacked Spanish settlements. He tried to sail around South America. He attacked Spanish ships in Chile and Peru. He claimed New Albion (California) for Elizabeth. He came home via the Spice Islands and did manage to carry out some trade there. He brought back lots of treasure to England.

However, the English attempt to set up a colony in Roanoke in America failed. The colonists lost most of their supplies and had to send a ship back to England with Grenville to get more. Hostilities with the Algonquin tribe also emerged and eventually the colonists had to be rescued by Francis Drake.

Ralph Fitch's journey to the East was partly successful and partly a failure. They were arrested as spies in Hormuz but eventually made it across to India. They went to the court of the Mughal Emperor and gained knowledge about the trade in diamonds, spices and cloth. When Fitch returned home he wrote a book about the people and customs of the East and people were amazed. He also described the things that could be traded.

In conclusion then, the adventurers had mixed success when it came to trade.

Examiner commentary

This is a Level 2 response. The answer has some kind logical structure. It demonstrates some knowledge of key features and characteristics of England's connections with the wider world, but there is lack of focus on the question asked. It deals with a range of different adventurers; however, although the response contained some quite detailed and accurate knowledge, it is very descriptive and not really made relevant to the question being asked. Where a link to trade is given, it is only very really asserted and not fully developed.



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