3.4 Early Elizabethan England, 1559-85: The Catholic and Puritan Challenges: 30-minute Pack

EDEXCEL 1HI0 · about 30 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions. Write in full sentences for Questions 2 and 3. You are advised to spend about 30 minutes on this pack.

1 Give two consequences for Separatists, such as followers of Robert Browne, who rejected the Church of England altogether, if the government judged their actions a serious threat.

(Total for Question 1 is 2 marks)

2 Explain why the Elizabethan government came to see Catholic missionary priests as a greater threat than ordinary English Catholics who quietly kept the old faith.

(Total for Question 2 is 12 marks)

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3 'The Puritan challenge was a more serious threat to Elizabeth's government than the Catholic challenge, 1559-88.' How far do you agree with this statement? Explain your answer.

(Total for Question 3 is 16 marks)

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Mark scheme · 3.4 Early Elizabethan England, 1559-85: The Catholic and Puritan Challenges: 30-minute Pack

Question 1

they could be imprisoned for spreading separatist ideas or writings	**B1**
in the most serious cases, such as the 1583 executions of John Copping and Elias Thacker, they could be executed for distributing separatist/Brownist material	**B1**

Answer: Imprisonment, or in the most serious cases execution, as with Copping and Thacker in 1583.

Question 2

Level 1 Identifies one or two general reasons why missionary priests were seen as more threatening, with little or no supporting detail or explanation.	**1-3**
Level 2 Identifies and begins to explain one or two reasons, supported by some accurate detail.	**4-6**
Level 3 Explains two or three reasons, each supported by accurate and relevant detail.	**7-9**
Level 4 Explains three or more reasons in a well-developed, logically structured way, supported throughout by precise and accurate detail, showing how the reasons connect.	**10-12**

Indicative content:

- Missionary priests, trained abroad (e.g. at Douai from 1568, Jesuits from 1580), actively worked to keep Catholicism alive and win converts, directly undermining the religious settlement rather than passively disagreeing with it.
- Their arrival from overseas, often via Catholic states hostile to England such as Spain, raised fears they doubled as intelligence agents or that their presence prepared the ground for future invasion or rebellion.
- The 1570 papal bull 'Regnans in Excelsis', which released Catholics from allegiance to Elizabeth, made any priest acting on the pope's authority look, in official eyes, like an agent of open disloyalty rather than simple private religious conscience.
- Converting others to Catholicism threatened to grow the pool of the queen's enemies, unlike a lay recusant's quiet, static non-conformity, which affected only themselves.
- The government's legal response shows this distinction clearly: the 1585 Act made the mere presence of a seminary priest treason, targeting active missionary work specifically rather than private belief.
- Overall, the government distinguished between passive religious conscience, which threatened little on its own, and active, organised missionary work, which threatened the settlement's survival directly and was treated accordingly.

Question 3

Level 1 Shows limited relevant knowledge of the Catholic and Puritan challenges, and offers only a simple, unsupported opinion on the statement.	**1-4**
Level 2 Shows some relevant knowledge and identifies relevant factors, but the argument is only partly supported and lacks a developed judgement on how far the statement is accurate.	**5-8**
Level 3 Shows good relevant knowledge and explains a range of factors, reaching a supported judgement on how far the statement is accurate, with some links made between factors.	**9-12**
Level 4 Shows precise, well-selected knowledge and explains a range of factors in a balanced way, reaching a fully supported and sustained judgement on how far the statement is accurate, with clear analytical links between factors and consistently accurate use of specialist historical terminology.	**13-16**

Indicative content:

- Supporting: prophesyings and Presbyterian ideas, such as Cartwright's, challenged the church's very structure and had sympathy among some senior figures, such as Archbishop Grindal, a threat arising from within the establishment itself.
- Against: the Catholic challenge was linked to the possibility of foreign invasion and armed rebellion, since the 1570 papal bull sanctioned disloyalty and missionary priests were feared as potential foreign agents.
- Against: the loss of allegiance sanctioned by Rome in 1570 made Catholic disloyalty a matter of national security and treason law, not simply a question of internal church discipline, in a way Puritan dissent rarely was.
- Balanced: both challenges were real and persistent but of different kinds; Puritan dissent mostly stayed within the political system, working through the church hierarchy, Parliament and the universities, whereas the most extreme Catholic dissent connected directly to treason and international conflict.
- Balanced: Puritan pressure was arguably more continuous and harder for the government to fully suppress, since it came from within loyal, conforming subjects and clergy, while the most serious Catholic dangers were concentrated in a smaller number of missionary priests and plots.
- Judgement: on balance the Catholic challenge posed the more serious threat to Elizabeth's throne and personal safety specifically, given its ties to international conflict and treason law, even though the Puritan challenge was a more sustained internal irritant to church governance throughout the period.

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