

PART 1: PROBLEMS, THREATS AND CHALLENGES c.1529 -1553

This guide is in two sections – an introduction to the issue followed by a worked example on teaching and learning on one of the issues in the Depth Study.

PART ONE: INTRODUCTION

In approaching the teaching of Unit 2 for the interpretation question (Question 2) teachers need to focus on Assessment Objective 3 which demands that learners:

analyse and evaluate, in relation to the historical context, different ways in which aspects of the past have been interpreted.

The Assessment Objective uses the key phrase “in relation to the historical context” which goes beyond just general factual knowledge of what happened.

In the Specification each of the depth studies identifies at least FOUR aspects of the past to be studied in relation to the different ways they have been interpreted by various historians or groups of historians. These are identified in the Specification where it states:

Historical interpretations of key issues from this period

different historical interpretations of key issues in this period covering a range of developments including:

- *the extent of change in Wales in the 1530s and 1540s*
- *the causes and impact of religious changes on Wales and England*
- *the impact of the Henrician Reformation*
- *the causes of and threats posed by the major rebellions in this period.*

The Teacher Guide that supports the qualification advises teachers that:

*It is expected that learners will be aware of a range of possible interpretations of these key issues made by historians but specific knowledge and recall of particular historians and their careers or publications is not required. Question 2 will focus on assessing the extent to which candidates are able to analyse and evaluate the validity of the two provided interpretations on a specific issue in **the appropriate historical context** and also to show an awareness of different interpretations of the issue set. Centres should encourage candidates to debate and offer a judgement on the key issue set and consider a number of interpretations within **the wider historical debate** over this issue. Candidates are expected to be aware of the debate - and able to consider other possible interpretations than the ones presented - but detailed knowledge of particular historians, their career and works are not required. Centres should encourage their learners to analyse and evaluate the two extracts provided not only to identify differences in interpretations but also to discuss how and why different interpretations have been formed.*

The two key phrases in this guidance are:

1. the **appropriate historical context** by which we mean learners should be taught the historical events and developments associated with all FOUR of the issues identified in the specification.
2. the **wider historical debate** by which we mean learners should be taught and understand how and why historians have formed different historical interpretations of each of the key aspects - but they do not need to discuss the historiographical development.

Learners need to be aware of the wider historical debate surrounding these identified issues and different schools of thought - and different schools of history. So, for example, they will be aware that there were Whig - Protestant and Revisionist schools of History on the impact of the Henrician Reformation but it is not required for them to know names of specific historians or that one historian was influenced by the work of another. Those are expectations in the NEA at Unit 5 – what we call there the developing historical debate - but not in the examinations at Unit 2. At best learners should be aware developments in History can be seen in a variety of ways and are able to appreciate that interpretations are formed for certain reasons and that they are provisional and open to challenge and change.

This may be done at Unit 2 by explaining that historians may make and debate different interpretations based on a number of considerations such as

- the availability of primary evidence
- the emphasis that they place on particular events and developments
- their focus on the varying importance of political, social, religious, economic and / or other aspects of history
- the influence of other historians who represent a similar school of thought.

The approach above is reinforced by the requirement at each of the mark schemes that *“Overall candidates will analyse both interpretations using their own understanding of the debate over this issue, offer an evaluation of the validity of the given interpretations and provide a judgement on the issue in the question that”*.

PART TWO: A WORKED EXAMPLE

This example is taken from the Specification on **The mid-Tudor crisis in Wales and England**.

It focuses on both the appropriate historical context and the wider historical debate. This example is based on the key issue of the impact of the Henrician Reformation.

1. The appropriate historical context

The specification outlines that teachers should ensure that learners are taught about:

the King's 'Great Matter'; religious legislation in the 1530s and 1540s; the dissolution of the monasteries; religious and ecclesiastical policies 1547-1553, including the Prayer Books and Acts of Uniformity; opposition to religious change.

Knowledge and awareness of this content will enable candidates to become familiar with the context surrounding the issue to be interpreted.

2. The wider historical debate

Teachers should also ensure that the learners are taught about how and why historians have formed different historical interpretations of the impact of the Henrician Reformation and that there has been a debate on this issue. This should include considering that historians debating the impact of the Henrician Reformation may represent schools of thoughts such as:

Interpretation	School of thought	Supporting context
The influence of longer term developments in religion and the position of the Catholic Church	A religious interpretation	The influence of the Protestant Reformation in Europe
The aims of Thomas Cromwell	A political interpretation	The legislation and administrative changes
The immediate issue of the problems facing Henry	a political and dynastic interpretation	The issue of the divorce
The impact of shorter term developments such as the Dissolution of the Monasteries	A financial and religious interpretation	Financial and political impact of the war on France
The impact of the changes on the people	A political, social and economic interpretation	Lack of uniformity and resistance in the country

Learners should be made aware that the Henrician Reformation brought about a rapid conversion of the people of Wales and England to create a Protestant nation – a period of radical change imposed from above by the King and his ministers. They should also be aware of another interpretation that the impact of the Henrician Revolution was neither rapid nor radical and if it did create a Protestant nation it did not create a nation of Protestants in Wales and England.

Learners should also be taught that over the past four hundred years historians have made different interpretations of the impact of the Henrician Reformation and have created different schools of history regarding this issue. For example they could learn that the long held Whig-Protestant view that the Reformation was rapid and radical was challenged in the mid twentieth century by historians who

A GUIDE TO THE LEARNING AND TEACHING OF THE INTERPRETATION ISSUE AT UNIT 2

THE MID-TUDOR CRISIS IN WALES AND ENGLAND c.1529-1570

tended to focus on either a 'top down' or a 'bottom up' interpretation of the impact of the Reformation. These historians tended to consider the political and religious impact of the Reformation on the nation. Since the 1970s revisionist historians have tended to point out the lack of uniformity of the impact of the Henrician Reformation and the resistance to it in areas of Wales and England. These interpretations have been developed over the past twenty years by an attempt to synthesise both views in the work of post-revisionist historians.

3. Testing validity

In order to discuss and test the validity of different interpretations, student may like to consider the following issues in making their judgments:

- What interpretation is being made?
- What historical support is there for this interpretation?
- How does this interpretation fit into the wider historical debate?
- How valid / convincing is this interpretation when compared to others?

4. Checking your work

Use this checklist to assess your response to the interpretation exercise set in Unit 2, Question 2.

Have you:	YES	NO
Understood the set question.		
Analysed Interpretation 1 and 2 to identify the interpretation contained in each extract.		
Analysed Interpretation 1 and 2 to identify the historical developments and date range referred to in each extract [<i>the context of each interpretation</i>].		
Discussed, using the context of the appropriate historical events and developments, why these historians have made different or differing interpretations.		
Analysed Interpretation 1 and 2 to identify the school of history or school of thought represented by these historians [<i>the historical debate</i>].		
Discussed, using the context of the historical debate over the set issue, why these historians have made different or differing interpretations.		
Discussed and evaluated the validity of Interpretation 1 and 2 using your awareness of a range of other interpretations of the set issue.		
Provided a judgement on the validity of the interpretation in the question set.		
Read over and corrected any mistakes?		

Are there any aspects of your response which need to be improved?