4.8 The Comprehensive System and Its Aims: Test Pack

AQA 8192 · about 15 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions. For questions worth 3 marks or more write full sentences. Use sociological terms where relevant.

1 Which of the following was a central policy aim of the 1965 move to comprehensive schooling in England and Wales?

- ☐ A) To expand selection by ability at eleven
- ☐ B) To end the 11-plus selection system and widen access
- ☐ C) To introduce tuition fees for state schools
- ☐ D) To replace local education authorities with academies

(Total for Question 1 is 1 mark)

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2 Define the term 'meritocracy' as used in debates about comprehensive schools and equality of opportunity.

(Total for Question 2 is 2 marks)

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3 Explain three practical measures a comprehensive school might use to reduce the visible effects of prior attainment differences between pupils on entry.

(Total for Question 3 is 6 marks)

4 Identify and explain two aims of the 1965 comprehensive schooling policy in reducing class-based inequality in education.

(Total for Question 4 is 4 marks)

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Mark scheme · 4.8 The Comprehensive System and Its Aims: Test Pack

Question 1

B (to end the 11-plus selection system and widen access)	**B1**

Answer: B

Question 2

identifies meritocracy as a system where people gain education and social positions on the basis of ability and effort rather than birth or class	**B1**
development, e.g. in education this means exams and qualifications should reflect individual merit	**B1**

Answer: Meritocracy is a system where people gain education and social positions on the basis of ability and effort rather than on birth or class; in education, qualifications should reflect individual merit.

Question 3

identifies a first practical measure, e.g. mixed-ability teaching in key subjects	**B1**
explains how mixed-ability teaching could reduce visible effects, e.g. by allowing lower-attaining pupils access to higher-level material and teacher expectations	**B1**
identifies a second practical measure, e.g. setting extra support such as catch-up classes or small group tuition	**B1**
explains how targeted support helps, e.g. by raising attainment and enabling pupils to compete for examination routes	**B1**
identifies a further measure, e.g. use of a broad curriculum including vocational as well as academic pathways	**B1**
explains how a broad curriculum reduces barriers, e.g. it provides multiple routes to qualifications so pupils of different backgrounds can succeed	**B1**

Answer: Measures include mixed-ability teaching which gives lower-attaining pupils access to higher-level material and better expectations; targeted support like catch-up classes or small group tuition that raise attainment; and offering a broad curriculum including vocational routes so pupils have multiple routes to qualifications and success.

Question 4

identifies an aim, e.g. to remove early selection at age eleven that favoured middle-class pupils	**B1**
explains how removing selection could reduce class-based inequality by giving all pupils access to the same curriculum and resources	**B1**
identifies a second aim, e.g. to widen access to academic courses for working-class pupils	**B1**
explains how wider access could reduce inequality by increasing opportunities for social mobility through qualifications	**B1**

Answer: Aims included removing early selection at eleven to prevent middle-class advantage, so all pupils had access to the same curriculum and resources; and widening access to academic courses so working-class pupils had more opportunity to gain qualifications and move up socially.

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