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# AS

# HISTORY

1J The British Empire, c1857-1914  
Report on the Examination

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7041/1J  
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**Question 1**

This question required students to identify the main interpretations of two extracts from books by historians and assess which of the two provided the more convincing interpretation of the British occupation of Egypt in the late nineteenth century. In general terms Extract A put forward an economic and strategic argument emphasising the defence of the Suez Canal. Extract B, on the other hand, presented an argument that the British government had no planned policy. It also argued that Evelyn Baring was pivotal in persuading successive governments to remain in Egypt. The extracts were generally accessible to students and many were able to identify the main interpretations.

The best answers were provided by students who focussed on the main interpretations and offered a balanced evaluation of their convincingness, with support and challenge backed up with well selected contextual knowledge. Some students challenged the interpretations by focusing on what was not included in the extract when the focus should be on what the historian is arguing. Many students did not compare the convincingness of the extracts as is called for by this question which limited their mark, or students who did make a judgement did so briefly meaning it was only partial or thinly supported.

Less effective answers were those which deconstructed the extracts line by line, or those in which students showed extensive contextual knowledge but did not relate it to the main focus of the question. The date parameters of the question were ignored by some students, leading them to offer factual examples which were not relevant. e.g. the Denshawai Incident of 1906.

**Question 2**

This question was the most popular of the two essay questions. It required students to explain why Britain did not face a challenge to their rule in India between 1857 and 1890. Students were required to weigh up the suppression of the Mutiny against other factors which would explain the lack of resistance. This question was generally well done as students showed good knowledge of the suppression of the Mutiny. Pupils were able to explain other factors such as economic benefits and post-conflict reforms. Some pupils did struggle to access the word “suppression” and confused this with military reforms post-1857. The date range was generally covered well by students. However, some weaker answers focused entirely on the Government of Act 1858 whereas others went past 1890 and included the Partition of Bengal which was not credited.

**Question 3**

This question required students to examine the developments in southern Africa between 1867 and 1902 and evaluate which was the most significant. This question was the least popular of the two essay questions. Stronger answers effectively explained why the discovery of gold and diamonds was important and weighed that against other developments such as wars, actions of the “men on the spot” and international rivalry. Some answers did not cover the date range, either focusing entirely on the 1860s and 1870s or only explaining events from 1895. Some students only examined the discovery of gold in 1886 so therefore were also not able to cover the date range. The word “development” confused some students who instead focused on reasons for British

expansionism in southern Africa. There were some students who included factual detail from outside of the geographical area in the question e.g. the Suez Canal, which was not credited.

### **Mark Ranges and Award of Grades**

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