Elizabethan sample questions.
Q1 How convincing...? How far do you agree? (8 Marks)

All questions: Explain your answer using your contextual knowledge.

How convincing is interpretation C about the reasons why Elizabeth did not get married?

How convincing is interpretation B about the Elizabethan theatre?
How convincing is interpretation B in explaining the causes of poverty in Elizabethan England?

Unemployment was a major cause of poverty. When large landowners changed from arable to sheep farming, unemployment increased rapidly. The closing down of the monasteries in the 1530s created even more unemployment. As monasteries had also helped provide food for the poor, this created further problems. Unemployed people were sometimes tempted to leave their villages to look for work. This was illegal and people who did this were classified as vagabonds.

How convincing is interpretation D about Elizabeth’s approach to religion in the first ten years of her reign.

The message was very clear: that they were all, including Elizabeth, members of the same team, working together for a common goal – that of a united, prosperous England. Extremes were to be avoided in order to unite, not divide. In this statement, Elizabeth very deliberately disassociated herself from the unpopularity of Mary’s regime by signalling how hers would be different.
How convincing is interpretation A about the threat to Queen I?

**INTERPRETATION A** An assessment of the threats to Queen Elizabeth, from The Life and Times of Elizabeth I, by Neville Williams (1972):

There were other plots against Elizabeth’s life in later years. However the revelations of the Ridolfi conspiracy, coming so soon after the Northern Rebellion, alarmed her most. That her own cousin, the Duke of Norfolk, should have plotted her downfall was the cruellest blow she had yet suffered.

How convincing is interpretation A about the career of Sir Walter Raleigh?

**Interpretation A** An interpretation of Sir Walter Raleigh. It depicts his dismissal from court. The picture was drawn for a children’s story book in the 1960s.
How convincing is interpretation A about Elizabeth’s early life?

INTERPRETATION A

From Elizabeth I by W. MacCaffrey (1993)

Elizabeth’s experience was very limited. Her life had been led almost exclusively in the seclusion of country houses, with only an occasional short visit to the Court.

INTERPRETATION A

‘Marriage and motherhood would deprive her temporarily – perhaps permanently – of the authority and power to rule. To share power she would hate. To renounce it she would find intolerable.’

J. Hurstfield, Elizabeth and the Unity of England, 1960

How convincing is interpretation A about Elizabeth’s reasons not to marry?
How convincing is interpretation A about Elizabethan theatre.

How convincing is interpretation B about the success of the Elizabethan Poor Law?
How convincing is interpretation A about the impact that Francis Drake had on Elizabethan England?


[D]rake] provided in his person a hero-figure upon which public imagination could focus. His remarkable achievement of 1577–80 had little practical effect apart from the immediate gain of treasure, but it did more than any other venture to publicise and stimulate English oceanic endeavour.

How convincing is interpretation B about how English Catholic opposed Elizabeth’s religious settlement?

From Secret Chambers and Hiding Places by Allan Fea (1908).

With incomparable skill Owen knew how to conduct priests to a place of safety along subterranean passages, to hide them between walls and bury them in impenetrable recesses, and to entangle them in labyrinths and a thousand windings. But what was much more difficult of accomplishment, he so disguised the entrances to these as to make them most unlike what they really were.
How convincing is interpretation A about the reasons for the defeat of the Spanish Armada.

How convincing is interpretation B about Elizabeth’s relationship with Parliament?
• Explain what was important about the Privy Council.
• Explain what was important about Elizabeth’s decision regarding her marriage.
• Explain what was important about exploration and trade in Asia for Elizabethan England.
• Explain what was important about voyages of discovery in the reign of Elizabeth I.
• Explain what was important about the execution of Mary, Queen of Scots for Elizabethan England.
• Explain what was important about the navy for Elizabethan England.
• Explain what was important about the problem of poverty in Elizabethan England.
• Explain what was important about Elizabeth’s experiences before she became Queen.
• Explain what was important about the succession issue in Elizabethan England.
• Explain what was important about new ideas and fashions in Elizabethan England.
• Explain what was important about the gentry in Elizabethan times.
• Explain what was important about population growth in the Elizabethan period.
• Explain what was the important about exploration in the Elizabethan period.
• Explain what was important about the Papal Bull of 1570.
• Explain what was important about Mary, Queen of Scots’ presence in England between 1568 and 1587.
• Explain the reasons why England was at war with Spain in the late 1580s.
• Explain what was important about the Spanish Netherlands during the Elizabethan period.
• Explain what was important about Mary, Queen of Scots during the Elizabethan period.
Q3 Write an account (8 Marks)

- Write an account of the problems Elizabeth faced in the first ten years of her reign.
- Write an account of the career of the Earl of Essex.
- Write an account of a rebellion you have studied that took place in Elizabeth's reign.
- Write an account of the ways in which Elizabeth's reign could be seen as a 'golden age'.
- Write an account of the different ways in which towns and cities dealt with poverty in Elizabethan England.
- Write an account of how the Poor Law system changed under Queen Elizabeth I.
- Write an account of Elizabeth's changing policy towards Catholics.
- Write an account of Puritanism during the reign of Elizabeth I.
- Write an account of the ways in which the Northern Rebellion affected Elizabethan England.
- Write an account of the ways in which a system of political patronage helped Elizabeth to govern England.
- Write an account of the ways in which the Earl of Essex affected Elizabethan England.
- Write an account of Elizabeth's handing of the 'marriage question'.
- Write an account of the ways in which the Earl of Essex affected Elizabethan England.
- Write an account of the ways in which Elizabeth used propaganda to strengthen her rule.
- Write an account of the ways in which poverty affected Elizabethan England.
- Write an account of the ways in which Sir Walter Raleigh affected Elizabethan England.
- Write an account of the ways in which poverty affected Elizabethan England.
- Write an account of the ways in which Puritans posed a challenge to Elizabeth and her regime.
- Write an account of the ways in which Elizabeth and her government enforced the religious settlement.
- Write an account of the ways the Roman Catholics plotted to remove Elizabeth from the throne.
- Write an account of the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588.
- Write an account of the ways in which Mary, Queen of Scots affected Elizabethan England.
- Write an account of the ways in which conflict with Spain affected Elizabethan England.
Essay format and refer to Hardwick Hall and your contextual knowledge.

• ‘The main reason for building a stately home in Elizabethan times was to demonstrate the successful career of its owner.’ How far does a study of Hardwick Hall support this statement?

• ‘The main change that Elizabethan manor houses demonstrated was the greater prosperity of their owners.’ How far does a study of Hardwick Hall support this statement?

• ‘The main change that Elizabethan manor houses demonstrated was their owners’ support for Elizabeth’. How far does a study of Hardwick Hall support this statement?