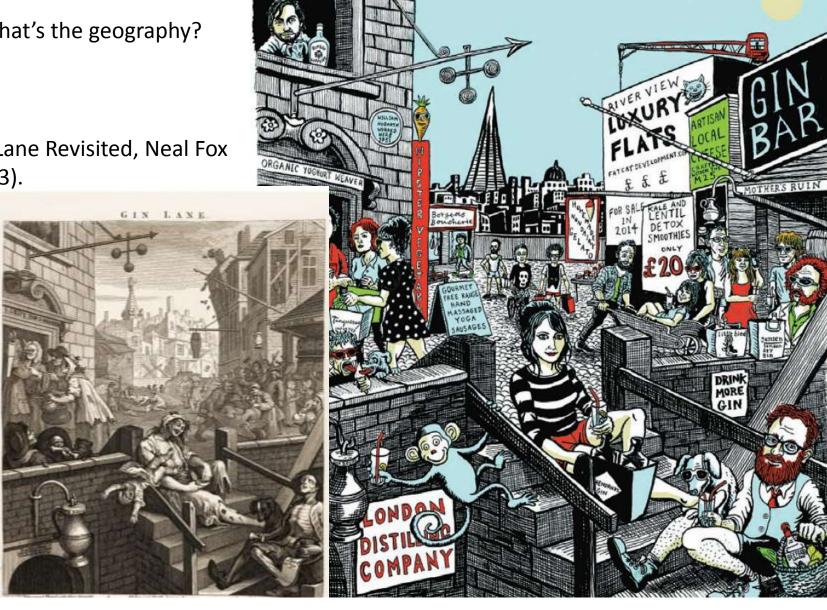
# Practical strategies for succeeding in geography exams

Mark Jones (PGCE Geography Tutor) and PGCE Geographers (Class of 2018) UWE, Bristol.

Geographical Association Bristol Branch Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> April 2018 6:00-8:00pm What's the geography?

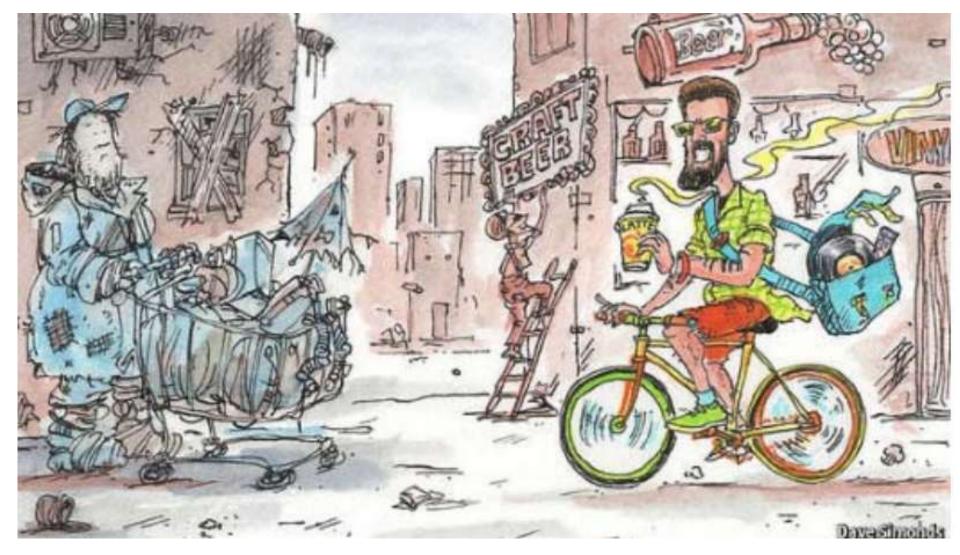
#### Gin Lane Revisited, Neal Fox (2013).

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P. Jackson (2017) Human Geography in the Handbook of Secondary Geography Jones, M ed (2017) GA: Sheffield.

#### What's the geography?

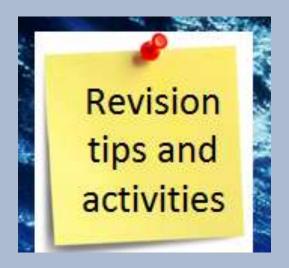


### Practical strategies for succeeding in geography exams

6:00pm Introduction and big picture 1.Take command 2.Let's Describe 3.Planning answers 4.What's my essay title? 5. Introductions to essays 6. Structuring essays

7:00pm Short break and refreshments Revision strategies and activities Hexagons Ropey revision 8:00pm Final remarks and close





#### **Assessment Objectives**

AO1 - Knowledge and Understanding (30-40%)

Can you demonstrate knowledge and understanding of different aspects of the geography specification ? **AO2 – Application** (30-40%)

Can you show you have synoptic capacity? i.e. to include/ make links in your answers to relevant aspects of the specification from other units. **AO3 - Skills** (20-30%)

Can you answer questions requiring specific skills ?

- cartographical,
- numerical,
- graphical,
- statistical.

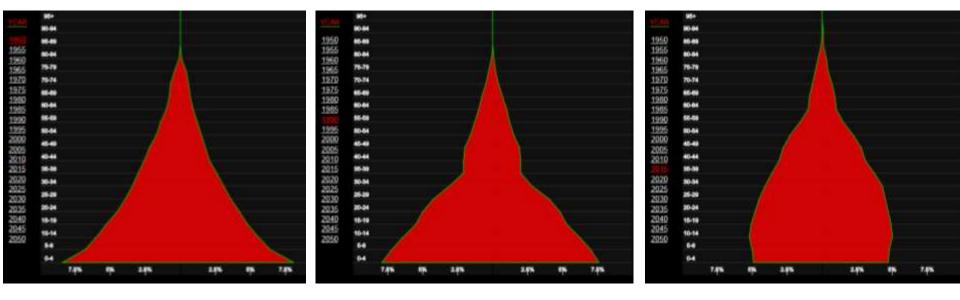
How confident am I when I answer the following types of question?

Short response questions – 4 marks Coastal

Explain the concept of the sediment cell. [4 marks]

Longer response questions – 20 marks Glacial Assess the relative importance of water and ice in the development of landscapes of glacial deposition. [20 marks] How confident am I when I answer the following types of question?

Analyse the trends illustrated by the population pyramids for Bangladesh shown in **Figure 3**. [6 marks]

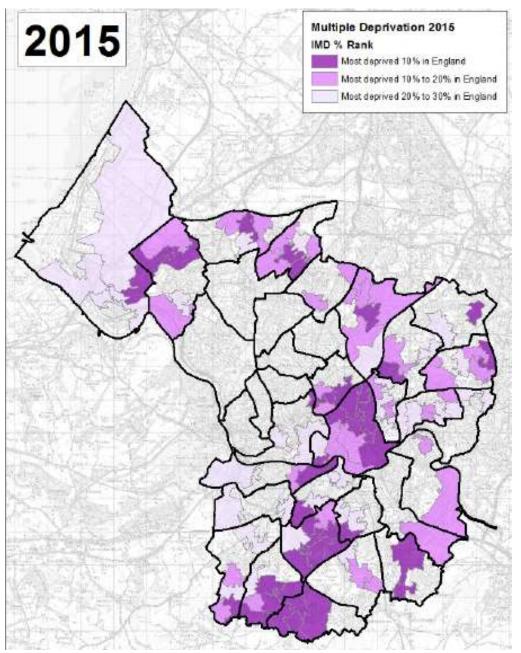


#### **FIGURE 3 - BANGLADESH POPULATION PYRAMID**

<u>1950</u>

1990





How confident am I when I answer the following types of question?

Assess the factors that might account for the spatial variation shown in **Figure 1** [9 marks]

**Figure 1: Index of Multiple Deprivation 2015** <u>Source</u>: Department for Communities and Local Government, Indices of Deprivation 2015

## Better written responses Take command

describe, analyse, explain, account for.., state, identify, to what extent, discuss, compare, contrast, examine, explain in detail, using a named example, distinguish between, outline the reasons for, assess, evaluate, annotate, illustrate, comment on, give reasons for..

#### Command words

1	State the precise meaning of an idea or concept. There is usually a low tariff of marks for this.	AQA
	Add to a diagram, image or graphic a number of words that describe and/or explain features, rather than just identify them (which is labelling).	A Level Geography (203 Command and Key Words
	Give an account in words of a phenomenon which may be an entity, an event, a feature, a pattern, a distribution or a process. For example, if describing a landform say what it looks like, give some indication of size or scale, what it is made of, and where it is in relation to something else (field relationship).	
1	Describe the similarities and differences of at least two phenomena.	
	Point out the differences between at least two phenomena.	
( 1	Make a statement that arises from a factual point made – add a view, or an opinion, or an interpretation. In data/stimulus response questions, examine the stimulus material provided and then make statements about the material and its content that are relevant, appropriate and geographical, but not directly evident. Candidates are being invited to 'think like a geographer'.	
	Set out the causes of a phenomenon and/or the factors which influence its form/nature. This usually requires an understanding of processes. Explanation is a higher-level skill than description and this is often reflected in its greater mark weighting.	
	Consider carefully and provide a detailed account of the indicated topic.	

	Break down the content of a topic, or issue, into its constituent elements in order to provide an in-depth account and convey an understanding of it.
	Consider several options or arguments and weigh them up so as to come to a conclusion about their effectiveness or validity.
	Consider several options or arguments and come to a conclusion about their importance/success/worth.
	Often occurs before 'Assess' or 'Evaluate' and invites an examination of an issue from the point of view of a critic with a particular focus on the strengths and weaknesses of the points of view being expressed.
1	Set out both sides of an argument (for and against), and come to a conclusion. There should be some evidence of balance, though not necessarily of equal weighting.
)	Give reasons for the validity of a view or idea or why some action should be undertaken. This might reasonably involve discussing and discounting alternative views or actions.
	Give reasons for the validity of a view or idea or why some action should be undertaken. This might reasonably involve discussing and discounting alternative views or actions. At A2 level each of the views present or options available will have positives and negatives. For the outcome(s) chosen, the positives outweigh the positives. Candidates should be able to explain all of this review process.
	Form and express a view as to the merit or validity of a view or statement after examining the evidence available and/or different sides of an argument.
	Activity 1.2 – matching definitions of comma

Activity 1.2 – matching definitions of command words

#### GCSE (9-1) Geography A and B AS/A level Geography



Command words are used consistently across GCSE and A level mark tariffs

Our assessments are designed to encourage all students to show what they know and understand about geography to the best of their ability. Our assessment structure is straightforward to navigate and our level-based mark schemes to assess extended-response questions are explicit about the types of response and skills required. A clear and consistent relationship across GCSE and AS/A level supports building on the same set of assessment skills each year, reducing transitional workload and helping students to access and master the exams.

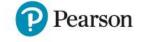
Key:	GCSE	A level														The command word mark tariffs outside the grey box a										
tariffs that apply to both	Marks	1	2	3	4	8	12	2	Marks	1	2	3	4	6	8	8		12	16	18	20	24			outside the marked.	grey box a
GCSE specs	Identify/State/Name	•							Define	AS														-		
A tariffs are only found in	Define	•							Identify/State/Name	AS	AS												1	The o	ommand v	vord mar
specification A B tariffs are only found in specification B	Calculate		0						Complete		AS													100000000	inside the	
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<ul> <li>tariffs that apply to both AS and A level specifications.</li> </ul>	Compare			•					Compare		AS	AS													-based mai	
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AS tariffs are only found in	Explain		•	•	•				Draw/Plot		AS	AS	AL											that st	udents kno	w exactly
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	Evaluate					0			Analyse						AL	i i								types	like these, v	vhereas at
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Pearson is the only exam board to define command words in the specification. Officially regulated by Ofqual, this ensures transparency and that these definitions will be used consistently for the lifetime of the qualification.

#### Supporting you every step of the way

To find out more about our assessments, sign-up to our Getting Ready to Teach events:

GCSE: www.edexcel.com/gcsegeogassess A level: www.edexcel.com/alevelgeogassess

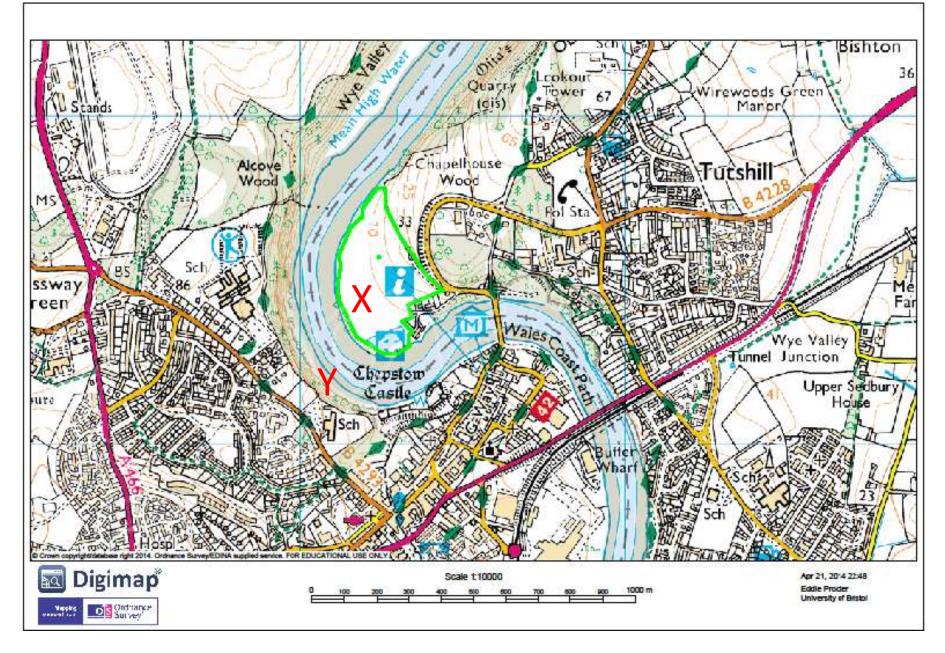


Pearson Command words are used consistently across GCSE and A level mark tariffs

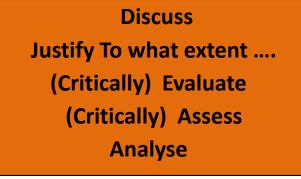


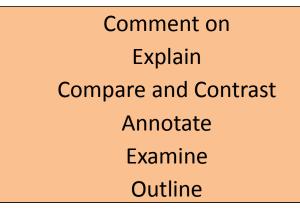
# Take command

Low to Mid Order Command Words distinguish betweek with your explain Always check with inational and the Examination of ....state, identify, annotate, a nam teacher and the Examination scribe, Specification and advice from " your Awarding Body using Higher O ....analys, assess, evaluate, discuss, to what extent do you agree.....

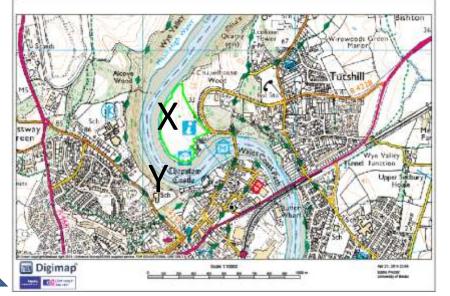


#### Activity 2.1 What's the question?





Describe Label Define.., What is meant by..



## Explain how a meander forms?

Compare and contrast the formation of the river features at X and Y?

Describe a meander?

Label a meander on the map?

#### Discuss Justify To what extent .... (Critically) Evaluate (Critically) Assess Analyse

#### Sustainable Flood Management

Increasing resilience to flood risk is an important Sustainable flood management is an approach to component of sustainable flood management. planning and delivering measures to reduce flood risk. Resilience to flooding can be increased through a variety of measures, including flood warning, flood defences, natural food management (e.g. floodplain storage) and guick and effective responses to fooding. Where food plaim and wetlands are connected to rivers, the flood storage they provide can reduce the risk of kownstream fooding Flood warning helps communities espond to flood risks Land management, including upland forest management, can help reduce run-off and flood flows to downstream areas Flood defence structures play a critical tole in holding back floods, particularly where communities, infrastructure and valuable land is at risk

Discuss how rivers can be managed in a sustainable way?

Evaluate a river management strategy using a named example

Assess the effectiveness of dams as a flood control measure?

Explain how a river floods?

Discuss, Justify, To what extent do you agree ....(Critically) Evaluate (Critically) Assess, Analyse To what extent do you agree that soft engineering approaches should be the main priority in Shoreline Management Plans (20 marks)

Evaluate how effective the coastal management strategies have been (15 marks)

Comment on, Explain Compare and Contrast , Annotate, Examine, Outline

State , Identify Define. Label Describe, What is meant by..

Explain two different approaches which would protect the stretch of coastline from further erosion in Figure 4 ( 6 marks)

Compare the processes which affect the shoreline and the cliff face in Figure 1 (6 marks)

Describe feature Y (4 marks)



Identify the feature X shown in the photograph ( 1 mark) Figure 1

#### **Examiner comment:**

One of the major pitfalls that face candidates in any examination is their difficulty in interpreting the demands of the questions asked of them.

Examiners always try to set questions which are clear in what they ask for and which can be answered by everyone who has followed the course and has prepared adequately for the examination.

**Correct interpretation of the Command Words of a question is, therefore, very important.** 

## Better written responses



#### Las Vegas, south-western USA



**Describe** the development that has taken place in Las Vegas, shown in **Figure 7**. [4 marks] Source: AQA AS June 2104



This answer gains how many marks out of 4?

**Describe** the development that has taken place in Las Vegas, shown in **Figure 7** Las Vegas is the gambling capital of the world situated in the Mojave Desert in Nevada in south-western USA. It is famous for the 24 hour casinos many of which are also hotels so tourists can stay in Las Vegas for a few days or a week. The buildings are often based on famous features in other countries like the <u>Luxor</u> which is pyramid shaped. The city in the picture also is increasingly becoming home to wealthy Americans who retire there so changing its social demographic. Being in a desert also means that water is scarce so you can only use water for landscaping on certain days.



## This answer gains how many marks out of 4?

Is this worth zero or 1 mark? The candidate has not really used figure 7 at all!

**Describe** the development that has taken place in Las Vegas, shown in **Figure 7** Las Vegas is the gambling capital of the world situated in the Mojave **Desert** in Nevada in south-western USA. It is famous for the 24 hour casinos many of which are also hotels so tourists can stay in Las Vegas for a few days or a week. The buildings are often based on famous features in other countries like the <u>Luxor</u> which is pyramid shaped. The city in the picture also is increasingly becoming home to wealthy Americans who retire there so changing its social demographic. Being in a desert also means that water is scarce so you can only use water for landscaping on certain days.

#### Las Vegas, south-western USA



**Describe** the development that has taken place in Las Vegas, shown in **Figure 7**. [4 marks] Source: AQA AS June 2104

Μ

F

Beyond the built-up area the land is empty and seems dry and barren

The settlement seems to sprawl in the distance towards the mountains

There are a lot of trees dotted about the area, with wide roads apparent especially going from top to bottom of the photograph, as well as from left to right.





Within the built-up area there is a line of very tall buildings that stand out in the landscape and cluster together with variable designs.

Beyond the built-up area the land is empty and seems dry and barren

The settlement seems to sprawl in the distance towards the mountains

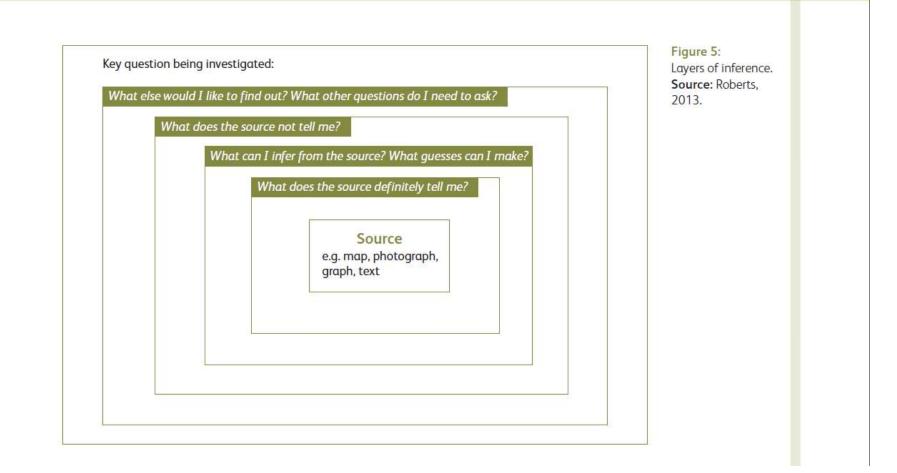
There are a lot of trees dotted about the area, with wide roads apparent – especially going from top to bottom of the photograph, as well as from left to right.





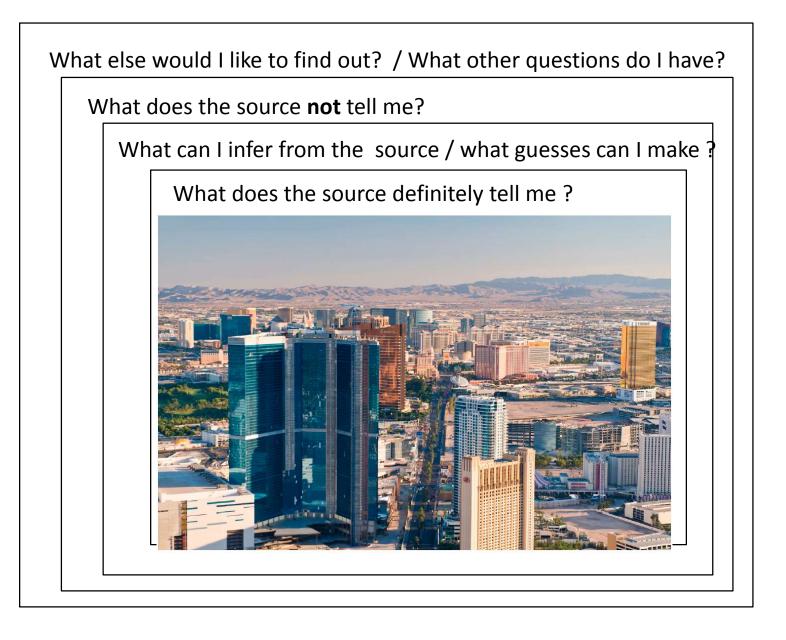
Within the built-up area there is a line of very tall buildings that stand out in the landscape and cluster together with variable designs.

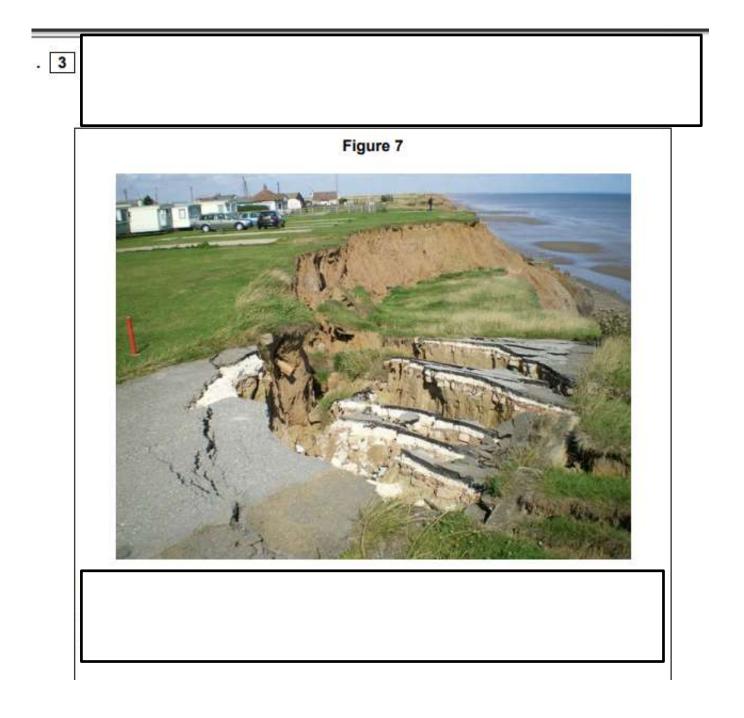
**Chapter 5: Planning for enquiry** 



**Source:** Roberts, M. (2017) Planning for enquiry in Jones, M. ed. (2017) *The Handbook of Secondary Geography.* Sheffield: Geographical Association.

#### Practising higher order skills - layers of inference





## Better written responses

# Let's describe and ...

Stimulus response questions

Examiner comment: need to study and use a stimulus on your answers. The command 'comment on' requires [you] to make a geographical inference based ... on something evident in the Figure. In direct terms, the Figure that is being provided should be referred to repeatedly in the answers to the questions set on that stimulus; and in simple terms evidence from the Figure should be given to support a point being made. AQA Geog 3 (2013, p.3)

Examiner comment from AQA Examiner Report

"Rehearsing how to respond to photographs, statistical data and maps is really important prior to taking the exam allowing candidates to deal with patterns, trends and anomalies."



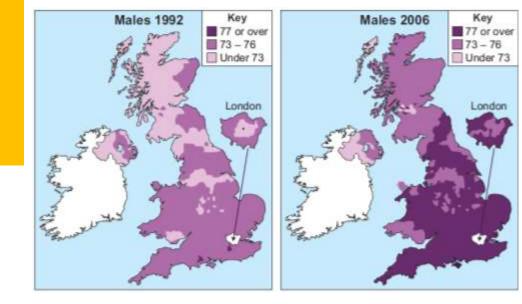
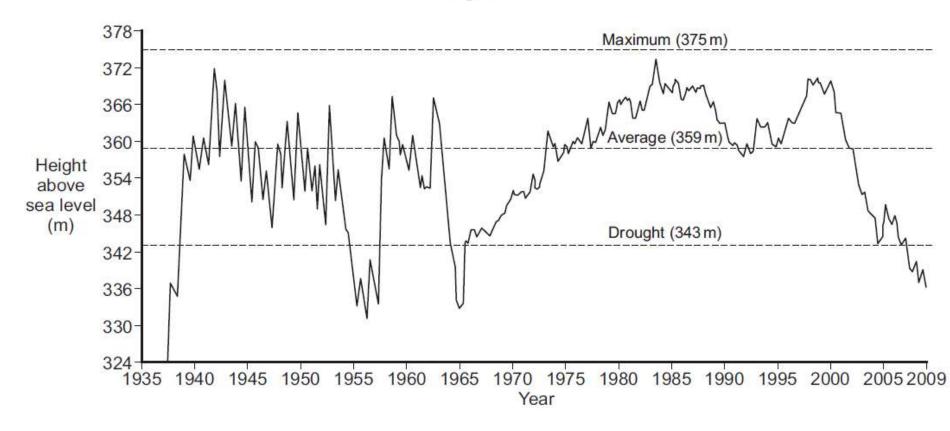


Figure 8 shows the water levels of Lake Mead at the Hoover Dam, near Las Vegas. The Hoover Dam was built in the 1930s.

Let's Describe

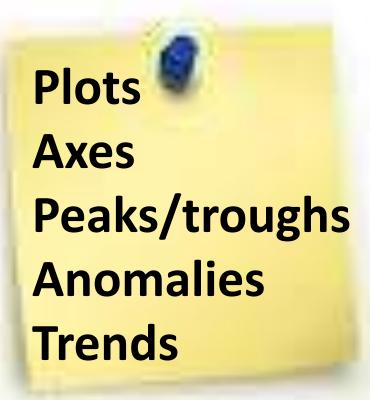
Figure 8



Describe the changing water levels of Lake Mead shown in **Figure 8**. [4 marks] Source AQA AS June 2014.

### **Reading Tables, Charts and Graphs**

- reading the data: what does the data tell us? e.g. highest, lowest, specific values or plots
- reading between the data: what relationships are there within and between the data? e.g. groups, trends, peaks, troughs, anomalies
- reading beyond the data: what can we extrapolate or infer from the data? e.g. future trends, for a different context.



Curcio, F.R. (1987) 'Comprehension of mathematical relationships expressed in graphs', *Journal for Research in Mathematics Education*, 18, 5, pp. 382–93.

See also chapter -Jones, M. (2017) Numeracy in Jones, M. ed. (2017) *The Handbook of Secondary Geography*. Sheffield: Geographical Association.

The amount of water in lake Mead has fluctuated

1. It rose quickly following the construction of the Hoover Dam reaching its average depth in about two years at about 357m

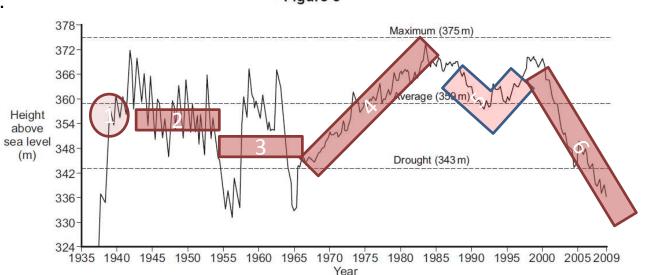
2. Despite fluctuating, it remained in a steady band until the mid-1950s, when its level varied much more – from 360m to 331m.

3. This continued during the 1960s with highs of about 365m and lows of 345m.

4. The late 1960s saw an overall increasing trend in the water level – as did the 1970s/80s, .....

5. with some reduction in the early 1990s. However, this was short lived and stores were replenished in the later years of the decade.

6. Since 2000, there has been a decline in water levels – this has been steadier and more sustained than previously – with 2009 levels at 336m below the drought level



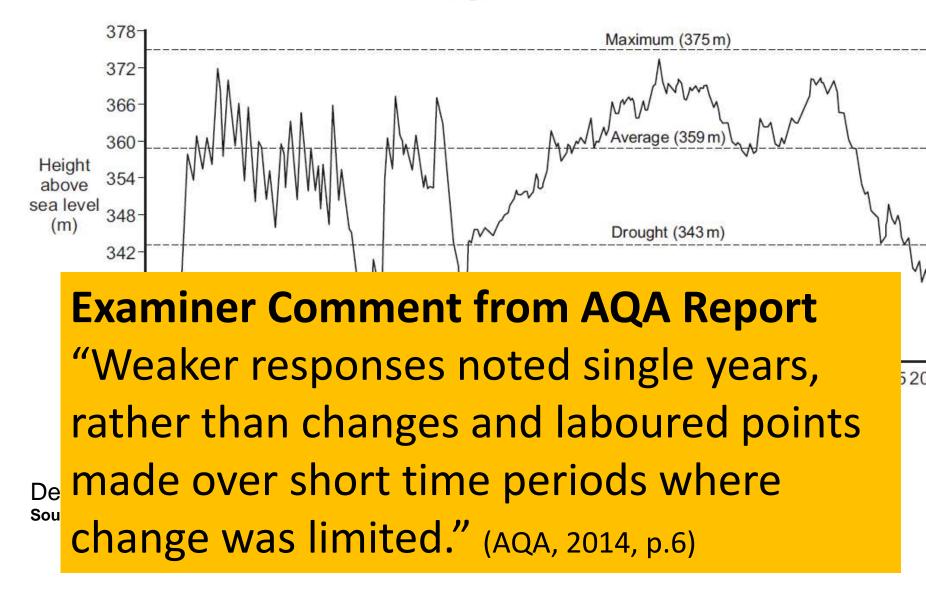
#### Let's Describe

Records

Figure 8 shows the water levels of Lake Mead at the Hoover Dam, near Las Vegas. The Hoover Dam was built in the 1930s.

Let's Describe

Figure 8



10

#### Background

AO2 - 5
 Any definition of the term mega city is arbitrary; however, the most widely used definition is 'an urban agglomeration of 10 million people or more '(UN). 'Meta cities' have more than 20 million inhabitants.

#### Notes for answers

Figure 4 shows that the majority of such cities can be found in the developing world – with only 9 or 10 in total in Japan, Europe and North America. There are similar numbers of mega cities in Africa as in each of Europe and North America.

When looking at the largest mega cities, the distinction is more stark – there are only two with 15+ million outside the developing world – New York, Tokyo. China and India dominate these. Rapid industrialisation in these countries has stimulated urban growth. Urbanisation in the developing world, particularly since 1970, has spawned the rapid growth of mega cities. The driving forces behind urbanisation have been massive rural-urban migration and natural increase rates that are higher in urban than rural areas.

#### Mark scheme

#### Level 1 (1-4 marks) (mid-point 3)

Simple statements of description. Limited or basic statements of commentary on the distribution. If no description given, then credit one good comment within this level.

#### Level 2 (5-7 marks) (mid-point 6)

More sophisticated description with appropriate commentary on the distribution. Award this level for each correctly attributed statement of commentary.

**Planning answers** 



'The positive impacts of population change on the character of rural and urban areas outweigh the negative impacts.' To what extent do you agree with this view? (15)

#### Level 3 (Detailed) 13-15 marks

Description is specific and targeted to the question.

There is reference to both urban and rural in a more balanced account.

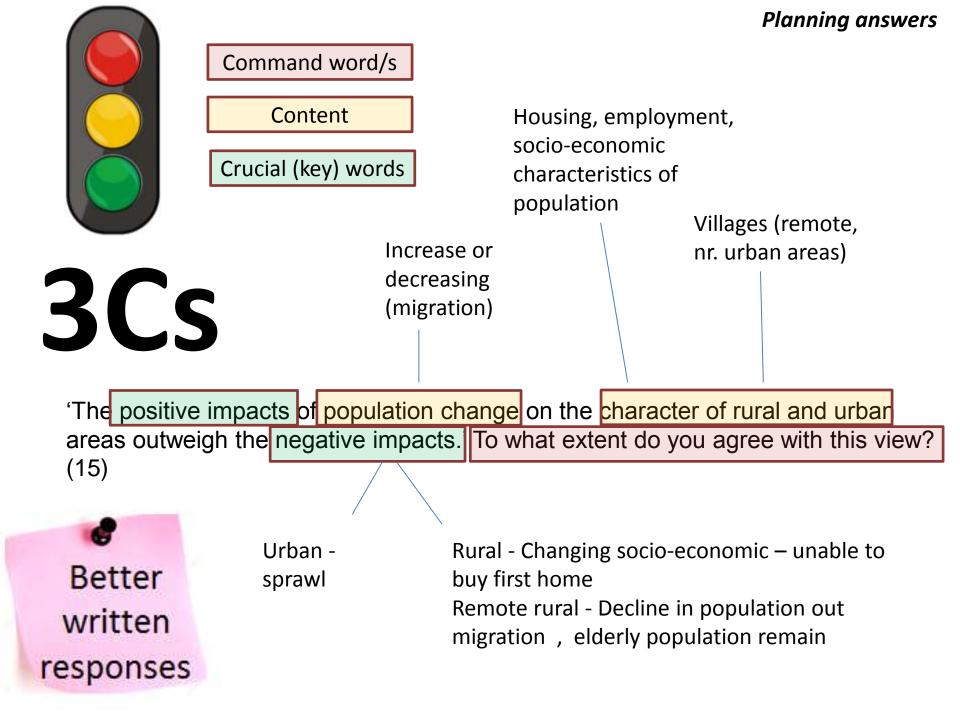
Points are supported/developed.

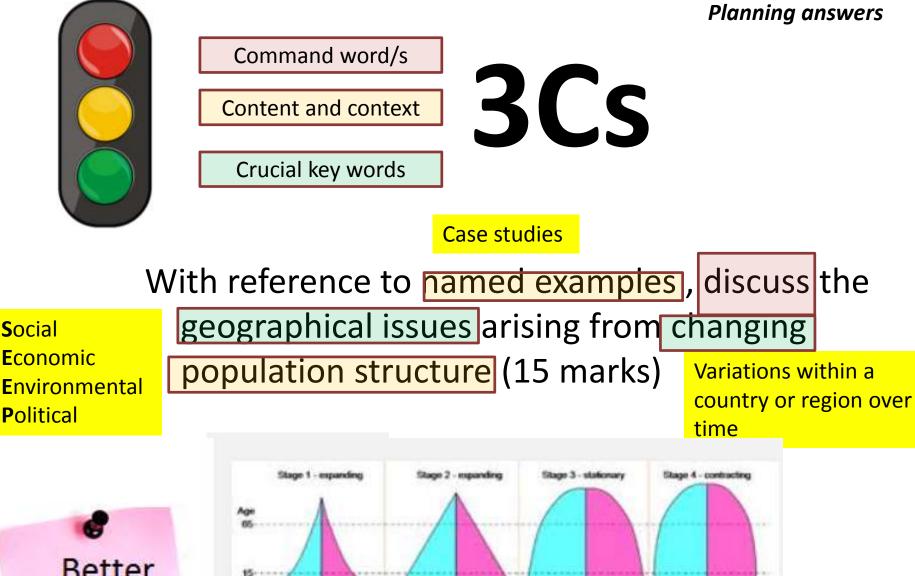
Discussion is to the fore and a clear, supported view is reached as to whether positive impacts outweigh negative impacts.

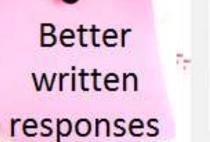
Explicit conclusion needed.

(Source AQA Geography Paper 1 June 2014 Mark Scheme, p.18)

**Examiner Comment from AQA Report 2014** The question demanded some careful planning, focusing on a limited number of ideas in the time available. Too many just launched into an answer without real thought or sense of direction. This resulted in disappointing responses with only a small proportion of candidates accessing Level 3.



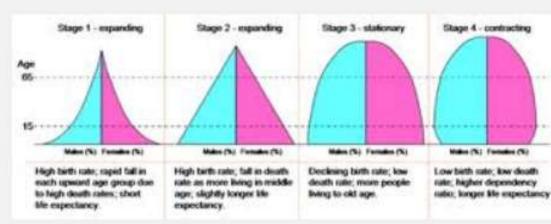


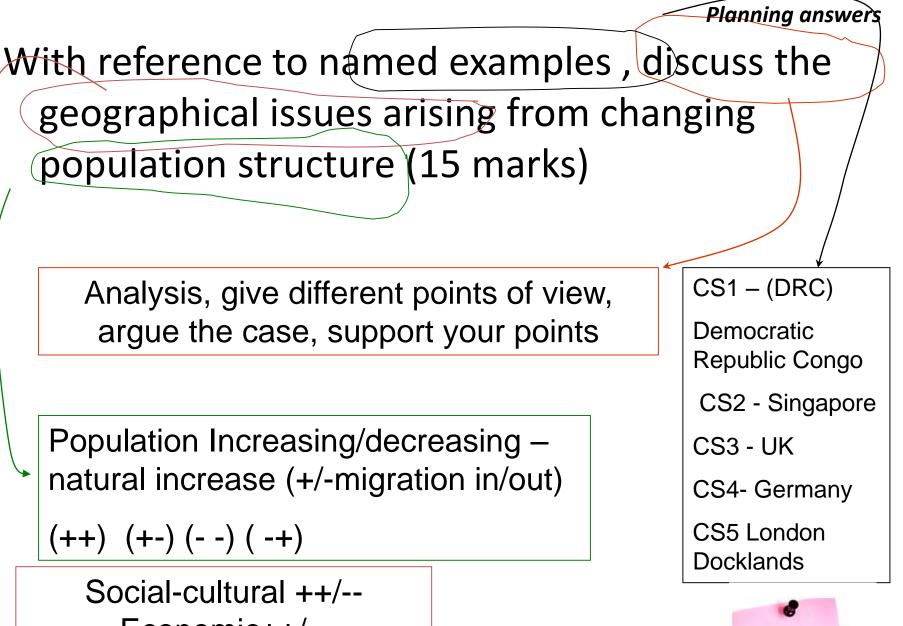


**S**ocial

**E**conomic

**Political** 





Better

written

responses

Economic++/--

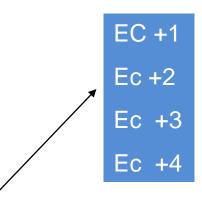
Environmental ++/--

**Planning answers** 

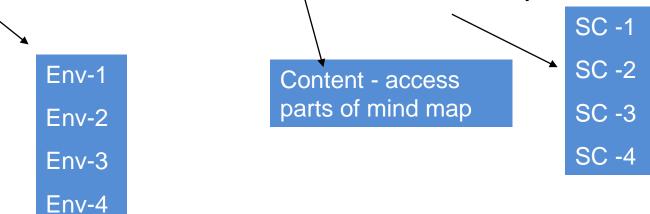
Better written responses

# Plan don't over plan

Evaluation, both perspectives, to what extent do you agree ?



• Diścuss whether positive économic impacts for countries from developing tourism outweigh the negative environmental and socio-cultural impacts?



#### Let's try one

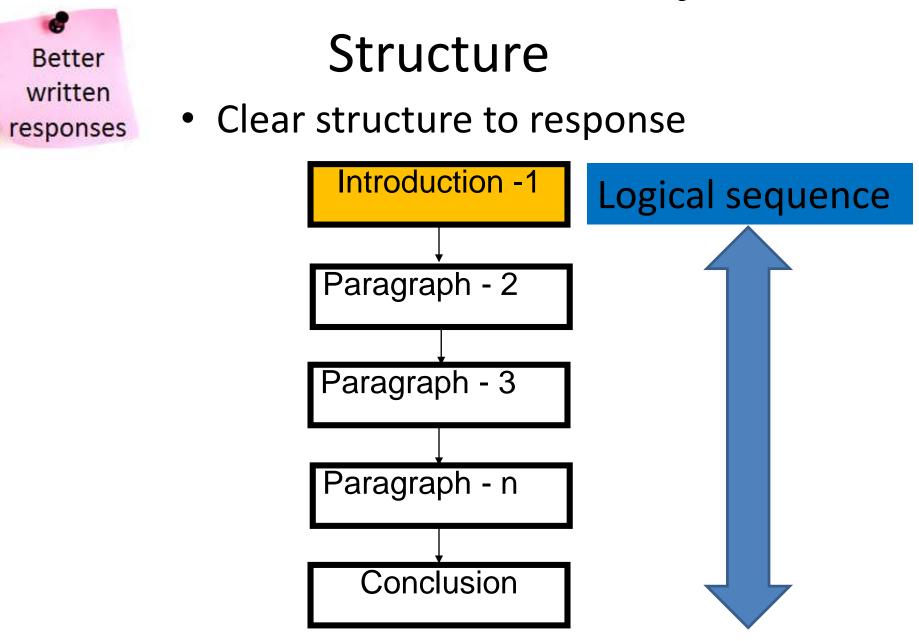
- 'No amount of coastal intervention by people can halt the natural processes which continue to present potentially serious risks to coastal communities now and even more so in the future.' To what extent do you agree with this view?'
- [20 marks]

**Planning answers** 

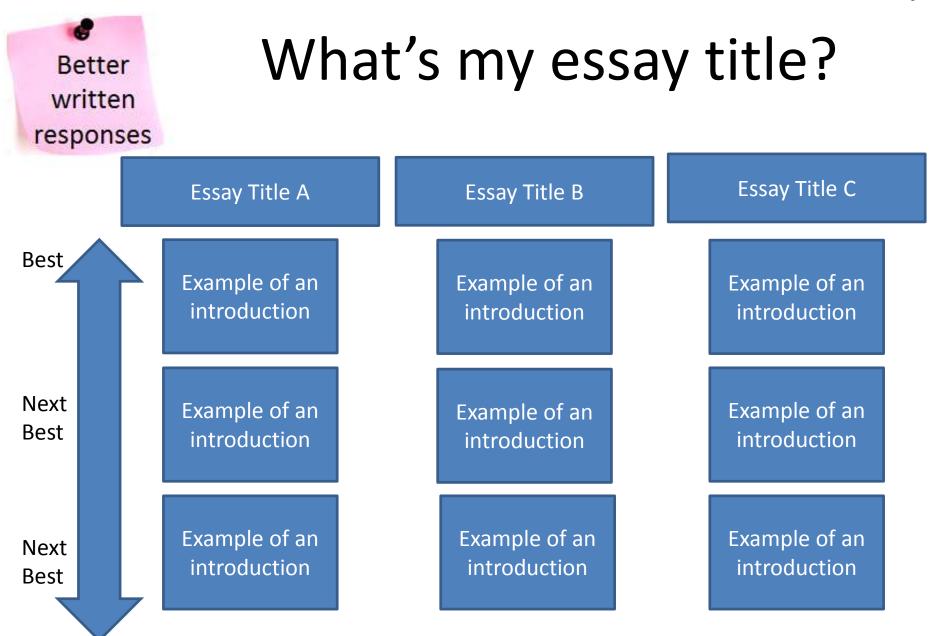
## What the examiners say

"Candidates need to carefully read the full question or key terms in the question, especially at A2. Not doing this is the single biggest cause of under-achievement. Too many candidates offer pre-learnt answers that do not fit exactly the demands of the wording of the question."

(OCR, June 2013)



*Introductions to essays* 



Introductions to essays



## What's my essay title?

Essay A Evaluate how plate tectonics theory helps our understanding of the distribution of seismic and volcanic events.

Essay B 'The decentralisation of retailing and other services has had a major impact on urban areas.' To what extent do you agree with this statement?

Essay C Examine the effects of greying population on health and welfare services?

Essay D Choose one named area of the world and explain why it is considered a disaster hotspot?

Essay E Using a case study, assess the causes and consequences of coastal flooding?

Essay F Using a case study; assess how successful one country has been in managing population change?

#### Introductions

'Don't include irrelevant 'chat' or introductions that repeat the question. (OCR Examiners' report June , 2013) Clear Unambiguous Context overview



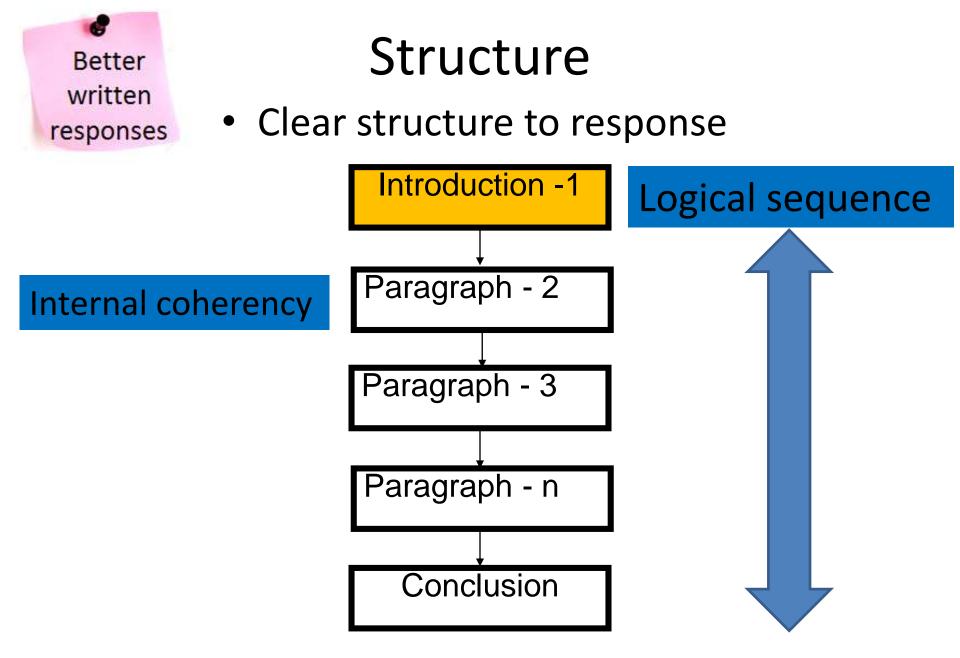
Extended writing

**Structure clear introduction**, with one major aspect per paragraph and a conclusion. Evaluation

With the emphasis on suggesting that the viewpoint may vary over time, location and depending on who you are within the community.

a number of case studies at different scales and/or locations.

(OCR teacher support materials, 2013)



Extended writing Structure clear introduction, with one major aspect per paragraph and a conclusion. Evaluation

With the emphasis on suggesting that the viewpoint may vary over time, location and depending on who you are within the community.

a number of case studies at different scales and/or locations.

(OCR teacher support materials , 2013)



Paragraphs

'Free standing, self-supporting unit of text'

- A core statement (point) of information or opinion
- A context to establish the significance of this statement to the point of the essay
- Evidence to support the statement
- Examples to illustrate the sources

PEEL

(Point, Explanation, Example, Link back to question)

• To what extent do you agree that tourism often brings mainly negative socio-cultural impacts?

Local people may adapt existing cultural practices in response to the needs of tourists wanting entertainment

Structuring essays

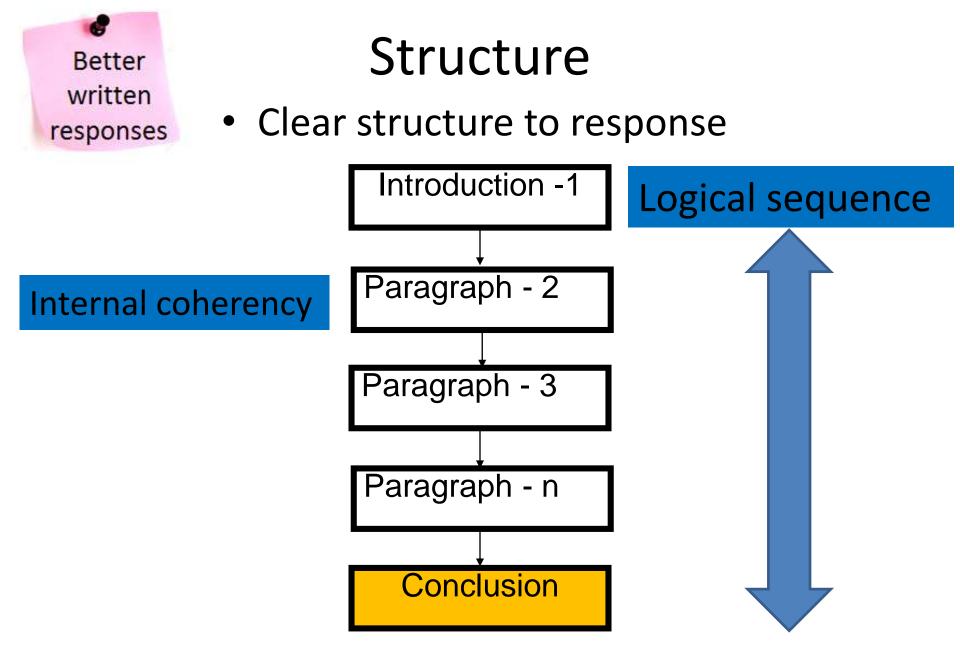
(-) ive SC

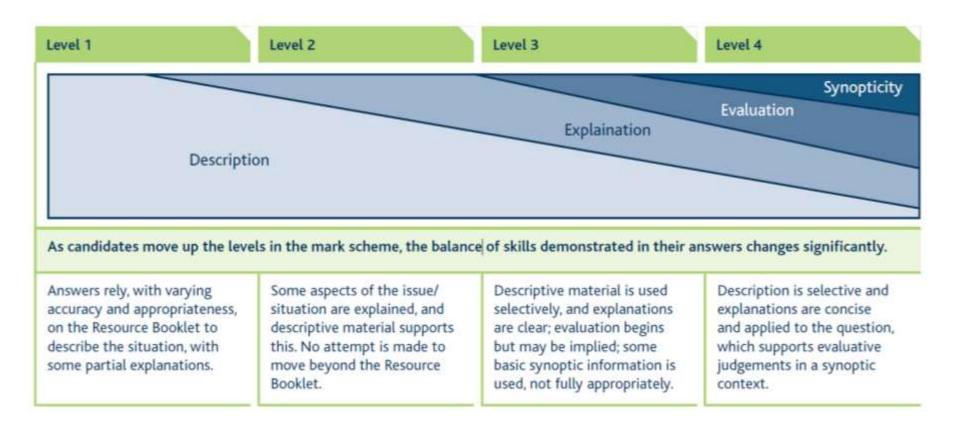
Such as repeating religious ceremonies a number of times instead of just once on a significant day and in a particular location.

Spain's Alarde festival used to occur once a year for the local community but the Tourism Ministry ordered for it to occur twice so tourists could also see it .

This staging of the event or what has been called 'Staged Authenticity' eventually led to negative consequences with the ceremony's demise and undermined local people's traditions

PEEL (Point, Explanation, Example , Link back to question)





Reference: Getting Started GCE Geography (Edexcel, 2013)

Poor responses result where candidates:

- Provide answers based on pre-learnt case studies 'answering the question they wanted to come up'
- Make uncritical use of case studies
- Poor use and spelling of terminology
- Identify synoptic elements 'Like I did...'
- Are more descriptive than analytical
- Offer no conclusion



#### Structuring essays

## What the examiners say

For the 15 mark '(b)' subquestions in Section A, the most common command words used are 'assess' and 'evaluate'. A conclusion can be a useful tool to come to a final judgement having weighed-up both sides of the argument. Conclusions do not need to be long, but they show the examiner that having considered the question from several angles you are now prepared to provide an overview

My Lach of supplies may cause varies, however with new reserves, and innovative extraction methods, trese incertainties imply lead to exploration of prover intenegy supplies

> Results Plus Examiner Comments

This conclusion makes reference to several key uncertainties in terms of energy futures, such as peak oil, political and environmental concerns. Notice how at the very end, the candidate recognises that there are some forces at work to reduce energy uncertainty.



The example on a conclusion shown here is about the length you should aim for.

#### Conclusions

Advice from Principal Examiners from different awarding bodies

'Show some attempt at a conclusion as the mark scheme rewards clear or effective conclusions' (OCR Examiners' report June , 2013)

> "Longer conclusions often simply repeat information already presented"

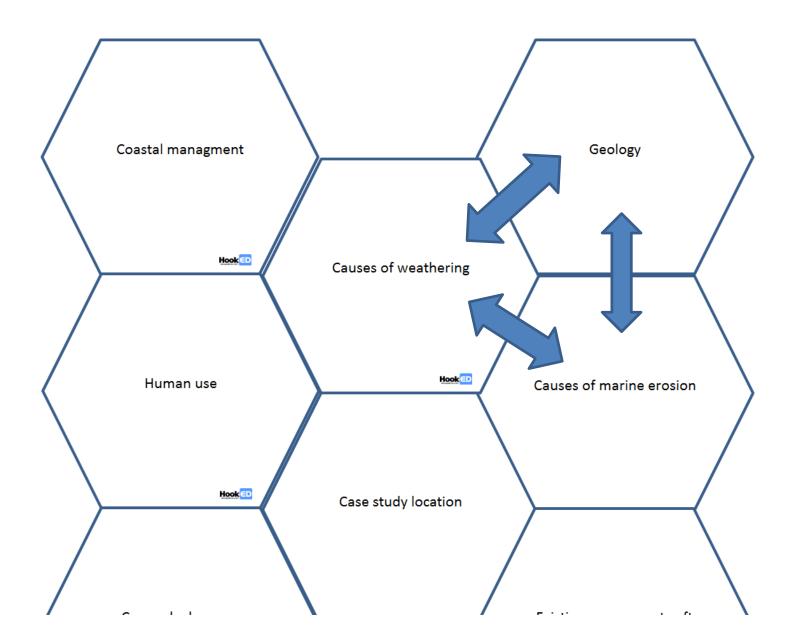
#### Checklists personal planners, flash cards, Revision help mnemonics, acronyms, speaking essays, model essays, peer assessment, self assessment, student use of examiner reports, podcasts,

Example of Revision checklist for AQA A2 topic

Plate tectonics and associated hazards		How well I understand			
Content	Poor	ОК	Good	Excellent	
The structure of the Earth in cross-section, and the					
theory of and evidence for plate tectonics and continental drift.					
Key Terminology/case studies Wegner, Sea floor spreading, Mid Atlantic Ridge					
The tectonic processes operating at plate margins and hotspots, and the causes and nature of vulcanicity, seismicity and associated landforms. Key Terminology/case studies <i>Hawaiian islands; Nazca/S American</i>					
The relationship between types of plate margins and the type and frequency of volcanic activity Key Terminology/case studies					



#### Hexagons

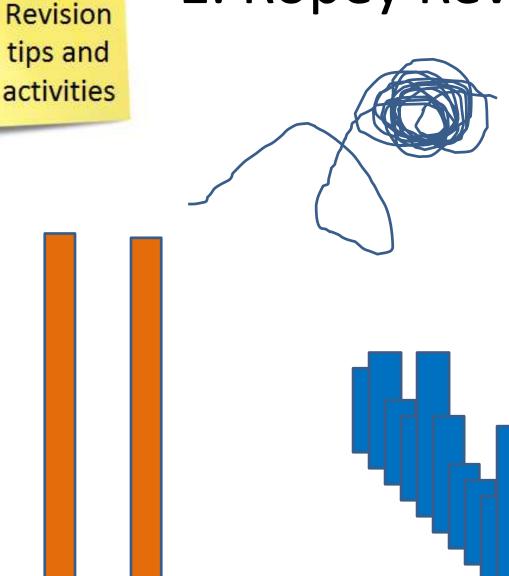




What am I learning? How is it goin

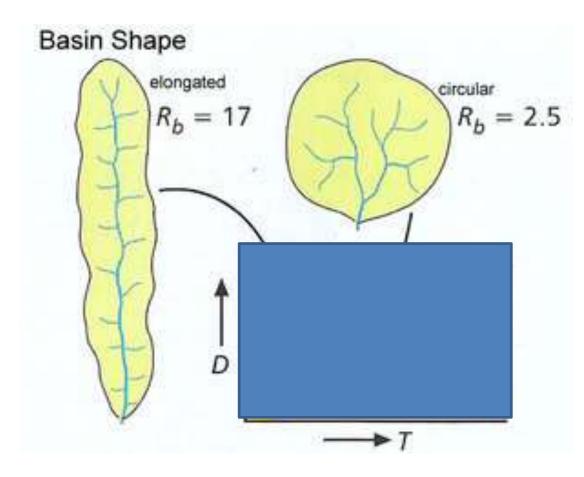
Home	HookED SOLO Hexagon Generator	
News	This HookED app populates a SOLO Hexagon Template.	
About	Brainstorm content ideas and enter them in the fields below.	
SOLO Taxonomy	Click "Generate Document" to populate the template.	
Apps	10 Small Hexagons per page	
Learning Intention Generator	2 Large Hexagons per page Hexagon 1.	
SOLO Symbol Generator	Hexagon 2.	
SOLO Self Assessment Tool	Hexagon 3. Hexagon 4.	
Functioning Knowledge Rubric Generator	Hexagon 5. Hexagon 6. Hexagon 7.	
Declarative Knowledge Rubric	Hexagon 8. Hexagon 9.	
Generator	Hexagon 10.	

#### 1. Ropey Revision



Y axis Bars Lines DTM TALC Climate Pop pyramids **??????????**??

X axis



#### Thank you for coming this evening

Mark Jones and PGCE Geographers Class of 2018 PGCE Geography Tutor UWE, Bristol.