

HISTORY

<p>Paper 9389/11 Document Question 11</p>

Key messages

Successful candidates:

- read the source with great care
- stand back from the source and decide its overall message
- focus on evaluation rather than narrative.

General comments

Most candidates knew that the **(a)** question requires an identification of similarities and differences. Most knew that answers to **(b)** questions require explanation of how each source either supports or challenges the prompt in the question. Most appreciated that they need to support the points they make with quotations from the relevant sources. When answering **(a)**, in particular, less successful answers often made incorrect points of comparison: they claimed similarities for points which were not actually similar and differences for points which were not really different. If the comparisons could not be properly validated, they could not be credited. This was less of an issue with regard to **(b)** questions. A minority of candidates interpreted the **(b)** question, which always asks about Sources A to D, i.e. all four sources, as requiring examination of only Sources A and D. Some candidates ran out of time, usually after writing introductions which contributed little to their answer. If candidates are to do justice to their knowledge and understanding and subject skills, effective time management is an essential general skill.

When reading the sources, candidates need to keep in mind which person or organisation is being referred to when pronouns such as 'he' or 'they' or 'it' are used. If candidates misread these details, it can lead to them misunderstanding the content and perspective of the source altogether. In addition, while candidates need to read the sources carefully, sentence by sentence, once they have done so they also need to stand back from the source and decide its overall message. A good example of where this is necessary was the **Section C** question on the League of Nations. Many took Source D as indicating that the British government was in favour of the USA joining the League of Nations. They usually quoted the first part of the second line – 'the USA should be allowed to join the League' – in doing so. They neglected the various qualifications made to that statement, both in the sentence itself and throughout the source. Whether the USA does or does not join the League is not the focus of Source D. Source D is concerned about the effect of the proposals of the US Senate on the workings of the League. It fears that, if accepted, they would threaten the success of the League. Source D's attitude towards the League is one of support. Nowhere does Source D actually say so. Here use of contextual knowledge could have helped. In November 1919, the British government was broadly in favour of the League.

Thus the key message to candidates is to read the sources very carefully, making sure you understand both the particular details of the source and its overall argument.

Comments on specific questions

Section A, the European Option: Italy in 1848

1 (a) Compare and contrast Sources B and D on the attitude of the Pope towards the events of 1848 and 1849.

When it comes to identifying similarities and/or differences, one is often easier to identify than the other. In this case, the differences were clear-cut. Source B, from the Pope himself, was taken from the document which marked his return to conservatism after a brief flirtation with liberalism. He claimed he did not want to fight Austria for religious reasons, because Austria was a Roman Catholic state. Source D was from a left-wing nationalist who would almost certainly be critical of the Papacy. He maintained that the Pope avoided going to war for secular reasons, to preserve the Papal States against an expansionist Piedmont. Candidates found similarities harder to find. The main one was quite simple: the Pope was opposed to war with Austria. Though Source B shows the Pope to be against a united Italy, no such point is made in Source D, meaning that no valid comparison can be made on this matter.

1 (b) How far do Sources A to D support the view that Austria was the biggest obstacle to change in Italy?

The question asks about 'change in Italy'. Most assumed that meant a united Italy. However, it could mean a less radical change in the status quo, e.g. the expansion of Piedmont. These different outcomes enabled different interpretations of Source D, for example. If the change was Italian unity, then Source D could be seen as a challenge to the hypothesis, monarchical rivalry being the greater obstacle. If the change was the expansion of Piedmont, then the source could be seen as supporting the hypothesis: defeat of Austria was essential to the expansion of Piedmont. Most candidates, however, took change to mean the unification of Italy. Source C was perhaps the source which best supported the hypothesis: the king of Naples would not go to war against Austria if it were not a major obstacle to change in Italy. Source A sees ambitions of Italian rulers as more important, an analysis with which Source D agrees. Source B shows the Pope strongly opposed to change. Most candidates were able to identify sources on both sides of the arguments, which ensured they reached Level 3.

Attempts at evaluation were usually generic, sometimes inappropriately so. This was the case with Source B, which many argued was reliable because it was a primary source and from the Pope himself. In fact, Source B was extremely unreliable. Even if candidates knew nothing about the Pope, they could use the provenance of Source B and some relevant contextual knowledge to make some specific points to evaluate the source. The edict was published in April 1848, a month when popular revolutions were taking place across Italy. The Pope was the ruler of much of central Italy. At that time the Pope would want to protect his own interests. Thus, any statement he made would be a partial defence of his position rather than an impartial account of events at the time. Evaluation along these lines raised answers to Level 4.

Section B, the American Option: The Sack of Lawrence 1856.

2 (a) To what extent do Sources B and C agree about the reaction of the people of Lawrence to the attack by the Border Ruffians?

The two detailed sources gave plenty of opportunities to identify similarities and differences. These sources stimulated answers which seemed correct but on careful reading often were not. The best example of misleading similarities was the argument that both sources showed that the women of Lawrence were left to defend themselves, had been abandoned by their menfolk. This was not so. Source B, which says that some young men stayed in to defend the city, also says 'it was thought prudent for women and children to leave the town'. They went to College Hill West, where they 'were fired upon'. (Incidentally, quite a number of candidates took this latter phrase to mean that women were killed.) Had candidates argued that the women were left unprotected, a different point, they would have been correct, so long as they chose the relevant extract from both sources to support their assertion. Even if some candidates struggled with similarities, most were able to explain the most striking difference: that Source B saw the men of Lawrence as brave while Source C labelled them cowards.

2 (b) How far do Sources A to D support the assertion that ‘a civil war had commenced in Kansas’?

Successful answers benefited when candidates reflected for a few moments on what is meant by ‘civil war’. It involves organised forces within a state challenging the government of that state, as was clearly the case in the USA in 1861. Whether civil war existed in Kansas in 1856 was another matter. Most candidates equated civil war with fighting. Thus they argued that sources A, B and D all support the argument that civil war had broken out in 1856, while Source C did not because Source C says the men of Lawrence ran away. A more careful reading of A and B shows that the attack on Lawrence was not a civil war because the attack was being led by a US marshal with authority to act given to him by a US District Court. According to these sources, the attack was upholding law and order, not challenging it. Source C reinforces this point in its opening sentence. The only source supporting the thesis turns out to be Source D, from which the quotation in the question is taken.

As for source evaluation, candidates who gave more specific evidence gave the strongest and most successful arguments. Source A is very partial. Atchison is a politician, not a soldier, and a US politician at that. The only evidence that he is a soldier comes from Source B and Mrs Robinson might have had her own motives for giving him the title of General. He is careful to mix his militant rhetoric with the more moderate demand to obey the law. As Source B shows, some of his commands are carried out: the Free State Hotel is destroyed, the printing presses – not the press, i.e. journalists, as one candidate wrote – thrown into the river. Source B was used by candidates to prove Source A is more reliable than it might first appear to be. Some argued that Source C was a Northern source, perhaps misled to the irony referred to earlier. It is thus one-sided, unreliable. In this case, Source B undermines the account provided by Source C. Many argued that Source D was the most reliable of sources because it was written in 1857. This is only a few months after the sack of Lawrence and it is the date of publication of the book, not its writing. Thus the date is no great help in evaluating Source D. The reference to the caning of Sumner, however, is accurate and helps ensure the reliability of Source D.

Section C, International Option: American Opinions Regarding the Proposed League of Nations, 1919.

3 (a) Compare and contrast the attitudes towards the proposed League of Nations expressed by the US Senate (Source C) and the British government (Source D).

In this case, candidates found it easier to identify similarities than differences. This was because the views of Source D were expressed via its commentary on the views of the US Senate, as expressed in Source C. Less successful answers focused more on a comparison of views of the US Senate’s attitudes than on the question, which was to miss the point of the question. Some argued that both sources said that the USA should not join the League. In reality, neither does. Source C expresses doubts about the USA joining the League. Source D expresses UK doubts about US doubts. The main difference is that Source C saw the League entirely in terms of US national interests whereas Source D focused on wider international interests as affected by US attitudes. Broadly, Source C is critical of the League, Source D supportive, as reflected the different national attitudes and interests of the two states in 1919.

3 (b) ‘In 1919 the American people did not support the proposed League of Nations.’ How far do Sources A to D support this view?

Many candidates identified that Sources A and B both provide evidence that the American people did support the League. The first line of Source A shows clear popular support for the League, even if the source later qualifies that support. Source B shows President Wilson taking an object entitled the League to the American people, bypassing the US Congress as he does so. The presumption of the cartoon is that he expects to get the support of the American people for the League. On the other hand, Source C shows the US Senate’s lack of support for the League. Source D is more even-handed. It is well aware of the reservations expressed by Source C and yet finishes by saying that the President intends to reject the Senate’s arguments. In this respect, Source D reinforces the message of Source B. And yet contextual knowledge shows that Source C won the argument. This does not mean that the US people rejected the League, just that their representatives did so.

In weaker responses source evaluation was usually generic. Many argued that Source D is reliable because it came from a non-American source and thus had no special interest to defend or to further. Others argued Source B was unreliable because it was a cartoon and thus intended to

entertain rather than reliably inform. Both are too general. For Source D, its content needs assessing against either the other sources or candidates' contextual knowledge. The latter tells us that the UK government did have an interest to further; it wanted the League to be a success and saw its wartime ally, the USA, as essential to that success. Thus its account is as partial as any other. And Source B can be shown to have some reliability by mentioning the national tour that President Wilson did undertake to gain support for the League of Nations.

HISTORY

Paper 9389/12
Document Question 12

Key messages

Successful candidates:

- read the source with great care
- stand back and consider its overall message
- focus on evaluation rather than narrative.

General comments

Most candidates knew that the **(a)** question requires an identification of similarities and differences. Most knew that answers to **(b)** questions require explanation of how each source either supports or challenges the prompt in the question. Most appreciated that they need to support the points they make with quotations from the relevant sources. When answering **(a)** in particular, some less successful answers made inappropriate points of comparison: they claimed similarities for points which were not actually similar; they claimed differences for points which were not really different. If the comparisons could not be properly validated, they could not be credited. This was less of an issue with regard to **(b)** questions. A minority of candidates interpreted the **(b)** question, which always asks about Sources A to D, i.e. all four sources, as requiring examination of only Sources A and D. Some candidates ran out of time, usually after writing introductions which contributed little to their answer. If candidates are to do justice to their knowledge and understanding and subject skills, effective time management is an essential general skill.

Candidates also need to make sure they know which person or organisation is being referred to when pronouns such as 'he' or 'they' or 'it' are used. For example, in Source D of the **Section A** question, on Bismarck and the Schleswig-Holstein crisis, who is the 'our' which provided the arms to defeat Denmark? And who is the 'us' mentioned at the end of that sentence? Is it Prussia or is it Germany? The difference is significant. The war is usually seen as a Prussian victory. Source C talks about the main battle of the war, at Duppel, being a victory for Prussian troops. In reality, both Austria and Prussia provided troops to fight Denmark. Thus the 'we' is Germany. (On a point of detail, the only German troops at Duppel were Prussian.) Once this point is clarified, a major contrast can be drawn between Sources C and D: Source D sees the war as a victory for Prussia, Source C as a victory for Germany. 'Us' is repeated in the third line of Source D, a reference which makes the identity as being Germany, not Prussia. A similar point arises with regard to the 'we' used by Bismarck at the start of Source B, even if in this case the clarification is less significant. Is Bismarck using the 'royal 'We'' to talk about himself or is he speaking on behalf of the Prussian government and state?

The other main issue concerns understanding the main message of the source. While candidates need to read the sources carefully, sentence by sentence, once they have done so they also need to stand back from the source and decide its overall message.

Comments on specific questions

Section A, the European Option: Bismarck and the Schleswig-Holstein Crisis.

1 (a) To what extent do Sources C and D have a similar attitude towards the consequences of the war with Denmark?

The two extracts came from similar sources: the liberal middle class. Source C was from an individual who supported Prussia's leadership of the movement to unify Germany, Source D from a German-wide group which is unlikely to be so pro-Prussian. It is worth noting the provenance of Source D, which reveals that the Liberal group is based in Frankfurt, the home of the failed German Revolution of 1848–49, led by Liberals of the time. Source D is thus anxious about the consequences of the Danish war for Germany while Source C delights in the benefits it has brought for Prussia and thus for Germany. Source D is also critical of Prussia while Source C sings its praises. The clearest similarity between the two sources is that they both see the war as helping to revive German national pride: Source C talks of its 'invigorating' effect, Source D of raising the 'national spirit'. Most candidates were able to identify these similarities and contrasts. Finally, Source C's opening remark about Bismarck is irrelevant as there is no point of contrast in Source D. The argument that one source mentions Bismarck while the other does not, as some candidates argued, is an invalid contrast and received no credit.

1 (b) How far do Sources A to D support the view that Bismarck's main aim was the expansion of Prussia?

The source which is crucial to a balanced answer is Source B. The other three sources broadly support the assertion that Bismarck's main aim was to expand the power of Prussia. Source B is the one source which clearly challenges the assertion. It argues that Bismarck's main aim was to maintain the status quo by defeating revolutionary ideas, above all liberalism and perhaps socialism, which was beginning to form in the 1860s. (Bismarck does seem to accept a form of nationalism so long as it appeals to 'the respectable part of the nation' only, by which he probably means the conservative upper middle class.) Less successful candidates misinterpreted Source B, which limited the Level, and thus the mark, which their answer could be awarded. Such candidates might have offset their analysis of Source B had they properly evaluated the source. Source B comes from Bismarck himself. Those who argued that this fact made Source B reliable did not receive credit for doing so. Bismarck is a notably untrustworthy source. In this case, he is writing to the Prussian ambassador to the Habsburg Empire. (Candidates need to know as part of their contextual knowledge that Vienna is the Habsburg capital.) He is writing in the summer of 1864, the year when the two states went to war against Denmark. He would be wanting to reassure Prussia's Austrian ally that he had no plans to overturn the status quo in Germany, as some suspected. He is briefing the Prussian ambassador to that effect. Its author, its date and its recipient together mean that the content of Source B cannot be trusted. This kind of specific evaluation, based on context and provenance, achieved a Level 4 mark.

Section B, the American Option: The Wilmot Proviso

2 (a) How far do Sources B and D agree about the aims of the Wilmot Proviso?

Good answers explained that the two sources were similar in agreeing that the Wilmot Proviso was intended to halt the expansion of slavery into the newly-acquired lands of the Mexican Cession. No one pointed out that both agreed that the Proviso was intended to have profound, radical consequences for the USA. Forbidding the expansion of slavery would have huge consequences for the North-South balance of the USA, which until then so carefully engineered. Wilmot and his supporters intended such consequences. The opponents of the Proviso, as evidence Source D, also identified the profound consequences it was intended to achieve. The two sources disagreed about what exactly those radical changes would be. Source B said it was to halt the expansion of slavery. The best answers used contextual knowledge about the huge areas of land gained from Mexico to help illustrate the point. Source B also hinted at the eventual goal of abolition of slavery. Source C, on the other hand, argued that the intended consequences were even more profound, namely the destruction of the South by very brutal means. The provenance of Source D showed its Southern origins, the Floridian newspaper probably exaggerating for effect, to scare its white readership into opposition against the Proviso.

2 (b) How far do Sources A to D support the assertion that there was never any chance that the Wilmot Proviso would pass?

The negative focus of the question – that the Wilmot Proviso would never pass – was noted by good answers. Source A challenged the assertion, argued that the Wilmot Proviso might one-day pass. It revealed that the Proviso had already been approved by the US House of Representatives. The Ohio newspaper asserted most strongly that the Congress would never pass a law authorising slavery in the new lands. There was a chance that it might pass one preventing the expansion of slavery, however. Source B argued both for and against the possible future passage of the Wilmot Proviso. Opposition in the Senate, which could be expected to continue as its representatives were fixed at two per state, taking no account of population changes, would prevent it ever being passed. On the other hand, the principle of no expansion is fixed because the House (of Representatives) would always approve the Proviso. This meant a constitutional deadlock, which meant on balance that the Proviso was unlikely to pass. Both Source C and Source D supported the assertion because they revealed the extent to which the South was prepared to go in order to prevent its passage. Source C suggested using the sword to block the Proviso, Source D wanted to ensure a Southern President who presumably could use his veto powers. Candidates were able to make some of these points on either side of the argument. Evaluation of the sources in moderate answers was generic: ‘this is a Southern newspaper and so is biased’ was such an assertion. Higher marks were awarded where evaluation was more specific, using provenance and contextual knowledge to show how reliable the content of a source is. Thus, for example, the relevant aspects of the Compromise of 1850 could be used to evaluate Source C, which talks of the possibility of peaceful compromise defeating the Proviso. Did popular sovereignty mean the defeat of the Proviso? In effect, it did not. None of the new Territories chose slavery. The Wilmot Proviso had been introduced, if not in name.

Section C, International Option: Different Interpretations of the League of Nations’ Covenant.

3 (a) Compare and contrast Sources A and B as evidence of American attitudes towards joining the League of Nations.

The sources in question were extracts from the respective platforms of the Republican and Democratic parties. The Democrats were opposed to joining the League of Nations because to do so would involve the USA in disputes in which it had no direct interest and thus limit its independence. The Republicans were prepared to join, arguing that to do so would help preserve peace and would not jeopardise US independence. Both, however, agreed that compromising American independence was undesirable. They also agreed that maintaining world peace was a desirable goal. Good answers were able to identify both similarities and differences.

3 (b) How far do Sources A to D support the view that the League of Nations’ Covenant threatened the independence of member states?

The question’s focus is the Covenant of the League of Nations. Some less successful candidates overlooked that fact and wrote an answer which considered whether the League of Nations threatened national independence or not. Such answers usually quoted examples of the League becoming involved in disputes over the Aaland Islands or Corfu. To do so was to write off the point. The question is not just about the USA. Some candidates saw it as such and thus wrote answers which were too narrow in focus. For the majority of better answers which properly focused on the Covenant, the sources divided quite neatly; on the surface, Sources A and D supported the assertion, Sources B and C challenged it. Candidates found the easiest sources to evaluate for reliability were Sources A and B. Both were election platforms, intended to win popular support in forthcoming Presidential election. Thus their reliability is open to grave doubt. The question of joining the League of Nations was a key issue in that election, the US Senate having rejected membership the previous November. Given the importance of the issue, the platforms were bound to exaggerate for effect. Evaluating the remaining sources, C and D, was less straightforward. Proper evaluation of either Source A or Source B, however, was enough to ensure Level 4 marks.

HISTORY

Paper 9389/13
Document Question 13

Key messages

Successful candidates:

- read the source with great care
- stand back and consider its overall message
- focus on evaluation rather than narrative.

General comments

Most candidates knew that the **(a)** question requires an identification of similarities and differences. Most knew that answers to **(b)** questions require explanation of how each source either supports or challenges the prompt in the question. Most appreciated that they need to support the points they make with quotations from the relevant sources. When answering **(a)** in particular, some less successful answers made inappropriate points of comparison: they claimed similarities for points which were not actually similar; they claimed differences for points which were not really different. If the comparisons could not be properly validated, they could not be credited. This was less of an issue with regard to **(b)** questions. A minority of candidates interpreted the **(b)** question, which always asks about Sources A to D, i.e. all four sources, as requiring examination of only Sources A and D. Some candidates ran out of time, usually after writing introductions which contributed little to their answer. If candidates are to do justice to their knowledge and understanding and subject skills, effective time management is an essential general skill. Candidates need to keep in mind which person or organisation is being referred to when pronouns such as 'he' or 'we' or 'they' or 'it' are used. The best example can be found in Source C of the **Section B** question, on Kansas after the Kansas-Nebraska Act. Some candidates decided that 'they' in the second line referred to the South while 'us' in third line and 'we' in the fourth referred to the North. This was despite the source being identified as a Southern source, from New Orleans. This radical misreading affected candidates' answers to both **(a)** and **(b)** questions, limiting the marks they could be awarded.

While candidates need to read the sources carefully, sentence by sentence, once they have done so they also need to stand back from the source and decide its overall message. In the **Section A** question on Bismarck and Austria, Source D gives details of discussions in the Austrian government in the months before Austria went to war with Prussia. One minister calls for Austria to 'show our teeth', which implies Austria was at least partly responsible for the 1866 war. Two other ministers argue the opposite, for a peaceful solution and against war. So what is the main message of the extract? At the very least, it shows the Austrian government to be divided. As of February 1866, Austria could not be responsible for war. Thus Source D supports the argument that Prussia provoked the war. A similar example can be found in Source C of the same topic, as explained below.

Source D of **Section B** also shows the need to identify the main message. Many candidates argued that the Source supported the argument that pro-slavery forces only had themselves to blame. They based their argument on the first two lines, which stated that the slaveholders had every possible advantage. The main point of Source D, however, is that the Anti-slavery forces won the day because their better organisation overcome the initial advantages that the pro-slavery groups had.

Comments on specific questions

Section A, the European Option: Bismarck and Austria

1 (a) To what extent do Sources A and C agree on Bismarck's views on conflict with Austria?

Source A came from Bismarck himself and six years before he became Prussian Prime Minister. At that time, he was a marginal figure, away from Berlin and the centre of Prussian power, having an image as a reactionary conservative. Source C came from the Austrian ambassador in Berlin almost exactly ten years later, four years into Bismarck's premiership and just months away from the Austro-Prussian war. By then, Bismarck had established a reputation as an awkward and effective politician who was well able to advance the interests of Prussia. The similarities between the content of the two sources were more obvious to most candidates than were the differences. In both, Bismarck talks of war with Austria, seems to want war with Austria. However, there are important differences between the two. In Source A, Bismarck sees the war, which he agrees to be unavoidable, as likely to occur later rather than sooner. In Source C he wants war sooner rather than later. The time gap between the two sources probably explains the difference. In 1856, at the time of the Crimean war, Bismarck, on the fringes of the Prussian government, could not be seen advocating immediate war against the leading state of Germany. In 1866, as the head of the Prussian government which had already fought one war in 1864, he believed the time to be right – and a few months later the war broke out. Few candidates outlined these contextual differences between the two sources.

1 (b) How far do Sources A to D show that Prussia was responsible for war with Austria?

Some candidates dismissed Source A as irrelevant, as it was the views of Bismarck before he became Prussian Prime Minister. However, the source does give some idea about the thinking of the politician many see as responsible for the 1866 war, and thus needs analysing. Many candidates argued that Source A shows Prussia to be responsible for war with Austria and thus supporting the hypothesis. In this source, Bismarck argues that Austria will not give way to Prussian claims for status which matches the great progress it has made. Eventually, Bismarck argues, Prussia will have to fight Austria but only because Austria will not back down. Thus war will be the result of Austrian obstinacy and not Prussian aggression. Source A challenges the assertion rather than supports it. Candidates found Source B hard to deal with because it did not directly mention war and its author was neither Austrian nor Prussian. If war is implied in the final sentence of Source B – 'there seems to be no chance of any reasonable agreement between the two' – then the Prime Minister of Wurttemberg sees both Austria and Prussia as equally responsible for its outbreak. In this respect Source B does not support the assertion. Source C does broadly support the hypothesis that Prussia was responsible for war with Austria. Such an argument is only to be expected from the Austrian ambassador writing to his minister in Vienna in the weeks before war actually breaks out. There is a qualification to this argument in that Source C also mentions that the Prussian king is reluctant to fight. However, the main message of Source C is that, assuming Bismarck's dominance of the Prussian government, Prussia is set on war. Source D has been discussed in the section on key messages at the start of this report. Better answers used contextual knowledge to help evaluate some or all of the sources. Anything from Bismarck is unreliable, almost by definition. Source A is no exception. Diplomatic dispatches such as Source C are usually unreliable. However, contextual knowledge shows that Bismarck did manipulate events in 1864–66 to push Austria into a corner from which the only escape was to declare war – which was what Austria did later in 1866. The Austrian disunity in early 1866 was eventually replaced by unity but only in the face of intensifying Prussian aggression. The evaluated sources show that Prussia was indeed responsible for war with Austria.

Section B, the American Option: Kansas after the Kansas-Nebraska Act: Slave or Free?

2 (a) To what extent do Sources B and C agree about the reasons why Kansas would become a slave state?

Source B listed four reasons why Kansas was bound to become a slave state. Weaker answers copied out the four points, which ensured their work reached Level 1 of the generic mark bands. Level 2 requires identification of either similarities or differences compared with the other source. A key point of Source C was the division between the pro-slavery forces within Kansas and similar forces across the rest of the South. According to Source C, the South had been doing little to support the struggle to introduce slavery into Kansas. This was perhaps the main difference between the two

sources. Overlooking this point limited answers to Level 2. Similarities to be identified included the failure of abolitionists to advance their cause in Kansas.

2 (b) How far do Sources A to D support the assertion that the Pro-slavery forces only had themselves to blame for their failure to make Kansas a slave state?

Sources C and D caused some candidates problems of understanding. Those who did interpret these sources correctly were able to identify sources on both sides of the argument. In answering (b), Source D became really important because it was the only one which clearly challenged the hypothesis. It argued that the Emigrant Aid Society effectively overcame all the advantages possessed by the pro-slavery forces, which were considerable. Source D was also the most straightforward of the four to evaluate. Who was its author? No less than the founder of the Emigrant Aid Society. When was he writing? In 1889, some thirty years after the event. He was bound to exaggerate, bound to romanticise the role of the society which he founded. Cross-referencing to the other sources, more contemporary with the events being analysed, show that emigration from the East was ineffective against pro-slavery forces. Source D is most unreliable. And yet, one key piece of contextual knowledge tells us that Kansas did eventually become a free state. Maybe Source D is that unusual source, unreliable and yet accurate.

Source B is an unorthodox source in that it argues that something would happen which did not actually happen. It does, however, provide a useful framework for answering the question. Source B's expectations did not materialise because all four points it made proved to be mistaken: the South was divided; eastern emigration did prevail; the federal government did not intervene in Kansas on the side of slave-owners; there were free-state newspapers in Kansas. The remaining three sources could have been used to help question the points made in Source B, as could relevant contextual knowledge. No candidate had the insight or confidence to take this approach, however.

Section C, International Option: The League of Nations in the Period from 1936 to 1938.

3 (a) Compare and contrast the views of Sources A and B about collective security.

Most candidates were able to identify the main difference and similarity. Both Hymans and Chamberlain believe that collective security has failed, that therefore the League of Nations was greatly diminished. As both were making this point in 1936, the year of the Abyssinian crisis, they could hardly do otherwise. The main difference was that Hymans, in Source A, was more optimistic than Chamberlain in Source B. Hymans talked about applying collective security more realistically. Chamberlain seemed to abandon collective security completely, arguing that its failure meant the end of the peace-making role of the League, though not the League itself.

3 (b) 'In the period from 1936 to 1938, it became clear that the League of Nations could never succeed.' How far do Sources A to D support this view?

The reference to the period from 1936 to 1938 provokes thoughts of dramatic international developments: Italy's occupation of Abyssinia, Germany's occupation of the Rhineland, Austria and the Sudetenland, the Spanish Civil War and Japan's invasion of China. All indicated the breakdown of collective security and the return of national security and defence expenditure, as shown by Source D. The best answers referred to these events, and used them to evaluate the four sources. The end of collective security meant the failure of the League of Nations in its best-known role. All four sources made this point and thus supported the assertion as far as it applied to 1936–38. The hypothesis under examination was that the League of Nations could never succeed, which is a different matter. There were two ways in which the League might still have a role, even after 1936–38. One was if it were reformed or revived in some way. Both Source A and Source D make this point, Source D via the comment on the tombstone. The other was if the League limited its role and concentrated on its other roles, which is what Source B argued. Good answers were able to make some of these points on either side of the argument, thus ensuring Level 3 marks. Many, however, misinterpreted the cartoon. They took the £43,250,000 defence estimates drawn on the wreath as being money to be spent on or by the League of Nations. It was in fact the expenditure that Britain was having to spend on its own defences. The caption explains that that expenditure been much less had the League been alive and collective security functioning properly.

HISTORY

Paper 9389/21
Outline Study 21

Key messages

- In **Part (a) questions**, candidates should focus on the key issue of causation, analysing a wide range of factors to show how they inter-reacted and reaching a judgement regarding their relative significance.
- In **Part (b) questions**, candidates should address the question rather than the topic, maintain a balanced approach and ensure that arguments are appropriately supported.

General comments

In line with the requirements of the examination, most candidates attempted two complete questions from one Section of the paper. Generally, candidates deployed their time effectively, devoting an appropriate amount to each question. Most candidates were able to demonstrate sound factual knowledge in at least some of their answers, but less successful candidates were unable to sustain consistent quality across all four of their responses. It was not uncommon for candidates to produce satisfactory or better responses to one part of a question, yet weak (and, in some cases, no) answers to the other part. There is a fundamental difference in focus between Part **(a)** and Part **(b)** questions. Many candidates clearly appreciated this and attempted the two Part **(a)** questions consecutively, followed by the two Part **(b)** questions (or vice-versa).

Part (a) Questions – These questions are about causation. Effective answers showed detailed knowledge and understanding of the reasons why a specific event occurred or why someone adopted a particular course of action. Invariably, causation can only be adequately explained by an appreciation of the combined effect of a number of factors, both long and short-term. The most effective responses were clearly focused on the key issue of causation and contained analysis of a wide range of factors, demonstrating how they inter-acted and developing judgements regarding their relative significance. Most candidates were able to identify and explain some relevant causal factors, but tended to drift into narrative/descriptive accounts of *how* something occurred rather than *why*. The weakest responses were characterised by mono-causal explanations, a tendency to drift into irrelevancy and factual inaccuracy and/or confused chronology; they were over-reliant on vague and generalised assertions lacking appropriate factual support.

Part (b) Questions – Good answers showed awareness that historical issues can be interpreted in many different, and, often, contradictory ways. For an interpretation to be valid, it must be based on a thorough analysis of appropriate and accurate factual material, and must show due consideration of alternative viewpoints. These questions require candidates to develop such interpretations, to make reasoned judgements and to justify their arguments in a clear, consistent and sustained manner. The most impressive responses were based on the development of consistent and balanced arguments, explicitly focused on the requirements of the specific question, leading to reasoned and fully-supported conclusions. Less successful responses fell into one of three categories – narrative/descriptive accounts of the topic with only implicit reference to the actual question; unbalanced arguments based on consideration of only one interpretation of the issue; relevant arguments based on factual support which was limited in range and depth. The weakest responses were often the result of confusion over the requirements of the question; they were characterised by factual inaccuracy and/or chronological confusion, assertions based on inadequate factual support or a tendency to drift into irrelevance (often by ignoring timeframes given in the question).

Comments on specific questions

SECTION A: EUROPEAN OPTION; Modern Europe, 1789–1917

1 France, 1789–1814

(a) *Why was Napoleon able to become First Consul?*

Most candidates were able to refer to Napoleon's perceived success as a military commander, his astute use of propaganda and his growing popularity with the French people. The most impressive responses went beyond these rather generalised factors, for example by analysing the role of Sieyès and demonstrating the significance of post-revolutionary governments' failure to provide stability. A number of candidates, misinterpreting the requirements of the question, described how Napoleon became Emperor and/or the reforms he instituted in that role.

(b) *To what extent were Robespierre and the Jacobins responsible for the political instability in France between 1789 and 1795?*

Most responses were confined to narrative/descriptive accounts of the actions taken by the Jacobin government, most notably the 'Reign of Terror', concluding that these radical measures were entirely responsible for the political instability in France. More effective responses were able to analyse the impact of Jacobin rule in the context of the social, political and economic problems which faced France in 1789, facilitating a more balanced approach to the question. Weak responses were characterised by over-reliance on vague and generalised assertions.

2 The Industrial Revolution, c.1800–1890

(a) *Explain why the Industrial Revolution affected the standard of living.*

The full implications of the term 'standard of living' were appreciated by the best answers which focused on domestic conditions. More moderately scoring responses were restricted to descriptions of the working and living conditions endured by the urban working classes in the period before legislation designed to improve these conditions began to have an impact. Some impressive responses were based on a wider interpretation of the requirements of the question, analysing the impact of the Industrial Revolution on different classes at different time periods.

(b) *'Without changes in transport there would have been no industrial revolution'. How far do you agree?*

Most mid-range answers focused on the development of railways, limited by generalised and undeveloped assertions regarding their impact (for example, that railways were vital for the movement of goods and people – a common misapprehension was that railways were important because they enabled the new urban working class to commute to work). Some candidates appreciated the need to consider other forms of transport, such as roads and canals, but their responses were primarily narrative in approach with little explicit reference to the requirements of the actual question.

3 The Origins of World War I, c.1900–1914

(a) *Why did the Germans develop the Schlieffen Plan?*

The majority of mid-range or weak responses tended to describe the plan, its implementation and its outcomes, a narrative approach which was, at best, of implicit only relevance to the actual question. Such responses were often characterised by factual weaknesses and unsupported assertions. For example, it was widely claimed that the Schlieffen Plan originated in 1914 as a response to Russian mobilisation following Austria-Hungary's declaration of war on Serbia. A common assertion was that Germany developed the plan because of its desire to 'conquer' the whole of Europe. While many candidates argued that Germany was afraid of facing war on two fronts, the most impressive responses provided detailed explanations of why this seemed a distinct possibility and how this fear led to the initiation of the Schlieffen Plan.

(b) *'The naval race was an important cause of the First World War'. How far do you agree?*

Most candidates were able to describe the naval race, and the best responses addressed the key issue of the extent to which it should be regarded as an important cause of World War I. Focused analysis was generally confined to the undeveloped assertion that the naval race led to increased tension between Britain and Germany. The most impressive responses were based on a genuine attempt to evaluate the impact of the naval race in context, demonstrating how it inter-reacted with other factors which culminated in the outbreak of war in 1914. A large number of less successful focussed on the causes of World War I generally, with little or no reference to the implications of the naval race.

4 The Russian Revolution, 1894–1917

(a) *Why did World War I damage the Tsar's position?*

The requirements of the question were generally well-understood, and most candidates were able to identify at least some relevant causal factors. The quality of responses differed according to the depth and range of the points made. In terms of depth, for example, it was commonly stated that the Tsar's position was undermined when he decided to take personal charge of the armed forces, leaving the Tsarina and Rasputin in control of Russian affairs; the most effective responses were able to provide detailed explanations of the impact of this decision. In terms of range, the most detailed responses demonstrated how Russia's failings in World War I were superimposed onto pre-existing animosity towards the Tsar, thereby enhancing the fragility of his hold on power.

(b) *'The 1905 Revolution had little impact.' How far do you agree with this view?*

The majority of candidates made a genuine effort to remain fully-focused on the requirements of the question. Less good responses generally tended to lack both depth and, more significantly, balance. Most responses argued in support of the view that the 1905 Revolution had little impact, based on the evidence that, having made concessions in the October Manifesto, the Tsar rapidly reneged on them through the Fundamental Laws. Where an attempt was made to create balance by identifying a counter-argument, this often comprised undeveloped assertions such as that the 1905 Revolution inevitably led to the subsequent removal of the Tsar in 1917. Weaker responses were restricted to narrative accounts of Bloody Sunday or, as in a significantly large number of cases, the revolutions of 1917.

SECTION B: AMERICAN OPTION; The History of the USA, 1840–1941

5 The Expansion of US Power from the 1840s to the 1930s

(a) *Explain why the European great powers did not formally take sides in the American Civil War.*

Candidates were generally able to demonstrate some knowledge of the key issues, but in weaker answers there was a tendency to rely on generalised statements which lacked sufficient factual support – for example, a common undeveloped assertion was that the European great powers did not get involved because of their own self-interest. The most impressive responses were characterised by the identification, explanation and analysis of a range of relevant factors, well-supported by appropriate and accurate factual depth.

(b) *'The Washington Naval Treaties were a great triumph for US diplomacy.' How far do you agree?*

Some high-quality responses to this question were characterised by clear understanding of American aims during the Washington Naval Conference and detailed assessment of the extent to which those aims were achieved by the various treaties which emerged from it. Some candidates were able to describe the terms of the treaties, to varying levels of depth and accuracy, but provided little or no analysis focused on the precise requirements of the question. Weaker responses were the product of insufficient factual knowledge; for example, a common assertion was that the Washington Naval Treaties were designed to enforce the disarmament of Germany as required under the terms of the Treaty of Versailles.

6 Civil War and Reconstruction, 1861–1877

(a) *Why were Congress and the Presidency so deeply divided over the Reconstruction of the South so soon after winning the Civil War?*

The majority of candidates appreciated that Congress, with its Republican majority, wanted to impose harsher terms on the South than President Lincoln, whose primary aim was to restore the Union. That this division was heightened under the presidency of Andrew Johnson was also widely understood. The quality of responses varied according to the depth and accuracy of the evidence used to support these main points. For example, while reference was commonly made to the Wade-Davis Bill, understanding of its implications was generally weak. Similarly, there was much confusion over the use of veto powers and the decision by Congress to impeach Johnson.

(b) *How far do you agree that, during the Civil War, the military and political leadership of the South was always inferior to that of the North?*

The most successful candidates were able to remain fully-focused on the key issue of leadership, explicitly differentiating between its military and political aspects while demonstrating a clear understanding of the significance of the word 'always'. The majority of responses tended to address the rather different question of why the North was victorious in the Civil War, an approach which often led to lengthy passages of narrative with little or no reference to issues relating to the quality of leadership. For example, it was commonly noted that the North enjoyed significant advantages over the South in terms of resources. As a result, most responses, while based on largely sound factual content, achieved only implicit relevance to the actual question.

7 The Gilded Age and the Progressive Era from the 1870s to the 1920s

(a) *Explain why the prohibition movement gained increased support in the early twentieth century.*

Less successful responses tended to lack explanatory depth and sufficient supporting evidence. This resulted in undeveloped assertions regarding the roles played by women, religion and the Progressive Movement. Some candidates lost focus on the question and described the impact of prohibition and explained why it was eventually ended. Others clearly lacked understanding of the term 'prohibition', several assuming that it related to governmental attempts to clamp down on the activities of Trusts.

(b) *How far was the industrialisation of the USA in the later nineteenth century founded on laissez-faire beliefs and policies?*

Most candidates demonstrated sound understanding of the term 'laissez-faire'. However, some responses were limited by largely narrative descriptions of the growth of Trusts and the power exerted by the 'Robber Barons', used as evidence of the government's unwillingness/inability to become actively involved in issues relating to the management of the US economy. A number of candidates drifted into irrelevance by outlining the laissez-faire reasons for President Hoover's failure to take effective measures when confronted with the initial stages of the Great Depression.

8 The Great Crash, the Great Depression and the New Deal, from the 1920s to 1941

(a) *Explain the reasons for the economic boom experienced by most Americans in the 1920s.*

Most candidates were able to identify a range of factors to explain the economic boom which the USA experienced in the aftermath of World War I. The most effective responses were characterised by detailed explanation, supported by the selection of appropriate and accurate factual evidence. A significantly large minority of candidates, clearly confused about the meaning and requirements of the question, wrote about the causes of the Wall Street Crash and the Great Depression.

(b) *'The right-wing opposition to Roosevelt's New Deal was more effective than left-wing opposition.'*
How far do you agree?

Candidates generally demonstrated some understanding of how and why there was opposition to Roosevelt's New Deal. That the right-wing believed the New Deal went too far, while the left-wing argued that it did not go far enough, was widely appreciated. The quality of evidence used to support these points varied in terms of depth and accuracy. The best answers went beyond this essentially narrative approach in order to analyse/evaluate the effectiveness of opposition to the New Deal.

SECTION C: INTERNATIONAL OPTION; International Relations, 1871–1945

9 International Relations, c. 1871–1918

(a) *Why were the Boers in conflict with Britain between 1880 and 1902?*

High-quality responses to this question demonstrated detailed contextual knowledge and understanding, facilitating in-depth analysis of the intricate and strained relations which existed between Britain and the Boers during the period. Less good responses lacked such range and depth, asserting that Britain wanted the land occupied by the Boers because of its strategic location and the availability of valuable resources such as gold and diamonds. A significantly large number of candidates wrote generally about the ‘Scramble for Africa’, with little or no focused reference to Orange Free State, the Transvaal or the Boers. A common misapprehension was that the Boers were an indigenous African community whose independence had not been threatened prior to the First Boer War.

(b) *‘By 1914, the USA had abandoned its policy of isolationism.’ How far do you agree?*

The most impressive responses were based on a clear understanding of the requirements of the question. Focusing on the expansionist-isolationist debate which occurred in the USA at the turn of the century, they provided a balanced assessment of a range of appropriate factual evidence. The most common conclusion was that economic necessity, combined with the outcome of the war against Spain, had encouraged the USA to abandon many, if not all, of its isolationist principles. Lower down the mark range, responses contained much the same factual detail, but lacked the analytical depth required to make a judgement and develop a focused argument. Confusion regarding the Monroe Doctrine was a common feature, many candidates suggesting that it was devised in the late 19th century and should be seen as evidence of the USA’s abandonment of isolationism. The weakest responses came from candidates who wrote exclusively about events which occurred after 1914, most notably the USA’s entry into World War I, involvement in the Paris Peace Conference and refusal to join the League of Nations.

10 International Relations, c. 1919–1933

(a) *Why did the Washington Naval Conference (1921–22) relieve international tension?*

Responses to this question fell into one of three categories. Firstly, and most impressively, those which demonstrated detailed understanding of why the Conference was held, what its outcomes were and the reasons why it led to a reduction in international tension. Secondly, those which accurately described the various treaties which emerged from the Conference without addressing the key issue of why these agreements helped to defuse international rivalry in the Far East. Thirdly, those which were the product of inadequate or inaccurate knowledge of the Washington Naval Conference; it was quite common, for example, for candidates to assert that the Conference was designed to enforce German disarmament as required under the terms of the Treaty of Versailles.

(b) *‘The Great War ended in 1918. The Great Peace did not begin until 1925.’ How far do you agree with this assessment of the significance of the Locarno Treaties?*

The most effective responses were based on detailed knowledge of the various treaties which emerged from the Locarno Conference, and the ways in which they helped to defuse tensions which had existed in Europe since the Paris Peace Settlement of 1919. Detailed analysis enabled some candidates to expose the weaknesses of the Locarno Treaties, or to demonstrate how they apparently improved relations between France and Germany owed more to French fears of isolation following the debacle of the invasion of the Ruhr or to the development of the Dawes Plan than to agreements reached at Locarno. The majority of responses lacked such analytical depth, being largely restricted to narrative accounts of the Treaties in varying degrees of factual depth and accuracy. The weakest responses showed insufficient knowledge regarding the Locarno Treaties.

11 International Relations, c. 1933–1939

(a) *Why was Spain’s left-wing government defeated in the elections of 1933?*

It was evident that the majority of candidates lacked the depth of factual knowledge required. Weaker responses focused on the Spanish Civil War, outlining various reasons why the Republicans were defeated. Some candidates, while clearly aware of the socio-economic problems facing Spain at the time and the disunity which existed between its various left-wing groups, were unable to link these general points to the

specific example of the outcome of the 1933 elections. Some very good responses provided detailed explanations for the growing discontent with Azana's government and the increasing influence of the CEDA.

(b) *'Propaganda and little else.'* How far do you agree with this assessment of Mussolini's foreign policy?

While most candidates were able to demonstrate some factual knowledge regarding Mussolini's foreign policy, relatively few focused on the precise requirements of the actual question. The most common approach involved a largely narrative account of Mussolini's foreign activities, followed by an unexplained/unsupported assertion about the extent to which they should be perceived as simply propaganda. In mid-range answers it was widely noted that Mussolini adopted a primarily diplomatic approach to foreign affairs prior to 1934, but thereafter became more aggressive as evidenced by the invasion of Abyssinia and Italy's increasingly closer links with Nazi Germany. The best answers analysed the significance of this by demonstrating, for example, how declining domestic support for Mussolini encouraged him to look for a propaganda boost by seeking overseas glory.

12 China and Japan, c. 1919–1945

(a) *Why did the Chinese Communist Party undertake the Long March in 1934?*

Weaker answers devoted too much time to providing unnecessarily detailed narrative accounts of the Long March and its subsequent implications, while better responses were characterised by the identification and explanation of a range of appropriate causal factors. The most effective responses demonstrated good contextual knowledge and understanding, arguing that, in essence, the Long March was a CCP retreat from the threat posed by Chiang Kai-shek's determination to eradicate the threat which it posed to his own power and that of the KMT.

(b) *The Japanese takeover of Manchuria in 1931 was due to political rather than economic reasons.'* How far do you agree?

The most successful responses were characterised by clear definition between the political and economic motives behind the Japanese takeover of Manchuria. This enabled balanced and analytical assessment of the evidence, leading to the development of sustained and structured arguments, fully-focused on the demands of the question. Moderately-scoring answers were able to identify a range of reasons to explain Japan's aggressive stance towards Manchuria, but gave insufficient consideration to whether these reasons should be seen as primarily political or economic.

HISTORY

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Key messages

- In **Part (a) questions**, candidates should focus on the key issue of causation, analysing a wide range of factors to show how they inter-reacted and reaching a judgement regarding their relative significance.
- In **Part (b) questions**, candidates should address the question rather than the topic, maintain a balanced approach and ensure that arguments are appropriately supported.

General comments

In line with the requirements of the examination, most candidates attempted two complete questions from one Section of the paper. Generally, candidates deployed their time effectively, devoting an appropriate amount to each question. Most candidates were able to demonstrate sound factual knowledge in at least some of their answers, but less successful candidates were unable to sustain consistent quality across all four of their responses. It was not uncommon for candidates to produce satisfactory or better responses to one part of a question, yet weak (and, in some cases, no) answers to the other part. There is a fundamental difference in focus between Part **(a)** and Part **(b)** questions. Many candidates clearly appreciated this and attempted the two Part **(a)** questions consecutively, followed by the two Part **(b)** questions (or vice-versa).

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Comments on specific questions

SECTION A: EUROPEAN OPTION; Modern Europe, 1789–1917

1 France, 1789–1814

(a) *Why did the Jacobins oppose Louis XVI?*

The most impressive responses were fully-focused on the precise requirements of the question, providing detailed analysis of the ways in which Louis XVI's monarchy clashed with the aims and aspirations of Jacobin supporters. Less successful responses tended to concentrate on the perceived weaknesses and failings of Louis XVI, commonly supported by lengthy passages of narrative. This approach, while clearly of implicit relevance, dealt with reasons for opposition to Louis XVI generally, rather than the views of the Jacobins specifically.

(b) *To what extent did the Directory 'abandon the revolution'?*

The majority of responses addressed the topic rather than the question. Based on sound knowledge of the Directory, most candidates provided narrative/descriptive accounts of its composition, actions and eventual replacement by Napoleon. Consideration of the extent to which the Directory upheld or abandoned the revolution was generally confined to undeveloped assertions in conclusions. The most effective responses were explicitly focused on the requirements of the question throughout, detailed analysis of appropriate factual evidence facilitating the development of well-reasoned and sustained arguments.

2 The Industrial Revolution, c.1800–1890

(a) *Explain why the railways were important to the Industrial Revolution after 1800.*

Weaker responses tended to be over-reliant on generalised and unsupported assertions, frequently confined to undeveloped points regarding the importance of railways for carrying goods and people. The most successful responses demonstrated understanding of a wide range of relevant factors, such as the ways in which railways stimulated capitalism/investment, led to greater technical innovation and facilitated population growth.

(b) *'Governments did little to encourage the Industrial Revolution.' How far do you agree?*

Less good responses tended to be generalised, many candidates simply outlining the causes of the Industrial Revolution with no specific reference to the role played by governments. Even the most focused responses were often confined to unsupported assertions regarding the significance of laissez-faire policies. Only the best answers met the requirement of the question to refer to more than one country.

3 The Origins of World War I, c.1900–1914

(a) *Why was there an Anglo-French agreement in 1904?*

The most successful candidates were able to identify, explain and analyse a number of factors which, in combination, led to the seemingly unlikely Entente Cordiale in 1904. The majority of responses tended to identify only one reason for the agreement reached between such long-standing rivals, the mutual fear of Germany (and its Triple Alliance allies) shared by both Britain and France; a fear that was explained in varying levels of depth and accuracy.

(b) *'The Kaiser played little part in the events which led to the outbreak of war in 1914.' How far do you agree?*

While there was a tendency to drift into generalised narrative accounts of the causes of World War I, most candidates were able to identify at least some relevant factors to challenge the hypothesis in the question. Candidates who fully appreciated the significance of the word 'outbreak', and who were able to ensure balance by highlighting factors over which the Kaiser had little or no control, produced the most effective responses. They were able to develop fully-focused arguments, supported by appropriate factual evidence.

4 The Russian Revolution, 1894–1917

(a) *Why was there social unrest in Russia in 1905?*

There was a common tendency to describe *how* social unrest manifested itself in 1905 rather than *why* it occurred. Less successful responses provided narrative accounts of the events of Bloody Sunday, consideration of its causes often confined to vague or generalised assertions regarding poor working/living conditions, Russia's economic instability and the Tsar's personal failings. The most effective responses were fully-focused on causation throughout, analysing a range of relevant factors based on the selection of appropriate and accurate factual evidence.

(b) *'The Tsar's decision to personally lead his army was the main reason for his downfall.' How far do you agree?*

Most candidates were able to develop sound arguments in support of the view that the Tsar's decision to take personal control of Russia's armed forces during World War I was an important factor in his ultimate downfall. Whether this decision was the *main* reason for his downfall, however, was frequently not considered. The most impressive responses achieved the required balance by analysing the relative significance of other factors, enabling fully-focused and well-reasoned judgements to be made.

SECTION B: AMERICAN OPTION; The History of the USA, 1840–1941

5 The Expansion of US Power from the 1840s to the 1930s

(a) *Explain why, in January 1918, President Wilson announced his Fourteen Points.*

This question was addressed by relatively few candidates, most of whom tended to outline the contents of Wilson's Fourteen Points speech rather than analysing his motives. As a result, the majority of responses lacked explicit focus on the precise requirements of the question.

(b) *How effective were US policies towards the Mexican Revolution in the period 1910–20?*

Relatively few candidates addressed this question. Most responses were narrative in approach, describing the events of the Mexican Revolution and Wilson's interventionist strategies in varying degrees of depth and factual accuracy. As in Part (a), Wilson's motives were rarely considered; as a result, few responses focused on the key issue of how effective US policies towards the Revolution actually were.

6 Civil War and Reconstruction, 1861–1877

(a) *Why was the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution passed in 1865?*

Less successful responses tended to lack range and depth. That the Thirteenth Amendment was intended to enforce the abolition of slavery was widely understood, but candidates generally found it difficult to identify other causal factors and, instead, drifted into unfocused narrative. The best responses demonstrated detailed understanding of the context in which the Amendment was passed, facilitating in-depth analysis of Lincoln's social, political, moral and strategic motives.

(b) *How consistent was the military strategy of the North during the Civil War?*

The most impressive responses were characterised by the development of fully-focused, balanced arguments, supported by accurate and well-selected factual evidence. Mid-range responses, while containing much the same factual information, tended to be essentially narrative accounts of the Civil War, often seeming to address the more general question of why the North defeated the South. As a result, relevance to the precise requirements of the question was sometimes lost.

7 The Gilded Age and the Progressive Era, from the 1870s to the 1920s

(a) *Why were party bosses so unpopular in the late nineteenth century?*

While reference was commonly made to Boss Tweed, less successful candidates generally demonstrated only limited understanding of the activities of party bosses or the ways in which they achieved and maintained their power. Explicit reference to the reasons why party bosses were unpopular tended to be

confined to vague, generalised and unsupported assertions regarding corruption and opposition from progressive reformers.

- (b) *To what extent were high tariffs the main cause of the rapid industrialisation of the USA in the late nineteenth century?*

Lack of balance was a common feature of weaker responses to this question. Many candidates were able to demonstrate how the imposition of high tariffs acted as a stimulus to industrial growth in the USA, but did not develop a counter-argument by considering other relevant factors. Conversely, some candidates wrote generally about the reasons for the USA's rapid industrialisation in the late nineteenth century without any reference to high tariffs or too readily dismissing them as a relevant factor. The most effective responses were characterised by a balanced analysis of appropriately selected factual evidence, leading to a fully-focused judgement.

8 The Great Crash, the Great Depression and the New Deal, from the 1920s to 1941

- (a) *Explain why the political opponents of the New Deal were so divided?*

The most impressive responses came from candidates who were able to compare and contrast the reasons why various individuals, groups and institutions opposed aspects of the New Deal. This approach ensured that analysis remained fully-focused on the requirements of the question. The majority of responses tended to describe opposition to the New Deal with only limited consideration of the reasons for it, or the differences within it. Lack of depth was a feature of weaker responses; for example, many candidates simply stated, without further development, that right-wingers opposed the New Deal because it went too far, while left-wingers criticised it for not going far enough.

- (b) *How far did the economic boom of the 1920s cause the Great Depression of the 1930s?*

Lack of balance was a common characteristic of less successful responses to this question. While their arguments varied greatly in terms of supporting evidence, most candidates were able to identify and explain ways in which the economic boom of the 1920s could be seen as the cause of the Great Depression. The most effective responses were able to develop convincing counter-arguments by demonstrating the ways in which other factors, such as the policies adopted by Hoover, both deepened and extended the Depression.

SECTION C: INTERNATIONAL OPTION; International Relations, 1871–1945

9 International Relations, c.1871–1918

- (a) *Explain why the USA did not enter World War I until 1917.*

Very good responses to this question were characterised by the identification and detailed analysis of a range of factors to explain why the USA did not become involved in World War I until 1917. Less good responses tended to lack such range and depth, often relying exclusively on the undeveloped assertion that the USA was following its traditional policy of isolationism. A significantly large number of candidates, misinterpreting the requirements of the question, outlined (often in considerable detail) the reasons why the USA *did* enter the war in 1917, based on evidence which was of implicit relevance only.

- (b) *'Japan's victory in the war of 1904–05 was the result of Russian weakness rather than Japanese strength.' How far do you agree?*

The strongest responses were characterised by detailed analysis of a wide range of appropriate factual evidence, enabling the development of balanced, well-reasoned and fully-supported arguments. The majority of responses, while containing much the same factual detail, tended to be over-reliant on basic narrative/descriptive accounts of the war itself. In most cases, consideration of the actual question was confined to largely assertive statements in conclusions.

10 International Relations, c.1919–1933

- (a) *Why did France occupy the Ruhr region in 1923?*

The vast majority of candidates clearly appreciated the connection between the French occupation of the Ruhr region and Germany's inability/unwillingness to meet its reparation obligations. The most impressive responses were able to analyse French motives in the wider context of on-going post-war tension between

France and Germany, facilitating the consideration of a wider range of causal factors. A significantly large number of candidates did not explicitly address the question – their responses comprised narrative/descriptive accounts of the occupation itself, often drifting into unnecessary/irrelevant detail regarding its short and long-term implications.

(b) *'The main cause of international tension during the 1920s was the USA's refusal to ratify the Paris peace settlement.' How far do you agree?*

The most impressive responses were characterised by detailed analysis of the impact of the USA's decision not to ratify the settlement which emerged from the Paris Peace Conference, contrasted against other factors which led to international tension during the 1920s. This approach enabled candidates to make well-reasoned and fully-supported judgements. Less successful responses lacked balance; while evaluating the extent to which the USA's return to isolationism had adverse effects on international relations, they did not consider other causes of tension in the period. Weak responses were either entirely narrative (e.g. describing the events which led the USA to reject the Paris peace settlement) or over-reliant on inaccurate/confused evidence (e.g. many candidates argued that the main cause of international tension in the 1920s was the Great Depression).

11 International Relations, c.1933–1939

(a) *Why did Italy occupy the Greek island of Corfu in 1923?*

Candidates generally were aware that Mussolini held Greece responsible for the deaths of four Italian members of a League of Nations' commission investigating a dispute regarding the Greek-Albanian border. Most responses were based on narrative accounts, often in considerable detail, of the actions taken by Mussolini in retribution against Greece. As a result, only one of Mussolini's possible motives for ordering the occupation of Corfu was explored. The most effective responses were more fully focused on the requirements of the question, analysing a range of factors to explain why Mussolini was prepared to take this action, even in defiance of the League of Nations.

(b) *To what extent was Stalin's willingness to sign the Nazi-Soviet Pact responsible for the outbreak of World War II?*

As in Part **(a)**, there was a common tendency to drift away from the key issue. Weaker responses comprised narrative/descriptive accounts of how the Pact came about and the agreements which it contained, supplemented by unfocused analysis of the respective motives of Hitler and Stalin. Explicit relevance was frequently confined to the point that Hitler's invasion of Poland, the event which led to the outbreak of World War II, was dependent on gaining prior agreement with Stalin's Russia. More effective responses were characterised by balanced analysis of a wide range of factual evidence, fully-focused on the precise requirements of the question.

12 China and Japan, c.1919–1945

(a) *Why, by the early 1930s, had Japan's democratically-elected government become unpopular with the Japanese people?*

Relatively few candidates addressed this question. Most were able to identify a range of relevant factors, the quality of responses depending on the depth of explanation and analysis provided. For example, while some responses referred to Japan's willingness to make concessions at the Washington Naval Conference, only the most effective answers explained why this helped to increase public discontent with the government.

(b) *Compare and contrast Chiang Kai-shek and Mao Zedong as political leaders during the 1930s.*

Relatively few candidates addressed this question. Most responses were based on good factual knowledge, but there was a tendency to focus on what Chiang and Mao actually did rather than on comparing their qualities and effectiveness as political leaders. The most effective responses went beyond a narrative/descriptive approach.

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Key messages

- In **Part (a) questions**, candidates should focus on the key issue of causation, analysing a wide range of factors to show how they inter-reacted and reaching a judgement regarding their relative significance.
- In **Part (b) questions**, candidates should address the question rather than the topic, maintain a balanced approach and ensure that arguments are appropriately supported.

General comments

In line with the requirements of the examination, most candidates attempted two complete questions from one Section of the paper. Generally, candidates deployed their time effectively, devoting an appropriate amount to each question. Most candidates were able to demonstrate sound factual knowledge in at least some of their answers, but less successful candidates were unable to sustain consistent quality across all four of their responses. It was not uncommon for candidates to produce satisfactory or better responses to one part of a question, yet weak (and, in some cases, no) answers to the other part. There is a fundamental difference in focus between Part **(a)** and Part **(b)** questions. Many candidates clearly appreciated this and attempted the two Part **(a)** questions consecutively, followed by the two Part **(b)** questions (or vice-versa).

Part (a) Questions – These questions are about causation. Effective answers showed detailed knowledge and understanding of the reasons why a specific event occurred or why someone adopted a particular course of action. Invariably, causation can only be adequately explained by an appreciation of the combined effect of a number of factors, both long and short-term. The most effective responses were clearly focused on the key issue of causation and contained analysis of a wide range of factors, demonstrating how they inter-acted and developing judgements regarding their relative significance. Most candidates were able to identify and explain some relevant causal factors, but tended to drift into narrative/descriptive accounts of *how* something occurred rather than *why*. The weakest responses were characterised by mono-causal explanations, a tendency to drift into irrelevancy and factual inaccuracy and/or confused chronology; they were over-reliant on vague and generalised assertions lacking appropriate factual support.

Part (b) Questions – Good answers showed awareness that historical issues can be interpreted in many different, and, often, contradictory ways. For an interpretation to be valid, it must be based on a thorough analysis of appropriate and accurate factual material, and must show due consideration of alternative viewpoints. These questions require candidates to develop such interpretations, to make reasoned judgements and to justify their arguments in a clear, consistent and sustained manner. The most impressive responses were based on the development of consistent and balanced arguments, explicitly focused on the requirements of the specific question, leading to reasoned and fully-supported conclusions. Less successful responses fell into one of three categories – narrative/descriptive accounts of the topic with only implicit reference to the actual question; unbalanced arguments based on consideration of only one interpretation of the issue; relevant arguments based on factual support which was limited in range and depth. The weakest responses were often the result of confusion over the requirements of the question; they were characterised by factual inaccuracy and/or chronological confusion, assertions based on inadequate factual support or a tendency to drift into irrelevance (often by ignoring timeframes given in the question).

Comments on specific questions

SECTION A: EUROPEAN OPTION; Modern Europe, 1789–1917

1 France, 1789–1814

(a) *Why was the Directory established in 1795?*

That the Directory was established to restore some form of stability to France after the failings of Louis XVI and the excesses of Jacobin rule was widely understood. Weaker answers showed a tendency to drift into unfocused narrative regarding the structure of the Directory, the problems it faced and the reasons why it was unable to achieve its primary aim. The most impressive responses remained fully-focused on the requirements of the question throughout, analysing the problems facing France which the Directory was established to address. Weak responses were generally the result of confusion, some candidates, for example, assuming that the Directory was established by Napoleon following his coup.

(b) *'It was caused by taxes.' How far do you agree with this view of the French Revolution?*

The most successful responses were characterised by detailed analysis of the inequalities and inefficiencies of the taxation system, contrasted against a range of other factors which also led to revolution in France. This approach enabled candidates to develop balanced arguments which explicitly addressed the requirements of the question. Answers lower down the mark range, while containing much the same factual information, tended to be narrative accounts addressing a more general question regarding the causes of the French Revolution. As a result, they lacked focused analysis.

2 The Industrial Revolution, c.1800–1890

(a) *Explain why the working classes were affected by industrialisation.*

Mid-range to weaker responses were confined to rather generalised assertions regarding the impact of urbanisation, particularly the poor living and working conditions experienced by the urban working classes in the first half of the 19th century. The strongest responses considered a wider range of issues, such as the impact of industrialisation on real wages and the longer term social, economic and political changes it brought about.

(b) *'Capitalism was the most important cause of the Industrial Revolution.' How far do you agree with this view?*

Less successful candidates adopted a narrative approach, essentially addressing a more generalised question regarding the causes of the Industrial Revolution. As in Part **(a)**, these responses tended to be over-reliant on generalised and, often, unsupported assertions. For example, it was widely asserted, without further explanation or development, that a significant cause of industrialisation was the Agricultural Revolution. It was not uncommon for responses to make little or no reference to capitalism, while relatively few met the requirement to refer to two countries. The most successful responses were characterised by clear understanding of the term 'capitalism', together with detailed analysis of its relative significance as a cause of the Industrial Revolution.

3 The Origins of World War I, c.1900–1914

(a) *Explain why Austria's policies caused tension in the Balkans up to 1914.*

Moderately scoring responses tended to be narrative in approach, describing Austria's actions with limited consideration of its policies/motives or of their impact in terms of raising tension in the Balkans. Weaker responses rather misinterpreted the question, confining their answers exclusively to Austria's involvement in the events of 1914. The most effective responses were fully-focused on the precise requirements of the question, well-supported by detailed and accurate factual evidence.

(b) *'German insecurity was the main reason for the Alliance System.' How far do you agree?*

The most successful responses were characterised by detailed analysis of the reasons why the Triple Alliance and the Triple Entente were formed, enabling well-argued and fully-supported judgements to be made regarding the relative significance of Germany's feelings of insecurity. Many candidates, misinterpreting the meaning of the phrase 'the Alliance System', wrote exclusively about the agreements which led to the formation of the Triple Alliance. Such responses were frequently narrative rather than analytical in approach, many being over-reliant on unsupported and/or inaccurate assertions. For example, it was commonly claimed that Kaiser Wilhelm created the Triple Alliance to further his ambitions to dominate Europe. Similarly, a number of candidates argued that the Triple Alliance was created in response to Russia's mobilisation following Austria-Hungary's declaration of war against Serbia in 1914.

4 The Russian Revolution, 1894–1917

(a) *Explain why Witte introduced reforms in Russia.*

Most candidates were aware of Witte's economic reforms and were able to describe them, often in considerable detail. In less successful answers there was a tendency to focus on the impact of these reforms rather than on Witte's motives for introducing them. As a result, the majority of these responses tended to be narrative in approach and limited in terms of both range and depth. The most effective answers demonstrated awareness and understanding of the role which Witte played in seeking to preserve the Tsar's regime in the wake of the 1905 Revolution.

(b) *'Trotsky was more important than Lenin to the Bolshevik success in October 1917.' How far do you agree?*

There were a number of impressive responses to this question. These were characterised by sustained focus on the requirements of the question, the relative significance of Trotsky's and Lenin's contribution to Bolshevik success in October 1917 analysed with the support of detailed and accurate factual evidence. In the most effective responses, this approach led to well-reasoned and well-argued judgements. Moderately scoring responses, while containing much the same factual information, lacked the analytical depth required in order to develop convincing arguments.

SECTION B: AMERICAN OPTION; The History of the USA, 1840–1941

5 The Expansion of US Power from the 1840s to the 1930s

(a) *Why did the USA fight the 'Indian Wars' in the period from 1865 to 1890?*

Moderately scoring responses tended to be over-reliant on generalised assertions regarding the desire/need for more land, the discovery of gold deposits, the development of the railroad and the requirement to provide protection for settlers. The most effective responses were able to provide appropriate evidence to substantiate these points, while also analysing their relative significance.

(b) *How significant to US relations with Asia was its acquisition of the Philippines?*

The most impressive responses were characterised by clear understanding of contextual issues relating to the USA's desire to extend and protect its trading connections in the Far East. This facilitated the development of balanced arguments which were fully-focused on the requirements of the question. Less successful responses tended to be essentially narrative, describing the events which led to the USA's acquisition of the Philippines rather than its implications for American relations with Asia.

6 Civil War and Reconstruction, 1861–1877

(a) *Why, despite having lost the Civil War, did the South do all that it could to block Reconstruction?*

The majority of candidates appreciated that the South greatly resented the imposition of legislation by Northern politicians, especially when it threatened their determination to uphold white supremacy. The quality of responses varied according to the depth and accuracy of the supporting evidence provided. Weak answers did not address the specific requirements of the question, for example by writing detailed and unfocused narratives regarding the activities of the Ku Klux Klan or the passage of the Black Codes.

(b) *'Civil liberties were never effectively limited during the Civil War.' How far do you agree?*

Responses to this question generally fell into one of three categories. Firstly, those very good answers which deployed well-selected and accurate factual information to develop balanced arguments which were fully-focused on the precise requirements of the question. Secondly, those mid-range responses which accurately described the ways in which civil liberties were affected by the Civil War without the depth of analysis required to address the actual question. Weak responses were the result of confusion regarding the meaning of the term 'civil liberties'.

7 The Gilded Age and the Progressive Era, from the 1870s to the 1920s

(a) *Explain why in 1912 Theodore Roosevelt established the Progressive (or Bull Moose) party.*

Most candidates were clearly aware that Roosevelt was dissatisfied with the actions taken by his nominated successor as president, Taft. In good answers, the reasons for this dissatisfaction were well understood, and these responses showed the factual and analytical depth required to address the question effectively.

- (b) *'The rapid industrialisation of the USA in the late nineteenth century led to great social and political instability.'* How far do you agree?

Candidates generally were able to demonstrate at least some understanding of social instability in the late nineteenth century, although this was not always supported by sufficient factual evidence. Issues relating to political instability tended to be less well addressed, many candidates relying on generalised assertions.

8 The Great Crash, the Great Depression and the New Deal, from the 1920s to 1941

- (a) *Explain why Herbert Hoover took no effective action to contain the economic depression which followed the Great Crash.*

The most effective responses were characterised by the identification and detailed explanation of a range of relevant factors, together with in-depth analysis of how these combined to condition Hoover's response to the early stages of the Great Depression. Less successful responses tended to lack such range, generally focusing on one particular issue, most commonly Hoover's steadfast belief in *laissez-faire*. The weakest answers provided narrative/descriptive accounts of the actions which Hoover did take, with no focused analysis of either his motives or the reasons why these actions proved ineffective.

- (b) *How great were the divisions in US society in the 1930s?*

The most successful responses were based on detailed analysis of a wide range of appropriate factual evidence relating to racial and social class issues. Less good responses tended to be over-reliant on narrative accounts of the New Deal, followed by unsupported assertions regarding its impact on social cohesion. Some candidates, misinterpreting the requirements of the question, wrote exclusively about opposition to the New Deal, focusing in particular on the actions of the Supreme Court.

SECTION C: INTERNATIONAL OPTION; International Relations, 1871–1945

9 International Relations, c.1871–1918

- (a) *Why was Japan victorious in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–05?*

The most effective responses were characterised by the identification and detailed explanation of a wide range of factors which led to Japan's seemingly unlikely victory in a war against one of Europe's Great Powers. Mid-range responses, while based on very similar factual content, tended to be over-reliant on a narrative/descriptive approach, with less reference to the requirements of the actual question.

- (b) *'Rivalry between Austria-Hungary and Russia was the main cause of World War I.'* How far do you agree?

As in Part (a), weaker responses found it difficult to remain fully-focused on the precise requirements of the question. There was a tendency to write generally about the causes of World War I, often with little or no direct reference to rivalry between Austria-Hungary and Russia. The most impressive responses came from candidates who were able to place this rivalry in the context of other factors which heightened tension between European nations in the period before 1914, thereby enabling detailed analysis of its relative significance.

10 International Relations, c.1919–1933

(a) *Why was the World Disarmament Conference (1932–33) unsuccessful?*

Virtually all candidates were able to show how, with the exception of Germany, no country had honoured the commitment which it made at the Paris Peace Conference to undertake disarmament. That this had caused resentment in Germany was widely understood. These two points were generally perceived as the reason why the World Disarmament Conference failed to reach agreement. The most successful responses were characterised by detailed analysis of the context in which the Conference was held, demonstrating the significance of factors such as the economic problems resulting from the Wall Street Crash, Japan's take-over of Manchuria and Germany's more aggressive stance since Hitler's rise to power.

(b) *To what extent was French fear of Germany the main cause of international tension during the 1920s?*

Most candidates were able to demonstrate sound knowledge and understanding of issues relating to Franco-German relations during the 1920s. The reasons for, and implications of, the French occupation of the Ruhr, for example, were widely explained, while the reduction in tension which followed the Locarno Treaties was clearly expressed. The most effective responses came from candidates who appreciated that, in order to address the requirements of the question, it was also necessary to consider the impact of other factors which led to international tension during the 1920s. This enabled the development of fully-focused arguments regarding the relative significance of French fear of Germany.

11 International Relations, c.1933–1939

(a) *Why did Hitler's Germany invade Poland in 1939?*

The most impressive responses were characterised by the identification and detailed explanation of a number of factors which led Hitler to order the German invasion of Poland in 1939, together with focused analysis of their relative significance. More moderate responses lacked such range, many being confined to accounts of Hitler's long-expressed desire for *lebensraum*. There was a very common tendency for potentially relevant points to be made without further development – for example, a frequent assertion was that Hitler invaded Poland because of the Nazi-Soviet Pact.

(b) *How far was Mussolini's foreign policy based on the desire to make Italy 'great, respected and feared'?*

The majority of candidates, while clearly aware that the quotation reflects one of Mussolini's primary foreign policy aims, adopted a largely narrative approach, describing his actions with limited explicit reference to the requirements of the question. Indeed, many responses seemed to be addressing the rather different issue of why Mussolini changed from a diplomatic approach to foreign affairs prior to 1934 to a more aggressive strategy thereafter. Chronological weaknesses were evident in many of these responses; for example, it was widely perceived that Mussolini's involvement in Fiume and Corfu were examples of his more aggressive foreign policy after 1934. The most successful candidates were able to deploy their knowledge and understanding in a more focused manner, developing well-reasoned and fully-supported arguments.

12 China and Japan, c.1919–1945

(a) *Why did Japanese army officers order the takeover of Manchuria despite the opposition of Japan's elected government?*

There were relatively few responses to this question. Most candidates were able to identify a range of relevant factors, both political and economic. The quality of responses varied according to the explanatory depth provided. For example, while virtually all candidates suggested that Japanese public opinion had little faith in democratic government, the most successful were able to explain why this was the case. Similarly, most candidates appreciated that possession of Manchuria would provide Japan with resources, such as iron ore and coal; the most effective responses were able to demonstrate why this was so important to a small, resource-poor country at a time of economic instability.

(b) *How effective was Chiang Kai-shek's leadership of the Kuomintang?*

There were relatively few responses to this question. In the most impressive, balanced assessment of well-selected evidence facilitated the development of sustained and fully-focused arguments. The majority of mid-range to weaker responses tended to comprise largely narrative accounts of Chiang Kai-shek's actions, consideration of the effectiveness of his leadership of the KMT being confined to conclusions.

HISTORY

<p>Paper 9389/31 Interpretations Question</p>

Key messages

Successful candidates:

- consider the extract as a whole, rather than looking at its component parts.
- spend a good amount of time reading and thinking about the extract before starting to write.
- ask themselves – before starting to write – ‘What is this extract *about*?’
- state what they believe the interpretation to be, and then use the extract to explain how they have reached this conclusion.

General comments

In general, answers showed a good focus on the extract. It was unusual to see a script that simply wrote about the events, and made no effort to engage with the extract. In most answers there was a balance between writing about the extract and offering support and explanation based on contextual or historiographical knowledge. There was a clear appreciation that the question asks what one can tell from the extract about the historian’s interpretation. There was also an understanding that merely repeating the extract was not the same as detecting the interpretation. The content of the extract is the medium through which the interpretation can be inferred, thus there must be a point in the answer where the attention turns onto the historian and away from what the extract says. In fact, the best answers show a more or less continuous focus on the historian by constantly juxtaposing what the extract says with what one can infer about the interpretation from it.

It is important to read the source carefully before starting to write. One effect of starting to write too soon is that some answers are about what candidates expect to read, rather than on what the extract actually says. This was particularly true of the Holocaust topic, where extracts on the Jewish response were commonly interpreted as being about the causation of the Holocaust, but can have an impact too on the Cold War topic, where extracts may deal almost exclusively with one of the protagonists, but be seen by candidates as applying to both. A good discipline for candidates, then, would be to ask themselves what the extract is about. If the answer, say, is ‘It is about Jewish resistance’, then the inevitable follow-up is ‘What is the historian trying to tell us *about Jewish resistance*?’ This kind of thinking would help candidates to focus their thoughts on the essential nature of the extract as a whole, and the interpretation contained within it.

A feature of answers, particularly on the Holocaust and Cold War topics, is the use of historiographical ‘labels’ (intentionalist, revisionist etc.) in identifying the historian’s interpretation. This can be useful shorthand, but can also be damaging. The first point to make is that there is no requirement to use these labels. It is just as effective to say ‘The historian puts responsibility for the Cold War on the United States’ as to claim that the historian is revisionist. The damage can be done when the label is used incorrectly, since this then becomes evidence of lack of understanding. Of course, if an incorrect label is used because the extract has been misinterpreted, then it’s the misinterpretation rather than the label that is at fault. The real problem arises when the label itself is not properly understood, or where an extract that in other ways has been correctly analysed then has an inappropriate label attached to it. As candidates will undoubtedly continue to use these labels – and rightly so as understanding of them is a central aspect of studying the topic – the best advice would be to use them sparingly, and only in relation to interpreting the extract as a whole, rather than attempting to attach them to single phrases, sentences or paragraphs.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: The Causes and Impact of British Imperialism, c.1850–1939

The central argument of the historian who wrote the extract is that British imperialism was never welcomed by indigenous populations, was resisted, and required cruel repression to maintain it. It was also clear that the historian disapproved of the Empire. The best answers recognised these aspects of the interpretation, and illustrated them using material from the extract. Sound answers recognised some of the overall interpretation, whilst missing the historian's disapproval. The weakest answers fell into two broad categories. First, those that repeated or paraphrased points in the extract without engaging with the historian's interpretation, and second, those that wrote about Imperialism with no reference to the extract.

Section B: The Holocaust

The central argument of the historian who wrote this extract is that Hitler was the motivating force behind the Holocaust, and that pre-war events had paved the way for the Holocaust. The best responses recognised both these aspects of the interpretation, and illustrated them using material from the extract. Most candidates recognised the intentionalist aspects of the extract, and to a great extent the quality of the answer was then determined by how consistently and coherently this interpretation could be illustrated. The extract made reference to the cessation of the T4 programme and some of the best responses used this material to excellent effect, highlighting how it underlined the intentionalist approach of the author. Some candidates searched for 'functionalist'/'structuralist' aspects or strove for a 'synthesis', usually by arguing that the whole extract did not simply focus on Hitler but also considered the role of Himmler and the SS, or the contingency of war. This was often based on a partial misunderstanding of the extract, for example by latching onto the reference to 'lasting effects of competition' and assuming it referred to 'working towards the Führer' or 'cumulative radicalisation'. Some weaker responses missed references to 'the Führer' and claimed that, as Hitler was not mentioned by name, it couldn't be an intentionalist interpretation. Some weaker responses did not integrate the final paragraph into the overall interpretation, perhaps because, though it suggested support for the intentionalist interpretation, this was not explicit. Some answers even thought it was saying that pre-war events had nothing to do with the Holocaust, because candidates took 'not simply a continuation' to mean 'not a continuation' and made false claims about the interpretation on this basis. The weakest answers fell into two broad categories. First, those that repeated or paraphrased points in the extract without engaging with the historian's interpretation, and second, those that wrote about the Holocaust with no reference to the extract.

Section C: The Origins and Development of the Cold War, 1941–50

The central argument of the historian who wrote the extract is that the United States was more responsible than the Soviet Union for the Cold War. The best candidates recognised the revisionist nature of the interpretation by analysing both the idea that the United States' post-war policy was determined by its willingness to use its economic power, and the claim that the Soviet Union was concerned merely with security and economic recovery, using material from the extract in support. Some candidates missed the aspects of the extract that placed greater responsibility on the United States (e.g. 'given their assumptions of how the post-war world must work'), and viewed the interpretation as post-revisionist, blaming neither side or both. Properly supported, this was a reasonable response, but could not be seen as showing complete understanding. Some of the weaker responses resulted from candidates imposing their own world view on the extract and seeing references to US economic domination as an entirely positive feature of the post-war world. This led to claims that the extract was 'traditionalist' because it blamed the USSR for the Cold War, a line of argument which couldn't be supported. The weakest answers fell into two broad categories. First those that repeated or paraphrased points in the extract without engaging with the historian's interpretation, and second those that wrote about the Cold War with no reference to the extract.

HISTORY

<p>Paper 9389/32 Interpretations Question</p>

Key messages

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- ask themselves – before starting to write – ‘What is this extract *about*?’
- state what they believe the interpretation to be, and then use the extract to explain how they have reached this conclusion.

General comments

In general, answers showed a good focus on the extract. It was unusual to see a script that simply wrote about the events, and made no effort to engage with the extract. In most answers there was a balance between writing about the extract and offering support and explanation based on contextual or historiographical knowledge. There was a clear appreciation that the question asks what one can tell from the extract about the historian’s interpretation. There was also an understanding that merely repeating the extract was not the same as detecting the interpretation. The content of the extract is the medium through which the interpretation can be inferred, thus there must be a point in the answer where the attention turns onto the historian and away from what the extract says. In fact, the best answers show a more or less continuous focus on the historian by constantly juxtaposing what the extract says with what one can infer about the interpretation from it.

It is important to read the source carefully before starting to write. One effect of starting to write too soon is that some answers are about what candidates expect to read, rather than on what the extract actually says. This was particularly true of the Holocaust topic, where extracts on the Jewish response were commonly interpreted as being about the causation of the Holocaust, but can have an impact too on the Cold War topic, where extracts may deal almost exclusively with one of the protagonists, but be seen by candidates as applying to both. A good discipline for candidates, then, would be to ask themselves what the extract is about. If the answer, say, is ‘It is about Jewish resistance’, then the inevitable follow-up is ‘What is the historian trying to tell us *about Jewish resistance*?’ This kind of thinking would help candidates to focus their thoughts on the essential nature of the extract as a whole, and the interpretation contained within it.

A feature of answers, particularly on the Holocaust and Cold War topics, is the use of historiographical ‘labels’ (intentionalist, revisionist etc.) in identifying the historian’s interpretation. This can be useful shorthand, but can also be damaging. The first point to make is that there is no requirement to use these labels. It is just as effective to say ‘The historian puts responsibility for the Cold War on the United States’ as to claim that the historian is revisionist. The damage can be done when the label is used incorrectly, since this then becomes evidence of lack of understanding. Of course, if an incorrect label is used because the extract has been misinterpreted, then it’s the misinterpretation rather than the label that is at fault. The real problem arises when the label itself is not properly understood, or where an extract that in other ways has been correctly analysed then has an inappropriate label attached to it. As candidates will undoubtedly continue to use these labels – and rightly so as understanding of them is a central aspect of studying the topic – the best advice would be to use them sparingly, and only in relation to interpreting the extract as a whole, rather than attempting to attach them to single phrases, sentences or paragraphs.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: The Causes and Impact of British Imperialism, c.1850–1939

The central argument of the historian who wrote the extract is that Britain did not benefit from the Empire, but that individuals, both in the colonies and in Britain itself, did. The best candidates recognised these elements of the interpretation, and were able to illustrate them using material from the extract. Sound answers recognised some of these central elements, whilst missing others, but nonetheless offered appropriate support from the extract. Some candidates were able to make valid comments about the historian's approach, for example, that the historian was looking at economic aspects, but without linking this to the interpretation. Weaker responses often spent too long writing about other interpretations. While the majority understood the message that the Empire was funded by the British taxpayer, some took this as a reference to the ideas of Hobson and Lenin. As a result, they drew inferences from the extract which couldn't be supported, most commonly about Empire being built on the suffering of the working class. The weakest answers fell into two broad categories. First those that repeated or paraphrased points in the extract without engaging with the historian's interpretation, and second those that wrote about Imperialism with no reference to the extract.

Section B: The Holocaust

The central argument of the historian who wrote the extract is that carrying out the Holocaust would have been impossible without Jewish complicity. It was also clear that the historian disapproved of this complicity. The best candidates recognised these elements, and were able to illustrate them using material from the extract. Weaker answers recognised the argument about complicity, but did not detect the explicit disapproval (e.g. 'the darkest chapter of the whole dark story'). While it was not necessary to include this to score highly, it was notable that a number of responses showed a very clear understanding of how the extract fits in to the historiography of the responses of victims of the Holocaust. A characteristic of many answers was an attempt to label the interpretation, generally as functionalist or structuralist, but intentionalist too, even though the extract was about the Jewish response to the Holocaust, rather than on what caused the Holocaust. In extreme cases, such was the focus on causation, that candidates even concluded that Jews were responsible for the Holocaust. Consideration of interpretations relating to victims, as well as to perpetrators and bystanders, is explicitly part of the syllabus, yet many answers indicated a lack of awareness of the issues raised in this extract. Weaker answers sometimes resulted from spending too long evaluating the extract, focusing on what they considered the historian to have left out rather than on the argument presented. The weakest answers fell into two broad categories. First those that repeated or paraphrased points in the extract without engaging with the historian's interpretation, and second those that wrote about the Holocaust with no reference to the extract.

Section C: The Origins and Development of the Cold War, 1941–50

The central argument of the historian is that the USA was responsible for the Cold War because it interpreted the policy of the Soviet Union incorrectly, and that this misinterpretation had damaging consequences. The best candidates recognised these elements, and were able to illustrate them using material from the extract. An essential aspect of reaching this conclusion was to detect the focus the historian placed on the United States: mentions of the USSR in the extract were used only to cast light on the policies and decisions of the United States. For example, the heart of the extract focused on the choice for the United States on how to perceive and interpret Soviet actions, rather than on what those actions actually were. Good answers reached the conclusion that the approach of the historian was revisionist ('With a view of this sort, the effort to make a diplomatic settlement became irrelevant...'). Weaker answers, though, concluded that it was post-revisionist, putting blame on both sides. This was a good example of candidates focusing on individual bits of the extract, rather than on the extract as a whole, by taking quotes like 'the monstrous horrors of the Stalinist regime', and presuming that anyone saying this would automatically be arguing for Stalin being to blame for the Cold War. Weaker responses often took a 'line by line' approach and this led them to make contradictory claims about the extract, even seeing two interpretations in one sentence: Stalin's foreign policy as 'clumsy and brutal' being a traditional interpretation and 'cautious and pragmatic' being post-revisionist. The weakest answers fell into two broad categories. First those that repeated or paraphrased points in the extract without engaging with the historian's interpretation, and second those that wrote about the Cold War with no reference to the extract.

HISTORY

<p>Paper 9389/33 Interpretations Question</p>

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In general, answers showed a good focus on the extract. It was unusual to see a script that simply wrote about the events, and made no effort to engage with the extract. In most answers there was a balance between writing about the extract and offering support and explanation based on contextual or historiographical knowledge. There was a clear appreciation that the question asks what one can tell from the extract about the historian’s interpretation. There was also an understanding that merely repeating the extract was not the same as detecting the interpretation. The content of the extract is the medium through which the interpretation can be inferred, thus there must be a point in the answer where the attention turns onto the historian and away from what the extract says. In fact, the best answers show a more or less continuous focus on the historian by constantly juxtaposing what the extract says with what one can infer about the interpretation from it.

It is important to read the source carefully before starting to write. One effect of starting to write too soon is that some answers are about what candidates expect to read, rather than on what the extract actually says. This was particularly true of the Holocaust topic, where extracts on the Jewish response were commonly interpreted as being about the causation of the Holocaust, but can have an impact too on the Cold War topic, where extracts may deal almost exclusively with one of the protagonists, but be seen by candidates as applying to both. A good discipline for candidates, then, would be to ask themselves what the extract is about. If the answer, say, is ‘It is about Jewish resistance’, then the inevitable follow-up is ‘What is the historian trying to tell us *about Jewish resistance*?’ This kind of thinking would help candidates to focus their thoughts on the essential nature of the extract as a whole, and the interpretation contained within it.

A feature of answers, particularly on the Holocaust and Cold War topics, is the use of historiographical ‘labels’ (intentionalist, revisionist etc.) in identifying the historian’s interpretation. This can be useful shorthand, but can also be damaging. The first point to make is that there is no requirement to use these labels. It is just as effective to say ‘The historian puts responsibility for the Cold War on the United States’ as to claim that the historian is revisionist. The damage can be done when the label is used incorrectly, since this then becomes evidence of lack of understanding. Of course, if an incorrect label is used because the extract has been misinterpreted, then it’s the misinterpretation rather than the label that is at fault. The real problem arises when the label itself is not properly understood, or where an extract that in other ways has been correctly analysed then has an inappropriate label attached to it. As candidates will undoubtedly continue to use these labels – and rightly so as understanding of them is a central aspect of studying the topic – the best advice would be to use them sparingly, and only in relation to interpreting the extract as a whole, rather than attempting to attach them to single phrases, sentences or paragraphs.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: The Causes and Impact of British Imperialism, c.1850–1939

The central argument of the historian who wrote the extract is that by the latter part of the nineteenth century Britain's pre-eminence as a colonial power was weakening, as its old preference for informal empire and free trade was being undermined by tariff barriers and the 'New Imperialism', so that in order to keep its influence it had no choice but to join in the rush to annex new territories. The best candidates recognised these elements, and were able to illustrate them using material from the extract. Weaker responses lost focus on the arguments in the extract, and simply wrote about British imperialism in general terms.

Section B: The Holocaust

The central argument of the historian who wrote the extract is that, for the Jews, any attempt to resist was better than acceptance of their fate, but even so, few chose to resist. A vital element of the extract was the author's move to define resistance in broad terms as any act of disobedience against the Nazis. The best candidates recognised these elements, and were able to illustrate them using material from the extract. However, understanding what the extract was about (i.e. Jewish resistance) was a prerequisite for detecting what the historian wanted to say about it. Candidates could not do well when their answers treated the extract as if it was about something else entirely – the causation of the Holocaust. For these candidates, whatever the extract said about the Jewish resistance was merely a potential clue as to whether the historian's approach was intentionalist, functionalist, structuralist, or a synthesis of these. As it was none of them, such arguments indicated lack of understanding. In the most extreme cases, answers might contain almost no reference to Jewish resistance at all, and consist instead of assertions about the interpretation with support only from background knowledge. In this topic candidates need to be aware that not every extract will deal with aspects of Holocaust causation. The specification includes victims, perpetrators and bystanders: candidates need to be aware of what historians have said about these groups, and any individual extract on them may or may not address issues of causation. On this extract, a particularly impressive argument advanced by some candidates was that the historian was directly challenging earlier interpretations about the Jewish response which saw them as passive, and sometimes even complicit, by advancing a new, broader definition of resistance.

Section C: The Origins and Development of the Cold War, 1941–50

The central argument of the historian who wrote the extract is that the USA was responsible for the Cold War because after World War 2 it was an aggressive expansionist power, and this was exacerbated by the hostile and pessimistic view of the Soviet Union held by US policy-makers. The best candidates recognised these elements, and were able to illustrate them using material from the extract, concluding that the historian had a revisionist approach. Whilst many answers were able to use material from the first two paragraphs to support an argument about US expansionism, the third paragraph proved harder to interpret successfully. It provided a good example of candidates writing about what they expected to read, rather than on what the extract actually said. In arguing that from a very early stage the US had a deeply pessimistic view of the USSR, the historian discounted the influence of Kennan's Long Telegram. In weak answers this was completely missed, as candidates chose instead to argue how influential Kennan was. A more significant issue was where candidates thought the last paragraph was signalling a change in the interpretation, by seizing on the statement that it was 'easy and rational' for the US to focus on the intentions of the Soviet Union. This led some to see a post-revisionist move to share the blame, despite the damning comments in the rest of the paragraph about the Truman administration. As always, conclusions that part of the extract was revisionist, and other parts post-revisionist, would be an inevitable indication of lack of understanding of the extract as a whole. The weakest answers fell into two broad categories. First those that repeated or paraphrased points in the extract without engaging with the historian's interpretation, and second those that wrote about the Cold War with no reference to the extract, but answers falling into the latter of these two categories were very rare.

HISTORY

Paper 9389/41
Depth Study

Key messages

Successful candidates:

- Address the specific question asked straightaway
- Avoid long, general introductions
- Give an opinion when asked :‘How far?’ or ‘How effective?’
- Back up the opinion with specific detail.

General comments

Most candidates grasped that this was really a ‘depth’ paper and that not only were a high level of analytical skills being looked for, but also a really thorough grasp of the topic/s based on independent study and serious reflection. It was very evident that Centres who worked on developing a high level of analytical skills and encouraged their candidates to read widely for themselves in order to gain a real understanding of their chosen topics, did very well indeed.

Some candidates spent too much time on a general ‘introduction’ to ‘set the scene’ which very often contained nothing which an Examiner could credit in any way as it did not deal with the question set. This was sometimes followed by two narratives or descriptions representing a ‘balance’ and then a conclusion which did not seem to match up with the implied drift of the facts listed earlier. Sometimes, because of the amount of time spent on the ‘introduction’ there was no time left for a conclusion, which meant that there was little chance of gaining the higher ‘analysis’ marks.

The better candidates tended to make a real attempt to deal with the question set in their opening paragraphs. If they were asked about ‘How successful was...’, they tended to think about what the criteria for ‘success’ might be in the context and then set out the main reasons why they felt that ‘X’ might or might not have been successful. Subsequent paragraphs carefully developed the case set out earlier. It is always important to make it clear what the actual purpose of any paragraph is. If the question asks ‘How far do you agree that...’ or ‘To what extent was...’ successful answers really tried to give a very firm answer which made it clear they had a view on the topic. That ‘X’ was the principal cause and it was the principal cause because of reasons a) and b) and c) and that other causes such as ‘Y’ and ‘Z’ were not as important because... If asked to ‘Evaluate the reasons for/why...’ the better candidates did not just list the relevant factors but really tried to comment on them, identifying which might be the most significant factor, and above all, why. It was the candidates who really imposed their own ideas and judgement on a response who got the highest marks.

Knowledge of the historiography of the topic is not necessary for the highest marks. While commenting, as part of an answer, on the various historian’s views on whether Johnson was responsible for the Vietnam War, or Lenin was responsible for the rise of Stalin, can gain credit, it is not necessary. Some responses deal largely with historian’s views, and responses tend to be a list that starts each paragraph with ‘Historian X says that...’ and the next with ‘Historian Y says that...’, and there is a never an answer to actually what the candidate thinks and why.

It is strongly recommended that Centres look at the reports of the other two papers, which are available on the CIE site, as they give detailed comments on all responses as well.

Comments on specific questions

Depth Study 1: Europe of the Dictators, 1918–1941

1 To what extent was the system of government imposed by Lenin ‘revolutionary’?

The best candidates gave a clear and firm answer to the issue of ‘extent’, and kept their focus very much on the system of government that was created. Some very good responses argued that, while in theory at least, the Bolsheviks were aiming at delivering something very different from what both the Provisional Government and the Tsars had done, in practice Lenin had ended up with something which could be seen to resemble the tsarist system in terms of autocracy and a degree of state control. Some spent time looking at the ways in which Lenin did try to develop a Marxist system in the context of Russia after the seizure of power, and also examining the role of the party and the various attempts to bring in a Marxist state. This worked well. Weaker responses tended to spend a lot of time describing what Lenin actually did, usually quoting War Communism, the NEP and the growing use of terror, but then found it very difficult to link that material to the question actually set.

2 How important were social and economic conditions in Italy from 1918 to 1922 to Mussolini’s rise to power?

While many sound answers had a broad grasp of why and how Mussolini got into power, there was in most cases a lack of much depth of knowledge. There was an awareness that adverse social and economic conditions played a part in his rise, with references to inflation and strikes, but very often without any evidence of the nature and extent of industrial action or the actual rate of inflation and what it actually meant for most Italians. There were many references to political instability, but little in the way of supporting detail on why this proved to be a factor, or what particular problems the various coalitions actually caused. There was also a frequent absence of any knowledge of exactly what Mussolini himself did in the years before 1922 and how that contributed to his being offered power. There was better knowledge in many cases on the role of the Papacy and the Church, and also the role of the King. The best responses clearly separated social from economic factors, and then weighed them up very carefully, compared them with a range of other factors which led to his rise, and made a clear judgement on the impact of these factors. They tended to avoid a vague comment such as ‘they were quite important...’ and went for a firmer ‘They were vital background factors/ or played a limited role...’ etc.

3 How far was Lenin responsible for Stalin’s rise to power?

The better responses made it very clear ‘how far’ they felt Lenin should take the blame. Some argued very strongly that Lenin had to take much of the blame. He had promoted Stalin to a critical role and was well aware of how dangerous Stalin could be. Lenin was also well aware of the many errors that Stalin had made, for example, when dealing with Poland and the nationalities. Others argued, equally well, that much more important to his rise were his actions following the death of Lenin and in his political manoeuvring in the later 1920s, coupled with careless potential competitors for the top spot. His pragmatism and ambition would have seen his rise at any rate. As always it was those who tackled directly and firmly the issue of ‘how far’ and were able to back up their points with detailed knowledge that did well. General answers based on the 1930s with lots of references to the purges did much less well.

4 ‘Incompetent from start to finish.’ Discuss this view of the conduct of Nazi economic policy between 1933 and 1941.

Good responses relied on some detailed knowledge of Nazi economic policy in the period. The best showed real awareness of the economic condition of Germany in 1932/3 and the impact that the depression had had on the country. There was still a tendency to assume that Germany was in the depths of hyperinflation and few seemed to be aware that it was deflation that was causing many of the problems. There were some very good responses that suggested that, initially, with the sort of public spending that Schacht had been recommending for some time (and Keynes had been advocating) it was very competent. The spending on public works, conscription and rearmament all reduced unemployment and ensured the ‘pump priming’ that Keynes advocated. It was not incompetent to start with. It was only later, the better answers suggested, that the Nazis went off the rails, with the obsession with autarky and determination to build a ‘war’ economy. There were some perceptive comments, supporting the ‘incompetence’ aspect, on how the Nazi war machine ground to a halt outside Moscow in 1941. There was also some good detail in relation to the actual

management of the economy, once Schacht had gone, by the various overlapping bureaucracies, with the damaging role of Goering getting many mentions. The weaker ones almost invariably lacked the requisite depth and knew little more than building autobahns.

Depth Study 2: The History of the USA, 1945–1990

5 'Television in the 1950s reflected US society rather than changed it.' How far do you agree?

The better answers looked very carefully at ways in which TV may have reflected society first, and there were some interesting suggestions that the picture of idyllic, white suburban life with stay-at-home mom, with father off to work and 2.2 well behaved children, was perhaps very different from reality for many Americans. Perhaps it reflected what Hollywood thought society ought to look like more than what it actually did. The few who actually considered ways in which TV might have helped to change society did well. Some argued that it was the growing national and international news coverage, especially of the Civil Rights, that led to social as well as political change. Several stressed how much TV coverage of 'Bull' Connor and his dogs had changed opinion. Some also argued how much TV and its advertising led to the growth of consumerism and helped change spending habits. Weak responses gave rather bland descriptions of the sort of shows on at the time, with lots of descriptions of the 'I love Lucy' show, with no indication of whether it did or did not change or reflect society in any way.

6 Assess the causes of America's increasing economic problems in the 1970s.

The good answers really thought about what 'assess' might require. There were a lot of lists of causes, with many feeling that government spending on Johnson's Great Society programme was the dominant, or in some cases, the only, cause. 'Assess' required some careful reflection on the role each possible cause played in creating the economic problems, and then commenting on which might be seen as the most important and why. Some argued successfully that US industry had had an exceptionally good time in the 50s, but then other economies, such as the Japanese and the German, had recovered from the war and were successfully competing with the US and winning its usual markets. Others placed much more blame on government spending on the arms race, Vietnam and social programmes, but never quite explained how this led to causing problems. There was often mention of what Nixon did to the Gold Standard, but there was little evidence seen as to why this actually caused a problem. Its implications simply were not grasped. Ford and Carter were mentioned as culprits, but again, none really knew why their policies and actions may have led to problems. Some saw oil price rises as the villain and knew that it meant the price of gas increased and there were queues for it but again, there was little understanding of why this led to wider economic problems.

7 How far were the 1980s a decade of setbacks for the ethnic minorities of the USA?

There was often a lack of detailed knowledge in answers to this question. Some knew that affirmative action declined, but often there was little understanding of what it actually was and what benefits it might bring. Some weak answers gave a simple narrative of the whole Civil Rights movement, with partial reference to Martin Luther King. There was quite a lot of knowledge seen about the epidemic of crack in many cities in the 80s but how this linked into the question was never made clear. Some suggested that under the presidency of Reagan there were cuts in various welfare programmes, which would have adversely affected ethnic minorities. However, this was never substantiated. Some suggested that ethnic minorities did not have any setbacks, as Reagan's increased spending on defence 'trickled down' to help many ethnic minorities. There was an absence of any detailed explanation of how this might actually have worked.

8 Account for the improvement in US relations with both the USSR and China in the 1970s.

There were very few responses which actually covered both countries. There were some excellent ones on China, arguing that the improvement was partially due to the US desire to get assistance in ending the Vietnam War, together with a desire on the part of the Chinese leadership to improve relations with the US. Nixon also had his own political motives, rightly assuming that improving relations with China and reducing the tension there would help his re-election chances. There were lots of details on 'Ping- Pong' diplomacy and all the secret ways Kissinger got the deal through. Less was known about the reasons for détente. Cuba had given both countries a shock, and both countries were worried in their own way about the growth of the military-industrial complex as well as the sheer size of defence budgets. The possibility of 'divide and rule' was there; the US was aware

of the tension between China and Russia and was quite anxious for it to continue. The best answers carefully debated which were the most important reasons with each, and why, and avoided just a list.

Depth Study 3: International History, 1945–1991

9 To what extent was President Johnson responsible for the USA’s involvement in the Vietnam War?

Answers showed some knowledge on what happened during the Johnson presidency and there could be an implicit assumption that therefore he was wholly to blame. Very few actually mentioned what had happened during the Eisenhower/Dulles era. The Kennedy years, with the considerable increase in both military supplies and ‘advisers’, rarely got a mention. There was no mention seen of pressure from Congress, the media or public opinion in the early years of the Johnson presidency, and the degree of responsibility they might have had for the conflict.

10 Assess the significance of the SALT Treaties.

In response to this question candidates usually listed, in some depth, the various treaties. However, there was rarely any comment on what the significance might have been. ‘Assess’ requires reflection and comment on the various treaties, why they were important and what their passage tells us about the various participants in the process. The treaties did start a long process of consultation and negotiation, but on the other hand both parties still had the capacity to wipe out the entire population of Earth.

11 To what extent should Deng Xiaoping be seen as a reformer?

Very few responses were seen. The better ones really did try and deal with the issue of ‘extent’ and give a firm judgment on that, but there were several which just said he was a reformer, to ‘some’ extent. The consensus was, that from an economic standpoint he was, and that from a political/constitutional viewpoint, he was not. One suggested that, starting with a programme of economic change, political change would surely follow in time. Perhaps Tiananmen Square proved this idea wrong. Some wrote an essay on Mao, with a lot of details on the impact of the Cultural Revolution and Mao’s responsibility for famine in China. This topic seemed to bring out some ‘prepared’ essays on why Mao was successful, but this knowledge could not be credited as it was not answering question set.

12 ‘The Camp David Agreements did little to reduce Arab-Israeli tension in the Middle East.’ How far do you agree?

There were insufficient responses to provide comment.

HISTORY

Paper 9389/42
Depth Study

Key messages

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General comments

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Some candidates spent too much time on a general ‘introduction’ to ‘set the scene’ which very often contained nothing which an Examiner could credit in any way as it did not deal with the question set. This was sometimes followed by two narratives or descriptions representing a ‘balance’ and then a conclusion which did not seem to match up with the implied drift of the facts listed earlier. Sometimes, because of the amount of time spent on the ‘introduction’ there was no time left for a conclusion, which meant that there was little chance of gaining the higher ‘analysis’ marks.

The better candidates tended to make a real attempt to deal with the question set in their opening paragraphs. If they were asked about ‘How successful was...’, they tended to think about what the criteria for ‘success’ might be in the context and then set out the main reasons why they felt that ‘X’ might or might not have been successful. Subsequent paragraphs carefully developed the case set out earlier. It is always important to make it clear what the actual purpose of any paragraph is. If the question asks ‘How far do you agree that...’ or ‘To what extent was...’ successful answers really tried to give a very firm answer which made it clear they had a view on the topic. That ‘X’ was the principal cause and it was the principal cause because of reasons a) and b) and c) and that other causes such as ‘Y’ and ‘Z’ were not as important because... If asked to ‘Evaluate the reasons for/why....’ the better candidates did not just list the relevant factors but really tried to comment on them, identifying which might be the most significant factor, and above all, why. It was the candidates who really imposed their own ideas and judgement on a response who got the highest marks.

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Comments on specific questions

Depth Study 1: Europe of the Dictators, 1918–1941

1 ‘The Bolsheviks offered a better future for the majority of the Russian people.’ To what extent does this explain their victory in the Russian Civil War?

Most answers to this question grasped that the focus had to be on the reasons for the Reds’ victory, and not on the causes of the war, but there were a lot of very long introductions on the background to the war which gained little credit. The best responses looked very carefully at what the Bolsheviks offered as inducements and promises. There was some very competent analysis of Lenin’s various slogans of ‘Peace, Bread and Land’ as well as good ideas on what was most likely to happen if the Left took over Russia. There were also come very astute comments on Bolshevik policies and promises towards the various other nationalities which made up Russia. These factors were then contrasted with the various other reasons for Bolshevik victory. Some argued that White incompetence and disunity, coupled with the Reds’ geographical advantages were more important, but others argued that it was the work of Trotsky that was critical. There were some very good and well balanced debates on the topic which made for good reading. The weaker responses tended to narrate the war or spend too long on the causes and events after 1922. Some had some valid ideas, but were prevented from the highest marks by a lack of depth.

2 How successfully did Mussolini rule Italy?

The better responses thought very carefully what the criteria for ‘success’ might be in this context. Some suggested that simply staying in power for as long as he did and avoiding the worst excesses of other dictators such as Stalin and Hitler, could be seen as a successful rule. There was a valid case there. Some argued that he did manage to solve some problems, such as the relationship between the State and the Church, and brought a degree of political stability to Italy after many troubled years. The trains did run on time and a degree of peace came to industrial relations which had not existed for many years, albeit by using fairly tough methods. The weaker responses tended to give quite long narratives of the period with a lot of emphasis on the various ‘battles’ and no indication as to whether they could be seen as failures or successes. There were also quite a lot of ‘how he got into power’ descriptions which had no relevance at all. Those who kept the focus firmly on the issue of ‘success’ and really demonstrated their depth of knowledge did very well.

3 Evaluate Stalin’s reasons for embarking on the Great Purge.

There were some excellent responses to this question. They invariably knew exactly what an ‘evaluate’ question was looking for. A good range of reasons was first identified and then commented on in depth. It was a question where knowledge of the historical debate could come in very useful when adding comment. In good answers there was some really mature reflection on Stalin’s motivation and a high level of comment as well as detailed knowledge. Some responses got a little carried away with narratives of what happened, giving details, for example of what happened to the Old Bolsheviks and the number of army generals who died, but did not really think about why Stalin began the Purge, as the question asked.. The very best considered the various motives suggested and made a developed case why one should be seen as the principal reason.

4 ‘There was limited opposition to Nazi rule after 1933 because most Germans supported Hitler and his ideas.’ How far do you agree?

The better responses to this question kept the focus firmly on why there was quite limited opposition to the Nazi regime after 1933. Some chose to debate, often not very successfully, whether there was more than ‘limited’ opposition in the first place. Most of the examples given tended to be outside the period studied, with a lot of references to the Bomb plot of 1944. There were some very good surveys of the various methods by which the Nazis remained in power, but did not reach any conclusion. The most successful responses tended to argue that the fact that Hitler had come in to power ‘legitimately’ was of crucial importance to gaining and retaining support. Once this was followed by ensuring that unemployment declined and the elites, such as the industrialists and the army officer corps, were appropriately managed, he was secure. Obviously a lot of other factors could get a mention, ranging from effective propaganda and the use of terror, to the indoctrination of children in their Schools.

Depth Study 2: The History of the USA, 1945–1990

5 How far do you agree that the economic growth of the late 1940s and the 1950s worked mainly to the benefit of the middle class?

Weaker answers were often limited to a list of reasons why there was economic growth in this period, and did not address the part of the question which mentioned the 'benefit to the middle class'. Better answers identified ways in which the middle class (and there were no views expressed of what the criteria for membership of that sector were) might have benefitted. Some mentioned that there was a growth in the number of white collar jobs, but in general there was insufficient detailed knowledge of the topic demonstrated in many responses.

6 How successful was the feminist movement in the 1960s and 1970s?

The best responses considered what 'success' might mean in this context and then argued a case. Candidates demonstrated knowledge of the Equal Pay Act and Roe v Wade, but little detail was seen of how they worked in practice and there could be little or no link to the question set. The responses tended to suggest that there might be the beginning of a change in attitude, by both men and women, but it was all very tentative.

7 How great was the impact of the AIDS epidemic on US society in the 1980s?

There were insufficient responses to provide comment.

8 'A complete failure.' How far do you agree with this assessment of the US policy of containing communism in Southeast Asia in the period from 1954 to 1968?

There were some competent responses to this question and there was evidence of really detailed knowledge of the topic. The better responses tended to think about what a 'complete' as opposed to a partial failure might include and came to some interesting conclusions. They also looked at the period as a whole, and did not just focus on a single conflict, such as Korea or Vietnam. Those that looked at areas of success, such as in Korea, Malaya, Thailand and the Philippines and then balanced them against the failures such as Vietnam and Laos did best.

Depth Study 3: International History, 1945–1991

9 'The missile crisis of 1962 was caused by the USA's determination to regain political and economic control over Cuba.' How far do you agree?

Some candidates produced some excellent responses to this question. There was an effective use of detailed knowledge and real understanding in many answers. There were some excellent debates which dealt with the aggression of Khrushchev and the, perhaps unwise, provocation of Castro, with the more obvious policies of Eisenhower and Kennedy. There could be some hazy grasp of what happened in Cuba under Batista, however. The majority of the better answers tended to place the blame more firmly on the American side, often showing really good awareness of the internal political pressures on both Kennedy and Khrushchev. Weaker responses tended to spend a lot of time on the outcome of the crisis, or just produced narratives lacking in any judgement.

10 How justified is the claim that Ronald Reagan was responsible for ending the Cold War?

This question produced some excellent responses (provided they managed to avoid a common pitfall and get the focus of their answers on why communism collapsed). The quality of debate in the better responses was very high, with strong arguments either way. Some felt that the answer lay very much with the gerontocracy in Russia being replaced by Gorbachev, a collapsing economy and large parts of the USSR wanting 'out', with Reagan simply following in the wake of events elsewhere. However, there were also some very good arguments in favour of giving Reagan the credit. Factors such as his spending on SDI and supporting any anti-communist movements he could find featured in most responses. Many candidates had the depth of knowledge here needed to do well, and there was lots of evidence of independent reading being done and less reliance on just a standard textbook.

11 'A fundamental change in Mao Zedong's economic policy.' How far do you agree with this view of the Great Leap Forward?

Responses to this question were characterised by a tendency to spend more time on why Mao undertook the Great Leap Forward than discussing whether it was a fundamental change or not. The most successful responses thought carefully about what a 'fundamental' change might look like and kept their focus very firmly on the nature and extent of the changes that followed its implementation. Some did argue successfully that, while it did not really mean much change in theory, the state still was going to run things. This led to some profound changes in practice, both in industry and agriculture.

12 How far was Britain responsible for the problems facing Palestine in 1948–49?

Responses tended to agree very strongly with the hypothesis suggested. Although there was no expectation of detailed knowledge pre-1945, there were a lot of valid comments about the role Britain had played in the region before the Second World War and the implications of the Balfour Declaration. Responses could be very one-sided and rarely seemed to think about the position that a bankrupt Britain found itself in, in Palestine, in 1945. The possibility that no-one really could find a peaceful solution, given the legacy of the Holocaust and in the circumstances of the Middle East at the time, did not seem to occur in any response. Responses, like most nations in 1945, found the simplest thing to do was blame Britain. The responsibility of the US never really seemed to get a mention. There was often depth there, but not often balance.

HISTORY

Paper 9389/43
Depth Study

Key messages

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General comments

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The better candidates tended to make a real attempt to deal with the question set in their opening paragraphs. If they were asked about ‘How successful was...’, they tended to think about what the criteria for ‘success’ might be in the context and then set out the main reasons why they felt that ‘X’ might or might not have been successful. Subsequent paragraphs carefully developed the case set out earlier. It is always important to make it clear what the actual purpose of any paragraph is. If the question asks ‘How far do you agree that...’ or ‘To what extent was...’ successful answers really tried to give a very firm answer which made it clear they had a view on the topic. That ‘X’ was the principal cause and it was the principal cause because of reasons a) and b) and c) and that other causes such as ‘Y’ and ‘Z’ were not as important because... If asked to ‘Evaluate the reasons for/why...’ the better candidates did not just list the relevant factors but really tried to comment on them, identifying which might be the most significant factor, and above all, why. It was the candidates who really imposed their own ideas and judgement on a response who got the highest marks.

Knowledge of the historiography of the topic is not necessary for the highest marks. While commenting, as part of an answer, on the various historian’s views on whether Johnson was responsible for the Vietnam War, or Lenin was responsible for the rise of Stalin, can gain credit, it is not necessary. Some responses deal largely with historian’s views, and responses tend to be a list that starts each paragraph with ‘Historian X says that...’ and the next with ‘Historian Y says that...’, and there is a never an answer to actually what the candidate thinks and why.

It is strongly recommended that Centres look at the reports of the other two papers, which are available on the CIE site, as they give detailed comments on all responses as well.

Comments on specific questions

Depth Study 1: Europe of the Dictators, 1918–1941

1 How far do you agree that Lenin did not intend to create a totalitarian state?

The best responses kept the focus very firmly on what Lenin's intentions were and did not get too involved in what he actually did. In less successful answers, there were a large number of detailed descriptions of War Communism and the NEP, but the link between these events to the question set was never made clear. Those who looked carefully at what a committed Marxist could be expected to do when in power, allowing for the particular circumstances of Russia from 1918 onwards, tended to have a good structure to their argument. Some looked in detail at what he promised, in his April Theses for example, and argued that there was little that was totalitarian in them. There was also some very good discussion of the structure of government that he set up which showed quite 'democratic' tendencies. Most good responses argued that his totalitarian methods, such as War Communism, the creation of the CHEKA and the way in which he dealt with the Kronstadt uprising were means to an end, and he did not wish to set up a totalitarian state. Some did argue that his intended 'Dictatorship of the Proletariat' was fairly totalitarian in intent and that the methods he used to establish his regime showed him in his true light, with terror, the banning of factions and censorship illustrating this well. The key to the higher marks was some obvious reflection on Lenin's intentions, coupled with an in-depth knowledge of the four-year period.

2 How far did Mussolini change Italy?

There seemed to be two broad approaches to this question. The less successful set out on a narrative of the period, tried to come to some sort of conclusion at the end. The better responses tended to look at Italy in 1922 and then in 1941 and see how much had actually changed, be it for better or for worse. Most tended to argue that, overall, there was little change beyond the fact that in 1922 Italy was trying to recover from participation in a disastrous war, and in 1941 Italy was getting involved in another. Many candidates argued that the Corporate State and the various 'Battles' had actually achieved very little. The South was still poor and the old elites still dominated Italy. Italy, in spite of Mussolini's various foreign ambitions, was still not seen as a major power. The Church was still quite a powerful force in Italian society. Answers which discussed Mussolini's 'success/failure' were not really relevant in this context.

3 'Many failures and few successes.' Is this a fair judgement on Stalin's rule in Russia?

The better responses took some care to reflect on the period Stalin dominated Russia as a whole. Less successful answers took a narrative approach, looking at his rise, collectivisation and 5 Year Plans and then the purges. Some reflection on what might be the appropriate criteria for 'success' or 'failure' in this context was always a good start and there were some very good, balanced, discussions produced. The very best invariably came out on one side or the other, with impressive evidence of 'sustained judgement'. There were some who produced impressive lists of what might be seen as both successes and failures, but with no comment at all on whether it might be seen as a fair judgement or not. Essays which started by saying 'it was quite a fair judgement' and then remained very neutral on the issue throughout, tended not to do well, however detailed the response was. While it was good to see a great deal of depth in many responses, it needs to be stressed that at this level detail is not an end in itself, but should be used to back up the candidate's case.

4 'The existence of mass unemployment was the principal reason for Hitler's rise to power.' How far do you agree with this judgement?

This question was often well answered with the focus kept very firmly on Hitler's rise to power. There was, at times, a lot of detail on policies and events after 1935 which had little relevance. The better responses went into some detail about the nature and extent of unemployment from 1930 onwards and the impact it had on German society and politics. There was a tendency to spend a lot of time on the terrible effects of inflation for some reason, confusing the economic crisis of the early 1920's with the deflationary period after 1930. The majority tended to argue that without the dreadful socio-economic conditions, many Germans would not have seen Hitler as a possible alternative to Weimar. It would not have placed Weimar politicians in such a difficult position and the embryonic democracy might well have survived. Some argued that, while mass unemployment was important, it was not the principal reason, as without Hitler's political and oratorical skills, supported by certain elites and a powerful propaganda programme, he would have got nowhere. Despite of an impressive

display of detailed knowledge, some responses were limited by a reluctance to actually identify what the 'principal' reason was and why.

Depth Study 2: The History of the USA, 1945–1990

5 How far did the position of women in American society change between 1945 and 1960?

There were insufficient responses to provide comment.

6 Assess the reasons why, in the 1970s, the US economy experienced the combination of slow economic growth and rapid inflation often called 'stagflation'.

Some weak responses tended to list some of the reasons why there was limited economic growth and rather ignore the inflationary part of the question. Many candidates did not separate the two parts of the question, and assumed that both had the same causes. There was a tendency to blame government spending on all of America's economic problems at the time. There was little focus on the 1970s and the implications of the oil price increase. The absence of much detail, such as the actual rate of inflation, was a limiting factor of many responses.

7 How effectively in the 1980s did black civil rights groups uphold the advances made in the 1950s and 1960s?

There were insufficient responses to provide comment.

8 How far, in the late 1940s, was the US policy of containment aggressive and expansionist in nature?

Candidates produced some strong responses to this question. Some spent a lot of time on the various interpretations of the origins of the Cold War, rather than dealing with whether it was aggressive or expansionist. Others argued that Russia should take the bulk of the responsibility for the Cold War and seemed to know very little about US policy. Better responses kept the focus very firmly on US policy, arguing on the whole that while it could well be seen as aggressive, particularly by the USSR, it was not necessarily expansionist. Candidates who kept their answers rooted in the 1940s were the most successful.

Depth Study 3: International History, 1945–1991

9 How far do you agree with the view that Khrushchev's decision to place nuclear weapons in Cuba was both irrational and counter-productive?

This question produced some excellent responses. The best took care to clearly separate the 'irrational' part of their answer from the 'counterproductive' part. Those who dealt with both at the same time did not always make it clear whether they agreed or disagreed with the view or not and subsequently there were a lot of rather muddled conclusions as a result. Most suggested that the placing of nuclear weapons in Cuba was quite rational in the light of the development of the Cold War, the presence of US missiles in Turkey, the inexperience of Kennedy and the proximity of Cuba to the southern part of the USA. An alternative view, arguing that it was bound to provoke a fairly strong reaction in the dangerous days of MAD, was also successfully put forward. Most suggested that it was counterproductive for Khrushchev, in that the world not only saw the USSR being forced to climb down, but also that it was to lead to his being ousted from power in Russia. Quite a few also suggested that from the point of view of world peace it was perhaps not counter-productive, as the hotline and the beginnings of at least talking about arms reduction was a good thing. There were many firm answers to the issue of 'how far' argued with 'sustained judgement', leading to very high marks.

10 To what extent was the USA responsible for the onset of the 'Second Cold War'?

Less successful answers often gave long lists of possible reasons why either the US or the USSR could be blamed for causing the Second Cold War but no developed answer. The evidence was there, but it the candidates did not then go on to make a judgement in response to the question. The better responses took care to weigh up the case for and against and come to a sensible conclusion, or set out their case from the beginning and then argue it strongly and convincingly. The latter tended to be the most successful, provided they indicated at least some awareness of the 'case

against.' There is never a 'right' answer in this sort of question and the response is judged by the quality of the argument/s and the evidence of understanding and depth of knowledge seen.

11 Which had the greater impact on the Chinese people, the Great Leap Forward or the Cultural Revolution?

Responses tended to show a good grasp of one of the two events, but rarely both. The best took some care to look at the impact of both on the people of China (and not just its leaders) and reflect with some care. Some backed away from a developed answer by indicating that the Great Leap Forward was all about economics while the Cultural Revolution was all about politics and society, and therefore they could not be compared. There were some essays which did not address the actual question but discussed Mao in terms of success/failure how he got into power in the first place. Those who paused and thought about what it was looking for did exceptionally well.

12 To what extent was Arab-Israeli tension in the period from 1967 to 1973 caused by superpower involvement in the Middle East?

There were some strong responses to this question, and the best weighed up all the various causes, long, medium and short term and after careful evaluation, worked out how much could be put down to the superpowers and how much to the two sides actually involved in the conflict. There was, at times, some strong partisanship and some quite sweeping assertions were made, demonstrating personal opinion rather than reasoned and carefully supported argument. There were a variety of different views demonstrated and it was interesting to note how many of the best responses came to very different conclusions. Weaker answers consisted of a list of causes of the conflict, taking, it seemed, a lot of care to exclude any reference to the two superpowers.