



GCSE

Geography B

90352H Hostile world and Investigating the shrinking world
Report on the Examination

9035
June 2015

Version: v0.1

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General

The paper proved to be an effective discriminator of geographical ability. It allowed candidates of all abilities at this tier to demonstrate positive achievement. The majority of candidates gave good responses to the range of data provided. Geographical skills such as interpreting diagrams, bar graphs, pie charts, photographs, articles and maps of various scales and types were good. Opportunities for extended writing were given in one or more parts of each question, and even the lesser ability candidates at this tier were able to offer a response, which demonstrated some good geographical understanding. The more able of the candidates were able to offer high quality, well developed responses, demonstrating excellent understanding of geographical issues, backed up with the correct of geographical vocabulary and good use of case study examples in some instances. They were able to apply their knowledge and understanding well in unfamiliar contexts.

As with the previous series, there was an imbalance between the numbers of candidates completing questions 2 and 3 of the examination paper, compare with questions 1 and 4. A vast majority of candidates opted for questions 1 and 4.

The vast majority of candidates completed the paper and there were relatively few parts of the questions that were not attempted.

SECTION A – HOSTILE WORLD

Question 1 - Living with Natural Hazards

In Question 1 (a), the term 'distribution' was not widely understood. Most candidates gave a long list of individual boundaries, often divided into constructive and destructive types. The vast majority did not give an answer which reflected a global scale to the distribution. Question 1 (b)(i) was well done by most candidates. Question 1 (b)(ii) was well done by many candidates with good knowledge of physical process and use of geographical terminology. Relatively few candidates seldom gave more than a simple idea of movement and/or named the different types of plate interaction and there was often clear knowledge of physical process and use of geographical terminology. The most common option was the destructive plate boundary and candidates at this tier did link together the plate boundary with divergence and were also able to show some knowledge of processes such as subduction at a destructive plate boundary and therefore, gained a Level 2 mark. This tended to be done better than the constructive plate boundary.

Question 1 (c) was often well done, with many candidates getting maximum marks. However, there were still a significant number of candidates who believe that seismographs could be used to predict an earthquake, and therefore arrange an evacuation. However, the more able candidates demonstrated sound knowledge of specific 'high tech' and 'low tech' building technologies and preparedness techniques. In Question 1 (d)(i), the term 'distribution' was again, not widely understood. Although a large percentage of the candidates were able to gain one mark for saying that the tropical storms were found between the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, the tendency was then to go on to describe the Tropical storm tracks. A minority of the candidates gained the second mark by giving a valid point relating to the distribution.

Question (d) (ii) was generally well done with most candidates able to describe possible effects and to fully develop these to gain the maximum three marks. Question 1 (e) elicited a wide range of responses. Some candidates merely listed effects and did not discriminate between primary and secondary effects. The better candidates were able to move from Level 1 to Level 2 by linking together points that focussed on primary effects. Sustained development in order to gain a Level 3 mark was usually through clearly described specific effects of a tropical storm and the use of one or more examples. Question 1 (f) did not prove problematic for the majority of candidates. Use of the photograph was very good with most candidates able to develop their responses to gain the maximum two marks.

Question 1 (g) elicited a wide range of responses. Most candidates were able to offer simple reasons for their chosen viewpoint; these were often taken directly from the resource provided. These were valid statements and many candidates were able to gain a top Level 1 and score three marks. Use of the resource was generally good. Many of the candidates did develop these ideas further to gain a Level 2 mark through good use of the resource along with the application of their own their own knowledge and understanding in constructing an argument for or against the issue. There was some use of case study examples to develop points and there were some well developed descriptions of a range of reasons for either the natural causes of wildfires, and/or clear arguments for the main cause being human activity in wildfire-prone areas. These often expressed the view that the climatic factors were vital for wildfires to start, but that it was usually a human action that provided the ignition. The best, detailed responses were those that clearly stated reasons for their chosen viewpoint and then used case studies to back up their chosen view. Relatively few of the candidates combined very good use of the resource with learned knowledge to back these points up, along with sustained development through the use of one or more examples in order to gain a Level 3 mark. In Question 1 (h), many candidates scored maximum

marks. Answers were often enhanced by reference to case study examples which demonstrated good geographical knowledge.

Question 2 - The Challenge of Extreme Environments

Question 2 (a) was well answered, with most candidates being able to interpret the diagram and describe a beginning, middle and end to the process. Some candidates lost marks by focussing on only one part of the process e.g. evaporation over the sea, or relief rainfall. A misconception amongst some candidates was that the wind blew sand from the coast, over the mountains and into the desert. Question 2 (b)(i) was well done by most candidates. Question 2 (b)(ii) was well done by many candidates with good knowledge of human effects and/or physical process and use of geographical terminology. Relatively few candidates seldom gave more than a simple description of what the causes given entailed and there was often clear knowledge of physical processes such as soil erosion and use of geographical terminology. The most common option was overgrazing and candidates at this tier did link together the effects on vegetation and were also able to show some knowledge of the processes acting on the exposed soil, such as wind/water erosion and therefore, gained a Level 2 mark.

Question 2 (c) elicited a range of responses. Some candidates merely listed methods or made limited attempts at elaboration e.g. 'the stone lines trap rain water'. The better candidates were able to move from Level 1 to Level 2 by linking together points and clearly show how the method reduced desertification. Sustained development in order to gain a Level 3 mark was usually through clearly described specific methods and the use of one or more examples to add detail. In Question 2 (d), the term 'distribution' was again, not widely understood. Although a large percentage of the candidates were able to gain one mark for saying that cold environments were found in the higher latitudes only a minority of the candidates gained the second mark by giving another valid point relating to the distribution.

Question 2 (e) was generally well done with most candidates able to describe possible effects. Some candidates were only able to identify basic; principally 'melting of ice sheets' and 'threatens wildlife' and answers at Level 1 tended to be very unstructured and vague. Many candidates were able to develop ideas to start to suggest clear linkages, sometimes set in a case study context. The more able candidates demonstrated sound knowledge of specific effects, with many focussing on the effects on food chains. Question 2 (f) elicited a wide range of responses. Most candidates were able to offer simple reasons for their chosen viewpoint; these were often taken directly from the resource provided. These were valid statements and many candidates were able to gain a top Level 1 and score three marks. Use of the resource was generally good. Many of the candidates did develop these ideas further to gain a Level 2 mark through good use of the resource along with the application of their own their own knowledge and understanding in constructing an argument for or against the issue. There was some use of case study examples to develop points and there were some well developed descriptions of a range of reasons for either allowing development of Antarctica to take place or for banning development. The best, detailed responses were those that clearly stated reasons for their chosen viewpoint and then used case studies to back up their chosen view. A minority of the candidates combined very good use of the resource with learned knowledge to back these points up, along with sustained development through the use of one or more examples in order to gain a Level 3 mark. Some parallel case studies of Alaska were also used to good effect.

Question 2 (g)(i) was generally well done; there was often clear knowledge of physical processes and many candidates scored maximum marks. Question 2 (g)(ii) was well answered. In Question

(h), many candidates scored maximum marks. Answers were sometimes enhanced by reference to parallel case study examples which demonstrated good geographical knowledge.

SECTION B – SHRINKING WORLD

Question 3 – Investigating the globalisation of industry

Question 3 (a) was well answered, with most candidates being able to interpret the map. In Question 3 (b) many candidates tended to give general reasons for the growth of industry e.g. 'improved transport', 'better communications', or 'more demand for products', but failed to develop any of these points by linking them to the global context in order to attain to a Level 2 mark. The better candidates clearly focussed upon the way that these factors contributed to the growth of links to distant markets and to interdependence.

In Question 3 (c), most candidates were able to interpret information from Figure 12 and showed a good understanding of the term 'development gap'. However, some candidates simply 'lifted' data and lost a mark. It should be emphasized that candidates are expected to interpret data rather than copy it out. In Question 3 (d), most candidates were able to interpret information from the map, but some did not notice the insert box for Europe and stated that most car factories on Figure 13 were found in Asia. Once again, the term 'distribution' was not always understood by candidates. Question 3 (e) elicited a wide range of responses. Some candidates were only able to identify basic advantages of TNCs; principally 'jobs' and 'money' and answers at Level 1 tended to be very unstructured and vague. Phrases such as 'reinvested the money in infrastructure,' or 'improved their quality of life,' need further elaboration to access Level 2. Many candidates were able to develop ideas to start to explain the nature of the opportunities brought by TNCs. This was sometimes set in a case study context, however there tended to be much repetition, with several examples of the same point being given. The more able candidates demonstrated sound knowledge of specific opportunities brought by TNCs tourism and linked these to an appropriate example. There was some pleasing evidence of learned information and some detailed and well-applied case study exemplars.

Question 3 (f) also elicited a wide range of responses; it was poorly done by many candidates, with many vague statements being offered and widespread misunderstanding of the term 'industrial structure'. Many candidates merely described environmental/economic/social problems caused by general industrial growth. Where the term was understood, de-industrialisation was the most popular option; responses were often reversals of points made in Question 3 (d) i.e. 'no jobs' and 'no money'. Some candidates were able to develop points and link ideas together, or to exemplify impacts with a case study and gain a Level 2 mark. Relatively few candidates gave Level 3 responses, but those that did were usually in a detailed case study setting and gave a real 'sense of place'; tertiarisation in India was a popular and appropriate choice. Some candidates gave very detailed reasons for the change in industry in a locality, when this was not demanded by the question. Question 3 (g)(i) was not always well answered with many candidates being unable to accurately describe the location of the development with sufficient accuracy. Many candidates got no credit for vague phrases such as 'near a motorway' and 'near the university'. A significant number of candidates did not give distances and many gave distances that were not sufficiently accurate. Use of direction was poor amongst many candidates. Question 3 (g)(ii) was also not always well answered with many candidates being unable to clearly state the nature of the locational advantages. Once again, there many vague statements such as 'near a motorway' and 'near the university'; these were lacking any elaboration to show the advantages of these factors. In Question 3 (g)(iii), some candidates were only able to list problems or conflicts and were limited

to Level 1. However, a significant number of candidates were able to clearly develop these points or take a case study approach to exemplify the nature of the problem and gain a Level 2 mark.

Question 3 (h) elicited a wide range of responses. Many candidates were only able to identify basic methods of managing problems caused by industry e.g. ‘filters on chimneys’, ‘recycle water’, or simple, sustainable energy sources e.g. ‘solar panels’ to gain a Level 1 mark. There were many very vague statements such as ‘they should not build factories’, or ‘they should not burn fossil fuels’, without any sense of how these would be achieved i.e. no scheme. Some candidates did clearly explain how real schemes made industry more environmentally sustainable, the best of these being set in a case study context. Once again, there was some pleasing evidence of learned information and some detailed and well-applied case study exemplars.

Question 4 – Investigating global tourism

Question 4 (a) was well answered with most candidates being able to interpret the map. In Question 4 (b) many candidates tended to give general reasons for the rise in tourism e.g. ‘cheap flights,’ ‘longer holidays,’ or ‘more disposable income,’ but failed to develop any of these points by linking them to the global context in order to attain to a Level 2 mark. The better candidates clearly focussed upon the way that these factors contributed to the growth of tourism to long haul, distant locations. In Question 4 (c), most candidates were able to interpret information from Figure 17 and showed a good understanding of the term ‘development gap’. However, some candidates simply ‘lifted’ data and lost a mark. It should be emphasized that candidates are expected to interpret data rather than copy it out.

In Question 4 (d), most candidates successfully used the data to develop a clear description of differences, mentioning the fact that more developed countries had more tourist arrivals than less developed countries, usually with supporting figures, but fewer mentioned of the degree of change that has taken place in the arrivals at the two sets of countries and gain all three marks. However, some candidates lost marks by giving reasons for differences, when this was not required.

Question 4 (e) elicited a wide range of responses. Some candidates were only able to identify basic advantages of tourism; principally ‘jobs’ and ‘money’ and answers at Level 1 tended to be very unstructured and vague. Phrases such as ‘reinvested the money in infrastructure,’ or ‘improved their quality of life,’ need further elaboration to access Level 2. Many candidates were able to develop ideas to start to explain the nature of the opportunities brought by tourism. This was sometimes set in a case study context, however there tended to be much repetition, with several examples of the same point being given. The more able candidates demonstrated sound knowledge of specific opportunities brought by tourism and linked these to an appropriate example, Kenya and Benidorm being popular choices.

Question 4 (f) also elicited a wide range of responses; it was poorly done by many candidates, with many vague statements being offered. These were often reversals of points made in Question 4 (d) i.e. ‘no jobs’ and ‘no money’. Some candidates were able to develop points and link ideas together, or to exemplify impacts with a case study and gain a Level 2 mark. Relatively few candidates gave Level 3 responses, but those that did were usually in a detailed case study setting and gave a real ‘sense of place’; Kenya, Benidorm and Blackpool being popular and appropriate choices. Many candidates gave very detailed reasons for the decline of tourism in a locality, when this was not demanded by the question. Question 4 (g)(i) was not always well answered with many candidates being unable to accurately describe the location of the development with sufficient accuracy. Many candidates only got credit for noting a coastal location, with vague phrases such as ‘near a motorway’ and ‘near the capital city’ being prevalent. A significant number of candidates did not give distances and many gave distances that were not sufficiently accurate. Use of

direction was poor amongst many candidates. Question 4 (g)(ii) was also not always well answered with many candidates being unable to clearly state the nature of the locational advantages. Once again, there many vague statements such as ‘near a motorway’ and ‘near the capital city’; these were lacking any elaboration to show the advantages of these factors. In

Question 4 (g)(iii), most candidates were able to list problems or conflicts and were limited to Level 1. However, a significant number of candidates were able to clearly develop these points or take a case study approach to exemplify the nature of the problem and gain a Level 2 mark. A small number of candidates failed to take into account that Figure 19 was a location in a more developed country and therefore chose inappropriate examples as part of their answers. Question 4 (h) elicited a wide range of responses. Many candidates were only able to identify basic methods of managing problems caused by tourists e.g. ‘litter bins’, ‘activity zoning’, or simple, sustainable energy sources e.g. ‘solar panels’ to gain a Level 1 mark. There were many very vague statements such as ‘they should not build hotels’, or ‘they should not put sewage in the sea’, without any sense of how these would be achieved i.e. no scheme. Some candidates did clearly explain how real schemes made tourism more environmentally sustainable, the best of these being set in a case study context. Ecotourism exemplars were particularly effective.

Some general points for development

Candidates must only answer one question from Section A **and** one question from Section B.

The resources used in the June 2015 examination papers for Unit 2 act as a stimulus for candidates to help them respond to questions and to be of value for teachers in centres to help prepare candidates for future examinations. They are provided as prompts for candidates to enable them to apply their knowledge and understanding to unfamiliar contexts and also to assess their understanding of geographical skills. Centres should encourage candidates to become comfortable with using a range of resources such as maps, photographs, tables of figures, graphs, diagrams and text etc. They should encourage candidates to be able to explain patterns, trends, relationships, causes, effects, opinions etc by applying their own knowledge and understanding to these contexts.

There is a need for accuracy when answering skills questions especially when giving compass directions and distances etc. In describing map features, the terms ‘distribution’ and ‘location’ need clarifying.

Questions that demand knowledge of physical process are still often not well done and candidates should be encouraged to give a detailed sequential development of the process. This should be supported by case study exemplars where appropriate. Candidates should be encouraged to use annotated diagrams where necessary, to aid explanation of physical process.

Some use of case study examples is a good strategy in responding to the Decision Making question (questions 1 (g) or 2 (f) on the Foundation Tier and 1 (g) and 2 (f) on the Higher Tier). The instruction ‘Use your case studies to support your answers where appropriate’ appears at the beginning of each section of the examination paper. Candidates should be aware that case studies help to exemplify and contextualise their responses. The best Level 3 answers on the Decision Making question make use of knowledge of accurate information to exemplify issues and develop a clear line of argument. A summative or reflective statement often improves the quality of the response. Responses to questions which demand a viewpoint or opinion to be expressed in a clear line of argument may be improved by centres allowing candidates to practise their reasoning skills,

by for example, using scaffolding techniques including key words such as 'because', 'so that', 'as a consequence' etc.

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