

# Grade 9 Answer

## Reasons for Differences

4/4  
Marks

### Question:

Why might the authors of Interpretations A and B have a different interpretation about McCarthyism? Explain your answer using Interpretations A and B and your contextual knowledge. (4 marks)

### Answer:

Interpretation A, by Raymond Gram Swing, was written in 1964, shortly after the peak of McCarthyism in the 1950s. Swing was a liberal journalist and a direct opponent of McCarthy, so his perspective reflects the personal and professional impact McCarthyism had on him and others in government, and his perspective reflects the resentment of McCarthy's tactics that were still fresh in the 1960s.

Interpretation B, written by historian Howard Zinn in 1980, takes a broader and more detached view. Zinn's interpretation reflects his historical perspective with the benefit of hindsight and academic analysis many years after the events, rather than taking from personal experience.

### Feedback:

This answer would get 4/4 marks because it recognises a difference in the provenances, and explains why this would lead to a difference in the interpretations.

## Interpretation A

**An excerpt from Raymond Gram Swing's autobiography published in 1964. Swing was a liberal journalist and was a strong opponent of Joseph McCarthy.**

**In those four years he thrived as a demagogue, and frightened many, if not all, diplomats into failing to give their frank opinions to the government for fear of being falsely accused of Communist tendencies. The government thus suffered from a debility among diplomats. Employees in the Information Agency had to smother their political judgments lest they be pilloried by Senator McCarthy's congressional committee.**

## Interpretation B

**An excerpt from Howard Zinn's book 'A People's History of the United States' published in 1980. Zinn was a Professor of History at Boston University, and wrote about the HUAC - a committee that investigated those thought to have communist ties.**

**In the early fifties, the House Un-American Activities Committee was at its heyday, interrogating Americans about their Communist connections, holding them in contempt if they refused to answer, distributing millions of pamphlets to the American public...Liberals often criticized the Committee, but in Congress, liberals and conservatives alike voted to fund it year after year. By 1958, only one member of the House of Representatives (James Roosevelt) voted against giving it money.**