

Assessment Report

Scholarship, 2007

History

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Commentary:

Scholarship candidates are required to write an integrated response that applies the six skills in one piece of work rather than compartmentalising them into separate answers. The ability to synthesise ideas, show understanding of historical relationships and contextual issues, make judgments about evidence and / or research, evaluate historical narratives, and present a critical argument must be evident in candidates' answers.

Candidates need to have a good knowledge of historical narratives and an ability to judge sources critically as well as thorough content knowledge.

The best candidates responded to the question asked and used the key idea provided to construct their own focused argument. These candidates not only sustained their argument but also wrote fluently and convincingly. They were adept at integrating historical narrative from their own knowledge with the narrative in the sources to support their argument. These candidates critically evaluated the primary and secondary sources provided and discerned their importance in relation to the question and their argument.

The instructions required candidates to use evidence from at least seven of the sources provided, and to integrate their own knowledge into their answer. Candidates who did not achieve Scholarship tended to paraphrase the sources provided, bringing in little of their own knowledge and / or argument. A number of these responses read like prepared answers for the Level 3 essays.

Candidates were required to respond to the timeframe specified in the question. Successful candidates demonstrated understanding and knowledge of the content from the broad survey course in relation to the question asked. Candidates who did not achieve Scholarship focused their response on one part of the topic. Candidates need to have a good knowledge of historical narratives in order to respond the question asked.

The best performing candidates most commonly demonstrated the following skills and / or knowledge:

- an ability to construct their own coherent, cohesive, and sustained argument and support it with accurate evidence from both the sources *and* their own knowledge
- an ability to demonstrate an awareness of the breadth and depth of the question
- an ability to succinctly integrate the views of historians (from the sources and their own knowledge) into their argument
- an ability to judge critically primary and secondary sources and discern the importance of the sources in relation to the question
- an ability to integrate their own content knowledge with the evidence from the sources into their argument
- an ability to demonstrate understanding and knowledge over the entire timeframe of the question, and to stick to the boundaries that the question put in place

Candidates who did NOT achieve scholarship lacked some or all of the skills and knowledge above and in addition they:

- adopted a narrative approach and made no attempt to develop an argument
- made little or no reference to historical narratives and did not evaluate the narratives
- made little or no reference to the sources and / or made little or no attempt to judge the sources
- relied on a large amount of paraphrasing of the sources and brought in little of their own content knowledge
- responded to the question asked by describing each source rather than structuring an argument