4.9 Marketisation, Parentocracy and School Choice: Test Pack

AQA 8192 · about 15 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions. For questions worth 3 marks or more write in full sentences. Spend about 15 minutes on this paper.

1 Which of the following was a marketisation policy introduced or enabled in the period after the 1988 Education Reform Act?

- ☐ A) Ofsted inspections of schools
- ☐ B) Abolition of all school examinations
- ☐ C) Universal free university places
- ☐ D) Removing parental involvement in admissions

(Total for Question 1 is 1 mark)

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2 Define the term 'cream skimming' in relation to school choice and marketisation.

(Total for Question 2 is 2 marks)

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3 Give one strength of the argument that marketisation and parental choice can improve standards in schools.

(Total for Question 3 is 2 marks)

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4 Explain the role of Ofsted inspections in the marketisation of schools since the 1988 reforms.

(Total for Question 4 is 4 marks)

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5 Item A: In 2025 a local authority published simplified data for six secondary schools. School X: 78% GCSE pass rate, oversubscribed; School Y: 52% pass rate, many vacancies; School Z: 80% pass rate, selective admissions; School W: 49% pass rate, high free school meal intake; School V: 75% pass rate, invests in tuition for borderline pupils; School U: 50% pass rate, recent poor Ofsted report. Using Item A and your own knowledge, explain two reasons why parents with more economic and cultural capital might prefer School X or Z.

(Total for Question 5 is 4 marks)

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Mark scheme · 4.9 Marketisation, Parentocracy and School Choice: Test Pack

Question 1

A (Ofsted inspections of schools) **B1**

Answer: A

Question 2

identifies cream skimming as selecting high-achieving or advantaged pupils to improve a school's results and reputation **B1**

development, e.g. it leaves other schools with a higher proportion of disadvantaged pupils **B1**

Answer: Cream skimming is when schools select high-achieving or advantaged pupils to improve results and reputation, leaving other schools with a higher proportion of disadvantaged pupils.

Question 3

identifies a strength, e.g. competition can incentivise schools to improve teaching and outcomes **B1**

brief development, e.g. successful schools may innovate and share best practice, benefiting pupils **B1**

Answer: A strength is that competition can incentivise schools to improve teaching and outcomes, and successful schools may innovate and share best practice, benefiting pupils.

Question 4

identifies that Ofsted inspects and reports on school quality and standards **B1**

development, e.g. inspection reports are public, informing parents and influencing school reputation **B1**

identifies that poor Ofsted ratings can lead to interventions or loss of autonomy for a school **B1**

development, e.g. this creates accountability and encourages schools to compete to avoid negative consequences **B1**

Answer: Ofsted inspects and reports on school quality and standards; its public reports inform parents and influence school reputation, and poor ratings can lead to interventions or loss of autonomy, creating accountability and encouraging schools to compete.

Question 5

identifies one reason, e.g. higher pass rates and oversubscription suggest better results and reputation **B1**

develops that reason, e.g. parents with resources seek schools with strong exam records as this helps future opportunities **B1**

identifies second reason, e.g. selective admissions or investment in tuition indicate selective or resource-rich environments **B1**

develops second reason, e.g. parents with cultural and economic capital can meet admissions criteria or support extra tuition, so they can access or benefit from such schools **B1**

Answer: Parents with more economic and cultural capital may prefer School X or Z because higher pass rates and oversubscription indicate better results and reputation, which they value for future opportunities; selective admissions or investment in tuition show these schools are resource-rich or selective, and wealthier, culturally knowledgeable parents are better able to meet admissions criteria and support extra tuition.

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