

Specimen Paper Answers

Paper 2

Cambridge International AS & A Level History

For examination in 2021, 2022 and 2023



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Introduction

The main aim of this booklet is to exemplify standards for those teaching Cambridge International AS & A Level History 9489, and to show examples of very good answers.

The booklet contains answers to Specimen Paper 2 – Questions 3(b), 6(a) and 7, which have been marked by a Cambridge examiner. Each response is accompanied by a brief commentary explaining the strengths and weaknesses of the answer. These examiner comments indicate where and why marks were awarded and how answers could have been improved.

These answers should be considered in conjunction with Specimen Paper 2 and the Mark scheme.

The Specimen Paper and Mark Scheme are available to download from the School Support Hub. These files are:

9489 History 2021 Specimen Paper 02

9489 History 2021 Specimen Paper Mark Scheme 02

Past exam resources and other teacher support materials are also available on the School Support Hub www.cambridgeinternational.org/support

Assessment overview

Paper 2 Outline study

Written paper, 1 hour 45 minutes, 60 marks

Candidates answer two two-part questions from three on one of the options given.

Candidates must answer both parts of the questions they choose.

Section A: European option

Section B: American option

Section C: International option

Externally assessed

60% of the AS Level

30% of the A Level

Assessment objectives

AO1

Recall, select and deploy historical knowledge appropriately and effectively.

AO2

Demonstrate an understanding of the past through explanation, analysis and a substantiated judgement of key concepts: causation, consequence, continuity, change and significance within an historical context, the relationship between key features and characteristics of the periods studied.

Section A: European option

Question 3(b)

3 The Russian Revolution, 1894–1921

- (b) 'The most important reason for the success of the Bolsheviks in October 1917 was the mistakes of the Provisional Government.' How valid is this view? [20]

Specimen answer

When the Tsar abdicated in February 1917, there were few politicians who had the experience to take on the government of Russia so the Duma formed a Provisional Government of mainly liberal politicians headed by Prince Lvov. This government was initially popular because of promises of social and economic reform and of democratic elections for the creation of a new permanent government. Failure to deliver on these promises undoubtedly contributed to the rise of Bolshevik power as did its decision to continue with the war against Germany and Austria. However, other factors played a part including the weakness caused by the division of power between the Provisional Government and the Petrograd Soviet and the return of Lenin with a much more proactive programme for the Bolsheviks. There are, therefore, a number of elements to consider in more detail before deciding if the statement is a valid one.

When the Tsarist government ended, the people of Russia looked forward to the solution of many of the problems that had made life increasingly difficult under the Tsar. These included a lack of food, poor working conditions in the factories, lack of land for the poor peasants to farm and of course the continuing effects of the war. The decision to continue the war was highly unpopular as it kept millions of soldiers who were needed to help farm the land, away from home and meant continued shortages as food for the troops was a priority. Also the use of the railways for war supplies meant less food could be moved to the cities, so this just made conditions worse, not better. If the big summer campaign against the Austrians had gone well, then their decision may have been justified, but it was a disaster and was followed by a fresh German advance. This led to many soldiers deserting and returning home which added to the general dissatisfaction and unrest.

Specimen answer, continued

The Provisional Government also decided that the land question should be left until a more permanent government was formed and peasants reacted angrily to this by seizing land for themselves from the large landowners. The government could do nothing to stop this and their failure increased their unpopularity. The growing problems led to an outbreak of rioting in July, showing how unpopular the government had become, but the army remained loyal and the uprising was ended with many, including some leading Bolsheviks, imprisoned. Lenin was forced to go into hiding in Finland. This shows that the Provisional Government had not lost control at this point, just that they were increasingly unpopular. As a result of this Kerensky replaced Lvov as Prime Minister and he appointed General Kornilov to help restore order. Kornilov wanted to reverse some of the changes made by soldiers' committees in the army and believed that similar measures were needed to restore order in the cities and so he began to move soldiers towards Petrograd. Kerensky, fearing a takeover by Kornilov, called on all the people of the city to take up arms to defend it. This included releasing prisoners from jail to join the forces. In the end the coup was stopped by railway workers preventing the movement of troops, but this destroyed any remaining loyalty most people felt to the Provisional Government and made Kerensky look incompetent. It also armed the Bolsheviks and made them seem like the heroes that had saved the city. Thus, this latest failure of the Provisional Government represents a critical development that paved the way for a Bolshevik takeover.

However, it could be argued that the Provisional Government faced an impossible situation. If they had left the war they would immediately have lost the economic support of their western allies which would have led to further problems at home. Also, any attempt to withdraw from the war would have meant negotiating a peace with the Germans who would have demanded the surrender of large areas of valuable land, possibly including the Ukraine. The loss of resources involved in such a surrender would have been equally disastrous for the government. So it could be argued that the provisional government was in a no-win situation.

A further factor in the success of the Bolsheviks was the leadership of Lenin. He returned to Russia in April 1917 and at once told the Bolsheviks to stop co-operating with the Provisional Government. He then published the April Theses which included the demand for 'Peace, Bread and Land'. This offered the workers and peasants an answer to the things they most wanted and so more people began to support the Bolsheviks. The July Days proved a setback for them as the government was able to publish evidence that Lenin's return had been assisted by the Germans, thus suggesting that he was working for them.

Specimen answer, continued

However, the turning point came with the Kornilov affair which returned the Bolshevik leaders to public support and led to them winning control of the Petrograd Soviet. This was important as the Petrograd Soviet shared power with the Provisional Government and had, through Order No. 1, more control over the army. Membership of the Bolshevik party increased from just 20,000 in April to 200,000 by October, showing how their policies and actions enabled them to challenge the Provisional Government successfully. Lenin's ideas were important in this and so was Trotsky, who organised the Red Guards and set up a military committee of the Petrograd Soviet that provided the troops to carry out the overthrow of the Government.

However, the number of Bolsheviks was still a very small percentage of the population so if more people had supported the government, this takeover would not have been possible so Lenin's leadership alone does not account for the October Revolution.

Overall it is possible to see that though the Provisional Government did not make good decisions, the most important failure was in not winning the support and confidence of the people. They expected the Provisional Government to make big changes in Russia. The Provisional Government did not have the time or the authority to make these changes and so support steadily drifted away. Lenin did offer an alternative to the people, but even so the Bolsheviks were still only a small party. However they were well organised and when the time came there was no-one who was willing to defend the Provisional Government thus allowing the Bolsheviks to take control. The biggest single factor in the change of fortunes for the Bolsheviks was the Kornilov affair as this gave the Bolsheviks a second window of opportunity following their failure in the July days, but overall, it was a complex combination of factors, not just the mistakes of the Provisional Government, that led to the Bolsheviks' success in October 1917.

Examiner comments

The opening paragraph demonstrates, with a few key details, a clear understanding of the focus of the question and offers several alternative arguments about the factors leading to success of the Bolsheviks. In the discussion that follows, the candidate outlines some of the key problems facing the Provisional Government.

The answer highlights the effects of the Petrograd Soviet but also demonstrates that the Bolsheviks were not yet in a position to replace the Provisional Government. It also highlights the critical importance of one key factor in changing the balance of power between the Provisional Government and the Bolsheviks.

The answer provides balancing views of the actions of the Provisional Government, suggesting that they were not so much mistakes as unavoidable effects of the situation they were in. This is followed by an explanation of other factors in the success of the Bolsheviks. The answer also demonstrates limits to the effects of Lenin's leadership.

This answer would be awarded Level 5. It summarises and considers the strengths and weaknesses of different 'factors' which are summarised here, and reaches an overall judgement that accounts for both sides of the argument.

Common mistakes

- Giving narrative/descriptive accounts of the topic with only implicit reference to the question.
- Making relevant arguments which are based on factual support but which are limited in range and depth.

Section B: American option

Question 6(a)

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

(a) Explain why there was a Great Crash in 1929.

[10]

Specimen answer

The Great Crash was when shares on the New York stock exchange fell rapidly causing some banks to collapse and people lost all their savings. There were several reasons for this including the rise in demand for shares in the 1920s that encouraged more and more people to borrow money to buy shares and resulted in the end in the Great Crash. Lack of control in the banking system added to this problem.

In the 1920s, thanks to new methods of production, there were more and more things to buy and the economy boomed on this consumerism. Firms grew rapidly and people wanted to buy shares in them because the firms were making big profits for shareholders. But by the late 1920s, sales began to slow down and firms stopped making such big profits so shares became less attractive and the demand for shares began to fall. This was one reason why the market failed because once sales slowed down shares were less attractive and people started trying to sell them, but no one really wanted to buy them.

Another reason why the stock market crashed is because many people who bought shares had never had them before and thought were an easy way to make big profits. When the profits stopped, people began selling their shares whilst they were still worth a lot of money. When there were a lot of people trying to sell, the price fell and people panicked. When everyone tried to sell their shares at once, the market collapsed.

Another reason for this was the banks' policies on lending. There was no government control over the banks and they were able to lend large amounts of money to investors who wanted to buy on the margin. This meant they paid only a small deposit for their shares and borrowed the money for the rest of the payment so even people with few savings could buy shares. When share prices started falling, people panicked about not being able to repay the loans, but this just made things worse and led to the crash. So irresponsible lending by the banks was another factor that caused the crash.

Overall, all these factors are linked but it was probably the banks' policies that were most critical. If the amount they could lend was more restricted, people would not have been able

Specimen answer, continued

to build up such big debts by buying on the margin. This would have stopped the prices of shares getting so overpriced and so the market would have slowed down more normally as it did from time to time. Also, people would not have had large debts, which was one of the things that made them panic when stock prices started to fall.

Examiner comment

In this answer the candidate shows a clear understanding of the focus of the question and identifies some causal factors. The introduction is brief and focused and highlights some of the key points to be considered. In the second paragraph the candidate explains the first factor. The third paragraph is a development of the second paragraph but it also expands the point by introducing a second identified factor. Then the third factor is developed and there is a link with previous factors.

In the last paragraph, the candidate prioritises one factor (bank policies) and explains the relationship between this and the other explained factor (price of shares) and the reason why the chosen factor is more important. The answer achieves Level 4.

Common mistakes

- Not showing how the factors interreacted and not assessing their relative significance.
- Making points that are irrelevant and factually inaccurate.
- Making vague and generalised assertions and showing little engagement with the issue being examined.

Section C: International option

Question 7 (a)

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

- (a) Explain why European nations engaged in a 'scramble for Africa' during the late nineteenth century. [10]

Specimen answer

There are a number of reasons why European countries wanted to take over land in Africa at this time and most of them are to do with competing with each other for more power. More land, additional resources, better trade links and avoiding war in Europe were all part of the reasons for the Scramble for Africa and need to be looked at in more detail.

After the Franco-Prussian War and the uniting of Germany in 1870, the national boundaries in Europe, except in Balkans, became strongly fixed and only a big war could alter these. Most countries did not want war so the only way to gain more land was to look overseas. Much of Africa was undeveloped at this time so it was an obvious target for gaining more land. Having more colonies was also a symbol of importance and prestige which is why later in the century, Kaiser Willhelm of Germany was so keen on gaining 'a place in the sun' and why Britons were proud to boast that they had an empire on which 'the sun never set'. At the same time the countries of Europe were going through the industrial revolution and merchants and industrialists were eager to find new sources of raw materials and markets for their goods. Because they were in competition with people from other countries, they often needed the support and backing for their countries' government.

When Europeans first went to Africa they were often overcome by tropical diseases, but the industrial revolution helped with the discovery and creation of new cures for these diseases so it became less dangerous for Europeans to go to Africa.

Better weapons were another result of the industrial revolution. They meant that smaller forces could have a big effect over the population of Africa where they still only had primitive weapons and so could not fight back against the Europeans.

The industrial revolution was clearly a big factor in the Scramble for Africa because it led to the search for markets and raw materials and provided medicines and weapons that helped the early explorers. However, the expeditions would not have gained much if they did not have the backing of their national governments which can be seen in events like the British government protecting the Suez Canal by taking over control of Egypt, or the crisis that was

Specimen answer, continued

caused when the British and French clashed at Fashoda over the control of Sudan. So overall the key factor that links all the others were the national ambitions and rivalry of European governments. This can be confirmed by the fact that in 1884–5 the Chancellor of Germany, Bismarck, organised a special conference in Berlin and as a result of this, the whole of Africa was divided up into spheres of influence for the different countries and certain guidelines were set out claiming land.

Examiner comment

The first paragraph provides a basic introduction but it also lists a number of factors that are investigated further later on in the answer, so the candidate has already reached Level 2.

The second paragraph explains the first factor – pursuit of national interests and competition without war in Europe – so the candidate has reached Level 3 and gained 6 marks for the explained point. The second explained point – effects of industrialisation on trade – gains an extra mark. Two more factors are explained in fourth paragraph, which moves the answer to the top of Level 3, gaining 8 marks.

The answer differentiates between the importance of the different factors with relevant and specific examples and a comparative judgement, reaching Level 4 and 9 marks. Reference to the Berlin conference consolidates the comparative judgement and gains a further mark. Overall, the answer achieves Level 4.

Common mistakes

- Writing much more than is needed. This question is worth 10 marks so the answer should be about half the length of the part (b) response.
- Stronger candidates explain several significant factors but then simply state which is the most important and why. Level 4 responses require a comparative judgement which means considering why other factors are not as important as the one identified as most significant. The final paragraph of this specimen answer meets that critical requirement very clearly.

Question 7 (b)

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

(b) To what extent had the USA become a world power by 1914?

[20]

Specimen answer

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries the USA was going through a lot of changes which made it look like some of the great powers of Europe. These included increasing involvement in overseas wars and taking over territory from other countries like Spain. The big business of the USA wanted to compete with other countries to sell their goods overseas so they put pressure on the government to expand their trade links. To defend their gains, the government had to increase the size of the navy, so the USA was getting more like the great powers of Europe. However, until the First World War the USA showed little interest in European affairs and their overseas interests were limited to the Americas and some parts of Asia. So, in some ways the USA was getting more like the great powers of Europe but was not really considered as one of them.

For most of the 19th century the USA was focused on expanding across the American continent and dealing with internal conflicts like the Civil War between North and South and the Indian wars against the native population. Immigration produced a rapidly growing population so even though the American economy began to grow rapidly the internal markets were able to absorb the increasing production. This meant that the USA had limited reasons for involving itself in overseas links. In the 1820s the Monroe Doctrine had been introduced, aiming at preventing European powers from expanding their interests in South America at a time when many new states were being carved out of the Collapsing Spanish and Portuguese Empires there. In reality this had little effect as the USA had no navy to enforce this policy.

In the 1890s this all began to change for several reasons. Firstly, the government completed the expansion of the USA from the Atlantic to the Pacific so for any further gains people would have to look overseas. At the same time the economy was struck by a serious recession in 1893. Big businessmen began to realise that it was not enough to rely on selling all their goods in the USA and that it was important to develop more overseas trade, so there was a growing interest in what overseas expansion might have to offer.

The second important event was the Spanish–American War of 1898–99. For several years there had been a Civil War in Cuba and the concerns of American businessmen who had interests there led the Government to send a gunboat, the *Maine*, to help protect US interests. When the *Maine* was sunk by a mysterious explosion in Havana harbour, war broke

Specimen answer, continued

out between the USA and Spain and when Spain was defeated in 1899, the USA gained not only Cuba but Puerto Rico territories in the Pacific including the Philippines. Not only had the US suddenly gained an empire, but when the Filipinos tried to claim independence they were brutally crushed. So the USA had become an imperial power and started treating its colonies just like the European powers did. Having got a foothold in the Pacific, the USA also became keen to have a bigger share of trade with China and began to push for an 'Open Door Policy' to allow the USA the same access to Chinese markets as the major European trading nations like Britain, France and Germany.

All of these changes led to another step towards becoming a recognised 'great power' and that was the development of the navy. In the 19th century, despite the Monroe Doctrine, the USA could do little to enforce it because it did not have a big navy. And though more ships were built during the Civil War to enforce the North's blockade of the South, her navy remained quite small. However, more trade overseas and the adding of colonies meant the government was expected to provide a navy to defend these and so began a big programme of shipbuilding under Presidents McKinley and Roosevelt. In 1907 Theodore Roosevelt decided to demonstrate the strength of their new naval forces and sent the main American fleet on a global tour. Because the steel ships had been painted white it was called the Great White Fleet and visited ports around the world, taking two years to complete the journey. Much of this expansion was due to the policies of two presidents, McKinley and T. Roosevelt, who both believed strongly in expanding US influence in the world. They were supported by the popular newspapers of the time, known as the 'yellow press', who got the people behind the plans of these presidents. Roosevelt was also responsible for the USA taking over the building of the Panama Canal as he realised it provided an important link between the east and west coasts in addition to the railways and made it easier for the industrial cities of the East coast to trade with markets in the Pacific without having it go right round South America. All of these changes seem to show that by the early 20th century the USA had become a world power.

However, most of these policies were merely an expansion of the Monroe Doctrine that suggests that the USA's prime focus of overseas interest was in the Americas and their only interest in contact with European powers was in restricting their access to that sphere of influence. This is demonstrated in the extension of the Monroe Doctrine in the Roosevelt Corollary. The Monroe Doctrine had been to make sure European power stayed out of South America; the Corollary claimed for the USA the right to intervene to settle any disputes between a European country and one in the American continent. So the USA was not

Specimen answer, continued

interested in being involved in European conflicts and even though they signed agreements like the Hague protocols, setting the rules for warfare, and the Algeciras agreement about influence in North America, the USA did not intervene in the Moroccan crisis of 1911 and was quick to declare its neutrality when war broke out in 1914. It was only a direct attack on US shipping that changed the US perspective of the war in Europe by 1917. Similarly, the expansion of the navy was mainly to protect US increasing overseas commercial interests. So the tour of the Great White Fleet was more about establishing commercial links than about showing how strong the US navy was. The round of world trip was more about establishing friendly relations as a basis for developing commercial links, than it was about showing how strong the USA was.

So by 1914 the USA had collected many of the features of a great power including an overseas empire, a large modern fleet and strong commercial links with other countries. Its industries were amongst the most productive of any nation. In 1900 it became the world leading economy judged by GDP and by 1910 it had the 3rd largest fleet in the world after Great Britain and Germany. But it was not very active internationally. Its policies in Central and South America were all just about protecting its sphere of influence but there was little real inclination by other countries to challenge this. Its involvement in other international affairs had been minimal and at the start of the war in Europe in 1914 it remained firmly neutral, reflecting its long-established policy of isolation.

In summary, the USA probably had all the trapping of a world power by 1914 but had still not been fully accepted as such by the other world powers and was not actively seeking to be more involved in international affairs, especially those of Europe.

Examiner comment

The answer has a good opening paragraph which highlights possible factors that might be used to argue for and against the hypothesis posed by the question. There is also a hint of how the conflict of possibilities might be resolved. The answer goes on to explain why the USA had little interest in international status in the nineteenth century.

The third paragraph begins to provide an explanation of how the USA might achieve great power status by 1914. This is followed by three other factors in the development of great power status and they are linked together.

By the end of the fifth paragraph, there has been very good explanation using a great deal of detailed information about why the USA should be a great power, but there has not been any effective counter-argument, so the answer is still Level 3 and 12 marks. The counter-argument starts in the sixth paragraph which, given the strength of the previous section, quickly moves the answer into Level 4.

The arguments are well explained and balanced.

The conclusion begins with a reasoned comparison of the two sides of the argument and this moves the answer to Level 5. It uses analysed details to reach a judgement which resolves the conflicting views implicit in the question to reach Level 5.

Common mistakes

- Lack of balance is the most significant mistake when candidates are trying to reach Level 4. Balance does not mean having equal amounts of factors on each side of the argument, but it does mean the arguments must be presented with similar levels of detail, as they are in the specimen answer.
- In trying to establish Level 5, many candidates just make the mistake of only writing why they prefer one side of the argument without highlighting the weakness of the alternative. Both sides must be assessed for a comparative judgement to be made. Alternatively, as in the specimen answer, the response may present a judgement which takes into account both sides and then offers a resolution of the apparent conflict that accounts for all the arguments.

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