

HISTORY

Paper 9489/11
Document Question 11

Key messages

- The most effective responses to **part (a)** are closely focused on the terms of the question.
- In **part (a)** the purpose of evaluating the sources is to explain the similarities or differences between the sources. Commentaries on the context, or discussions on reliability, are not relevant unless they are used in this way.
- In **part (b)** the purpose of evaluating the sources is to decide which side of the argument (support or challenge) is stronger. Sources should be placed in context and evaluated to decide whether they lend weight to the argument. Commentaries on the context or reliability of sources are not creditworthy unless they serve the question.
- It is important to use source content to support points made in both sections of the question paper. Short quotations are adequate. It is also necessary in **part (b)** to explain how the source supports or challenges the statement in the question.

General comments

Most responses showed positive characteristics and demonstrated understanding that the **(a)** question requires identification of similarities **and** differences, and that **part (b)** requires an explanation of how each source either supports or challenges the statement or prompt in the question. Most candidates used source content to support their answer by providing relevant quotations or direct paraphrases from the sources. The most perceptive responses understood the nuance offered in some of the sources and recognised where it was possible to use a source for both support and challenge.

The focus of the **(a)** questions is to identify valid similarities and differences between the sources. In each of the **(a)** questions candidates were required to make comparisons of inferences based on 'attitudes' in **Question 1(a)** and 'impact' in **Question 2(a)** and **Question 3(a)**. Where answers were weak this often resulted from overlooking these specific terms with some writing detailed comparisons of the sources which were not focused on the question. It is important that like-for-like comparisons are made. Some weaker responses asserted similarities or differences for points which were not comparable. If the comparisons cannot be properly supported, they cannot be credited. In some cases, the similarity or difference was asserted with no support offered from either source.

To achieve marks in the higher levels, it is necessary to evaluate the sources by considering the context in which they were produced. However, to be creditworthy the evaluation of the sources must relate to the question. In **part (a)** candidates need to decide how the sources are similar and different and to consider why the similarities or differences exist. For instance, in **Question 1(a)** it was possible to use contextual knowledge of the impact of Prussia's victory in the war against Austria to explain the similarities between the sources. In **Question 3(b)**, effective responses understood that evaluative comments must be linked to the question to be relevant. It is useful for candidates to ask themselves whether their knowledge of the topic supports the claims made in the sources. If so, that might increase the value of a source. Alternatively, if a source was written for a specific purpose or audience, they should consider how that affects its weight as evidence. For example, some used their knowledge of Hitler's rise to power to assess whether what was argued in Source A was a valid assessment of Nazi policies. Others used their contextual knowledge to explain the rather different view offered by Source D. The weight of the evidence was then considered to decide if the source weakened or strengthened the support or challenge element of the answer.

The time allowance for this revised AS Level paper has increased by 15 minutes. However, although there was evidence that many candidates planned their answers, there were also indications of poor time management, and a significant minority did not complete their answer to **part (b)**. Planning helps candidates to stay focused on the questions and is a useful strategy to develop. It is a good idea for candidates to draw up a time plan at the start of the exam to remind themselves when to move on to **part (b)**.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: European Option: Liberalism and nationalism in Germany, 1815–71

Question 1

(a) Read Sources A and B. to what extent do these sources agree about the attitudes of other powers towards Prussia?

Most responses made a relevant comparison between the sources and the most frequently discussed similarity being that it was clear that other powers did not approve of Prussia's behaviour as they thought that Prussia was abusing its power. This was generally supported with effective use of source details. The provenance of Source A showed that France thought Prussia was dangerous and many quoted the comment that it was *'one thing to know how to use a needle, but it's a skill that should not be abused.'* This could be matched to one of several points in Source B. For instance, the comment that Prussia had carried out an *'arbitrary act'* in annexing Hanover, the complaint from the King that the realm had been *'seized'* and this was a *'flagrant violation of European treaties'*, all demonstrated his outrage at Prussia's behaviour and so supported Source A. Identifying valid differences proved to be more challenging for some but many responses recognised that while Source B still believed Prussia could be stopped by foreign powers, Source A implied Prussian expansion was inevitable. Weaker responses sometimes resulted from overlooking the requirement to focus on attitudes and there was some misreading of both sources which demonstrated weak contextual understanding. A small minority of candidates did not recognise Bismarck in Source A or did not understand that Bismarck was Minister President of Prussia. The best responses used contextual knowledge about the outcomes of the war between Austria and Prussia to account for the similarities or differences between the sources, many noting that France was possibly feeling nervous that they would be the next target. A considerable proportion of candidates lost valuable time including background knowledge, or a commentary on the reliability of the sources, which was not linked to the question.

(b) 'Bismarck was motivated more by Prussian than German interests.' How far do the sources support this claim?

Most candidates gave a two-sided response to the question and there was evidence of effective source use in many responses. Most identified Source B as a support source, explaining that the King of Hanover's protests about annexation by Prussia proved that Bismarck was motivated by Prussia's interests rather than those of the German states. Source A was also seen as a support source. The cartoon portrayed Bismarck stitching the German states together, having achieved the power to do this by force. A few responses tried to use Source A as evidence of a challenge. Although it could be argued that the cartoon showed Bismarck unifying the states, which some claimed was to their benefit, this did not sit well with the statement in the provenance. Source C contained arguments which could be used on either side and the way candidates read the phrase *'our security'* determined whether they saw this as a support or challenge source. Some considered *'our'* to be a reference to Prussia. However, a significant proportion of candidates understood this to mean Prussia along with South Germany and therefore reflective of a wider concern for German security. Source D was also a nuanced source and many candidates argued it could be used on both sides. In this letter from Bismarck, there is emphasis on *'national unity'*, the *'single German commonwealth'* and *'a feeling of community and equality'*. These statements could be seen as evidence of a determination to bring about what was best for Germany. More perceptive responses recognised this argument but also considered that Bismarck was trying to win over the Crown Prince of Prussia and therefore what he said was driven by Prussian interests. Some used their contextual knowledge to explain the strained relationship between Bismarck and the Crown Prince, suggesting Bismarck's ulterior motive outweighed German interests. It was possible to use contextual knowledge such as this to evaluate the sources and assess their strength as evidence in response to the question. However, most attempts to evaluate were generic, often stating that the source was biased or unreliable because it was from a speech or letter without any links to the

context or the question. Several weaker responses took a one-sided approach to the question, arguing that all the sources supported Bismarck being motivated by Prussian interests. Although some sources could be read in two ways, it is important to note that there will always be evidence in the sources to argue both sides of the issue.

Section B: American Option: The origins of the Civil War, 1820–1861

Question 2

- (a) **Read Sources B and C. To what extent do these sources agree about the impact of the annexation of Texas on slavery?**

Many responses identified a similarity between the sources by explaining that both sources showed that the Southern slave states would benefit from the annexation of Texas. In Source B it was argued that the *'relative strength of the slave states'* would be increased. Source C supported this by claiming that the bill to annex Texas *'seized...the whole of Texas for the sole benefit of the South'* and this would strengthen the slave states and therefore slavery. A considerable proportion of candidates also pointed out a difference between the sources. Source B argued northerners supported the annexation because, in the long term, the South would not benefit. The *'upland'* nature of Texas meant it would all be suitable for establishing plantations and, if the state were divided, only one section would be slaveholding. On the other hand, Source C argued that the constitutional balance resulting from the annexation of Texas would be *'transferred to the slave holding states.'* Some candidates attempted to use their contextual knowledge to explain the similarity between the sources. To do this effectively it was necessary to understand that Source C was quoting a Northern Democratic source. Those who missed this point struggled to make sense of the reasoning behind the argument in Source C. Many responses offered support from the sources to explain and develop their points. However, there were some who asserted that the sources were similar or different but did not provide relevant material from both sources to support their comparison. Others wrote about each of the sources in turn without making a link between them. Many responses added a paragraph of contextual knowledge, or a discussion of the provenance and reliability, which did not serve the needs of the question.

- (b) **'Americans supported the annexation of Texas.' How far do the sources support this view?**

Many responses made effective use of the sources and produced a balanced answer. Source A was used for support as it listed many of the benefits that annexation would bring such as it would *'increase the wealth and commerce of the country.'* Some attempted to use it as a challenge, but this was generally based on misreading the second bullet point of the source as being about driving slaves out of the US. Source B was used as a supporting source with reference to the existence of *'northern as well as southern friends of the annexation of Texas.'* Source C was generally seen as a challenge source and the phrase that the *'bill is a combination of fraud and oppression'* was often used to develop the point. Source D offered evidence that Americans did not support the annexation of Texas based on the argument that it would destroy the relationship which existed between the Senate and the House of Representatives, creating a Senate *'bearing no proportion to the people.'* Weaker responses often resulted from misreading Sources C and D. For instance, some saw the comment that the annexation would be a *'bold and tyrannical use of the majority'* as being positive. A few considered the creation of extra Senators, referred to in Source D, as positive although Webster argued strongly that this was not the case. Some responses lost focus on the question and did not address whether Americans supported annexation. In a small number of responses candidates overlooked the terms of the question and focused on whether the sources supported slavery. While some candidates attempted to consider the authorship of the sources and comment on their reliability, this often fell short of the mark, either with the use of stock evaluation or comments on reliability not being used to address the question. Some unfinished responses were seen and these candidates would have benefited from making a time plan at the start of the exam so that they did not spend too long on **part (a)**.

Section C: International Option: The League of Nations and international relations in the 1930s

Question 3

- (a) **Read Sources A and D. Compare and contrast Sources A and D as evidence about the impact of the Great Depression.**

Most answers supported a valid similarity that both sources showed that one impact of the depression was a huge increase in unemployment. Source D pointed out that *'seven million men and women were unemployed'*, while Source A showed a similar picture with the *'industrial proletariat have become unemployed in their millions'*. Another similarity was the impact of the middle class who were *'made poor'* in Source A and were *'swept away'* in Source D. Identifying and supporting valid differences seemed more challenging for some and many responses lost focus on the question. Several candidates wrote about differences in what each source argued about foreign relations or focused on the comments made about the Versailles settlement. Neither of these were acceptable as they were not impacts of the Depression. Stronger responses saw that there was a clear difference between the sources and pointed out that the positive tone of Source A suggested that Hitler saw the Great Depression as an opportunity for the Nazi party to gain power. The writer of Source D however, had a negative outlook on this and saw the way the Nazis used the impact of the Depression as a threat. Although the author agreed the Nazis used the desperate economic state of Germany to their own advantage, this was seen as the rise of *'tyranny'* where the Nazis offered *'distorted explanations'* to secure support. Many responses included contextual knowledge or comments on the reliability of the sources. The most effective answers used their knowledge to explain the reasons behind the similarities or differences. Understanding how Hitler used the Depression to secure his own position was used to evaluate Source A. By the time Source D was written the nature of the Nazi regime was known, and knowledge could be used to explain the difference in viewpoints between the sources. Weak responses resulted from a lack of focus on the question and tended to compare the sources with no reference to *'impact'*.

- (b) **How far do the sources support the view that Hitler's rise to power created a threat to international peace?**

Many responses made effective use of the sources to support and challenge the idea that Hitler's rise to power created a threat. Source A was used as a challenge source, quotations such as *'obligation to support the maintenance and consolidation of peace'* were used to show that Hitler had peaceful intentions. More perceptive candidates recognised that there was a difference between what Hitler said and what he meant. Some pointed out that the phrase *'the preservation of our people's right and the regaining of their freedom'* had more sinister overtones when applied to policy. Source B could be used on either side of the argument. Some pointed out that the Minister of Labour was interested in *'economically valuable work'* to be done. However, the majority argued that the source showed Hitler to be intent on rearmament which would eventually lead to Germany being a threat to peace. Strong responses often pointed out the apparent contradiction between Sources A and B, showing that the meeting in Source B was only a week later than the radio broadcast in Source A but had a quite different message. The most effective of these responses linked this to the question by explaining that this undermined the credibility of Source A and therefore weakened the argument that Hitler was not a threat. Source C was mostly used as a challenge source. The diplomat argues that the Nazis sounded as though there were aggressive and wanted to *'expand in the East'* but he dismissed this as *'inflammatory statements'* which were designed to win support, claiming that their talk of war should *'not be trusted.'* Some misread this as evidence that the Nazis were a real threat because of their war talk and aggressive policies. Source D was universally seen as evidence that the Nazis were a real threat. Many quoted Hitler's *'violent appeals for revenge'* as evidence of aggressive intent. Candidates often used their contextual knowledge of Hitler's foreign policy to support what this source argued, explaining that by 1941 the author had witnessed the takeover of Austria and the invasion of Poland and knew what he was talking about. This was only creditable as evaluation if it was linked to the question. While many responses included contextual knowledge, few made the necessary link to the question. Weak responses sometimes resulted from misreading sources such as B or C. In common with answers to **Questions 1 and 2**, some were undeveloped because of mismanaged timing during the exam.

HISTORY

<p>Paper 9489/12 Document Question 12</p>

Key messages

- This assessment focusses on source comprehension, analysis, and evaluation. As such, this should be central to candidates' approach.
- When reading sources candidates should ensure that they take notice of the overall message of the source to understand the argument or point of view of the author. This means that the source should be viewed holistically rather than divided into individual sentences or part sentences which, taken alone, can convey different ideas to that of the whole source.
- Candidates should ensure that they look closely at the provenance of each source as they read and consider how far this is useful when analysing the statement given. Candidates should consider the nature (what type of source it is), the origin (who wrote or produced the source), and purpose of sources before commenting on generic reliability or placing in a particular context. However, comments about source evaluation should always be related to answering the question posed.
- Time-keeping is vitally important. Candidates need to make sure they leave enough time to complete answers to both questions.

The key message is for candidates to read the sources carefully, making sure that they understand both the details of the source and its overall argument. This will ensure candidates are well prepared to tackle both questions.

General comments

Most candidates know that the **(a)** question requires an identification of similarities **and** differences, and that answers to **(b)** questions require an explanation of how each source either supports or challenges the prompt in the question.

Strong responses supported points with precise quotations or direct paraphrases from the relevant sources. In some weaker responses candidates attempted to include long sections of quotation by starting a sentence and then using ellipses to join with a later section. This was rarely a successful way of showing support from the source and often led to confusion or lack of clarity. Support should take the form of brief, precise, quotation or paraphrase.

Weaker responses to **part (a)** were often rushed and in a significant minority of cases this was a result of the **part (a)** question being completed last. Although there is no required order for the question to be answered it should be noted that the **part (a)** question is designed to prepare candidates for the longer essay style question by concentrating on two sources and a particular issue. Candidates who completed **part (b)** first often found it difficult to refocus on **part (a)**.

Candidates sometimes made inappropriate points of comparison. They claimed similarities for points which were not actually similar and differences for points which were not different. If the comparisons cannot be properly validated, they cannot be credited. The comparisons should also be focused on the question e.g. in **Section C** comparisons should focus on 'German relations with Poland' rather than other similarities and differences between the sources.

The focus of the **(a)** question is to identify valid similarities and differences of the content of the sources. Weaker responses often included large sections of contextual knowledge or stock paragraphs of 'evaluation' rather than tackling the focus of the question. Although there are marks in the top level for commenting on the usefulness of the sources, the focus of the question should be on making a developed comparison i.e., identifying similarities and differences.

When analysing the sources many candidates confused themselves by picking out sections of text which ran counter to the overall message of the source. Some candidates were prone to just looking for similar words without thinking about their context. Candidates should be careful to look at the whole source and not dissected sections of it when making links to the questions and further judgements.

To achieve higher evaluation marks, it is necessary to explain why the nature, origin or purpose of the source makes it more or less useful when answering the question. One example of where this could be achieved was in **Section A**, Source B. Responses that dealt with this source successfully used their knowledge of Bismarck's early career to comment on his position in arguing for war with Austria. As such, when using these ideas, it is important that candidates explain why this makes the source more or less useful for the question rather than just stating the date or type of source and saying it is unreliable.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: European Option: Liberalism and Nationalism in Germany 1815–1871

Question 1

(a) How far do these sources agree about the relationship between Austria and Prussia?

Many candidates made a good attempt at this question and were often able to identify similarities and differences in the sources. Most responses were able to show, with support, that the relationship between the two countries was strained and many were able to discuss the differences in the way the two countries are portrayed in each source. Candidates should be wary on including long descriptions of cartoons or visual sources as this rarely aids their analysis of similarities and differences. Instead a summary should be given of the message the source is trying to convey. In the strongest responses the source comparisons were accompanied by clear contextual knowledge that was used to clarify or further explain the areas of comparison and contrast. The best responses began to use the nature and purpose of both sources to explain why the two sources showed similarities and differences.

(b) How far do the sources support the view that Austria was responsible for war with Prussia?

This question was generally well attempted, and responses showed an ability to use the sources to support and challenge the assertion given in the question. Many responses also showed a close reading of the sources, recognising the complexity in some of them which meant they could both support and challenge the statement. Most candidates were able to recognise both support and challenge in the sources and good responses used clear quotations or paraphrases to support their points. Stronger responses were then able to use knowledge to contextualise the sources to explain them further and answer the question given. This was done best when specific sections of the sources were chosen and then explained or analysed further. There were also a minority of responses which started to use the provenance of the sources to weigh up the evidence they gave. This meant that answers began to evaluate sources for use in the question which was very effective and relied on the knowledge and understanding of those candidates. There was still some evidence of candidates using time to write long sections of contextual knowledge or rote provenance discussions. Neither of these approaches was successful when answering the question and were often not credit worthy beyond Level 1 in the mark scheme.

Section B: the American Option: The origins of the Civil War, 1820–61

Question 2

(a) Compare and contrast the inaugural addresses of the two presidents.

Relatively few candidates attempted this question which provided source extracts from the opposing inaugural addresses which were given in early 1861. Many responses dealt with this well and were able to recognise the calls for peace/opposition to war in both sources whilst also discussing the different views on the validity of secession. Some weaker responses described the sources with lots of general contextual knowledge about the situation in the early months of 1861 but did not clearly compare or contrast the content of the two sources. Candidates are encouraged to remember that the focus of this question is to compare the sources, and this should be their main priority when answering.

(b) 'In early 1861, war was unlikely.' How far do the sources support this view?

This question was well attempted by most candidates and there were many responses which were able to show how the sources both supported and challenged the assertion in the question. Stronger responses also showed a clear grasp of relevant contextual knowledge which helped them expand on and analyse the sources. Some of the best responses were able to think about how the word 'unlikely' might relate to the events of early 1861. This meant that they were beginning to read the sources beyond face value. Most answers did not manage to evaluate the sources in context in order to come to a conclusion about utility. Candidates should concentrate on making clear comments about how the nature, origin or purpose impacts on the utility of the source for answering the question rather than describing stock evaluation.

Section C: International Option: The League of Nations and international relations in the 1930s

Question 3

(a) Compare and contrast Sources A and C on German relations with Poland.

This question required candidates to focus on evidence about German relations with Poland in both source extracts. Some candidates confused this with trying to look at wider issues tensions between German and countries in the League. It should be remembered that **part (a)** questions have a specific focus which should be followed closely by candidates. Most candidates were able to recognise both similarities and differences in the sources as detailed in the mark scheme. Stronger responses were able to use knowledge of the period to contextualise the sources and clarify or explain the positions taken in them. Some candidates got distracted from the content of the sources by their own knowledge of the events surrounding appeasement and the Polish question and this often led to extended sections of own knowledge which did not address task. The best responses applied knowledge of the period to explain the differences between the sources when using provenance which went beyond rote evaluation. Overall, this question was well attempted.

(b) How far do the sources support the view that Germany and Britain would go to war over Poland?

Many candidates were able to use all four sources to support and challenge the assertion in the question. Most of these used evidence from the sources to clearly support their argument. Stronger responses used clear and precise contextual knowledge to clarify the evidence from the sources and further explain some of the details. The strongest responses used knowledge of the period to evaluate the sources and explain how this evaluation made them more or less useful when answering the question. The best of these were able to look at the purpose of different sources when discussing the possible actions of Great Britain in particular. More responses attempted to use this more successful method of evaluation rather than making stock phrases on the origin of sources. Overall, candidates displayed good knowledge in this question and were increasingly adept at working with the sources.

HISTORY

<p>Paper 9489/13 Document Question 13</p>

Key messages

- This assessment focusses on source comprehension, analysis, and evaluation. As such, this should be central to candidates' approach.
- When reading sources candidates should ensure that they take notice of the overall message of the source to understand the argument or point of view of the author. This means that the source should be viewed holistically rather than divided into individual sentences or part sentences which, taken alone, can convey different ideas to that of the whole source.
- Candidates should ensure that they look closely at the provenance of each source as they read and consider how far this is useful when analysing the statement given. Candidates should consider the nature (what type of source it is), the origin (who wrote or produced the source), and purpose of sources before commenting on generic reliability or placing in a particular context. However, comments about source evaluation should always be related to answering the question posed.
- Time-keeping is vitally important. Candidates need to make sure they leave enough time to complete answers to both questions.

The key message is for candidates to read the sources very carefully, making sure that they understand both the details of the source and its overall argument. This will mean candidates are well prepared to tackle both questions.

General comments

Most candidates know that the **(a)** question requires an identification of similarities **and** differences, and that answers to **(b)** questions require an explanation of how each source either supports or challenges the prompt in the question.

Stronger responses supported the points they make with precise quotations or direct paraphrases from the relevant sources. In some weaker responses candidates attempted to include long sections of quotation by starting a sentence and then using ellipses to join with a later section. This was rarely a successful way of showing support from the source and often led to confusion or lack of clarity. Support should take the form of brief, precise quotation, or paraphrase.

Weaker responses to **part (a)** were often rushed and in a significant minority of cases this was a result of the **part (a)** question being completed last. Although there is no required order for the question to be answered it should be noted that the **part (a)** question is designed to prepare candidates for the longer essay style question by concentrating on two sources and a particular issue. Candidates who completed **part (b)** first often found it difficult to refocus on **part (a)**.

Candidates sometimes made inappropriate points of comparison. They claimed similarities for points which were not actually similar and differences for points which were not different. If the comparisons cannot be properly validated, they cannot be credited. The comparisons should also be focused on the question, e.g. in **Section C** comparisons should focus on 'Britain's attitude to the Anschluss' rather than other similarities and differences between the sources.

The focus of the **(a)** question is to identify valid similarities and differences of the content of the sources. Weaker responses often included large sections of contextual knowledge or stock paragraphs of 'evaluation' rather than tackling the focus of the question. Although there are marks in the top level for commenting on the usefulness of the sources, the focus of the question should be on making a developed comparison i.e., identifying similarities and differences.

When analysing the sources many candidates confused themselves by picking out sections of text which ran counter to the overall message of the source. Some candidates were prone to just looking for similar words without thinking about their context. Therefore, candidates should be careful to look at the whole source not dissected sections of it when making links to the questions and further judgements.

To achieve higher evaluation marks, it is necessary to explain why the nature, origin or purpose of the source makes it more or less useful when answering the question. One example of where this could be achieved was in **Section A**, Source D. Responses that dealt with this source successfully used their knowledge of the context to comment on the position of the Imperial and Free Conservative Party within ongoing discussions about unification and their relationship to Bismarck. As such, when using these ideas, it is important that candidates explain why this makes the source more or less useful for the question rather than just stating the date or type of source and saying it is unreliable.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: European Option: Liberalism and Nationalism in Germany 1815–1871

Question 1

(a) Compare and contrast the political views expressed in Sources A and D.

This question focused on the manifestos of two Prussian political parties and asked candidates to identify similarities and differences in their views. Candidates responded well to this question and used their contextual knowledge of German political questions to compare and contrast the sources. Many responses were able to show similarities in political beliefs about unification whilst pointing out differences in opinions on social and economic issues. In stronger responses this was accompanied by clear contextual knowledge that was used to clarify or further explain the areas of comparison and contrast. The best responses began to use the nature and purpose of both sources in order to explain why the sources differed.

(b) How far do these sources show that the unification of Germany was a popular policy?

This question was generally well attempted, and responses showed an ability to use the sources to support and challenge the assertion given in the question. Many responses also showed close reading of the material and recognised the complexity in some of the sources which meant they could both support and challenge the statement, e.g., in Source C where the question of ‘popular’ was a good one to test. Most candidates were able to recognise both support and challenge in the sources and good responses used clear quotations or paraphrases to support their points. Stronger responses were then able to use knowledge to contextualise the sources to explain them further and answer the question given. This was done best when specific sections of the sources were chosen and then explained or analysed further. There were also a minority of responses which started to use the provenance of the sources to weigh up the evidence they gave. This meant that answers began to evaluate sources for use in the question which was effective.

Section B: the American Option: The origins of the Civil War, 1820–61

Question 2

(a) Compare and contrast these two sources as evidence about Fort Sumter after the attack.

Some responses dealt with this question well and could clearly draw similarities and differences between the two sources. Candidates should be encouraged to read the sources they are given carefully rather than assuming that they know what the content will be from the attributions and see how they align/differ from visual sources. Stronger responses used contextual knowledge successfully. Again, candidates should avoid using time to write long descriptions of, e.g., the period of secession and build up to Fort Sumter which are not precisely relevant to the question asked.

(b) ‘The Federal garrison in Fort Sumter was easily defeated.’ How far do the sources support this view?

This question required candidates to have some notion of what the phrase 'defeated easily' might mean in the context of the battle of Fort Sumter. This was often well attempted and there were many responses which were able to show how the sources both supported and challenged the assertion in the question. Stronger responses also showed a clear grasp of relevant contextual knowledge which helped them expand on and analyse the sources. This was most often done by using Source C and/or Source D to comment on the views of the battle from the North and South. This meant that they were beginning to read the sources beyond face value. Although many candidates described the provenance of the sources using stock evaluation, very few used this to test how useful the sources were when answering the question. Candidates should concentrate on making clear comments about how the nature, origin or purpose impacts on the utility of the source for answering the question rather than describing stock evaluation.

Section C: International Option: The League of Nations and international relations in the 1930s

Question 3

(a) Compare and contrast Sources B and D as evidence about Britain's attitude to the Anschluss.

This question required candidates to focus on British attitudes to the Anschluss in both source extracts. Some candidates confused this with trying to look at wider issues surrounding appeasement. Therefore, it should be remembered that **part (a)** questions have a specific focus which should be followed by candidates. Most candidates were able to recognise both similarities and differences in the sources as detailed in the mark scheme. Stronger responses were able to use their knowledge of the period to contextualise these sources and clarify or explain the positions taken in them. Some candidates got distracted from the content of the sources by their own knowledge of the events surrounding Hitler and Austria and this often led to extended sections of own knowledge which did not address the question asked. The best responses began to use knowledge of the period to explain the differences between them using provenance which went beyond rote evaluation. Overall, this question was well attempted.

(b) How far do the sources support the view that the people of Austria wanted the Anschluss?

Most responses engaged with the sources thoughtfully to offer support and challenge for the assertion stated in the question. There was plenty of scope to discuss what 'the people' might mean in the context of Anschluss and the best responses began to use their contextual knowledge to do this. Many candidates were able to use all four sources to support and challenge the assertion in the question. Most of these used evidence from the sources to clearly support their argument. The strongest responses used knowledge of the period to evaluate the sources and explain how this evaluation made them more or less useful when answering the question. More responses attempted to use this method of evaluation which was more effective than making stock phrases on the origin of sources.

HISTORY

Paper 9489/21
Outline Study 21

Key messages

- Candidates should read all the available questions carefully to ensure that they choose the best options for themselves, making sure to read both the **part (a)** and **part (b)** question.
- The strongest responses planned their answers before beginning to write their full essays. It is recommended that candidates refer back to their plans and make sure they have included all of their key points.
- Careful attention should be given to the timeframe of the questions to ensure that only relevant material is included in responses. Not focusing answers on the boundaries of the question is one of the common features of weaker responses.
- It is important to distinguish between social, economic and political factors and struggled when responding to questions that are focused specifically around one of these elements of an explanation in comparison to other factors (e.g., How far were economic problems the cause of political instability in...?)

General comments

The overall performance of candidates was good. The most popular questions were in **Section A**. Few candidates answered questions from **Section B**. Responses were generally well structured and showed that many candidates had made good use of the time available to plan the content and structure of their essays.

For **part (a)** questions many candidates recognised the need to identify causal factors and many explained the role that one or more of the factors played in explain why a specific event occurred. The strongest responses also explained the links between these factors and established some order of relative importance between them. Less successful answers included very detailed descriptions of events but provided very little explanation of them. These answers could have been improved with the inclusion of some important reasons for an event or action and explanation of why they are important.

There were some very strong responses to the **part (b)** questions. Many candidates demonstrated a detailed knowledge of the topics and were carefully considered, with a well-supported analysis of alternative perspectives. The best responses included a comparison of the relative strengths of different arguments and drew reasoned conclusions in answer to the specific question.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: Modern Europe, 1750–1921

Question 1: France, 1774–1814

(a) Explain why Louis XVI was executed in 1793.

Most answers were included at least one explanation, usually concentrating on Robespierre's role, the reluctance of Louis to make concessions, and/or the flight to Varennes. Weaker answers included a narrative of events leading to the execution rather than selecting key factors, such as those listed above, to explain Louis fate. The best responses provided clear links between the different pressures of the period.

(b) To what extent was Napoleon's military ability the reason for the ending of the Directory in 1799?

There was a wide range of responses to this question. The strongest responses included a balanced comparison of the role of Napoleon against the role of other factors in the fall of the Directory. More modest answers were typically quite generalised in nature and could have been improved with a greater focus on the question. Weaker responses contained little detail or were a narrative of either Napoleon's career or the failures of the Directory. Another notable feature of weaker responses was the inclusion of general statements about Napoleon's use of propaganda, the Napoleonic Code and the Concordat, with a general view that the Directory was 'unpopular' or 'corrupt', but these were often unsupported assertions which needed support in order to be credited. Good responses demonstrated how Napoleon built his popularity at a time when the Directory was struggling, highlighting the fact that Napoleon was often the 'enforcer' of the Directory's authority so that once he turned against them, they were doomed. Good answers also included other factors including the role of Sieyes and of Napoleon's brother Lucien in providing the coordination of action to end the Directory.

Question 2: The Industrial Revolution in Britain, 1750–1850

(a) Explain why the agricultural revolution was a cause of the Industrial Revolution.

Some good answers were seen to this question. They included clear explanations of how the increase of food production led to a larger population to work in factories, or that the changes in agriculture meant that poorer villagers were forced off the land and went to cities to find work in factories. Better responses were demonstrated how changes in agriculture increased demand for the materials to make new machinery which had a knock-on effect on the growth of other industries. The strongest answers explained how increased wealth generated by agriculture led to investment in other fields such as improving transport. Weaker answers often included a description of the agricultural revolution without linking to the industrial revolution or wrote more generally about one or the other with no identification of the links between them.

(b) To what extent did industrialisation benefit the lower classes?

There were some good responses to this question. Weaker responses struggled with the definition of 'the lower classes'. Many essays, even at the upper end of performance, needed to be more balanced. Although responses showed a good knowledge of why the lower classes might not have benefited from industrialisation, including examples of the social problems it created, as well as poor working conditions, more balance was needed in some responses demonstrating how they might have benefitted as well. Few responses went beyond the idea of job creation on the benefit side, making for some very unbalanced answers. The best responses stated that measures to tackle these issues had begun to be introduced by the end of the period (i.e., 1850).

Question 3: The Russian Revolution, 1894–1921

(a) Explain why the Tsarist regime was able to survive the 1905 Revolution.

A well answered question. Good knowledge and use of the October Manifesto meant that most answers reached Level 3 with one solid explanation provided. Better answers gave more than one explanation, for example that the army supported the Tsar, or that the middle class were wanting representation rather than revolution, and so were happy with the idea of a Duma. Some answers chose to interpret the question in terms of what happened in the years following the 1905 revolution, such as Stolypin's reforms and the repressive measures adopted by the Tsar. This was an acceptable approach and produced some solid responses. A few weaker responses showed confusion about chronology and wrote more about the causes of the revolution rather than its outcome.

(b) 'The main cause of the Bolshevik victory in the Russian Civil War was the disunity of their enemies.' How far do you agree?

A real mixture of answers here. Better answers clearly differentiated between strengths of the Reds and weaknesses of the Whites and gave a sustained judgement through the ability to compare and evaluate directly throughout the answer. These responses identified the different groups of Whites and the variations in their objectives as a basic problem, but the best responses also included references to the consequences of geographical division and the problems of co-ordinating supplies, planning, etc. Most answers seemed stronger on the side of the Reds with weaknesses of the Whites often not going much further than the statement in the question. Some weaker

responses focused mainly on the leadership of Lenin with only general commentary on other factors.

SECTION B: The History of the USA, 1820–1941

Question 4: The origins of the Civil War, 1820–61

(a) Explain why civil liberties were limited during the Civil War.

This question showed some misunderstanding of the term ‘civil liberties’ with some responses referring to slavery and emancipation. Good responses cited specific examples such as the suspension of *habeas corpus* by both the North and the South and a few quoted specific cases that highlighted this. The most common explanation was that of resistance to the draft, but many answers lacked specific knowledge.

(b) ‘Opposition from white southerners was the main reason for the limited success of Reconstruction.’ How far do you agree with this view?

There were some detailed answers on one side of the argument, with most responses explaining white southern reaction to Reconstruction. Stronger responses had good supporting detail of the Black Codes, KKK, etc. Some of these examples could have been developed further to answer the question more fully. The other side of the argument was not tackled as securely, and rarely went beyond an understanding of the disagreements in the North about the nature of Reconstruction. When answering this question responses needed to make note of the timescale specified. Some responses gave accounts of the ending and immediate aftermath of the Civil War, including the clash between presidential and congressional reconstruction. Other responses included details from after the period of Reconstruction ended with the Compromise of 1875. Few responses had any mention of Grant’s presidency which covered most of the Reconstruction period.

Question 5: The Gilded Age and Progressive Era, 1870s to 1920

(a) Explain why Progressives wanted to limit the power of party machines.

Stronger responses wrote about Boss Tweed, largely describing the way he operated, concentrating predominantly on the exploitation aspects of his operation. These responses could have been improved by making explicit links to the aims of the Progressives, rather than the links being implied. Likewise, some responses fell back on the phrase ‘Progressives’, stating their aims, without relating them to the desire to limit party machines. There was also some misunderstanding of the term ‘party machine’ which limited some responses.

(b) To what extent was the growth of the railroads the reason for the rapid industrialisation of the late nineteenth century?

Stronger responses provided balance in their arguments by drawing on knowledge of other contributory factors such as the role of the ‘robber barons’ or the influence of the rapid influx of immigrants that provided a rapidly expanding available workforce. Weaker responses were predominantly descriptive and, though they provided some evidence to support the idea that railroads facilitated movement of raw materials and goods, few of these responses went significantly beyond this.

Question 6: The Great Crash, the Great Depression and the New Deal policies, 1920–41

(a) Explain why Hoover found it difficult to respond to the consequences of the Great Crash.

Some reasonable responses were seen, but few provided wide-ranging analysis. The best responses combined Hoover’s personal perspective with the structural limitations that he faced to produce well balanced answers. The most common approach taken was to explain Republican policies such as rugged individualism. Some responses did also recognise that Hoover’s power over banks was limited. Weaker responses gave a description of the consequences of the Crash e.g., Hoovervilles, unemployment, collapsing banks etc. These responses needed to go further and explain why Hoover had such difficulties overcoming them. A small number of responses wrote about the causes of the Crash and did not gain any credit.

- (b) **'The most significant opposition to the New Deal came from those on the left of politics.'**
How far do you agree with this view?

Most responses described the opposition of the Supreme Court in general terms but were unsure as to how to classify other sources of opposition. These responses often included a description of key features and failings of the New Deal, providing detailed description rather than addressing the question directly. The best responses identified and explained the role of right-wing opposition beyond that of the conservative Court and this led to balanced and perceptive judgements. Weaker responses could have been improved with a more secure understanding of what was meant by the 'left of politics'. When responses identified Long and Townsend, the supporting detail was not always accurate. Stronger responses did identify and explain the role of right-wing opposition beyond that of the conservative Court and this led to balanced and perceptive judgements.

SECTION C: International Relations, 1870–1945

Question 7: Empire and the emergence of world powers, 1870–1919

- (a) **Explain why US foreign policy changed during the presidency of McKinley.**

This was a popular question, with many responses explaining a range of factors that contributed to the change. Better answers showed that the acquisition of the former Spanish colonies in the Caribbean and Pacific created an outward looking country and that the economic crash of 1893 highlighted the need to move beyond dependence on the internal market. This in turn led to pressure from businesses and a populist movement in the red press for the acquisition of new territories. The USS Maine was also described, but not always linked to how that led to change. The best responses demonstrated effectively how these factors could be linked to provide the impetus to a new 'imperialist' approach to foreign policy by McKinley. One of the most common errors was using supporting detail that was outside of McKinley's presidency such as the Treaty of Portsmouth and the Great White Fleet.

- (b) **To what extent was British imperial policy up to 1902 based on fear of other European powers?**

There were some very well-argued essays that clearly argued the different reasons and reached some good judgements. Good answers clearly explained the perceived European threats and link them to specific areas of imperial policy such as Fashoda or Suez. These responses were balanced, explaining well the other reasons, mainly focussing on national prestige and economic reasons. Some good arguments clearly argued that economic pressure was paramount including areas such as Suez due to its links with India and trade. Weaker responses limited their answers to describing the Scramble for Africa and did not recognise that imperial policy had wider implications for a nation's overall foreign policy.

Question 8: The League of Nations and international relations in the 1920s

- (a) **Explain why reparations remained a problem throughout the 1920s.**

Knowledge of this topic was often displayed in detailed narrative, but it was not always used in the best way to show clear explanation of the factors that led to difficulties in international relations. The best responses integrated their understanding of French expectations, German resistance, and international involvement to produce a well-reasoned explanation. Weaker answers were more descriptive and provided a chronological account of the reparations issue without considering the issue of why it remained a problem.

- (b) **'Economic issues were the most important of the problems faced by the successor states in the 1920s.'** How far do you agree?

The best responses showed a sound understanding of the problems that faced the 'successor states' and contrasted the significance of the economic issues with those created by border disputes, ethnic minority populations and political weaknesses. Such responses often achieved a good level of success. Some weaker responses showed confusion regarding what the 'successor states' were, though some gave a general sense of the problems created by the peace settlement in eastern Europe. Economic factors were often linked, incorrectly to having to pay reparations.

Unsuccessful responses wrote about the effects of the Versailles Settlement on some of the major participants including Germany and France.

Question 9: China and Japan, 1912–45

There were too few responses to make general comment appropriate.

HISTORY

Paper 9489/22
Outline Study 22

Key messages

- Candidates should read all the available questions carefully to ensure that they choose the best options for themselves, making sure to read both the **part (a)** and **part (b)** question.
- The strongest responses planned their answers before beginning to write their full essays. It is recommended that candidates refer back to their plans and make sure they have included all of their key points.
- Careful attention should be given to the timeframe of the questions to ensure that only relevant material is included in responses. Not focusing answers on the boundaries of the question is one of the common features of weaker responses.
- It is important to distinguish between social, economic and political factors and struggled when responding to questions that are focused specifically around one of these elements of an explanation in comparison to other factors (e.g., How far were economic problems the cause of political instability in...?)

General comments

The overall performance of candidates was good. The most popular questions were in **Section A**. Few candidates answered questions from **Section B**. Responses were generally well structured and showed that many candidates had made good use of the time available to plan the content and structure of their essays.

For **part (a)** questions many candidates recognised the need to identify causal factors and many explained the role that one or more of the factors played in explain why a specific event occurred. The strongest responses also explained the links between these factors and established some order of relative importance between them. Less successful answers included very detailed descriptions of events but provided very little explanation of them. These answers could have been improved with the inclusion of some important reasons for an event or action and explanation of why they are important.

There were some very strong responses to the **part (b)** questions. Many candidates demonstrated a detailed knowledge of the topics and were carefully considered, with a well-supported analysis of alternative perspectives. The best responses included a comparison of the relative strengths of different arguments and drew reasoned conclusions in answer to the specific question.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: Modern Europe, 1750–1921

Question 1: France, 1774–1814

(a) Explain why the National Constituent Assembly introduced the August Decrees.

A very popular question that produced a range of responses, the majority of which concentrated on the difficulties facing France in the period leading up to the August Decrees. The strongest responses focused specifically on the issues that were dealt with in the Decrees – principally the problems that stemmed for the continuing unfairness that resulted from the impositions of the feudal system. The weakest responses often wrote about the problems of the Ancien Regime without fully addressing the issue of the August Decrees. Many responses were not fully aware of what the August decrees aimed to address and provided a general account about solving various problems that existed in 1789. Few responses focused on the immediate events leading to the August Decrees such as the storming of the Bastille or the ‘Great Fear’.

- (b) **'The ideas of the Revolution were ignored by the Directory.' To what extent do you agree with this statement?**

Good responses to this question recognised the implicit argument within this statement and structured their responses accordingly. They provided a clear explanation of the policies and practices of the Directory that followed revolutionary ideas and then examined factors that conflicted with them. Often the policies were evaluated against the underlying principles of liberty, equality and fraternity – for example, in challenging the statement reference was made to the idea of annual elections, a five-man Directory which avoided a single autocratic ruler, the division of powers within the government, etc. In supporting the hypothesis reference was often made to the suppression of election results the Directory did not like and the use of the army to quell protests. There were some well-constructed responses around these arguments which scored well. The strongest responses referred back to specific objectives as enshrined in the Declaration of the Rights of Men and Citizens, the August Decrees and the Civil Constitution of the Clergy. Weaker responses tended to provide a basic account of the way the Directors ruled and/or what they failed to do, with little or no consideration of what the original objectives of the Revolution might have been.

Question 2: The Industrial Revolution in Britain, 1750–1850

- (a) **Explain why industrialisation caused urbanisation.**

Candidates who chose this question generally had a clear idea of the causes of urbanisation. Stronger responses broke down the effects of industrialisation into 'push' and 'pull' factors and the best responses demonstrated how factors were often linked in a complex web of causation. Weaker responses produced a list of factors that caused urbanisation without focusing on the way in which industrialisation might be involved. For example, most candidates were aware that changes in farming had an effect, but weaker responses described the changes in agriculture without demonstrating how these changes were reflected in 'industrialisation'.

- (b) **'By 1850, industrialisation had made little impact on the political system.' How valid is this view?**

Many candidates struggled with the concept of 'the political system', though there were some very perceptive and well-constructed responses that scored well. Good responses cited specific changes such as the extension of the franchise and redistribution of parliamentary seats as a response to the growth of the industrial centres in the North and the Midlands, (including the removal of rotten and pocket boroughs). Some responses also recognised that the bad effects of the growth of industry and rapid urbanisation needed the government to step in and produce some sort of controls for the sake of basic safety and public health, but that these were only just beginning to be issues by 1850. Many responses could have been improved with a greater understanding about the details of the Great Reform Act. Where weaker responses did write about the Act, it was often not linked to the issue of the effect of industrialisation. A few weaker responses included content on political changes from beyond 1850, and therefore it could not be credited.

Question 3: The Russian Revolution, 1894–1921

- (a) **Explain why Tsar Nicholas II issued the October Manifesto.**

Most responses identified at least one reason why the Tsar introduced this measure, recognising that it was a response to, and a consequence of, the outbreak of the 1905 revolution. Better responses explained how the Manifesto responded on several levels to different groups of the discontented and also recognised that while it was not necessarily what the Tsar wanted, it was what he was persuaded to believe was necessary (primarily by Witte).

- (b) **To what extent was War Communism a failure?**

Many responses demonstrated a good general understanding of the basic operation of War Communism. There was less clarity about the objectives of War Communism. Responses that began with a good understanding of the latter generally produced balanced and well-argued responses showing that whilst it achieved the core objective of securing Bolshevik control it was in many other ways a failure and lost a significant amount of support so that, once the Bolshevik

victory in the Civil War had been secured, Lenin ultimately replaced it with the New Economic Policy. Weaker responses described War Communism or, in the case of a few, wrote about Communism in general with no direct focus on the question.

SECTION B: The History of the USA, 1820–1941

There were too few responses to make general comment appropriate.

SECTION C: International Relations, 1870–1945

Question 7: Empire and the emergence of world powers, 1870–1919

(a) Explain why Japan succeeded in defeating Russia in the Russo–Japanese War of 1904–05.

There were many good responses to this question which provided a clear explanation of different factors that contributed to Japanese success both in terms of the strengths of the Japanese and the weaknesses of the Russians. Good responses demonstrated an understanding that as result of Meiji Restoration Japan had revolutionised its industrial capacity and built a modern and well-equipped Navy and Army. In contrast the Russian forces were depicted, accurately, as being out of date and poorly organised. Weaker responses wrote a narrative of the conflict often confusing chronology in general and specific details especially relating to the role of the British in restricting Russia's capacity to respond to the Japanese.

(b) How important was the Spanish–American War of 1898 in changing the focus of US foreign policy?

Good responses often began with a clear explanation for what the Spanish–American War was and what the United States gained from it. From this starting point candidates argued that the acquisition of Spain's overseas territories in the Caribbean and the Pacific meant that they now had colonies that they needed to defend leading to significant naval developments and a more proactive policy in utilising the resources of these colonies and recognition of their usefulness in encouraging further developments. Such an approach led to a reasoned account of why the war led to change. Stronger responses then presented other factors that were encouraging change at this time from the effects of the 1893 economic crash on domestic markets for manufactured goods, to the effect of the popular press in promoting a more expansionist outlook to which politicians had to respond. Weaker responses often wrote a description of the war and a brief commentary on its results, without establishing any sort of contrast between different views of the effects of the war.

Question 8: The League of Nations and international relations in the 1920s

(a) Explain why Franco–German relations improved after 1924.

Most candidates answered this question well. Many responses cited the effects of the Dawes Plan coupled with the Locarno agreement which stabilised relations in Europe. Stronger responses also explained the significant effect of the personal relationship between Gustav Stresemann and Aristide Briand and some went as far as explaining that the Young Plan represented the peak of the positive relationship between the two countries.

(b) How important were the Agencies in the work of the League of Nations in the 1920s?

This question was not particularly well answered. Most candidates demonstrated some knowledge about the work of the League of Nations in the 1920s although weaker responses largely focused on the peacekeeping role of the League itself, rather than the specific focus of this question. These responses showed little understanding of what the Agencies of the League were. Stronger responses showed an awareness of the work of these special committees of Agencies and described and assessed their achievements. The best responses compared the relative importance of these, sometimes commenting on longer term impacts of some of the work undertaken.

Question 9: China and Japan, 1912–45

(a) Explain why there was an outbreak of protests in China beginning on 4 May 1919.

There were two main approaches to this question, and good responses used a combination of the two. The first was a review of long-term factors – the collapse of imperial rule, the rise of warlords and the effect of Yuan Shi-kai's bid for the imperial throne. Against this were set the immediate causes of dissatisfaction with the outcome of the Paris Peace conference and the way in which China had largely been ignored despite being one of the allies. Many good responses also highlighted how the granting of former German territorial concessions to Japan angered the Chinese led to protests.

(b) To what extent did Japanese plans for a Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere explain the attack on Pearl Harbor?

Good responses showed a clear understanding of what the Japanese hoped to achieve by attacking Pearl Harbor, which was to clear the way for a drive south into the poorly defended empires of struggling European powers such as the Dutch, French and British. All of this can be clearly linked to the plans for economic expansion and improving access to the resources that these territories offered to Japan. These responses then gave a clear contrast to this with focus on the challenge that the US fleet offered in general to Japanese control of the Pacific and a wider understanding of the steady deterioration in Japanese–American relations from growing resentment of their treatment to the issue of US embargo on oil supplies to Japan. Many weaker responses offered only a partial insight into the alternative explanations, which limited their effectiveness in answering the question.

HISTORY

Paper 9489/23
Outline Study 23

Key messages

- Candidates should read all the available questions carefully to ensure that they choose the best options for themselves, making sure to read both the **part (a)** and **part (b)** question.
- The strongest responses planned their answers before beginning to write their full essays. It is recommended that candidates refer back to their plans and make sure they have included all of their key points.
- Careful attention should be given to the timeframe of the questions to ensure that only relevant material is included in responses. Not focusing answers on the boundaries of the question is one of the common features of weaker responses.
- It is important to distinguish between social, economic and political factors and struggled when responding to questions that are focused specifically around one of these elements of an explanation in comparison to other factors (e.g., How far were economic problems the cause of political instability in...?)

General comments

The overall performance of candidates was good. The most popular questions were in **Section A**. Few candidates answered questions from **Section B**. Responses were generally well structured and showed that many candidates had made good use of the time available to plan the content and structure of their essays.

For **part (a)** questions many candidates recognised the need to identify causal factors and many explained the role that one or more of the factors played in explain why a specific event occurred. The strongest responses also explained the links between these factors and established some order of relative importance between them. Less successful answers included very detailed descriptions of events but provided very little explanation of them. These answers could have been improved with the inclusion of some important reasons for an event or action and explanation of why they are important.

There were some very strong responses to the **part (b)** questions. Many candidates demonstrated a detailed knowledge of the topics and were carefully considered, with a well-supported analysis of alternative perspectives. The best responses included a comparison of the relative strengths of different arguments and drew reasoned conclusions in answer to the specific question.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: Modern Europe, 1750–1921

Question 1: France, 1774–1814

(a) Explain why France experienced the ‘Reign of Terror’ between 1792 and 1794.

This was a popular question and was generally well answered. Many candidates demonstrated some knowledge of what the Reign of Terror involved and most explained at least one reason for it. The most common responses were linked to the role of Robespierre, or the increasing radicalisation of the Jacobins, which often went further to explain the fear of counterrevolutionary activities. Not many candidates attempted to link factors, but knowledge was used well to produce a good quality of answer. Some responses focused mainly on the execution of the king and its immediate follow up in Paris rather than the wider occurrence of mass executions. Weaker responses gave a description of events leading up to the Reign of Terror rather than explaining the actual phenomenon and why it happened.

(b) To what extent did the ideas of the Enlightenment cause the outbreak of the Revolution in 1789?

Many candidates demonstrated sound knowledge of the role of the Enlightenment, often based on the idea of changing beliefs about absolute monarchy and demands for more inclusion in government. All responses presented a much stronger argument for the role of other factors including the severe financial difficulties partly stemming from past overcommitments (e.g. the American War of Independence, etc.). Most candidates also offered some sort of reasoned argument. Such responses could have been improved with the inclusion of greater balance in their arguments and analysis. Weaker responses were less secure in their knowledge of the role of the Enlightenment and wrote only in general terms about the ideas of key philosophers.

Question 2: The Industrial Revolution in Britain, 1750–1850

(a) Explain why canals were important to the development of the Industrial Revolution.

Most answers included an explanation of at least one reason why canals were important – most commonly that canals allowed for the increased movement of raw materials and finished goods. The Duke of Bridgwater was often mentioned and used as evidence that not only did canals manage to make transporting goods cheaper, but also that profits could be invested in other aspects of the Industrial Revolution. Stronger responses explained the benefits of cost reduction and of speedier delivery as separate points. The most successful responses gave analysis of the interrelationship of different factors to demonstrate a complex web of factors which together contributed to the growth of industries as a result of the development of canals.

(b) After 1800, how far did governments use repression to respond to the demands for change caused by industrialisation?

A majority of responses showed a misunderstanding of the term ‘use of repression’ and what it might involve or were not able to develop a counter argument to give a balanced response. Answers were typically stronger on the repression side, with candidates confident about the use of troops, citing Peterloo as an example, and the Combination Acts etc., and how they were used on particular groups. Some alternative arguments were restricted to the Great Reform Act and political change. Stronger responses considered the pressures for change in areas of social and economic unrest and provided examples of Factory and Public Health Acts. There were some sound judgements seen, either evaluating the change through time, or a giving comparison of responses to working-class demands as opposed to middle-class demands.

Question 3: The Russian Revolution, 1894–1921

(a) Explain why Lenin’s leadership was important to Bolshevik success in October 1917.

This question, being the most popular on the question paper, produced a wide variety of responses that ranged from a clear explanation of several distinct reasons (usually April Theses, his careful timing and refusal to work with the Provisional Government), to long descriptions of what he did, culminating in an overall idea that ‘... he managed to get lots of support’. The best responses established links between the factors they identified. Weaker responses gave confusing accounts about factors such as German involvement in Lenin’s return or Lenin hiding in Finland with little connection or focus on the question.

(b) ‘Political issues caused the 1905 Revolution.’ How far do you agree?

This was a well answered question with many candidates very confident in their knowledge of this topic, providing a wide range of reasons for the 1905 Revolution that were well supported. Stronger answers clearly showed what they considered to be ‘political causes’, thereby clearly constructing a balanced argument. The best responses produced a sophisticated consideration of the factors with an assessment of how they linked with each other, for example suggesting that Bloody Sunday was not in itself a political protest because it was an appeal to the Tsar, as ruler, based on the economic and social distress of the working people of St Petersburg, but the action of the Tsar’s soldiers turned it into a political factor. Weaker responses identified a range of factors which were responsible for the Revolution and some reasoned explanation but did not adequately differentiate between political and other factors that were at work.

SECTION B: The History of the USA, 1820–1941

Question 4: The origins of the Civil War, 1820–61

- (a) **Explain why Congress pursued a policy of ‘Radical Reconstruction’ from 1867.**

This was a popular question that was well answered. Many candidates identified several key reasons. The best answers demonstrated a thorough understanding of the context in which reconstruction was imposed on the South after the Civil War. Weaker answers confused Congressional and Presidential actions towards Reconstruction and some introduced Lincoln’s plans as a significant element of the response, which added little to the quality of the answer. Weaker responses could have been improved with a clearer understanding of the relative proposals of Lincoln, Johnson and the radical Republicans.

- (b) **To what extent was superior military strategy the reason for the North’s victory in the Civil War?**

Stronger answers clearly argued that at the beginning of the Civil War the South’s military strategy was strongest, and that this changed after the appointment of Grant, explaining the difference Grant made to the North’s military strategy. Arguments on the other side were based around the other advantages that the North had such as manpower or the role of the Emancipation Proclamation. These were often contrasted with the situation in the South and could lead to the development of judgements. Other stronger responses contrasted the short-term success of southern tactics as devised by Robert E Lee and the longer-term impact to the Anaconda Plan, which was never devised to achieve a quick victory but imposed a slow, but increasing pressure, on the South’s capacity to continue the war. Weaker answers were more descriptive in nature or contained fundamental errors with regard to who was leading which side or which side won certain battles,

Question 5: The Gilded Age and Progressive Era, 1870s to 1920

- (a) **Explain why there was a rise in organised farming groups in the late nineteenth century.**

There were few responses to this question. No responses offered an explanation rooted in detailed knowledge and understanding of the situation facing farmers in the latter part of the nineteenth century.

- (b) **‘Wilson did more to achieve Progressive aims than other Progressive presidents.’ How far do you agree with this view?**

Many candidates provided more specific information on this topic than in their **part (a)** responses, but the responses were limited in their success. Modest answers explained or described the achievements of Wilson and Roosevelt, but very few included details of President Taft. The main weakness was that answers described what they did, rather than comparing or evaluating the success of their actions. Few responses considered the failings of Wilson as a progressive President. Where Wilson achievements were given with an explanation of why this made him a good president, this was often in isolation and without any significant comparison with Roosevelt and/or Taft, which was necessary to fulfil the requirements of the question.

Question 6: The Great Crash, the Great Depression and the New Deal policies, 1920–41

- (a) **Explain why the US economy experienced problems in 1937–38.**

Good responses gave a number of factors that led to an economic downturn in Roosevelt’s second term, including his own policies such as a return to balancing the budget. They showed an understanding of the term ‘Roosevelt recession’ and were able to explain why it happened. Weaker responses wrote about the causes of the Great Depression, with no material relevant specifically to 1937–38, with many going back to the banking crisis and the ‘First Hundred Days’ and ‘alphabet agencies’ in Roosevelt’s first term.

- (b) **To what extent were structural weaknesses in the US economy to blame for the Great Crash of 1929?**

Successful responses began with a clear definition of what might be considered as structural weaknesses and provided a logically sequenced and balanced argument. Such responses also demonstrated a good understanding of key factors such as 'buying on the margin' and 'the bull market' and used this knowledge well to produce balanced and analytical responses. Less successful responses did explain at least one side but were often more descriptive in nature or included unsupported assertions, for example the buying of shares would automatically lead to the market crashing. Weaker responses did not have a clear structure and were more of a generic description of why the Wall Street Crash happened rather than an answer specific to this question.

SECTION C: International Relations, 1870–1945

Question 7: Empire and the emergence of world powers, 1870–1919

- (a) **Explain why the USA needed to expand its naval resources after the Spanish–American War.**

This was a popular question, and many candidates explained at least one valid reason, mainly linked to the need to defend their new territories, or the role of the navy in establishing themselves as a major power. Stronger responses included explanations that were clearly defined and made links between the factors, most commonly showing the various factors stemming from the gaining of territories after the Spanish–American War. Stronger responses recognised that this war marked a watershed in US foreign relations and that the development of a more active foreign policy required the acquisition of an up-to date and effective navy.

- (b) **To what extent were economic motives the reason for imperial expansion amongst the major European nations in the late nineteenth century?**

Many candidates demonstrated a sound understanding of this topic, explaining how the need for raw materials, markets and entrepreneurial pressure on Government led to the need to acquire and defend colonial possessions. Stronger responses balanced this with issues of national pride and direct national competition fuelled by jingoistic public opinion, as well as cultural/religious motives to provide an effective counter-argument. Weaker responses focussed more on the detail of specific conflicts, such as the Boer War or the Fashoda incident, rather than explaining them in their historical context.

Question 8: The League of Nations and international relations in the 1920s

- (a) **Explain why the League of Nations was involved in Eastern Europe in the 1920s.**

The strongest answers linked the Treaty of Versailles to why the League needed to get involved in Eastern Europe – border disputes, refugees, financial crises, etc. Some weaker answers did not focus on Eastern Europe, instead describing what the League did generally in the 1920s, with only parts of the response being relevant. Other weaker answers described the problems setting up the League, or the Treaty of Versailles, and did not consider the work of the League. While most candidates had good knowledge of the work of the League, responses could have been improved in the application of that knowledge to the specific focus of Eastern Europe.

- (b) **How successful was the Washington Naval Conference of 1921–22?**

The strongest responses clearly established the aims of the conference, therefore creating a natural structure to their answer by comparing the outcome of the conference with the declared or underlying aims. This approach then led candidates to make a judgement on success or failure. Some of these responses made a judgment based on short term success vs longer term failings in the agreements made in Washington. Weaker responses did show knowledge of what was decided but made limited comments about whether that meant the conference was a success. Examples of how the conference failed tended to be less accurate or far more generalised in terms of contextual knowledge. Some responses mistakenly referred to the military restrictions placed on Germany at the Treaty of Versailles.

Question 9: China and Japan, 1912–45

- (a) **Explain why Japan joined the Anti-Comintern Pact.**

Many candidates demonstrated an understanding of the anti-Soviet and anti-Communist elements as well as Japan's own imperialist ambitions in eastern Asia. Some answers became side-tracked into Japanese foreign policy or the threat from China without linking it to why the Anti-Comintern Pact or were descriptive rather than explanatory. A significant number of responses demonstrated a good grasp of the individual issues that were involved in Japan's decision but needed to go further to explaining why joining the Anti-Comintern Pact would help.

(b) How important was the war against Japan in strengthening the position of the Chinese Communist Party by 1945?

There were some good answers to this question. Most responses explained that the KMT suffered in comparison to the CCP often by comparing the divergent tactics developed by the two sides both in relation to the Japanese and in connection with the winning of popular support from the Chinese people. Some responses also highlighted the superior propaganda of the CCP which was used to emphasise their success whilst minimising the achievements of the KMT. Some answers went further than this, with a few showing that the KMT had support from the United States, or that there were other reasons for the strength of the CCP. Few candidates attempted an overall judgement. Many responses that started well often ended abruptly, needing more balance and/or depth.

HISTORY

Paper 9489/31
Interpretations Question 31

Key messages

- The purpose of this paper is for candidates to identify and explain the historian's interpretation and approach. The text provided should be used to support points made about the messages and interpretation of the extract. The focus of the answer should be on the extract rather than the background of the topic.
- To write effective responses candidates need to develop an understanding of the argument of the extract in its entirety. It is vital that candidates allocate time to read and think about the extract. The best answers demonstrate a confidence in handling the extract which comes from the candidate working through it carefully before writing their response.
- The accurate use of historiographical labels can be helpful in providing a framework for responses. However, this proved challenging for some candidates and there was evidence of the labels being misused and misunderstood. In a significant minority of responses, discussion of the label dominated the answer to such an extent that there was little focus on the content of the extract and the interpretation of the historian.

General comments

Many responses demonstrated positive qualities and showed some ability to engage with the argument presented in the extract. The strongest responses were fully focused on the extract and demonstrated complete understanding by explaining both elements of the main argument. Most answers were complete, and many reached a reasoned conclusion. Such responses were fluent demonstrated confidence in handling the ideas of the extract and showed an ability to appreciate the argument in its entirety. These responses understood how the extract was constructed and supported their points with detailed references, often showing a perceptive reading of the extract. Many candidates demonstrated a sound approach by explaining and supporting one element of the main argument. Most understood that the extract was an interpretation and offered some support from the extract for relevant sub-messages.

Providing effective support is important. Weaker responses often offered partial quotations, such as the first few words of a sentence followed by ellipses (...). The use of partial quotations makes it difficult to see how the claims made about the interpretation are supported. Often the full content of the quotation was not discussed. In some cases, references to the extract were edited to exclude problematic arguments and so important points were missed. For instance, in **Question 2**, candidates used a partial quotation such as '*It was obvious...Himmler's men*' as evidence that the extract was structuralist. This missed the key element that '*the task would be entrusted to*', which did not suggest structuralism. Weaker responses also sometimes resulted from candidates scanning the extract quickly, looking for key words to identify the approach without reading the text carefully. In **Question 2**, references to Himmler and Heydrich were wrongly assumed to be indications of structuralism. Likewise, in **Question 3**, some candidates attached a traditionalist label to the extract based on the single phrase Stalin '*was also a predator*.'

Knowing how to detect the interpretation in the extract is key to writing an effective response. Comprehension of what the extract says is a good starting point. For instance, in **Question 3** the historian includes the statement from General Marshall that a united Germany under Soviet control would be '*the greatest threat to the security of Western nations*'. Some candidates read this as being the view of the historian, rather than Marshall, and this led them to conclude the extract blamed the USSR. Often responses selected a statement in the extract and wrote about it without showing how it related to the interpretation. Candidates should stop and ask themselves, 'what does this mean for the interpretation?' Working through the extract with a focus on the opinion of the historian will lead to a better understanding of the overall message that the historian wishes to convey. Candidates who worked through the extract on a paragraph-by-paragraph basis presented less coherent and sometimes contradictory answers. For instance, it was

common for responses to **Question 1** and **Question 2** to contain conflicting messages and interpretations. The best responses selected elements from the extract to support the entire interpretation.

Understanding the context of their chosen topic and how the historiography has developed are important tools to help candidates explain the approach and interpretation used in the extract. A significant proportion of candidates, particularly in response to **Question 2** (but also to a lesser extent in **Question 1** and **Question 3**) used the extract as an opportunity to write about the context or historiography. Such answers frequently picked out an element of the text and wrote about other ideas or issues which were related but not mentioned in the extract. The use of labels can be helpful to a candidate when trying to describe the interpretation contained in the extract. Wrongly used labels suggests some insecure understanding of the historiography. More candidates than usual seemed to focus on labelling the approach rather than discussing the interpretation. Successful responses remain focussed on the opinion of the historian and how this can be used to infer the overall interpretation.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: The origins of the First World War

The main interpretation of the historian was that Germany and Austria became increasingly willing to depart from the international norms of behaviour which had existed since the nineteenth-century and which, if followed, would have prevented war. The most effective answers recognised both aspects of the interpretation and illustrated them using material from the extract. Most responses understood that the extract argued that Germany and Austria together were held responsible for the outbreak of war. It was less common to see the idea that they deliberately breached the norms which could have kept the peace as a central part of the argument. Responses often became too focused on who was to blame, rather than why war occurred. Most responses understood the argument that Germany was deliberately pursuing a policy which would lead to war. However, dealing with Germany alone was a sub-message of the extract. The historian argued *'Germany was the main culprit'* but that *'Austria was to blame as well'*, going on to show how the relationship between the two and their joint decisions led to war. A minority of responses became overly concerned with the role of Germany and tried to make the extract fit the Fischer thesis. Some were distracted by references to Serbia and missed the key point that, although Serbia's behaviour was outside the established norms, Serbia was not blamed for the outbreak of war in this interpretation. Others misread references to Russia and argued a 'shared responsibility' approach. In fact, Russia's mobilisation was argued not as an act of aggression but instead as a *'precaution intended to warn Austria and put pressure on Germany to restrain its ally.'* Weaker answers resulted from a lack of focus on the requirements of the task. Such responses often did not focus sufficiently on the extract and included lengthy discussions of the background to the First World War. Others criticised the work of the historian and offered an alternative interpretation.

Section B: The Holocaust

This was the most popular question and many candidates identified and supported part of the main argument or relevant sub-messages. The main interpretation of the historian was that Hitler had long considered the Final Solution and that the invasion of Russia in 1941 was seen by Hitler as the opportunity to carry this out. The most effective label to use for this extract was intentionalist. Stronger answers recognised that Hitler intended to destroy the Jews and were not distracted by references to the henchmen. Few responses understood the importance of the war for the argument and some wrongly labelled this element of the argument as functionalist. Many claimed the extract was a synthesis of intentionalism and structuralism and some responses claimed it embodied an entirely structuralist approach. This was based on misreading how the role of the henchmen was portrayed, resulting in a partial understanding of the interpretation. As the most perceptive responses pointed out, Himmler and Goering were shown as acting on orders from above, rather than on their own initiative. There was no evidence in the extract of the chaotic, competitive nature of the Nazi state or of Hitler being a 'weak' dictator. Some misread the idea that *'Hitler did not issue written orders'* as an indication that there were no orders from Hitler. However, statements such as *'the task would be entrusted to Himmler's men'* and *'Goering's directive did not launch a completely new process'* strongly suggested that there was direction from above. The reference in paragraph one to Hitler's *'vision for the distant future'* was read by some candidates as meaning that Hitler was not to blame for the Holocaust. Those who took a paragraph-by-paragraph approach often argued that the first paragraph was intentionalist and then contradicted themselves by arguing that the rest of the interpretation was structuralist. Evidence of insecure labelling was noted with some candidates commenting that *'there is a mention of war which is functionalism'* and others using the terms functionalist and structuralist as meaning the same. It is important to read the whole extract carefully. Weaker answers often resulted from scanning the extract for

key words and phrases which were then used, out of context, as a basis for the entire answer. The weakest answers often selected a quote from each paragraph, explained what it meant and added some contextual knowledge. A few candidates used the extract as an opportunity to write about the views of other historians. Although contextual and historiographical knowledge was often sound in these responses, they lacked the necessary focus on the extract itself to be effective.

Section C: The origins and development of the Cold War, 1941–50

The central argument of the historian was that although both the United States and Soviet Union shared responsibility for the increasing tension over Germany, the situation was brought to a head by the issue of currency reform. The historian argued that the Americans pushed for currency reform, despite knowing that the Soviet Union opposed it and could not be included. Although blame for the outbreak of the Cold War could be attached to the Americans for pushing forward with policies which were bound to antagonise the Soviets, there was sufficient negative comment on the Soviet Union to suggest it should share the blame. The strongest responses argued that this was a post-revisionist interpretation and demonstrated their understanding by recognising relevant aspects of the interpretation, illustrating them using material from the extract. Most answers demonstrated some understanding of the extract, focusing on sub-messages, often about the Soviet Union. Weaker responses showed a flawed understanding of labels. Sound answers picked up on details from the extract such as both being to blame for the deterioration of relations over Germany. However, weaker responses but often missed the importance of the argument about currency reform. Many argued the approach was traditional, despite discussing American interests in Germany and currency reform which were pursued at the expense of the Soviet Union. Some answers took the point from the first paragraph that the Soviets were a puzzle to the West and used this as the sole basis for arguing a traditional approach without referring to why Soviet actions were 'to blame' for increasing tensions. A significant minority of candidates asserted that the extract was post-revisionist but gave a response which was entirely based on their contextual knowledge of the development of the Cold War. Such responses would benefit from spending more time on close reading of the extract and working out how the historian has supported their ideas.

HISTORY

Paper 9489/32
Interpretations Question 32

Key messages

- The purpose of this paper is for candidates to identify and explain the historian's interpretation and approach. The text provided should be used to support points made about the messages and interpretation of the extract. The focus of the answer should be on the extract rather than the background of the topic.
- To write effective responses candidates need to develop an understanding of the argument of the extract in its entirety. It is vital that candidates allocate time to read and think about the extract. The best answers demonstrate a confidence in handling the extract which comes from the candidate working through it carefully before writing their response.
- The accurate use of historiographical labels can be helpful in providing a framework for responses. However, this proved challenging for some candidates and there was evidence of the labels being misused and misunderstood. For instance, many candidates argued that the extract in **Question 3** was post-revisionist. Although this was a reasonable label to apply, to be properly developed the answer must show how post-revisionism is argued in the extract rather than offering a generic definition and trying to make the extract fit.

General comments

Many responses demonstrated positive qualities and showed some ability to engage with the argument presented in the extract. The strongest responses were fully focused on the extract and demonstrated complete understanding by explaining both elements of the main argument. Most answers were complete, and many reached a reasoned conclusion. Such responses were fluent demonstrated confidence in handling the ideas of the extract and showed an ability to appreciate the argument in its entirety. These responses understood how the extract was constructed and supported their points with detailed references, often showing a perceptive reading of the extract. Many candidates demonstrated a sound approach by explaining and supporting one element of the main argument. Most understood that the extract was an interpretation and offered some support from the extract for relevant sub-messages.

Providing effective support is important. Weaker responses often offered partial quotations, such as the first few words of a sentence followed by ellipses (...). The use of partial quotations makes it difficult to see how the claims made about the interpretation are supported. Often the full content of the quotation was not discussed. There was also some evidence that candidates had scanned the extract quickly, looking for key words to identify the approach without reading it carefully. In **Question 3**, references to '*ideological differences*' were taken as clear indications of post-revisionism. Although it was reasonable to label the extract in this way, ideology was not the focus of the argument. Some wrote generic statements such as '*the historian is post-revisionist because they blame both or neither*' without establishing how either side was blamed or showing how the historian argued that neither was to blame.

Knowing how to detect the interpretation in the extract is key to writing an effective response. Comprehension of what the extract says is a good starting point. Once a candidate has identified the interpretation, they can consider what the historian means by including certain ideas. Often responses selected a statement in the extract and wrote about it without showing how it related to the interpretation. Candidates should stop and ask themselves, 'what does this mean for the interpretation?' Working through the extract with a focus on the opinion of the historian will lead to a better understanding of the overall message that the historian wishes to convey. Candidates who worked through the extract on a paragraph-by-paragraph basis presented less coherent and sometimes contradictory answers. For instance, it was common for responses to **Question 3** to contain conflicting messages about whether the United States or the Soviet Union was to blame for the increase in tension which led to the Cold War. This resulted from

candidates writing the answer before developing a sense of the whole argument in the extract. The best responses selected elements from the extract to support the entire interpretation.

Understanding the context of their chosen topic and how the historiography has developed are important tools to help candidates explain the approach and interpretation used in the extract. A minority of candidates used the extract as an opportunity to write about the context or historiography. Such answers frequently picked out an element of the text such as *'the Soviet blockade of Berlin'* and then added a detailed but irrelevant discussion of events without referring to why it was relevant to the interpretation. Answers should be about the opinion of the historian and how this can be used to infer the overall interpretation. It is not necessary or desirable for responses to evaluate the extract and present their preferred account of the reasons for the outbreak of the Cold War, as this is not the focus of the question.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: The origins of the First World War

There were too few responses to make general comment appropriate.

Section B: The Holocaust

There were too few responses to make general comments appropriate.

Section C: The origins and development of the Cold War, 1941–50

The central argument of the historian was that, in the post-war period, American policy makers became increasingly suspicious of the Soviet Union and the mutual mistrust which arose from this made cooperation difficult. The interpretation was nuanced. It described Truman's policies as confrontational and hostile towards the Soviet Union and it was possible, if correctly focused on the arguments put forward by the historian, to argue that the extract was revisionist. Properly argued, it was also acceptable to label the extract as post-revisionist. The reference to the Czechoslovak coup at the end of the extract suggested that the Soviets were a real threat and were also to be held responsible for the increase in tension. Sound answers picked up details from the extract such as *'These failures inevitably promoted distrust between the superpowers'* to show that, according to this extract, mistrust on both sides was a key cause of the tension which led to the Cold War. Few focused on element of the argument which suggested the United States could be blamed for this. Although some responses attempted to argue that the extract was both post-revisionist and revisionist, which was not a logical position to take given the development of the historiography, many more argued in favour of post-revisionism. Most responses demonstrated partial understanding of the extract by identifying elements of the interpretation but without offering adequate support or by overemphasising sub-messages. Candidates often supported their use of the post-revisionist label by quoting the historian's comment at the beginning of the extract about *'ideological differences that had made Soviet-American relations difficult'*. While this was a valid sub-message, these answers missed the main thrust of the argument. Weaker answers resulted from a lack of focus on the extract and how the historian had supported and developed their interpretation. A significant minority of responses made an assertion that the extract was post-revisionist but gave a response which was almost entirely based on their contextual knowledge of the Cold War. For instance, the phrase *'economic factors were important'* at the start of paragraph three was noted and followed by a discussion of how economic factors contributed to the start of the Cold War with no reference to the arguments put forward in the extract. Such responses would be improved by paying closer attention to the argument presented by the historian rather than offering their own explanation of the reasons for the development of the Cold War.

HISTORY

Paper 9489/41
Depth Study 41

Key messages

- Effective answers responded directly to the specific demands of the questions rather than writing in more general terms about a topic.
- It is important that knowledge is used to support explanations and judgements rather than making comments that are simple generalisation or assertion.
- To fully respond to command words within the questions such as 'assess', 'evaluate' and 'discuss' candidates need to demonstrate their ability to deploy higher level skills such as supported judgement and evaluation.
- It is important to understand key terms in the syllabus content within their historical context.

General comments

Many candidates provided well-developed and well-supported explanations in response to the questions. However, many responses focused on explanation and did not attempt to assess the relative importance of factors or to present a clear and supported judgement. Evaluation leading to supported judgement is a higher skill than giving a series of explanations and is a requirement in a Depth Study at the top levels of the mark scheme. There is a distinction between simply giving a series of reasons for, say Stalin's rise to power, and following the instruction in the question to 'analyse' the reasons. Weaker responses were purely descriptive answers which offered no explanation and made no attempt to respond to the question.

It is also important to respond directly to the specific requirements of the question and rather than with the wider topic in more general terms. Understanding key terms is vital. For example, Mussolini's Corporate State refers to a distinct element involving the establishment of Corporations. It does not refer to the Italian state as a whole over which Mussolini ruled. Also, the term 'consolidating'; with reference to the power of the Nazi regime has a distinct meaning which is different from, say, gaining power or rising to power.

The selection of relevant material is also a key requirement. The strongest responses used material linked to the specific aspect of the question whereas weaker responses did not make a distinction between question and general topic and included material that was not directly relevant. In a Depth Study there is a requirement that the material will be chosen appropriately. There were responses for instance which went beyond Stalin's rise to power and dealt with developments in the 1930s that could not be used explain that.

Where the question was understood and material was chosen which supported explanations, responses did show some insight and there was some detailed knowledge. There was some well-developed historical writing which was clear and accurate. However, such responses could have been improved even further with a greater focus on assessment and judgement which would have given many promising answers greater depth.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: European history in the interwar years, 1919–41

1 Assess the extent to which the Corporate State achieved its aims.

Where the term 'Corporate State' was understood there were some good responses which gave a critique of a social policy which attempted to end strife between workers and employers and to create greater unity. The Corporate State was an important part of the regime and is worthy of greater study than was sometimes evident. Some did argue that the practice was at variance with the theory, but this assertion

needed to be supported with evidence in order to be credited. Some answers started by considering the Corporate State but quickly moved to a survey of other features as if the question had asked about its relative importance. Weaker responses did not focus on the Corporate State but offered a general survey of the domestic, and sometimes also the foreign policies, of the regime.

2 Analyse the reasons for Stalin gaining power by 1929.

Answers were generally focused on the reasons for Stalin gaining power and there was some interesting detail about the infighting and the significance of ideological differences. This was encouraging as the rise can too often be seen as a purely personal struggle. However, there was some tendency to see the rise to power as being played out in a more public arena, as with for example Hitler, by reference to the appeal to 'the Russian people'. Also, some weaker answers went beyond 1929 to a consideration of the events of the 1930s as though the question had asked about maintaining power. Better responses did focus on explanation and demonstrated a good understanding of different elements. Few responses offered much in the way of a judgement about the causes or factors and there was little that went beyond assertion about the relative importance of different explanations.

3 'Terror was the crucial factor in the Nazi regime consolidating its power in Germany by 1934.' Evaluate this view.

A common approach in response to this question was to establish elements of terror and then argue that there were other factors which were then explained in turn. The strongest answers did evaluate the view and engage with the key word 'crucial'. The element of judgement about the relative role of terror was not often present even in answers which otherwise showed a good understanding of different reasons. Few really engaged with the idea of consolidation. Hitler's position in January 1933 of being in office but not having full power and heading a coalition and facing the possibility of being unseated by the army or forced into a radical policy by his own supporters which might have fatally alienated the elites. Terror was often dealt with in a general way and later aspects were introduced. The significance of key elements such as the Decree for the Protection of the People and the State and the Enabling Act were not always grasped. The Night of the Long Knives was often described but its significance in terms of gaining army support was not much considered. In weaker responses there was often consideration of policies and developments which were more significant after 1934 while sometimes the focus was more on the rise to power than the actual consolidation. There were some developed explanations and some detailed knowledge in better answers and these could have been improved further by evaluating the view in the question.

4 Assess the extent to which the role and status of women changed in Britain in the period 1919–39

There were too few responses for meaningful comment.

Section B: The USA, 1944–92

There were insufficient responses to **Questions 5 to 8** for any comment on performance.

Section C: International history, 1945–92

9 'The Cuban Missile Crisis was a defeat for the Soviet Union.' Evaluate this view.

Though some responses sustained a brief discussion, many offered long descriptions of the crisis itself. Material relating to the outcome was often brief and underdeveloped. When dealing with outcomes it was important to make explicit reference to the idea of 'defeat' and not simply to outline results.

10 'The Korean War resulted in stalemate with few positive outcomes' Assess this view.

There was some overreliance on providing a narrative of events, but stronger responses engaged with the concept of 'stalemate' and also analysed whether outcomes were largely negative. However, though some answers offered some more developed explanations of the impact on Korea and on international relations, the majority of responses were restricted to limited comments following lengthy descriptions.

11 Analyse the role of Kenyatta's leadership in achieving independence for Kenya.

There were too few responses for meaningful comment.

12 Assess the view that Nasser was a ‘popular failure’ in his handling of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

There were too few responses for meaningful comment.

HISTORY

Paper 9489/42
Depth Study 42

Key messages

- Effective answers responded directly to the specific demands of the questions rather than writing in more general terms about a topic.
- It is important that knowledge is used to support explanations and judgements rather than making comments that are simple generalisation or assertion.
- To fully respond to command words within the questions such as 'assess', 'evaluate' and 'discuss' candidates need to demonstrate their ability to deploy higher level skills such as supported judgement and evaluation.
- It is important to understand key terms in the syllabus content within their historical context.

General comments

Many candidates provided well-developed and well-supported explanations in response to the questions. However, many responses focused on explanation and did not attempt to assess the relative importance of factors or to present a clear and supported judgement. Evaluation leading to supported judgement is a higher skill than giving a series of explanations and is a requirement in a Depth Study at the top levels of the mark scheme. There is a distinction between simply giving a series of Stalin's policies and the impact they had on the people of Russia and following the instruction in the question to 'analyse' the impact of the whole Soviet regime on families.

It is also important to respond directly to the specific requirements of the question and rather than with the wider topic in more general terms. Understanding key terms is vital. For example, **Question 10** asked about 'peaceful coexistence' but this was not widely understood as a term by those who attempted the question.

The selection of relevant material is also a key requirement. The strongest responses used material linked to the specific aspect of the question whereas weaker responses did not make a distinction between question and general topic and included material that was not directly relevant. In a Depth Study there is a requirement that the material will be chosen appropriately.

Where the question was understood and material was chosen which supported explanations, responses did show some insight and there was some detailed knowledge. There was some well-developed historical writing which was clear and accurate. However, such responses could have been improved even further with a greater focus on assessment and judgement which would have given many promising answers greater depth.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: European history in the interwar years, 1919–41

1 Assess the extent to which Fascist indoctrination was the main aim of Mussolini's leadership

Though some responses were little more than a general account of elements of Mussolini's rule in Italy, there were answers which showed a good understanding of indoctrination and the ideas and principles which his leadership wished to instil. However, it is important that the question's wording should have been carefully considered. The focus of the question was on 'aims' and these was not always sufficiently addressed in responses. The best responses did offer a balanced judgement between indoctrination and other aims more typical of a dictatorship or a regime intent on nationalist expansion.

2 Assess the impact that the Soviet regime had on families.

This question produced quite a variety of responses. Weaker answers offered little on families as such and dealt with various aspects of the Soviet regime. This approach did not meet the requirements of the question. Others offered a survey of elements of the regime, mainly under Stalin, and described the effects on the Soviet people without much consideration of 'families'. Stronger responses were better-focused and addressed the whole period, maintain a focus on families and drew a distinction between the earlier years of the regime and the return to more conventional views of family life. Some confused the policies of Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia. Relatively few answers engaged with the command word 'assess' and offered more explanation or description than assessment.

3 'Nazi youth policies were a failure.' Discuss this view.

Candidates demonstrated a good range of contextual knowledge of this topic. Stronger responses well-informed and begun by establishing some success criteria in order to analyse what the aims of the policies were and how far they were met. They offered some balance between areas which did show that the policies were effective and evidence, for example opposition among young people, that showed the qualities of blind loyalty and discipline which the regime hoped to inculcate were not universally accepted. There was some judgement shown by more successful responses. Weaker responses offered an outline of policies with limited assessment.

4 Evaluate the impact that the Great Depression had on the economy of Britain

There were too few responses for meaningful comment.

Section B: The USA, 1944–92

There were insufficient responses to **Questions 5 to 8** for any comment on performance.

Section C: International history, 1945–92

9 Assess the extent to which Khrushchev's policy of peaceful coexistence eased Cold War tensions

Responses to this question could have been improved with greater understanding of details of this topic. Candidates showed some uncertainty about what was meant by 'peaceful coexistence' and in some cases when Khrushchev was in power. Many answers were general surveys of the Cold War which did not address the question sufficiently.

10 'Preventing the spread of communism was the main reason for the United States' growing involvement in Vietnam,' Assess this view.

The few responses seen did not always focus on the reasons for US involvement and did not engage with the idea of a 'growing involvement'. Many candidates gave a general description of US concerns about communism description with only very limited reference to Vietnam.

11 Analyse the impact that the rivalries between the Cold War superpowers had on the civil war in Angola.

There were too few responses for meaningful comment.

12 'Dependence on oil was the main cause of the Gulf War of 1991.' Evaluate this view.

There were too few responses for meaningful comment.