



A-level HISTORY

Challenge and Transformation: Britain, c1851–1964

Paper 1G

ADDITIONAL SPECIMEN QUESTION PAPER

2 hours 30 minutes

Materials

For this paper you must have:

- an AQA 12-page answer book.

Instructions

- Use black ink or black ball-point pen.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer book. The **Paper Reference** is **1G**.
- Answer **three** questions.
In **Section A** answer Question 01.
In **Section B** answer **two** questions.

Information

- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- The maximum mark for this paper is 80.
- You will be marked on your ability to:
 - use good English
 - organise information clearly
 - use specialist vocabulary where appropriate.

Advice

- You are advised to spend about:
 - 60 minutes on Question 01
 - 45 minutes on each of the other questions answered.
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Section AAnswer Question 01

Extract A

The 1945–51 Labour government introduced extensive welfare legislation and this was followed in the 1950s by a gradual relaxation of wartime austerity. Without a return to the unemployment levels of the inter-war period, many people anticipated the establishment of a more egalitarian society in Britain. If this was measured by a reduction in inequalities of wealth, progress was made. In 1938, the top 100,000 earners in the United Kingdom received 11.7 per cent of all personal income before tax; in 1955 this had fallen to only 5.3 per cent, and the share of the top million fell from 21.5 per cent to 12.3 per cent. Real wages of the bottom 12 million out of a total employed population of around 22 million rose by 24 per cent between 1949 and 1955. In this sense, relative to the pre-war period, the 1950s saw the advent of the affluent working class, leading to the so-called ‘never-had-it-so-good’ years of the late 1950s and 1960s.

Adapted from Edward Royle, **Modern Britain A Social History 1750–1985**, 1987

Extract B

British working class life in 1939 looked very different from that of 1930. More workers were employed in factories and offices than in domestic service, reinforcing their sense of collective interest and their bargaining power. In the evenings young workers enjoyed their financial independence at cinemas and dance halls. Yet what had not changed was just as evident as what had. Unemployment had not gone away, families still endured the hated means test. Compensation for boring work and continued economic and political subordination came from a new consumer culture. However, Labour’s victory in 1945 and its postwar reforms signaled that the gaping social chasm of 1939 had narrowed slightly. By 1957, according to Harold Macmillan, Britons apparently ‘had never had it so good’. But the voices of working class Britons offer a different view. Far from being a period of unprecedented affluence, the income gap between the rich and the poor, which had dramatically narrowed in the 1940s, widened in the 1950s.

Adapted from Selina Todd, **The Rise and Fall of the Working Class 1910–2010**, 2014

Extract C

From the 1930s a new economy grew up based on mass production and mass consumption, laying the basis of post-war prosperity. In the war years the real wages of workers rose by 81 per cent due mainly to full employment; a 1944 White Paper committed government to 'maintain a high and stable level of employment', which was achieved for almost thirty years. Indeed, the welfare state was built on the foundations of full employment as the post-war Labour government poured resources into New Jerusalem projects. However, in 1951 workers rejected the Austerity Britain projected by Labour; the Tories now delivered thirteen years of uninterrupted prosperity, almost doubling living standards in a generation. From the mid-1950s affluence began to re-shape society. There was a big increase in home ownership and a huge growth in the number of private cars, television sets and other consumer durables. By 1964 the five-day week, plus two weeks' holiday, had become standard. A new economic order had converted capitalism into the great engine of prosperity

Adapted from Robert Skidelsky, **Britain Since 1900**, 2014

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Using your understanding of the historical context, assess how convincing the arguments in these three extracts are in relation to the growth of affluence amongst the working classes.

[30 marks]

Section BAnswer **two** questions

0 2

'The British parliamentary system was transformed in the years 1851–1885.'

Assess the validity of this view.

[25 marks]**0 3**

How successful was Gladstone in improving Anglo-Irish relations in the years 1868–1893?

[25 marks]**0 4**

'Rigid adherence to the ideology of free trade caused significant damage to the British economy in the years 1900–1939.'

Assess the validity of this view.

[25 marks]**END OF QUESTIONS**

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