3.9 Socialist Thinkers: Beatrice Webb and Anthony Crosland

EDEXCEL 9PL0 · about 60 minutes · Write-in edition

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions. Short-answer items and the 10-mark question may be concise, but the final 30-mark essay should be a well-structured, full-sentence response using named thinkers and precise terminology. Spend about 10 minutes on short items, 12 minutes on the 10-mark question, and 35 minutes on the 30-mark essay.

1 State two methods the Fabian Society used to spread its ideas in late Victorian and Edwardian Britain.

(Total for Question 1 is 2 marks)

2 In 1909 Beatrice Webb signed the Minority Report of the Royal Commission on the Poor Law. Explain one way in which its approach reflected Fabian ideas about the role of the state.

(Total for Question 2 is 3 marks)

3 Explain one difference between the Fabian view of how socialism should be achieved and the view of revolutionary Marxists.

(Total for Question 3 is 3 marks)

4 Explain what the Webbs meant by a 'national minimum'.

(Total for Question 4 is 2 marks)

5 State Crosland's redefinition of 'socialism' in The Future of Socialism, focused on equality.

(Total for Question 5 is 2 marks)

6 Explain briefly the role of Keynesian demand management in Crosland's strategy for achieving more equal outcomes within a mixed economy.

(Total for Question 6 is 3 marks)

7 Explain, with one historical detail, how Beatrice Webb advocated extending the democratic franchise as part of her socialist strategy.

(Total for Question 7 is 6 marks)

8 Evaluate the extent to which Beatrice Webb and Anthony Crosland agree on how socialism should be achieved. In your answer anchor arguments in the views of Webb and Crosland and reach a reasoned judgement.

(Total for Question 8 is 24 marks)

9 Explain why Anthony Crosland argued that equality of opportunity alone was not enough to create a socialist society.

(Total for Question 9 is 3 marks)

10 This 10-mark question asks: Analyse two reasons why Anthony Crosland believed socialism did not require common ownership, referring to his arguments in The Future of Socialism.

(Total for Question 10 is 10 marks)

Mark scheme · 3.9 Socialist Thinkers: Beatrice Webb and Anthony Crosland

Question 1

one accurate method, e.g. researching social problems and publishing the findings in pamphlets and tracts (such as Fabian Essays, 1889) **B1**

a second accurate method, e.g. lecturing and holding discussions, or 'permeation': persuading MPs, civil servants and local councillors of other parties to adopt Fabian policies **B1**

Answer: Any two of: research and publication (tracts and Fabian Essays); lectures and discussion meetings; permeation of existing parties, councils and the civil service.

Question 2

identifies a recommendation of the Minority Report, e.g. breaking up the Poor Law and replacing it with specialised public services (such as health, education and pensions) run by local authorities **B1**

explains that the aim was to prevent destitution through state provision rather than to deter people from applying for relief **B1**

links to Fabian ideas, e.g. expert administration, state responsibility for a national minimum standard, or reform through existing institutions rather than revolution **B1**

Answer: The Minority Report proposed replacing the Poor Law with specialised public services run by local authorities, aiming to prevent destitution rather than deter applicants; this reflected the Fabian belief that expert-run state institutions should guarantee a basic standard of living, achieved by reforming existing government.

Question 3

Fabian view: socialism should be achieved gradually, through democratic reform of the existing state and its institutions **B1**

Marxist view: capitalism can only be replaced by a revolution in which the working class overthrows the capitalist state **B1**

explains the reason for the difference, e.g. Fabians believe the state can be persuaded and used by experts and elected governments, whereas Marxists believe the state serves the ruling class and so cannot be reformed into a socialist one **B1**

Answer: Fabians such as Webb believed socialism would come gradually through democratic reform and expert administration of the existing state, whereas revolutionary Marxists believed the working class must overthrow a capitalist state that serves the ruling class and cannot be reformed.

Question 4

a basic standard of living or conditions below which no citizen should be allowed to fall, guaranteed by the state **B1**

gives an example area, e.g. wages, working hours, health and sanitation, education **B1**

Answer: A floor of basic conditions, such as decent wages, hours, health and education, that the state should guarantee to every citizen.

Question 5

identifies that Crosland defined socialism primarily as equality of outcome or reduced inequalities **B1**

identifies that he argued this could be achieved within a mixed economy, not necessarily via common ownership **B1**

Answer: Crosland redefined socialism as a commitment to reducing social and economic inequalities, an equality of outcome emphasis, arguing this could be pursued within a mixed economy rather than depending on common ownership of the means of production.

Question 6

identifies Keynesian demand management as state use of fiscal and monetary policy to stabilise demand and maintain full employment **B1**

explains Crosland's view that full employment and economic growth are prerequisites for redistribution and improved living standards **B1**

links this to redistribution via taxation and public spending to reduce inequality **B1**

Answer: Keynesian demand management uses fiscal and monetary policy to sustain demand and full employment; Crosland argued that by maintaining growth and employment the state creates the resources and stable conditions needed for redistribution through taxation and public spending, thereby reducing inequalities within a mixed economy.

Question 7

identifies that Webb supported widening the franchise and democratic participation to give working people influence over local and national policy **B1**

identifies municipal democracy as a focus, with town councils and local government as sites for reform **B1**

links franchise extension to ideas of education and gradual reform through institutions **B1**

provides one historical detail, e.g. Webb's involvement in founding the London School of Economics (1895) and her work on local government commissions that promoted municipal reform **B1**

explains how greater political inclusion would enable implementation of municipal socialism policies **B1**

explains a limitation or qualification, e.g. slow pace of change and reliance on elites as administrators **B1**

Answer: Beatrice Webb argued that extending democratic participation, especially at local and municipal level, would empower working people to secure public services and municipal ownership. She worked on local government commissions and helped found the London School of Economics in 1895 to improve expertise and democratic capacity. Webb saw education, institutional reform and broadened voting rights as means for gradual, managed socialist change, though she also expected expert administrators to play a central role and the pace to be gradual.

Question 8

Level 0 No relevant material.	**0**
Level 1 Basic, limited knowledge of Webb and/or Crosland with little or no developed analysis or evaluation. Assertions are general or unsupported, and there is no clear judgement.	**1-6**
Level 2 Some accurate knowledge of both thinkers with limited analysis. Evaluation is present but uneven, tending to description rather than direct comparison. A simple judgement may be offered with limited support.	**7-12**
Level 3 Clear, accurate knowledge used to compare Webb and Crosland. Analysis explores points of agreement and disagreement with reasoned evaluation and supporting examples. A plausible, qualified judgement is reached.	**13-18**
Level 4 Sophisticated, wide-ranging knowledge and analysis directly comparing Webb and Crosland across ends, means and institutions. Evaluation critically engages with strengths and weaknesses of each position, places them in historical context, and reaches a clear, well-substantiated and nuanced judgement about the extent of their agreement.	**19-24**

Indicative content:

- Areas of agreement: both are reformist rather than revolutionary, preferring democratic and parliamentary methods to achieve socialist aims; both accept a role for the state in securing social welfare and reducing inequality.
- Webb specifics: Fabian gradualism, emphasis on municipal socialism, bureaucratic collectivism and expert-led planning; belief in expanding democratic institutions while relying on administrative expertise to implement change; sceptical of abrupt revolution.
- Crosland specifics: revisionist social democracy in The Future of Socialism (1956), redefining socialism as equality of outcome, advocating Keynesian demand management, mixed economy and redistribution rather than universal common ownership; practical focus on policies to reduce inequality.
- Key disagreements: Webb places greater emphasis on planning, municipal ownership and the role of permanent administration as the mechanism for change; Crosland accepts market enterprise and managerial capitalism, arguing state intervention, regulation and redistribution are sufficient to deliver social ends without nationalisation as a principle.
- Practical considerations: Webb's model emphasises institutional reform and building municipal capacity, which may be slower but offers stable administrative control; Crosland's model aims for quicker social improvements through macroeconomic policy and redistribution but depends on sustained political consensus and effective taxation and spending.
- Theoretical critique and evaluation: assess whether ownership determines power relations and whether Crosland underestimates class power if ownership remains private; assess whether Webb underestimates democratic accountability risks from bureaucratic power or overestimates the neutrality of experts.
- Historical context: Webb writing in late 19th and early 20th centuries focused on municipalism and administrative reform; Crosland writing mid 20th century responded to post-war mixed economy realities and welfare state achievements, affecting their policy prescriptions.
- Conclusion pointers: a balanced judgement might argue they agree on reformist method and state responsibility for welfare, but disagree substantially on the necessary economic instruments, so they converge on ends and democratic means but diverge on the centrality of planning and ownership as tools.

Question 9

equality of opportunity means giving everyone a fair chance to rise (a meritocracy), but it leaves the gaps between the top and the bottom of society in place	**B1**
Crosland wanted a narrowing of inequalities of wealth, status and class distinction, so that social relationships were more equal, not just the chance to climb a hierarchy	**B1**
gives a means or example, e.g. comprehensive education, progressive taxation or extended welfare provision	**B1**

Answer: Crosland believed that a meritocracy, in which people merely have an equal chance to climb, still leaves a steep hierarchy of wealth and status; socialism required narrowing those class divisions through measures such as comprehensive education and progressive taxation.

Question 10

Level 1 Basic identification of one or two relevant points with little or no development or analysis.	**1-2**
Level 2 Some accurate points about Crosland's arguments with limited analysis, such as noting his focus on equality of outcome and acceptance of a mixed economy, but lacking clear linkage to reasons why common ownership was unnecessary.	**3-5**
Level 3 Clear analysis of two reasons with developed explanation, for example showing how the decline of private ownership concentration and the effectiveness of state regulation reduce the role of nationalisation, and how Keynesian management and redistribution can produce equal outcomes.	**6-8**
Level 4 Detailed, well-developed analysis of two distinct reasons, each supported by explanation and example, showing how Crosland argued that the ends of socialism could be secured via mixed economy policies, demand management and redistribution rather than common ownership, and evaluating the strengths of those reasons.	**9-10**

Indicative content:

- Reason 1: The goal is equality of outcome rather than changing ownership, so nationalisation is an instrument, not an end; therefore common ownership is unnecessary if redistribution and public services can reduce inequality.
- Reason 1 development: Crosland argued that concentrating on ownership misunderstands the objective of socialism; practical policies like progressive taxation, welfare provision and public education can achieve similar redistributive effects.
- Reason 2: The post-war mixed economy and managerial capitalism reduced the ability of owners to exercise direct control, making full common ownership less relevant to achieving social aims.
- Reason 2 development: Large corporations had bureaucratic management structures and state intervention, so Crosland saw planning, regulation and state influence within a mixed economy as sufficient to direct outcomes without formal nationalisation.
- Supplementary reason: Keynesian demand management, ensuring full employment and growth, creates fiscal capacity for redistribution and high living standards, aligning means with socialist ends without seizing ownership.
- Evaluation pointers: Consider strengths, such as practical achievability and electoral feasibility, and weaknesses, such as dependence on political will, limits of regulation, and critiques that ownership affects workplace democracy and power relations.