



A-level HISTORY

Component 1B Spain in the Age of Discovery, 1469–1598

Friday 23 May 2025 Morning Time allowed: 2 hours 30 minutes

Materials

For this paper you must have:

- an AQA 16-page answer book.

Instructions

- Use black ink or black ball-point pen.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer book. The **Paper Reference** is 7042/1B.
- Answer **three** questions.
In **Section A** answer Question 01.
In **Section B** answer **two** questions.

Information

- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- The maximum mark for this paper is 80.
- You will be marked on your ability to:
 - use good English
 - organise information clearly
 - use specialist vocabulary where appropriate.

Advice

- You are advised to spend about:
 - 1 hour on Question 01 from **Section A**
 - 45 minutes on each of the **two** questions answered from **Section B**.

Section A**Answer Question 01.**

Extract A

The development of Spanish industry took second place to trade and commerce during Isabella and Ferdinand's reigns. Traditional industries like leather, soap, iron and shipbuilding continued to grow, but silk and textile production declined, which was largely due to government policies. Granada was the main supplier of silk. However, the conquest of Granada in 1492, and subsequent persecution of its Muslim inhabitants, led to falling silk production levels due to skilled workers leaving the region. The cloth industry was also damaged by the persecution of *conversos* and the expulsion of Jews in the 1490s and the consequent loss of skilled craftspeople, merchants and investors. Isabella and Ferdinand failed to promote native industries and relied too much on exporting raw wool instead of developing the Spanish textile industry. Insufficient financial support was given to the wine, ceramics and shipbuilding industries. Although there were examples of economic growth as a result of Isabella and Ferdinand's economic policies, the Spanish economy had weaknesses. Many of these resulted from the Crown's economic decision-making.

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Adapted from G Woodward, *Spain in the Reigns of Isabella and Ferdinand, 1474–1516*, 1997

Extract B

Isabella and Ferdinand sought to increase their wealth as a means of increasing their power. They encouraged activities such as trade and commerce, which were an important source of revenue for the Crown and country. This was most obvious in their promotion of the *Mesta*, the organisation which controlled Castilian sheep-farming and wool marketing. Isabella and Ferdinand aggressively promoted wool exports and devoted much of Castile's energies and resources to sheep-farming. The monarchs recognised that the *Mesta* had the potential to be financially rewarding and was relatively easy to control, with a ready-made and widespread organisation. Actions were taken by both monarchs to reduce corruption and a uniform rate of taxes for grazing and herding sheep was imposed throughout the country. Wool production was not only a direct source of exports but was also important for Spanish cloth manufacturing, and there was probably an overall rise in the output of cloth. Although such actions positively impacted Spanish trade, imports remained higher than exports throughout the period.

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Adapted from F Fernández-Armesto, *Ferdinand and Isabella*, 1975

Extract C

New World territories were by far the most important lands acquired by Spain under Isabella and Ferdinand because of their growing economic significance after the death of Isabella. Nearly half a million ounces of gold were drawn yearly from the mines of Hispaniola alone. The pearl fisheries and sugar-cane introduced from Spain's New World territories also brought in much money. The enslavement of indigenous people for labour increased profits, at least after the death of Isabella who had intervened to prevent such practices. Ferdinand had been granted half the amount of New World revenues. Recognising the potential for wealth generation, he continued to fund further exploration after Isabella's death, acquiring an important supply of precious metals as well as plentiful fertile lands on which to grow crops for trade with Spain. Despite these benefits, funding New World exploration was expensive for the Crown and government. New World wealth had a greater impact for individual *conquistadores*, many of whom returned to Spain wealthy men after voyages to the New World.

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Adapted from WH Prescott, History of the Reign of Ferdinand and Isabella the Catholic, 1837

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Using your understanding of the historical context, assess how convincing the arguments in these three extracts are in relation to Spain's economy during the reigns of Isabella and Ferdinand in the years 1474 to 1516.

[30 marks]**Turn over for Section B**

Section B

Answer **two** questions.

0 2

'Spanish actions in the New World were influenced more by religious motives than desire for economic gain during the reign of King Charles.'

Assess the validity of this view.

[25 marks]

0 3

To what extent did opposition within Spain weaken Philip II's royal authority in the years 1556 to 1598?

[25 marks]

0 4

How successfully did Spain manage its relations with England in the years 1556 to 1598?

[25 marks]

END OF QUESTIONS

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