

4 Answering relevantly

This unit will help you to learn how you can answer a question as relevantly as possible.

The skills you will build are to:

- recognise the demands of the question
- stick to the focus of the question
- plan a relevant answer to the question.

In the exam, you will be asked to tackle a question such as the one below. This unit will prepare you to write your own response to this exam-style question.

Exam-style question

Explain **one** way in which people's beliefs about the causes of disease were the same in the seventeenth century and the fourteenth century.

(4 marks)

The three key questions in the **skills boosts** will help you to recognise the demands of the question and ensure that you answer relevantly.

1 How do I read the question?

2 How do I identify relevant detail?

3 How do I plan my answer to ensure it answers the question?

Turn over to see one student's response to a similar exam-style question.

Look at the student's response to this exam-style question:

Exam-style question

Explain **one** way in which people's beliefs about the causes of disease were the same in the nineteenth century as they were during the seventeenth century.

(4 marks)

During the nineteenth century people continued to believe strongly in miasmatic theory – that disease was caused by 'bad air'. This is a continuation in beliefs from the seventeenth century, when microscopes made it possible to study what scientists called animalcules in the air. This fitted in with the earlier belief that disease was caused by inhaling smelly, contaminated air. These animalcules were really bacteria, but the link between them and disease was not proven until Pasteur's germ theory in 1861 and Robert Koch's later work on bacteria.

- 1 Circle (A) the sections of the answer that are about aspects staying the same.
- 2 Underline (A) the sections of the answer that are about change.
- 3 Look at your selections. Highlight (P) those that you think are most relevant to the question.

Causes of disease

This unit uses the theme of causes of disease to build your skills in answering relevantly. If you need to review your knowledge of this theme, work through these pages.

- 1 Underline **A** the most appropriate word to complete the description below, about the beliefs surrounding the causes of disease during the Medical Renaissance (1500–1700).

*It takes a long time for the attitudes of a society to change, and so people during the Renaissance often believed the same things caused disease, as their ancestors had during the Stone Age/Roman occupation/Middle Ages. This meant that beliefs were predominantly **rational/supernatural**. For example, people continued to believe that God sent disease as a punishment for sins.*

*The Renaissance was a period of change, though, and across Europe the power of the Church was in decline and people were increasingly looking to science to explain the world around them. Individuals like Vesalius and Harvey were beginning to apply this **scientific/religious/hi-tech** approach to medicine, and this would eventually lead to more **rational/supernatural** explanations for the cause of disease. However, without proof people continued to rely on ideas they knew and trusted.*

- 2 Draw  lines linking the headings on the left to the descriptions of the traditional beliefs on the right.

Anatomy

The books of Galen and Hippocrates were used less and people began to observe for themselves rather than looking for what books told them.

Astrology

Belief that the body was made up of four liquids, to be kept in balance. People questioned whether external factors had a bigger influence.

Diagnosis using urine

Increased acceptance of dissection and scientific interest led to a better understanding of the human body. Vesalius and Harvey practised it.

Influence of the Church

Another explanation for disease that became less popular. While scientists continued to explore the skies, its role in medicine diminished.

Miasma

Increasingly abandoned as a tool, as people questioned the role of eating the wrong things. Doctors decided it was not directly related to health.

Theory of the Four Humours

The idea that inhaling bad smells/air causes illness continued, as interest in external factors grew and following an increase in epidemics.

Use of medical books

As scientific enquiry increased, people questioned whether God sent disease. Humanists criticised people's reliance on the Church for explanations, encouraging them to instead observe the human body.

Remember this?

3 In the table below there are some **new ideas** of the 17th century hidden among the traditional beliefs about the causes of disease.

a Highlight  the **rational** beliefs and highlight in another colour the **supernatural** beliefs about the causes of the disease. This will help you to see whether new ideas were predominantly rational or supernatural. Fill in  the key to help you.

Rational Supernatural

Four Humours	Miasma	Punishment from God
Alchemy (using chemistry to try to produce gold)	Disease separate from the body (Paracelsus)	Seeds in the air (On contagion)
Blood not used up and replaced (Harvey)	Disease not caused by diet	Animalcules (Royal Society publication)
Dissections to better understand the body	Evil spirits	Astrology (impact of the position of stars and planets)

b Now circle  the ideas that are new to the Renaissance.

4 Using the information in the table above, list  the new ideas that you have circled under the correct factor of influence.

Factor of influence	New ideas
Scientific discovery	
Understanding of anatomy	
Humanism and questioning the Church	
Suggestions by key individuals, e.g. Paracelsus, Thomas Syndham	
New technology such as Leuwenhoek's microscope	

1 How do I read the question?

To identify the focus so you can answer the exam question relevantly you need to:

- look at the time period(s) mentioned – the **time parameter**
- identify the **topic/theme** the question is asking you to focus on
- make **comparisons** to determine how much things changed or stayed the same.

The exam question will cover **time parameters** or time periods.

- ① The time periods you may be asked about will often be centuries. Label  the timeline with the correct century name. One has been done for you.

1200.....1300.....1400 *15th century* 1500.....1600.....
1700.....1800.....1900.....2000

- ② Look at the exam-style question below and circle  the **time parameters**.

Exam-style question

Explain **one** way in which people's reactions to the plague in Britain were similar in the fourteenth and seventeenth centuries.

(4 marks)

The question will also ask you to focus on one of the **topics/common themes** you have studied in the Medicine thematic study, such as:

- what people believed caused disease
- how illness was treated or prevented
- who cared for the sick and where
- which factors influenced medicine, e.g. key individuals, science and technology, religion.

- ③ Look at the exam-style question below and underline  the **topic/theme**.

Exam-style question

Explain **one** way in which people's beliefs about the causes of disease were different in the nineteenth century to the sixteenth century.

(4 marks)

Finally, you need to identify what **comparisons** the question is asking you to make, whether things are similar or different between the two time periods and how. Answering how things were the same/different is key to explaining.

- ④ Look at the exam-style question below and highlight  the **comparison focus**.

Exam-style question

Explain **one** way in which people's beliefs about the causes of disease were the same in the nineteenth century and the seventeenth century.

(4 marks)

To be relevant your answer must stick to the time period(s), topic and comparison focus identified in the question. Anything outside of this could be considered irrelevant.

- ⑤ Look again at the three exam-style questions on this page and, where you haven't already, circle  the time parameter, underline  the topic/theme and highlight  the comparison focus for each one.

2 How do I identify relevant detail?

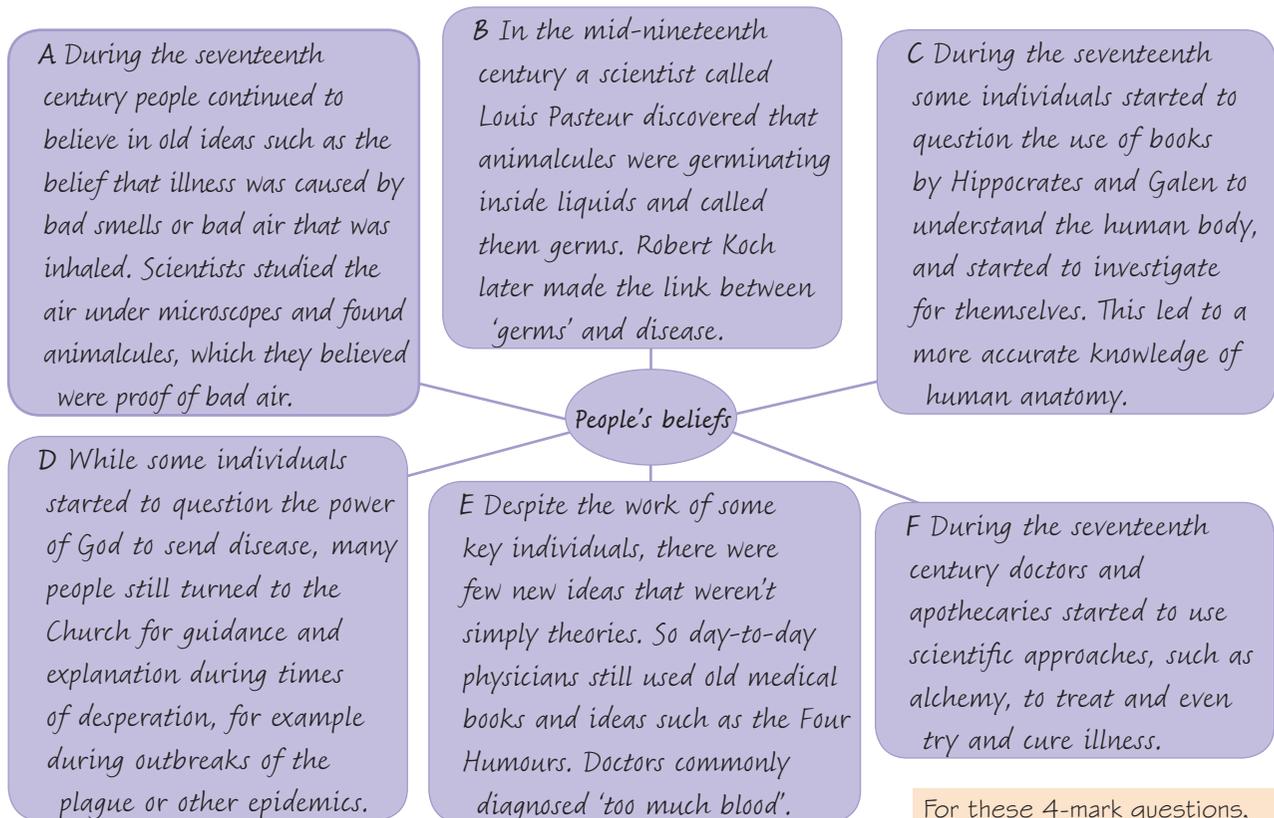
To develop your answer it is necessary to support the focus you have identified in the question with relevant details from your own knowledge.

- 1 Look at the exam-style question below. Circle (A) the time parameters, underline (A) the topic/theme focus and highlight (A) the comparison focus.

Exam-style question

Explain **one** way in which people's beliefs about the causes of disease were the same in the seventeenth century as they were in the thirteenth century. (4 marks)

- 2 A student has made the following notes from their own knowledge to answer the above question. Circle (A) which of the detailed knowledge sections below is relevant to answering this question.



For these 4-mark questions, you only need to talk about **one** way in which things changed or stayed the same.

- 3 The detailed knowledge above is historically accurate, but:
- a explain (A) why note B is not relevant to answering the question

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- b explain (A) why note C is not relevant to the question

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- c explain (A) why note F is not relevant to the question

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3 How do I ensure I answer the question?

As well as selecting relevant content knowledge to support your answer, it is important that you explain how there was a similarity or a difference.

Look at the following exam-style question and the example student answer below it.

Exam-style question

Explain **one** way in which treatments for illness were different between the nineteenth century and the present day.

(4 marks)

One way in which treatments for disease are different today from the nineteenth century is that we can now cure infections using antibiotics. In the nineteenth century people often died from infected wounds because there was no effective treatment. However it was not until after 1900 that scientists developed treatments which could kill these specific bacteria without harming the rest of the body. These are the cures we still use today to fight infection, for example penicillin.

One way to make sure your answer answers the question is to use the following checklist.

Checklist	
Have I:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
identified one factor?	<input type="checkbox"/>
selected content knowledge for that factor for the first time period required?	<input type="checkbox"/>
selected content knowledge for that factor for the second time period required?	<input type="checkbox"/>
explained how there is a similarity or a difference?	<input type="checkbox"/>

- 1 Tick the checklist to decide if everything necessary has been covered in the sample student answer.

You can use specific language to make it clear that you have identified whether there is a similarity or a difference. Here are some words and phrases that will help you to do this.

still remained continued
 persisted also changed
 was now in contrast are different

- 2 Read through the sample student answer above and highlight where they have used words to show similarity or difference.
- 3 Have a go at rewriting the answer above to include more of the phrases from the word box.

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Sample response

Read through the student's response to the following exam-style question.

Exam-style question

Explain **one** way in which people's beliefs about the causes of disease were the same in the seventeenth century as they were in the fourteenth century.

(4 marks)

During the fourteenth century it was a common belief that God sent disease as a punishment for people's sins. In the seventeenth century people still believed in God, but also people had started to question the idea that God was in control of every aspect of life and in particular fewer people believed that God sent disease. During the seventeenth century scientific discoveries were being made and people became more concerned with external factors causing disease. The medieval idea of miasma and bad smells still fitted with these ideas, so people and doctors continued to use them as an explanation for disease during the seventeenth century. This idea was developed when animalcules were discovered but the principle was the same – disease was caused by contaminated air.

1 Complete  the details below to decide upon the focus of the exam-style question.

Time period:

Topic/theme:

Comparison:

2 Highlight  the sections of the student's answer you think are most relevant to the focus of this question.

3 a Cross out  any sections that are not relevant to the question and therefore unnecessary for the student to include in their answer.

b Why are these sections irrelevant? (Think about the focus you identified.) 

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4 What advice would you give this student to help them to improve their answer? 

Consider how you might instruct them on:

- what to take note of when reading the question
- how to avoid including irrelevant information.

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Your turn!

Now try this exam-style question using the prompts below.

Exam-style question

Explain **one** way in which people's beliefs about the causes of disease were different in the seventeenth century and fourteenth century.

(4 marks)

- 1 In the exam-style question,
 - a circle (A) the time parameters
 - b underline (A) the topic/theme focus.
- 2 List (pencil) four pieces of content knowledge relevant to the question. Include as much detail as possible.

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- 3 Look at your notes above and highlight (pencil) the content knowledge that most clearly shows one difference between the time periods..
- 4 Write (pencil) a brief bullet point plan of your answer:

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- 5 Now write (pencil) your response to the question on paper. As you write, think carefully about:
 - the relevance of the details you are using
 - explaining the comparison between the two periods clearly.

Review your skills

Check up

Review your response to the exam-style question on page 29. Tick the column to show how well you think you have done each of the following.

	Not quite <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Nearly there <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Got it! <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
identified the time parameters of the question	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
identified the topic or theme focus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
selected content knowledge that was relevant to the question	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
compared the situation between the two periods clearly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Need more practice?

You will need to practise what has been covered in this unit to answer other exam-style questions in this workbook. If you want to practise another 4 mark similarity and difference question, try this one:

Exam-style question

Explain **one** way in which understanding of the causes of disease and illness was different in the eighteenth century from the present day.

(4 marks)

How confident do you feel about each of these **skills**? Colour in the bars.

1 How do I read the question?	2 How do I identify relevant detail?	3 How do I ensure I answer the question?