
AS

HISTORY

7041/1J: British Empire, c1857-1967
Report on the Examination

7041
June 2019

Version: 1.0

Further copies of this Report are available from aqa.org.uk

Copyright © 2019 AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved.

AQA retains the copyright on all its publications. However, registered schools/colleges for AQA are permitted to copy material from this booklet for their own internal use, with the following important exception: AQA cannot give permission to schools/colleges to photocopy any material that is acknowledged to a third party even for internal use within the centre.

Question 01

This question required students to identify and compare the interpretations of two extracts written by historians. They were asked to assess which of the two provided the more convincing interpretation of British attitudes to Empire in the years 1890 to 1914.

In general terms, Extract A put forward the view that attitudes towards the Empire amongst the British had declined in confidence pre-1914 and the reason for this was the Second Boer War. Extract B, on the other hand, presented an argument that the British people were committed to the continuation of the Empire although the Second Boer War had caused them some anxiety. Another difference between the two extracts was that Extract B stated that the solution to this anxiety was to put greater faith in the Empire to solve the problems that had arisen. Extract A offered no such opinion. Most students were able to identify these key interpretations.

The best answers were provided by students who focused on the key interpretations and offered a balanced evaluation of their convincingness, with support and challenge backed up with well-selected contextual knowledge. It was pleasing to see that many more students this year challenged the argument presented, rather than criticising the extracts by listing information which was not included in them. Many students came to a final judgement on which was the more convincing interpretation, although the less effective answers did so only briefly and with less substantiation.

Less effective answers demonstrated poor contextual knowledge and understanding. Some students, for example, were confused as to which colonial war Extract B was referring to. Other less able students also moved away from the focus of the question and challenged parts of the extracts which were not relevant to 'British attitudes'.

Question 02

This question required students to evaluate the main factors which explained the extension of British influence in Africa in the years 1857 to 1890. This question was generally well done, as students showed good knowledge of colonial administrators such as Baring and Frere. They balanced these against other factors such as the contributions of explorers, traders, missionaries or international relations.

The factor in the question, 'colonial administrators', caused confusion for some weaker students, as Disraeli and Gladstone were falsely used as examples of these. The date range also proved problematic for some as administrators such as Curzon and Milner were sometimes wrongly referenced as examples.

Question 03

This question required students to evaluate the economic benefits the empire brought to Britain in the years 1890 to 1914. Again, this was done well by many students.

The most effective answers balanced arguments relating to Britain gaining access to raw materials, consumer goods, food and other valuable items against the idea that the Empire prevented Britain from continuing its own industrial development. Some argued that it was responsible for poor working conditions. Less effective answers lost track of the question and tried to evaluate the different types of benefits the Empire brought to Britain, an approach which received little credit.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.