Category 2: Written research task (Civil rights)

This sample has been compiled by the Queensland Studies Authority (QSA) to help teachers plan and develop assessment instruments for individual school settings. It demonstrates the following criteria:

- Planning and using a historical research process
- Forming historical knowledge through critical inquiry
- Communicating historical knowledge

Assessment instrument — Written assignment

Theme
Studies of hope

Inquiry topic
The struggle against racism

Task
Devising a research question that inquires into one aspect of either the:
- struggle to eliminate apartheid in South Africa
- Civil Rights Movement in the USA.

Following the steps in the inquiry process outlined in your booklet, conduct your research. Write an analytical essay of 1000–1500 words where you develop and substantiate a historical argument in response to your research question. Your essay must include direct and indirect references to historical sources, and a bibliography.

Possible topics
- Resistance groups who organised protests against racist systems
- Strategies used to oppose and overcome racist policies
- Individuals who led movements for change

Research process

Definitions
- Define your area of study
- Define your focus
  - Develop a research question
  - Devise sub-questions
  - Develop a hypothesis

Sources
Locate a range of sources

Backgrounds, changes and continuities — motives and causes
Research and take notes for sub-questions related to this aspect of inquiry

Effects, interests and arguments
Research and take notes for sub-questions related to this aspect of inquiry

Reflections and responses
- Critically evaluate your sources
- Answer your sub-questions
- Finalise your hypothesis
- Plan your essay
- Draft your essay

Note: The use of a research booklet is not mandatory
**Instrument-specific criteria and standards**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard A</th>
<th>Standard B</th>
<th>Standard C</th>
<th>Standard D</th>
<th>Standard E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Planning and using a historical research process</strong>&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;The student:&lt;br&gt;- identifies conceptually complex issues for investigation, devises and focuses historical research questions and appropriate sub-questions&lt;br&gt;- demonstrates initiative by locating and organising primary and secondary sources that offer a range of perspectives&lt;br&gt;- creates and maintains detailed, systematic, coherent records of research that demonstrate the interrelationships of the aspects of the inquiry&lt;br&gt;- demonstrates critical reflection during research to make valid choices about direction or emphasis.</td>
<td><strong>The student:</strong>&lt;br&gt;- identifies significant issues for investigation and devises historical research questions and appropriate sub-questions&lt;br&gt;- demonstrates initiative by locating and organising primary and secondary sources that are relevant and offer different perspectives&lt;br&gt;- creates and maintains systematic, coherent records of research that demonstrate effective applications of the aspects of inquiry&lt;br&gt;- demonstrates reflection during research and revises the process where necessary.</td>
<td><strong>The student:</strong>&lt;br&gt;- devises or applies straightforward historical research questions and sub-questions that involve simple issues and familiar concepts&lt;br&gt;- locates and organises some relevant sources&lt;br&gt;- maintains a record of research that demonstrates a basic understanding of the aspects of inquiry&lt;br&gt;- responds to obvious issues that emerge in the research process.</td>
<td><strong>The student:</strong>&lt;br&gt;- uses closed, factually based historical research questions&lt;br&gt;- locates some relevant sources&lt;br&gt;- presents a record of research that demonstrates some of the aspects of inquiry.</td>
<td><strong>The student:</strong>&lt;br&gt;- usually relies upon others to frame questions&lt;br&gt;- locates some information in sources provided&lt;br&gt;- provides fragmented and often irrelevant evidence of research, if any.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Forming historical knowledge through critical inquiry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard A</th>
<th>Standard B</th>
<th>Standard C</th>
<th>Standard D</th>
<th>Standard E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **In the response to the historical questions, the student:**  
- uses a diversity of primary and secondary sources to:  
  - comprehend and apply explicit and implicit meanings  
  - analyse to identify implicit and explicit patterns of information and categorise evidence  
  - perceptively interpret values and motives and identify perspectives, while acknowledging the time period and context of a source’s production  
  - corroborate primary and secondary sources  
- evaluates the relevance, representativeness, likely accuracy and likely reliability of sources  
- synthesises evidence from primary and secondary sources to justify insightful decisions.  |
| **In response to historical questions, the student:**  
- uses primary and secondary sources to:  
  - comprehend explicit and implicit meanings  
  - analyse to identify explicit patterns and allocate information to categories  
  - interpret values and motives and identify perspectives  
  - corroborate secondary sources  
- evaluates the relevance, likely accuracy and likely reliability of sources  
- synthesises evidence from primary and secondary sources to make reasoned decisions.  |
| **In response to historical questions, the student:**  
- generally uses primary and secondary sources to:  
  - comprehend explicit meanings  
  - identify simple and familiar concepts, values and motives that are explicit  
  - analyse to identify obvious themes or patterns  
  - recognise relevant sources  
- refers to mainly secondary sources to make obvious decisions.  |
| **In response to historical questions, the student:**  
- generally, when dealing with historical sources:  
  - identifies basic explicit facts  
  - comprehends some of the explicit meaning  
  - groups information according to identified classifications  
- where decisions are made, supports them mainly with opinions.  |
| **In response to historical questions, the student:**  
- includes some information relevant to a factual inquiry  
- comprehends some factual detail in a basic historical source  
- recognises information with some common characteristics in a basic historical source.  |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard A</th>
<th>Standard B</th>
<th>Standard C</th>
<th>Standard D</th>
<th>Standard E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communicating historical knowledge</strong></td>
<td><strong>Communicating historical knowledge</strong></td>
<td><strong>Communicating historical knowledge</strong></td>
<td><strong>Communicating historical knowledge</strong></td>
<td><strong>Communicating historical knowledge</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the written assignment, the student:</td>
<td>In the written assignment, the student:</td>
<td>In the written assignment, the student:</td>
<td>In the written assignment, the student:</td>
<td>In the written assignment, the student:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- consistently communicates accurately recalled or selected definitions, key historical concepts, terms, events, developments and people, and the relationships among them</td>
<td>- usually communicates accurately recalled or selected definitions, key historical concepts, terms, events, developments and people</td>
<td>- communicates some recalled or selected definitions and descriptions of key historical concepts, terms, events, development and people</td>
<td>- communicates some recalled or selected accurate definitions and historical knowledge</td>
<td>- communicates little recall or selection of accurate historical knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- presents coherent, valid historical arguments that:</td>
<td>- presents coherent, valid historical arguments that:</td>
<td>- presents coherent responses that:</td>
<td>- presents responses to basic historical research questions that:</td>
<td>- presents responses to tasks that contain errors in vocabulary, style and conventions that obscure meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- incorporate concepts of change and continuity over time</td>
<td>- refer to the causes and consequences of changes and continuities over time</td>
<td>- use some historical concepts</td>
<td>- incorporate some reference to sources of historical evidence</td>
<td>- where tasks are completed, rarely meets stipulated or negotiated requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- use extensive vocabulary in a succinct and effective manner</td>
<td>- use vocabulary effectively</td>
<td>- incorporate some direct reference to appropriate sources of historical evidence</td>
<td>- convey meaning that is sometimes discernible despite frequent errors in vocabulary, style and analytical essay conventions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- accord closely with the style and conventions of the analytical essay format</td>
<td>- accord for the most part with the style and conventions of the analytical essay format</td>
<td>- are expressed in descriptive and explanatory language in which the meaning is discernible despite errors in vocabulary, style and analytical essay conventions</td>
<td>- uses some elements of a recognised system of referencing, with frequent inaccuracies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- refer to evaluation processes without disrupting the argument</td>
<td>- incorporate direct and indirect reference to relevant historical evidence</td>
<td>- use appropriate conventions of a recognised system of referencing</td>
<td>- usually completes tasks but may not meet all of the stipulated or negotiated requirements.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- incorporate direct and indirect references to diverse relevant historical evidence</td>
<td>- use appropriate conventions of a recognised system of referencing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- accurately use the conventions of a recognised system of referencing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- meets stipulated or negotiated requirements of tasks for length, format or scope of responses.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>