Category 2: Written research task (Civil rights)

Criterion 1: Planning

This extract from a student’s records of research shows the initial planning for their inquiry. The extract demonstrates evidence of the match to an A standard for an aspect of Criterion 1: Planning and using a historical research process.

Criteria and standards

This student response has been matched to instrument-specific criteria and standards; those which best describe the student work in this sample are shown below. For more information about the syllabus criteria and standards descriptors, see the highlighted standards on the Modern History subject page at www.qsa.qld.edu.au/2055.html.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard A</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Criterion 1: Planning and using a historical research process</td>
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<tr>
<td>The student:</td>
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<tr>
<td>• identifies conceptually complex issues for investigation, devises and focuses historical research questions and appropriate sub-questions.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note: Colour highlights have been used in the table to emphasise the components of the standard and the qualities that discriminate between the standards.

Key:
- cognitive processes
- elements of the task
- qualifiers that describe “how well” or “to what extent” the cognitive processes or elements of the task have been demonstrated at each standard
Student response — Standard A

When planning and defining the scope of the inquiry, at an A standard, the records of research would demonstrate that the student has:

- identified conceptually complex issues for investigation, devises and focuses historical research questions and appropriate sub-questions.

**Comments**

The research question is conceptually complex, i.e. it is about the impact of art on wider social and political change. It is historical in that it explores the antecedents of a significant historical movement.

The rationale shows the origins of the research question, i.e. how the student has identified the issue for investigation and why it is interesting, relevant and significant.

The sub-questions are drawn from the aspects three and four of the Aspects of Inquiry (indicated by the shaded text boxes). They are student-devised, appropriate and focused to enable the student to answer the main research question.

The student develops an initial hypothesis that will be reflected upon and refined as the inquiry progresses.

**Research question**

How did the Harlem Renaissance alter the USA of the early 20th century, laying the foundation for the Civil Rights Movement?

**Rationale**

I chose this research topic as it is an important aspect, I think, of the Civil Rights Movement and is a perfect example of the importance of art in affecting social change in history. I am interested in art and culture and for this reason I feel the inquiry subject will hold my interest for the duration of the assignment. I also feel it is important to study the origins of events such as the Civil Rights Movement, as well as the significance of art in history, so this research topic is particularly important.

**Sub-questions**

1. What new themes and ideas were explored by African Americans, through art, during the flourishing of culture that was the Harlem Renaissance?
2. How did this explosion of intellectual creativity alter the social disposition of African Americans as a social group?
3. Did the Harlem Renaissance realise its goal of altering perspectives and subsequently changing the social hierarchy of America?
4. What was the immediate legacy of the Harlem Renaissance? Did its achievements have a significant effect on the Civil Rights Movement?

**Working hypothesis**

The Harlem Renaissance was extremely important in laying the foundations for the Civil Rights Movement.