Exam Practice – From the Cradle to the Grave

The first type of source question you will encounter are “how useful/valuable/reliable” questions. These are similar to ES1 questions at Standard Grade, but you are required to go into more depth:

* You must discuss the date – **and** its significance
* You should discuss the author and what makes him/her important
* You should write about the content – use quotes and explain what is important about the content
* You must write about the purpose of the source and whether it is one-sided (biased) or not. Note – even biased evidence is useful for historians
* You can mention if there is anything of significance missing from the source which may alter its importance.

**Source A**:

From B S Rowntree, “Poverty, A Study of Town Life”.

Allowing for broken time, the average wage for a labourer in York is from 18s. to 21s; whereas, according to the figures given earlier in this chapter, the minimum expenditure necessary to maintain in a state of physical efficiency a family of two adults and three children is 21s. 8d. or, if there are four children, the sum required would be 26s.

1. How useful is **Source A** for describing poverty in the early twentieth century? (4 marks)

**Model Answer**

Source A is very useful for describing poverty in the early twentienth century. The source was written at the beginning of the twentieth century when there was widespread poverty in Britain. Source A was written by Seebohm Rowntreee who studied poverty in York and therefore had a good knowledge of poverty. The Source describes how wages of labourers were barely enough to support a family. The source is also useful because it comes from a report into poverty and was written to inform. However, the source only describes poverty in York and doesn't describe poverty in the rest of Britain. Overall Source A is quite useful.

**Source B:**

# Lloyd George speech at Manchester, 1908

After all, this is a rich country. It is the richest country under the sun; and yet in this rich country you have hundreds and thousands of people living under conditions of poverty, destitution, and squalor that would, in the words of an old Welsh poet, make the rocks weep.

1. How valuable is **Source B** for explaining why David Lloyd George was in favour of social welfare reforms? (4 marks)

**Source C** is from a newspaper printed in 1942



# The mug is a picture of William Beveridge

How useful is **Source C** for highlighting the feelings of the public towards the Beveridge Report? (4 marks)