



Cambridge International AS & A Level

THINKING SKILLS

9694/42

Paper 4 Applied Reasoning

May/June 2025

1 hour 45 minutes



You must answer on the enclosed answer booklet.

You will need: Answer booklet (enclosed)

INSTRUCTIONS

- Answer **all** questions.
- Follow the instructions on the front cover of the answer booklet. If you need additional answer paper, ask the invigilator for a continuation booklet.

INFORMATION

- The total mark for this paper is 50.
- The number of marks for each question or part question is shown in brackets [].

This document has **8** pages. Any blank pages are indicated.

Questions 1 and 2 refer to Document 1.

1 (a) State the main conclusion of the argument. [1]

(b) Identify **two** intermediate conclusions in paragraphs 5 to 6. [2]

(c) Analyse the structure of the reasoning in paragraph 3. [5]

(d) Identify **one** unstated assumption in paragraph 7 upon which the reasoning relies. [1]

2 (a) Identify and explain **three** flaws and/or weaknesses in the reasoning in paragraphs 4 to 6. [6]

(b) Explain how the reasoning in paragraph 2 is weakened by the flaw of *invalid deduction*. [2]

3 (a) 'Americans find studying history is more valuable than studying science.' (Document 4A)
Explain why this conclusion cannot be drawn from the data collected by the survey described in Document 4A. [2]

(b) 'Studying history gives you more earning power than studying biology.' (Document 4B)
Identify **four** weaknesses in the support given by the graph in Document 4B to this claim. [4]

4 You are advised to spend some time planning your answer before you begin to write it.
'History should not be taught at school.'
Construct a reasoned argument to support **or** challenge this claim.
Your argument should:

- have a clear structure and make use of various argument elements
- use and evaluate evidence from Documents 1 to 5
- respond to significant counter-positions.

[27]

DOCUMENT 1

The dangers of ‘history’

- 1 Most schools teach history as a regular part of the curriculum, and the wisdom of the subject’s existence in schools is rarely commented upon. However, while there might be a case for learning history as an adult or at university, history should not be taught in schools.
- 2 If the lessons students receive are presented in a fair and balanced way, then they will leave school with a fair and balanced view of the world. However, history lessons are inevitably tainted with the teachers’ own biases and preconceptions. It is easy to imagine teachers with differing political views presenting the history of the Russian revolution to children in different ways. So the teaching of history means young people do not leave school with a fair and balanced view of the world.
- 3 Young people are very interested in historical battles and they are also very impressionable. As a consequence, children can become obsessed with historical conflicts. Destructive thoughts can last for years. So history teaching leads to destructive behaviours, like discrimination, hatred, and violence.
- 4 History can lead to wars, because courses deliberately present a version of history designed to promote nationalism. Many countries, including France, Hungary, Ireland, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Portugal, Singapore, the UK, and most US states, have what amounts to a ‘national curriculum’ that schools must follow. Uncomfortable aspects of a nation’s past are often avoided in favour of events that engender national pride, like military victories and great inventions.
- 5 History lessons present oversimplified information, partly so that young children can understand it, but also because of the limited teaching time – school history is often described as ‘some dates and who won what battle’. Schoolchildren regard historical ‘facts’ as being equivalent to the facts they encounter in mathematics and science. So the inclusion of history in a school curriculum can be intellectually dangerous, because people who study history at school may learn to treat questionable information as truth.
- 6 In my biology class, I once taught an intelligent, hardworking student called Alison. She went to a top university to study history. I met her after she graduated from university, when she was working in a café for the minimum wage. So studying history at school ruins your employment prospects.
- 7 Anyway, studying history takes time away from the really useful subjects, like maths and science. We need more scientists and mathematicians to help us solve the big global issues, like climate change. So teaching history makes dangerous climate change more likely.

DOCUMENT 2

Why Study History?

In answer to the question, 'Why study history?', one could do worse than to ask some historians, those fearless explorers of the past who give our lives some context.

Arthur Marwick, Professor of History at the Open University, once suggested that people try to imagine what everyday life would be like in a society in which no one knew any history, stating that 'It is only through knowledge of its history that a society can have knowledge of itself'. In the 1960s, historian EH Carr wrote, 'We can fully understand the present only in the light of the past.'

Having an educated view on matters of public concern is fundamental to democracy, whether one is involved in a political party, casting a vote in an election or discussing politics with friends. In order to function effectively, representative democracy needs an electorate that has a certain level of relevant knowledge, understanding and critical thinking. Studying history trains the mind, increases empathy and provides a necessary historical perspective from which to view the most pressing problems of our time. A lack of historical understanding in society can have negative effects for democratic decision-making. Another historian once stated, 'Time and again, complex policy issues are placed before the public without adequate explanation of how they have come to assume their present shape, and without any hint of the possibilities which are disclosed by the record of the past.'

The school history lesson is a fertile ground for the development of a host of transferrable skills. Students must use memory, imagination, reasoning power and judgment while collecting, examining, weighing and evaluating evidence before drawing conclusions, forming opinions and then communicating those opinions clearly and convincingly to others. The study of history equips children with these indispensable job-related and life-related skills.

History fires students' curiosity about the past, in their own country and in the wider world. They learn how the past influences the present and what beliefs and cultures have influenced people's actions. While learning about history, students develop a time-framework for the world they live in. They see the diversity of human experience, which helps them understand more about themselves as individuals and members of society. What they learn in history lessons can influence their attitudes and values in later life. TV history presenter and History Professor, Simon Schama, thinks that it is particularly important that children learn history: 'Unless they can be won to history, their imagination will be held hostage in the cage of eternal Now: the flickering instant that's gone as soon as it has arrived.'

DOCUMENT 3

Extract from a government careers advice website

Although history is sometimes dismissed as ‘stuff that has already happened’, studying it is extremely important, not only for remembering the past but for shaping the future. Everything that has ever happened can be described as history, so history directly affects us every day. History spans all cultures, eras and environments, and is a constantly deepening well of information.

Aside from the general benefits of history, studying history can be of direct benefit in the following employment sectors and careers.

<i>Employment sector</i>	<i>Career paths</i>
Law	Lawyer Court official
Education	History teacher University lecturer Librarian
Media	Journalist Editor Writer
Hospitality and tourism	Tour guide Museum curator
Public service	Politician Civil servant
Consultancy	Management consultant Data analyst Creative consultant

DOCUMENT 4A

Americans find studying history is more valuable than studying science

Children often wonder if they'll ever need to use the things they learn in school. In 2018, a respected polling company conducted a survey of US adults and asked, 'Which subject you studied at school has been the most valuable to you in life?'

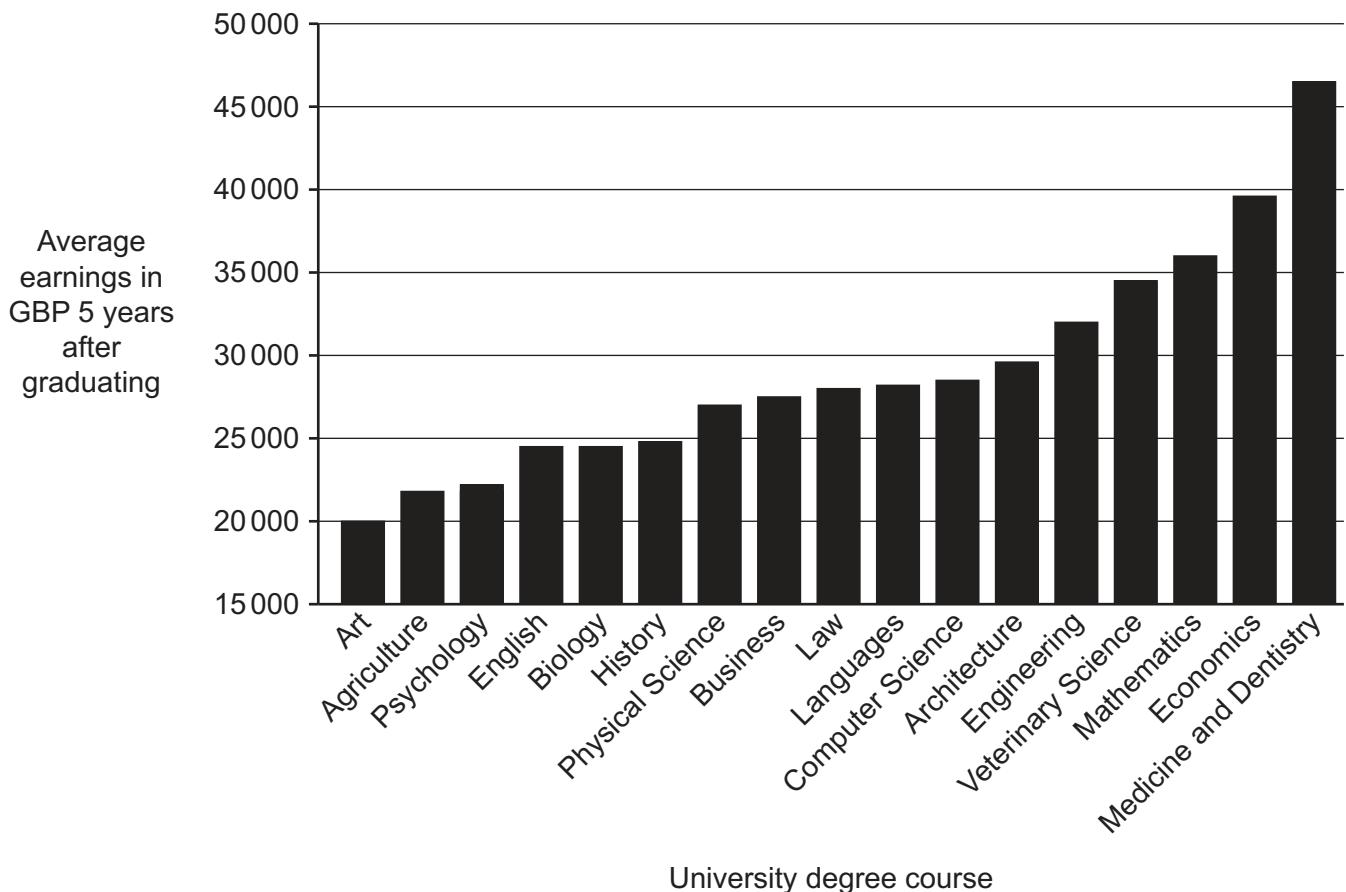
34% of respondents said they found mathematics to be the most useful subject – no surprises there. Second on the list was English at 24%, but the surprise third place was history, with 7% of respondents claiming they found it most valuable. History was followed by sciences and business at 4% each, with all other subjects scoring 2% or less. Interestingly, respondents with a higher overall educational attainment level were more likely to choose English than mathematics as their most valuable subject (36% against 16%).

It's possible that people value the school subjects that they use most often, especially those they use at work. Everybody needs a certain facility in mathematics, if only just to tell the time or check change, and most people need to use some form of written communication, even if it is just texting your friend.

DOCUMENT 4B

Also in 2018, a UK political think tank conducted research into university graduate salaries in the UK and produced the graph below. (Most university degree courses in the UK involve the study of only one subject.) From this graph, the think tank concluded that studying history gives you more earning power than studying biology.

Average earnings 5 years after graduating from university



DOCUMENT 5**Some quotes about studying history**

History, despite its wrenching pain, cannot be unlived. However, if faced with courage, need not be lived again.

Maya Angelou (writer)

History is concerned not with the conveying of facts but with the making of informed judgements, and the display of the evidence upon which those judgements are made.

Anonymous (educationalist)

History is a set of lies agreed upon.

Napoleon Bonaparte (emperor)

Take any important issue of our time...and it becomes impossible to seriously confront any of them without understanding their historical background.

Alan Bullock (historian)

History will be kind to me, for I intend to write it.

Winston Churchill (politician)

The only thing that we learn from history is that we learn nothing from history.

Georg Hegel (philosopher)

History, properly taught, can help men to become critical and humane, just as wrongly taught it can turn them into bigots and fanatics.

Christopher Hill (historian)

Bad history is not harmless history. It is dangerous. The sentences typed on apparently innocuous keyboards may be sentences of death.

Eric Hobsbawm (historian)

The past changes a little every time we retell it.

Hilary Mantel (writer)

The most effective way to destroy people is to deny or obliterate their own understanding of their history.

George Orwell (writer)

Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.

George Santayana (philosopher)

History is merely gossip.

Oscar Wilde (writer)

If history and science have taught us anything, it is that passion and desire are not the same as truth.

EO Wilson (scientist)

History is a people's memory, and without a memory, man is demoted to the lower animals.

Malcolm X (political activist)

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