

ABSTRACT

The Growth of Caribbean Examination: Developments in English

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This study traces the use of the examining process in the educational system of the English-speaking Caribbean from its beginnings in the nineteenth century, with the use of the Cambridge (G.C.E.) up to the development of the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) Examinations. The subject about which data are provided is English 'A' set by the Caribbean Examinations Council which replaces the Cambridge Ordinary Level English Language examination.

This study begins with an outline of the origins and purposes of examinations. The history of examinations in the Caribbean is followed by the data concerning the establishment of the Caribbean examinations.

The methods of testing the syllabuses including arguments for and against objective and essay testing are discussed.

The sample of data-grades listings is taken from results of candidates from Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados and Guyana - in the CXC English 'A'

examination, Basic and General proficiencies 1983 and 1984. The method of reporting results under the two profiles "Understanding" and "Expression" tested in paper 1 and paper 2 respectively, facilitates comparison of performance in these two skills. The data also include a sample of students who sat both GCE and CXC in 1983.

Comments on the data and recommendations for the future prospects of English examinations are made in the context of the continued concern over the inability of certificate bearing students to produce satisfactory oral and written English .