

This type of assessment requires learners to analyse and evaluate three complex contemporary sources in the context of a specific issue from within the Depth Study [AO2].

Centres should encourage candidates to demonstrate their skills of source analysis and evaluation in the context of the specific key issue mentioned in the enquiry question.

Centres should encourage candidates to consider the content, provenance and tone of the presented sources, with appropriate reference to the historical context in which the sources are set. Clearly who says it and when they say it will have a bearing upon the content of the source within the context of the set key issue.

Sample enquiry into the topic of poverty

Source 1

Mr Charles Booth's paper on State pensions for the aged poor proves that pauperism is most probably not, as we have all been taught, due to drunkenness, vice and laziness but to unemployment, depression, sickness and old age. These according to Mr Booth's unimpeachable figures are the chief cause of poverty. His concept of a 'poverty-line' in which he calculated the minimum weekly sum of money "necessary to enable families ... to secure the necessities of a healthy life" (including fuel and light, rent, food, clothing, and household and personal items) is certainly ground-breaking and should be studied by those who care not to admit to the abject poverty that afflicts many of our fellow citizens. Readers of this newspaper will know how passionately has been the campaign for radical reform.

[From an editorial published in *The Observer* newspaper (December 1903)]

Source 2

We have found respectable old women annoyed by the presence of noisy and dirty idiots. We have ourselves seen pregnant women forced to work side by side with women so physically deformed that they offend the eye. We have more than once seen young children in bed with minor illnesses next to women of bad character under treatment for infectious diseases, whilst other women in the same ward were dying of cancer and senile decay. Our findings have revealed that nationwide there are 11,000 certified and 60,000 uncertified mentally defective persons in our workhouses, living and sleeping in the same rooms as persons of sound mind. Provision must be made to segregate these unfortunates from those who would otherwise not come into contact with them.

[From a report compiled and published by a Royal Commission on Workhouses in England and Wales (1909). The report was ordered to be prepared by the outgoing Conservative government in 1905 and took four years to compile and was published by the Liberal government.]

Source 3

Brought up in stifling airless rooms with scanty food in the midst of births and deaths year after year, will affect even the strongest of minds and constitutions. Their life is the life of savages – their food is of the poorest quality and their only luxury is drink. From these come the battered figures who slouch through the streets. These are the worst class of corner men who hang round the doors of public houses. They give no useful service, they create no wealth but more often they destroy it in a fit of understandable envy. Those who are able to wash the mud away may find some gems to it.

[Charles Booth, a social reformer and researcher, writing in his social survey entitled *Life and Labour of the People in London* (1903)]

Classroom exercises for enquiry

Exercise 1

With reference to these sources and your understanding of the historical context, assess the value of these sources to an historian studying the problem of and attitudes to poverty at the turn of the twentieth century.

Exercise 2

With reference to these sources and your understanding of the historical context, which of these sources is more valuable in explaining why poverty was such a major issue at the beginning of the twentieth century?

Other possible topics for enquiry

The extent of social change in the early twentieth century.

The significance of economic change and conflict in Wales in the early twentieth century.

The significance of political change in Wales and England in the early twentieth century.

The impact of war, including the Boer War and the Great War.