Geography

Practice Questions

AQA A Level

Instructions

Individual, exam-style questions

The questions contained in this booklet match the style of questions that are typically asked in exams. This booklet is not however, a practice exam. Elevate's research with top students identified that top students do more practice questions than anyone else. They begin the process of testing their knowledge early in the year.

Therefore, we have provided exam-format questions that are sorted by topic so that you can answer them as you learn the information, rather than waiting until the very end of the year to complete exams.

Comments, questions?

Let us know if you need any further advice by visiting www.elevateeducation.com. You can comment on any of our material, or head to the FAQ section and ask us a question. Also, you can find us on social media so you can stay up to date on any brand new tips we release throughout the year.

Other information

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Plate Tectonics

Question 1:

1) This picture was taken during the aftermath of the Nepal earthquake in 2015.

   Describe and comment on the impacts shown in the image. (7 marks)

Answer:

The AQA GEOG3 2015 mark scheme states a good answer to this type of question should include:

"Clear description and comment on the nature of the impacts seen/suggested. Evidence of geographical thinking such as wider or longer term impacts".

Key Impacts are: Powerlines destroyed. Damage to the road. Assume there's deaths/Injury. Damage to buildings. Traffic on the road, people could be evacuating the area OR trying to continue with daily lives.

Tip: Focus on the stumulus

Make sure you describe the image itself in detail and then use your descriptions to explain the impacts.
For example, a low level answer would say:

'buildings have been destroyed. Power lines have started to fall down.'

An excerpt from a top level answer would say something along the lines of:

'The building in the foreground, on the right hand side of the image has been partially destroyed. The front wall has collapsed and the exposed brickwork appears to be structurally unsound. Coupled with the irregular construction of the buildings in the background, and the sheer number of poorly fitted wires attached to the fallen powerlines, **we can conclude that** infrastructure in Nepal is not subject to strict regulations. **As a result,** the earthquake will have had a greater impact on infrastructure.'

The phrases in bold show the examiner that you are answering the question. You're

using a description of the image to make a wider comment on the impacts of the

earthquake

Question 2:

Describe the characteristics of forms of minor extrusive volcanic activity and explain their formation. (8 Marks)

Answer:

The AQA Examiners' reports state that this type of 8 mark question is designed to test candidates' knowledge and understanding of a highly specific area of the syllabus.

The 2013 AQA mark scheme states that top level answers for this type of question provide detailed characteristics and explanations 'possibly with some use of supportive material'. To get top marks you have to show 'a breadth of knowledge'.

Specifics are:
Formation
- Usually near an active or recently active volcano (type of plate boundary).

- Water underground (from rainfall) falls through cracks and is heated by magma.
- Hot water is less dense so it rises.
- Hot water reacts with rocks it comes into contact with. Becomes mineral rich.
- Geothermal systems. Large systems (young volcanoes). Cooler systems (older/extinct volcanoes). Isolated warm springs (faultlines).

Hot Springs
- Vary in temperature.
- Some are slightly alkaline (have a soapy feeling). Alkaline chloride systems.
- Temperature depends on how quickly water can rise to surface.
- Sinter deposits. Pure silica from boiling springs.
- Grand Prismatic Spring – Yellowstone
- Blood pot hot spring, Beppu, Japan. 78 C slightly red from clay.
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Boiling mud pools
- Water rises and mixes with clay, volcanic ash and mud
- Water usually is short supply. Thickness varies seasonally.
- Usually white/grey sometimes red.
- Hverir, Iceland

Geysers
- Water is superheated by magma (up to 300 C)
- If it only reaches as steam it's a fumarole
- Sinter cones, travertine or geyserite around base
- Old Faithful – Above a Caldera in Yellowstone 120m high

This mark scheme is not exhaustive. It's just to give you an idea. Points in bold demonstrate a breadth of knowledge.

Tip: Use examples wisely

I think this is the easiest type of question to bag a full set of marks on. All you have to do is use your knowledge well. Don't just namedrop a ton of examples in this type of question, apply the theory to them to demonstrate you have a 'breadth of knowledge'. For example, you could use Blood Pot hot spring in Beppu, Japan to demonstrate that there isn't a definitive distinction between a hot spring and a mud pool. Beppu has a reddish tinge because the area has plenty of water which mixes with clay. If water was in short supply in the area, there would be a reddish mud pool.

Question 3:

With reference to examples, assess the ways in which the damage and impacts of a seismic event can be prevented. (10 marks)

Answer:

This question requires you to assess. Unlike the previous questions, you have to come to some sort of conclusion.

Possible Points
Measurement and prediction technology
- Prediction is difficult and unreliable.
- Radon gas levels, animal behaviour, groundwater levels.
- Monitor fault lines, Measure local magnetic fields
- Preventing an earthquake thought to be impossible, however, there has been research into the possibility.
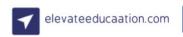
Protection
- Education/Awareness/Culture
- Hazard Assessment

- Previous disasters – lessons learned – Improvements?
- Building regulations and restrictions
- Land use planning
- Pre-arranged evacuation plans/Military training
- Communication and Warning Systems
- Technology – Smart meters to prevent fires.
- Hard and Soft Defences – Japan's Sea walls etc.

A top answer will be fully developed and provide a range of examples of named places. It should include AT LEAST 2 case studies. All points should be backed up with Case study evidence. A rounded answer which fully assesses.

Tip: Fundamentals

There's no right or wrong way to answer this type of question, but there are a few fundamentals.

Stick to the question and spin it in your favour

This sounds obvious, but it's easy to go off on a tangent with a question like this. You only have about 17 minutes to answer this question and there's so much you can write about. You don't have time to talk in detail about the nature of a hazard.

What I used to do was write the key words from the question at the top of my page as a reminder. Here I'd write 'Assess – <u>Damage and impacts</u> – seismic – <u>prevented</u>'. Use these words in your answer all the time, particularly damage, impacts and prevented. Not only will it make you consider if what you're talking about is relevant, it spins the question in your favour. It emphasises how important each of your points is.

Quality Over Quantity
There's enough to write about for this question to be worth 40 marks. What I'd do is pick 3-5 strong points and go into a lot of detail. To get top marks you have to back up EVERYTHING with case study evidence. A good rule of thumb for a question like this is to primarily reference 2 case studies and drop in a couple of references from other ones. Which leads us on to the next tip…

Make sure your case studies are detailed
You can't get a top mark on a question like this unless you have detailed information that goes beyond the textbook. Say you chose to write about warning systems as a way to prevent the damage and impacts of a seismic event. Japan's system would be an obvious choice to talk about, but could you talk about it in depth? Do you know:

- What it's called?
- The Government Department responsible for it?
- How much it costs?
- How it works?
- Facts and figures about it?
- Was it effective in the Tohoku earthquake?
- Who's criticised it?
- What have they said about it?
- Has it been improved since? If so, will it be more effective?
- Have any academics critiqued it?

It doesn't take too long to find all of this out. Have a look at our case study guide for tips on getting comprehensive case studies quickly.