

HISTORY

Paper 0977/12
Paper 12

Key messages

Successful responses are dependent upon candidates reading the questions carefully before they begin, in order to understand exactly what is being asked, and to give themselves the opportunity to write focused and balanced responses. Any given dates in the question should be carefully noted to help ensure that responses only include relevant details.

In essay-type responses it is a good idea for candidates to practice writing evaluative, rather than purely summative, conclusions in which they make a judgement and justify this by reference to the balance of evidence cited in their essay.

Successful responses were characterised by the inclusion of relevant, contextual examples.

General comments

Successful responses were able to demonstrate good factual knowledge and understanding of both the Core and Depth Study questions. These responses included clear and accurate communication of ideas, whether explaining the reasons for past events and historical features or building an argument to reach a balanced historical judgement. Less successful responses, whilst often demonstrating sound factual knowledge, found it difficult to apply the knowledge to the question set. These responses tended to be characterised by a descriptive list of facts with no explanation.

It was pleasing to see that there were very few rubric errors and most candidates had used the time allocated effectively and completed the paper.

Candidates need to be aware of the specific demands of each type of question:

Part (a) responses should focus on description and only include relevant details. Explanation is not required. Most candidates now realise that answers to **(a)** questions can be short and concise and that there is no need to include background information.

Part (b) responses require facts and explanation. Candidates must be selective of the factual knowledge needed to explain events and write in continuous prose rather than using a 'listing' approach. Most **(b)** questions ask 'Why' a particular event happened, so it is important that candidates direct their response to address the reasons, rather than provide a description of what happened. Successful responses were carefully organised, usually using separate paragraphs for the different reasons that are being explained. Narrative or long introductions which 'set the scene' are not required.

Part (c) requires facts, explanation and analysis. The most effective responses argue both for and against the focus of the question and reach a balanced judgement. When a question asks, 'Are you surprised a particular event happened?' it is important to include explanations on both sides of the argument. A valid conclusion should go beyond being a summary of what has already been stated by addressing, 'how far' or 'how successful'. Weaker responses often focused only on one side of the argument. These could be improved by including more contextual examples on both sides of the argument to produce a balanced response.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: Core Content

Questions 1, 2, 3 and 4

There were too few responses to these questions for meaningful comments to be made.

Questions 5 and 6

These were the two most popular questions in this section.

Question 5

- (a) This question was very well answered. The best responses demonstrated a detailed knowledge of how the Assembly and the Council of the League were meant to work and included a number of relevant, concisely expressed points. Points made included: 'the Assembly met once a year', 'one of the Assembly's roles was to set the budget', 'the Council consisted of four permanent members', 'the Council could issue sanctions'. Other responses did not include details on both the Assembly and the Council. Less successful responses did not distinguish between the Assembly and the Council and described the activities together. Some responses strayed away from the question and wrote at length generally on the setting up of the League of Nations, which lacked relevance to this question.
- (b) There were mixed responses to this question. The most effective were familiar with the events leading up to Mussolini's bombing of Corfu and the subsequent response of the League, and provided two explanations as to why the League's failure was important. They explained that the League appeared weak because Mussolini ignored the League's instructions and insisted that the demands for Greek compensation should be dealt with by the Conference of Ambassadors, which found in favour of Mussolini's demands. A second reason often explained was that the Corfu crisis showed that powerful countries, such as Italy, could just ignore the League of Nations. This would be a lesson for other powerful countries, such as Germany and Japan, in the future when they were attempting to acquire territory. Less successful responses identified reasons without any explanation, or with minimal reference to the Corfu incident, such as, 'its failure was important because it showed the weakness of the League' and 'this was important as it showed that powerful countries could ignore the League'. A small number of responses demonstrated no accurate knowledge of the Corfu crisis, often confusing the events and the countries involved.
- (c) This question was well answered. There were a number of well-developed and balanced responses which discussed the extent to which the lack of an army explained the League's failure in the 1930s. Strong responses identified the problems caused by the lack of the League's own army, especially when moral and economic sanctions failed, and went on to explain where such an army could have been used such as in Manchuria or Abyssinia. These responses then explained other reasons for the failure of the League of Nations. The most common reason identified and explained was the lack of major powers such as the USA. This had an impact on the imposition of economic sanctions, candidates most often citing the Abyssinian crisis as an example whereby the USA, not being in the League, continued trading with Abyssinia, rendering the economic sanctions ineffective. Other reasons identified included British and French self-interest, and this was often explained using aspects of the Manchurian or Abyssinian crises to demonstrate this. Weaker responses included irrelevant details of why the USA did not join the League and/or wrote detailed descriptions of the Manchurian and Abyssinian crises without highlighting how the response of the League led to its failure. A few responses included events in the 1920s such as Corfu and Vilna which were not relevant to this question.

Question 6

- (a) This question worked well for most candidates who had a good understanding of what happened in the Saar in 1935. Successful responses tended to include four precise and relevant pieces of information, for example: a scheduled plebiscite was held, identifying two of the choices available to those who voted (most were unaware of the option to remain as a League mandate) and knowing the outcome. Some left out the options and simply gave the result. Weaker responses were characterised by a lack of factual knowledge, often confusing the Saar with the Rhineland and describing how German troops marched into the area.

- (b) There were many strong responses which contained two explanations as to why the Anschluss was important to Hitler. The most common reasons identified were Hitler's own Austrian origins and his determination to overthrow the Treaty of Versailles. Candidates then went on to develop and explain these themes by linking them to Hitler's determination to create a Greater Germany and to strengthen German military resources, including manpower. Successful responses also included how the Anschluss would improve Hitler's more immediate ambitions regarding Czechoslovakia and confirmed his improved relationship with Mussolini's Italy. Weaker responses were often confused. For example, there was confusion between Hitler's aim for a Greater Germany and Hitler's quest for Lebensraum (which did not apply to Austrian territory). Some responses had no understanding of the term, 'Anschluss'.
- (c) There were mixed responses to this question. Successful responses included contextual examples to produce a well-balanced answer explaining surprise and alternatively, not surprised, that Britain and France declared war on Germany in September 1939. Candidates were strongest on appeasement as a reason to be surprised. The rationale behind appeasement was well explained, with Anglo-French non action over the remilitarisation of the Rhineland and Anschluss, as well as the 1935 Anglo-German naval agreement, frequently cited and explained. Appeasement was also well used on the other side of the argument to indicate that that the patience of Britain and France with Hitler ran out after the occupation of the rest of Czechoslovakia in March 1939 and in effect that the warning to Hitler over Poland after that could not have been clearer. The lack of British and French preparedness for war, though cited as a reason not to be surprised, was often identified, but less well explained, with many candidates arguing that both these countries were still recovering from the impact of the First World War (rather than the Great Depression), as was more accurately the case in the 1930s. Weaker responses tended to be superficial on much of the detail. They commonly identified appeasement as a reason why they were surprised but did not provide any contextual examples to support their supposition. These responses needed to include supporting examples such as: 'they were following a policy of appeasement and had let Hitler break the Treaty of Versailles by rearming Germany, remilitarising the Rhineland, achieving Anschluss and agreeing at the Munich Conference for the Sudetenland to be taken over. They took no action when he invaded Czechoslovakia in March 1939, therefore it is difficult to see how Hitler's invasion of Poland was any different, and so it is a surprise that they declared war on Germany in September 1939.' Weaker responses also tended to include a narrative of events leading to the outbreak of war in 1939 with no expression of surprised/not surprised.

Question 7

- (a) This question was very well answered and most candidates very high marks. They demonstrated a detailed knowledge of the tactics used by the Vietcong. Points made included: they used guerrilla warfare, which often involved a network of tunnels for escape and surprise attacks. They blended in with the peasants and used booby traps. Other relevant tactics most commonly cited were the use of the Ho Chi Minh Trail, they retreated when the Americans attacked so that the Americans could not fight a conventional battle, and the use of ambushes.
- (b) Strong responses demonstrated a good understanding of why the Tet Offensive was important for the USA and explained two reasons. The two most common reasons identified were that it showed the American people that North Vietnam was very far from being defeated and it led to the US seeking negotiations to end the war with North Vietnam. The first identification was explained by developing the idea that it was important for the USA because of the impact it had on the American people. Tet was a massive attack by North Vietnamese forces across South Vietnam in 1968. Despite being a military defeat for North Vietnam it caused a big shock in America. They even attacked the American Embassy in Saigon. The Americans had been told that North Vietnam was weak and incapable of launching large attacks. Tet showed that this was incorrect and support for the war in America declined and the opposition increased. Prior to this media coverage had been generally positive but, as a result of Tet, public opinion changed and there were several peace marches to end the war. Weaker responses usually readily identified reasons, but these needed to be fully developed into explanations. There was a minority of candidates who had no knowledge of the Tet Offensive and offered no response.
- (c) There were mixed responses to this question. To achieve high marks candidates needed to produce a well-balanced answer to explain which was more important for the USA, its involvement in Korea or in the Cuban Missile Crisis. Successful responses showed good understanding of the events in Korea and identified that US involvement was important to stop the spread of communism. This was explained by adding, as troops from North Korea invaded South Korea and

were supported by both China and the USSR, that there was a real danger that South Korea would fall to the communists. This would have been an important step in spreading communism to other countries in Southeast Asia. On the other side of the argument, candidates identified and explained that US involvement in Cuba was vital to stop a potential nuclear war. This is because Cuba was a communist country off the coast of the USA and the USSR missiles which were placed there were a real threat to the USA. Some responses were one sided; candidates tended to be more familiar with events in Cuba than with those in Korea. Weaker responses included much narrative on the background to the Cuban Missile Crisis, including the overthrow of Batista and the Bay of Pigs failure for the USA, which were not relevant to this question. These responses also often included detailed description of the Cuban Missile Crisis without stressing why it was important for the USA.

Question 8

- (a) This question worked well for most candidates who had a good understanding of the Soviet Union's response to the uprising in Hungary in 1956. They expressed a number of concise and relevant points, including: Soviet tanks and troops moved into Budapest, fierce fighting followed and 3,000 Hungarian civilians were killed. Nagy and his supporters were executed. Other responses wrote about why the Soviet Union responded in this way which was not the focus of the question.
- (b) This question was well answered. Strong responses were characterised by the explanation of two reasons why it was important for the Soviet Union to stop Dubcek's reform programme in Czechoslovakia. The most common reason explained was that the Soviets were afraid that Dubcek's ideas would spread to other Communist countries in Eastern Europe. His reforms included a free press, freedom of speech and reducing government control over industry. If these reforms were allowed in Czechoslovakia there was a worry that people in other communist countries would demand the same freedoms. Other factors identified and explained included the fact that the USSR would look weak if they did not take decisive action and they were worried this would weaken the Communist Bloc in the Cold War against the USA. Weaker responses shifted the focus of the question and described Dubcek's reforms, rather than emphasising why it was important for the Soviet Union to stop them.
- (c) There were mixed responses to this question. Strong responses explained surprise that Gorbachev made little effort to defend Soviet power in Eastern Europe. This was because previous Soviet leaders had seen Eastern European countries as a protective barrier for the Soviet Union against the West. The Soviet Union had been invaded by Germany twice in the twentieth century and Stalin had been determined that this would not happen again. This had been the basis of foreign policy for decades and explains why the Soviet Union had put down risings in Hungary and Czechoslovakia. As a result of previous events, it is very surprising that when communist regimes began to collapse and the Berlin Wall fell, that Gorbachev did nothing. These responses often also expressed surprise, because The Brezhnev Doctrine had said that the Soviet Union would intervene. Such responses produced a balanced answer by then explaining why they were not surprised, most commonly expressing the fact that Gorbachev was a new type of leader in the Soviet Union who realised that the Soviet Union was in economic trouble and spending too much on arms in the unwinnable war in Afghanistan. He believed in different policies such as Glasnost and Perestroika. Less successful responses were characterised by a narrative of Gorbachev's reforms, with no reference to surprised/not surprised. It is important that candidates link the points that they make to the question.

Section B: Depth Studies

Questions 9 and 10

There were too few responses to these questions for meaningful comments to be made.

Question 11

This was the most popular question of the Depth Studies

- (a) The majority of candidates knew that Hitler took advantage of the Reichstag Fire by blaming the communists, which then gave him an excuse to arrest them. Successful responses had a good understanding of other immediate consequences, including how he was able to convince President

Hindenburg that communists were plotting to overthrow the Government so that he would issue an emergency decree, thus he took advantage of the Reichstag Fire to consolidate his power. A common misconception was that after the Reichstag Fire he immediately passed The Enabling Act.

- (b) There were mixed responses to this question. The majority of candidates could identify reasons why the Depression was important to the Nazis, most commonly that the Nazis gained support because the Weimar Republic did not deal well with the effects of the Depression and the Nazis were able to win support by offering full employment. Successful responses developed such points into an explanation. They explained that, as a result of the Depression, millions of Germans had lost their jobs. This gave the Nazis the opportunity to do well in elections as they expressed contempt for Weimar's democratic system and said that it was unable to solve Germany's economic problems caused by the Depression. The Nazis organised soup kitchens and provided shelter in hostels for the unemployed. They promised them work, freedom and bread. This gave them lots of votes and they became the largest party in the Reichstag in the elections of July 1932. Less successful responses included generalisations as to how the Depression was important to the Nazis and how it enabled them to exploit the situation but did not say how, and also the points made were often not linked to the Depression. A small number of responses discussed the hyperinflation crisis of 1923 which was not relevant to this question.
- (c) This question was well-answered. Candidates showed a very good understanding of the effects of the Munich Putsch and produced some good responses, with detailed arguments on either side of the debate. The majority of candidates began their responses agreeing with the hypothesis by using the events of the Munich Putsch to explain that in the short term it was a failure. Most commonly included were that it was not well planned, failed to win popular support, was defeated quickly, Hitler was later arrested and imprisoned and the Nazi Party was banned. Successful responses then examined the other side of the debate, including the long-term effects of the Munich Putsch. A common explanation was that Hitler was imprisoned in Landsberg Castle and whilst there he had time to re-think his tactics. He realised that he could not gain power by uprisings and violence and that he needed to win support and win elections. This made him re-organise the party and begin to use democratic methods. This was a turning point for the Nazis and contributed to their later success in elections. Weaker responses tended to be more descriptive, an example being that Hitler wrote *Mein Kampf* when he was in prison; the key themes were described in these responses, but little attempt was made to link it to the long-term success of the Nazis. Others were less selective in the details they included in their answers and wrote at length how the Germans gained power in 1933, with no link to the effects of the Munich Putsch.

Question 12

- (a) The majority of candidates were very familiar with how the Nazis used the mass media. Examples included: cheap radios were made available so all Germans could buy one and hear Hitler's speeches. Goebbels controlled the newspapers closely and they were not allowed to print anti-Nazi ideas. Posters were put up around Germany showing images of the ideal Aryan family. Successful responses also highlighted that the Nazis used the media to promote Nazi propaganda and to make the Nazis look great. Weaker responses mis-interpreted the focus of the question and whilst being able to identify the different types of mass media, they did not focus on how the media was used by the Nazis.
- (b) Strong responses identified and explained two reasons why Kristallnacht was important. The most common explanation was that it was a turning point in the nature of the Nazi persecution of the Jews. It was a change from the previous economic and social persecution to physical persecution, with Jews being beaten and murdered, and can be seen as a step towards the Holocaust. Other reasons explained included the increasing number of Jews leaving Germany and how Goebbels had used the event to try to improve his standing with Hitler. Less successful responses included details on why Hitler hated the Jews, which was not the focus of the question. A small number of candidates confused Kristallnacht with the Night of the Long Knives.
- (c) There were some good responses to this question which were well organised and included carefully selected and relevant details. In agreement with the hypothesis, responses explained that there was no effective opposition to the Nazi regime. They explained this in terms of the terror and force used to suppress any opposition. Control was exercised through the Gestapo, who had unlimited powers to search houses, arrest people on suspicion and send them to concentration camps without trial or explanation. Many Germans were frightened to speak out against the regime, even if they wanted to. Strong responses also gave consideration to ways in which opposition to



the Nazi regime was effective. They explained how many young people believed in freedom of expression and values which conflicted with those of the Nazis. They used the Edelweiss Pirates as an example and showed how they shared a strong distaste of the strict regimentation and sexual segregation of the Hitler Youth, so they often beat them up. During the war they carried out acts of sabotage, helped army deserters and even assassinated a Gestapo chief. The activities of the Swing Movement, the White Rose group and members of the Church were also often used as examples of effective opposition. Some opposition could be used to demonstrate both sides of the debate, for example, groups like the White Rose, despite scattering leaflets and conducting an anti-Nazi graffiti campaign, were rounded up by the Gestapo and executed, thus reducing the effectiveness of the opposition. Other responses would have benefited from adopting a much less narrative approach on the effectiveness of the opposition.

Questions 13 and 14

There were too few responses to these questions for meaningful comments to be made.

Question 15

- (a) This question was well answered and candidates had a good understanding of the experiences of American farmers in the 1920s. Successful responses described the problems experienced by farmers at this time and gained very high marks as a result of identifying four points. These included: overproduction, competition from Canada, reduction in prices and the eviction of tenant farmers because they could not pay their rents.
- (b) Successful responses were characterised by explaining how a specific traditional industry struggled in the 1920s. Two explanations were needed. The main industries identified and explained were the coal and textile industry. For example: The coal industry struggled and found itself producing too much coal because demand for it was going down. This was because electricity was increasingly supplied to more homes and factories, so they were changing from coal to electricity for their energy. They were also changing to other new forms of energy, such as gas and oil. Less successful responses only provided generalised answers with no mention of specific industries, for example, the main reason why traditional industries struggled was because of changes happening in American society. This could have been improved by identifying an industry and including more details as to why it was struggling in the 1920s.
- (c) There were some very good responses to this question, which displayed an excellent knowledge and understanding of the US economy in the 1920s. These responses produced well supported arguments on both sides of the debate. Regarding the responsibility of the Republican Government for the boom, successful responses identified and explained policies related to low taxation, import tariffs, the formation of trusts and laissez-faire. The counter explanations most commonly focused on technical advances such as the assembly line and mechanisation of new industries, such as the car industry and its boost to other associate industries like rubber, oil and glass. Other examples included explanations of credit, advertising and the positive impact of World War I on the US economy. Less successful responses, whilst often demonstrating sound factual knowledge, were less selective in the details they needed to use to answer the question relevantly and often described the reasons for the boom, rather than explain their impact on the American economy.

Questions 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21 and 22

There were too few responses to these questions for meaningful comments to be made.

HISTORY

Paper 0977/22
Paper 22

Key messages

Candidates should ensure that they answer the question directly. If a question asks how useful a source is, candidates should clearly refer to 'usefulness' in the answer; if a question asks why a speech was given or a letter was written, then explaining a reason is vital. The best way to ensure that the question is being directly addressed is to refer to it in the opening sentence of the answer, for example 'This cartoon is very useful to a historian because'.

Avoiding descriptions of pictorial sources and paraphrasing written sources is important. Candidates should try to interpret sources. This means they need to work out the argument or point of view the artist/author was trying to put across and their purpose in doing this. It can be a useful starting point for candidates to ask themselves about each source, 'What is the point of view of the artist or author?'

Question 6 carries a high number of marks. When answering it, candidates need to directly check each source against the hypothesis given in the question and not against something that is similar to it. In the twentieth century option, a number of candidates focused on 'harsh' rather than on 'unfair'.

General comments

A large majority of candidates answered the questions on the twentieth-century option. There were many competent scripts and a small number of outstandingly good ones.

Nearly all candidates were able to comprehend the sources and showed at least reasonable skills in interpreting, comparing and evaluating. The better candidates made good use of their knowledge and understanding of the historical content to help them understand and use the sources relevantly. Weaker responses tended to focus on the historical context without relating it to the question or the sources.

Nearly all candidates completed all the questions, although there was a tendency to write very long answers to **Question 1**. These answers often contained lengthy paraphrases of both sources and did not address the question until right at the end. This sometimes appeared to lead to candidates not having enough time to complete **Question 6** properly.

Comments on specific questions

Option A: Nineteenth century topic

Question 1

Most candidates managed to find several agreements such as the Papacy, Austria and local loyalties all being an obstacle to unification. Many also explained that the sources disagree over what was the biggest obstacle to unification, the Italians or Austria. Some candidates summarised both sources and then made assertions about agreements or disagreements. The best way to answer this question was a point-by-point comparison.

Question 2

The most common way of answering this question was to focus on the fact that Charles Albert promised his immediate support in Source C, but in Source D he claimed that he was not ready and was very slow to act. Candidates used this difference as proof that Charles Albert was lying in Source C. Some also compared his show of enthusiasm for 'Italian brotherhood' in C with his rejection of popular support in D, and the suggestion that he was more interested in expanding Piedmont's power. Better answers evaluated one of the sources to check whether these differences meant he was lying. The most popular way of doing this was to consider Charles Albert's purpose in making the proclamation in Source C. Relevant use of sound contextual knowledge made this approach work well and produced some very strong responses. Other answers tended not to compare the sources or identified lying by Charles Albert but did not explain the lying.

Question 3

The key to answering this question well was to consider Mazzini's message in the context of November 1848. By this time it is not surprising to see Mazzini feeling frustrated because of the defeat of Charles Albert and the change of mind by Pope Pius and King Ferdinand. Most candidates were able to explain Mazzini's message but tended to set this in the very general context of 1848, rather than specific events of that year. A small number of candidates paraphrased the source, rather than interpreted its message.

Question 4

Most candidates were able to find similarities in the messages of the two cartoons. Similarities most commonly explained were the fact that Italy is not free in either cartoon and the fact that Austria is portrayed as an oppressor in both. A few candidates managed to find a difference such as Source F suggesting some possible hope for Italy, but Source G suggesting no hope at all. The best answers were those that compared the points of view of the cartoonists – they are both in favour of a free independent Italy.

Question 5

There are two crucial steps on the way to writing a good answer to this question. The first is to infer from Source H the Pope's attitude towards a unified Italy. The second is to clearly and explicitly address the issue of 'surprise'. Some candidates wrote good answers that could have led to being surprised or not surprised but did not get as far as addressing the issue. Most candidates were surprised by what we are told about the Pope's attitude in Source H. This was based on Pius's actions as a reformer shortly after being elected as Pope in 1846. A few candidates were able to use their knowledge of the Pope's actions and pronouncements since 1848 to argue that there is no reason to be surprised by Pius's attitude.

Question 6

This question was generally answered well. The sources provided candidates with plenty of material to work with on both sides of the argument. They managed to focus on the hypothesis about Austria being the most important obstacle to Italian unification and used the sources clearly and convincingly. The following is a good example of how a source should be used in response to **Question 6**: 'Source D shows that the most important obstacle to Italian unification was the incompetence of Charles Albert. The source tells us that he was very slow in attacking the Austrians and his army was not ready. It also suggests that he was interested in increasing the power of Piedmont rather than helping Italian unification.' A few candidates neglected the sources and wrote general essays about the struggle for Italian unification.

Option B: Twentieth century topic

Question 1

Most candidates had little difficulty identifying and explaining agreements between the two sources, for example they both state that the British thought the Treaty was too harsh, they both state that Germany did not like the Treaty, and they both claim that Germany was made stronger by the Treaty. Candidates found it harder to find disagreements but they are there, for example Source A claims Germany was made stronger by the splintering of the Austrian and Russian empires, while Source B says that this was caused by the creation of Poland. Candidates should avoid summarising each source and then asserting that they agree or disagree. What worked best was a point-by-point comparison.

Question 2

The majority of candidates were split into four groups by this question. Some thought that the cartoonist approved of the treatment of Germany, and this seems to be supported by the mocking way in which the Kaiser and Germany are presented. The date of the cartoon would also support this view. In June 1919, a large majority of people in Britain wanted Germany to be punished harshly. Those that were explicit about the cartoonist's approval provided the strongest responses. A second group of candidates understood that Germany was being punished harshly but did not get as far as suggesting approval. A third group inferred valid sub-messages from the cartoon, for example the Treaty was a diktat, Germany did not like the Treaty or the Allies were in total control. A final group of candidates, probably influenced by Sources A and B, understood the harsh treatment of Germany but argued that the cartoonist disapproved of what was happening. These answers were the weakest ones to this question. A small number of candidates either misinterpreted the cartoon (for example Germany was being punished lightly) or described the surface features of the cartoon.

Question 3

There were few poor answers to this question. Most candidates addressed the issue of surprise and did so by comparing the claims made by the two sources. This usually led them to conclude that Source D does make Source E surprising because of the disagreements about the Treaty. However, some then turned their answers around by pointing out that because D is British and E is German, the disagreements are not surprising. The best answers developed this approach further by using either contextual knowledge or cross-reference to other sources to explain why the views expressed in Sources D and E are to be expected. Less successful answers either claimed that D does not make E surprising because one is British and the other is German, without using the content of the sources, or did not address the issue of surprise.

Question 4

This question is about Lloyd George's purpose in making the speech in Source F when he did. The best answers therefore focused on what he said and how he wanted to affect the behaviour of others. This led them to explain that Lloyd George was trying to win the support of Parliament or of the British people. Many candidates put their answers in context by explaining, for example, that he may have been doing this because of the demands in Britain for a tough treaty. A careful reading of Source F shows that Lloyd George was trying to convince people that the Treaty was a good one because it was just, its punishment of Germany was appropriate, and that it would help maintain peace in the future. Many candidates just focused on the message of the speech and did not consider Lloyd George's purpose in making such a speech, while some explained the context as the reason for giving the speech but neglected to address what he was actually saying. The best answers brought message and context together, to explain Lloyd George's purpose. It is very important, when answering a question such as this one, that candidates make clear that what they are explaining about the message or the context, is a reason for the speech. A few candidates explained message or content but would have improved their answers by stating why they were doing this.

Question 5

This question produced many good answers. Most candidates argued that the cartoon is useful evidence. They did this on the basis of interpreting the messages of the cartoon, for example, Germany was punished harshly. Better answers added that Germany's allies were also going to be heavily punished. This is a central feature of the cartoon. The cartoon also reveals the cartoonist's glee that the punishment was going to be harsh. The cartoon has a gloating tone and some candidates were able to use this as evidence of British support for the treatment of Germany and its allies. Weaker answers dismissed the cartoon as not useful because it is just a cartoon, it is British and therefore biased, or because of what it does not tell us. When responding to questions about usefulness it is usually a good approach to try to find a way that the source is useful. This cartoon is undoubtedly biased, but this is not a good reason for rejecting it because it provides useful evidence about British attitudes. Some candidates argued that the cartoonist is criticising the peace treaties, whereas the portrayal of the various figures in the cartoon clearly suggest a mocking of the fear and discomfort of Germany and its allies.

Question 6

Many candidates answered this question well. They were able to explain how some sources support the hypothesis that Germany was treated unfairly, and how some sources disagree with such a claim. The best answers contained certain key features. First, it was made clear which source was being referred to and whether it supports or disagrees with the hypothesis. This can be achieved very simply, for example 'Source

E supports the idea that German was treated unfairly because...'. Second, the focus was on the hypothesis, rather than on a variant of it. For example, it is not acceptable to replace 'unfairly' with 'harshly'. They do not have the same meaning. Something can be harsh without being unfair. Thirdly, if sources were divided into two groups, each individual source was then used by itself. Attempts to make general claims about a group of sources do not generally result in strong answers. Finally, source detail was used as the basis of an explanation of how a source supports or disagrees with the hypothesis, for example 'Source E supports the idea that Germany was treated unfairly. It does this by calling the treaty 'disgraceful' and claiming that German honour was being 'dragged to the grave', and 'Source F does not support the claim that Germany was treated unfairly. This is because Lloyd George argues that the treaty was right and fair. He does this by arguing that Germany has to pay reparations because of the damage it caused in the war. It is being punished because it tried to trample on national rights and freedoms.'



HISTORY

Paper 0977/03
Coursework

Key messages

An appropriate coursework title will point candidates in the right direction and give them a good chance of demonstrating the relevant skills and understanding.

Candidates should try to assess significance, rather than describing or explaining it. Long narratives and descriptions should be avoided. Use should be made of argument and counter argument.

Candidates should focus on the subject named in the title, rather than on other factors.

Candidates should use a range of criteria such as political, social and depth and breadth, to assess significance. They can also consider significance from the perspectives of different individual/groups at the time and consider immediate and longer-term significance.

General comments

There was much good work seen, with many candidates using appropriate titles and producing focused assessments of significance. Most candidates kept to the word limit, although a small number used significantly less than 2000 words and could have developed their arguments further. Nearly all centres sent well organised packages of coursework containing the correct sample of candidates' work and relevant supporting documentation. Useful summative comments on candidates' scripts explained why certain levels and marks had been awarded.

Comments on specific questions

Nearly all of the titles used for this session were appropriate. A wide range was seen but examples of the types of title that worked well include:

Assess the significance of propaganda in Germany between 1933 and 1945.

Assess the significance of the New Deal in the USA.

Assess the significance of Gustav Stresemann.

Assess the significance of black opposition to apartheid in South Africa.

How significant was the Battle of the Somme in the First World War?

Assess the significance of Goebbels for Germany and the German people.

Most of these titles include the words 'assess' and 'significance', making it clear to candidates how to approach the task. The titles are also open, allowing candidates to use a range of criteria of their own choosing. On the other hand, a title such as 'How important was the Depression in helping Hitler come to power?' is not appropriate. This is because it does not allow a broad assessment of significance because the impact of the Depression is limited to Hitler coming to power. Other ways in which the Depression was significant for Germany cannot be assessed. It also encourages candidates to spend much of their answers writing about other factors that contributed to Hitler's rise to power, instead of focusing on the significance of the Depression. This type of title, in practice, tends to produce multi-causal explanations (in this case of Hitler's rise to power). This is not what is required.

Most answers were focused on significance. The most successful made genuine attempts to produce an assessment of significance, while weaker answers only described or explained significance. Some candidates just explained the outcome of an event or of the actions of an individual. The best answers, however, assessed how far the impact of the individual or event mattered – in different ways, for different reasons and to different people. These responses often included argument and counter-argument and demonstrated an understanding that judgements about historical significance are provisional. Weaker answers were one-sided. They argued why a person or event was significant but made no use of counter-argument to suggest possible qualifications to their argument. The weakest answers tended to be narrative accounts and some focused on factors other than the one named in the title.

Another feature of the best answers was the use of a range of criteria such as political, economic, social, depth and breadth of impact, impact for different groups, and immediate and longer-term significance. These criteria do not have to be announced in the first paragraph of the answer; doing this can look rather mechanical and artificial. Answers were often better when the criteria emerged naturally. Candidates should think carefully about which criteria to use. They should choose those that work most effectively with the individual or event they are evaluating. A few of the best answers included supported judgements about the most important way in which the named factor was significant, for example was its political significance more important than its economic significance?

Most of the marking was accurate and demonstrated a good understanding of the markscheme. This should be used holistically, with judgements being reached about an answer as a whole. The key features are focus, relevance and assessment of significance, supported by good knowledge and understanding of the history. Although marginal comments can be useful in identifying the qualities of an answer, they should not be used to award levels, especially early on in a response. Moderators found centres' summative comments most useful, especially when they were used to sum up the key qualities of an answer and to explain why it had been placed in a particular level.

HISTORY

Paper 0977/42
Alternative to Coursework

Key messages

This paper requires candidates to give an extended response to one question from a choice of two from their chosen Depth Study. Responses should be balanced answers that are well-structured, analytical and address the question of importance or significance. An in-depth and wide range of knowledge is required to support arguments and reach conclusions.

General comments

A range of Depth Studies was undertaken. Depth Study B: Germany, 1918 – 1945 was the most popular choice among candidates, followed by Depth Study D: The United States, 1919 – 1941. A good number also attempted Depth Study A: The First World War, 1914–1918 and Depth Study C: Russia, 1905 – 1941. There were too few attempts at Depth Study E (China), Depth Study F (South Africa) or Depth Study G (Israelis and Palestinians) for meaningful comments to be made.

Good responses had been well-planned and were able to use a wide range of material to give balance with supported explanations. The best answers also gave supported judgements and conclusions, but many would have benefited from providing a sustained line of argument throughout the response. There were very few rubric errors where candidates had attempted both questions from the Depth Study or multiple Depth Studies. Less successful answers contained too much narrative or description or did not properly address the question that was set. These candidates wrote at great length about the topic or Depth Study in general, instead of focusing on the parameters set by the question. Some candidates also strayed from the chronology set out in the question, which sometimes led to large sections of the response lacking relevance. Candidates need to read the question carefully before answering and ensure that their response focuses on the issue in the question.

Comments on specific questions

Depth Study A: The First World War, 1914 – 1918

Question 1 attracted a good number of answers, with too few candidates attempting **Question 2** for meaningful comments to be made.

Question 1

This was generally well answered. Candidates had an in-depth knowledge of the Schlieffen Plan and why Russia's mobilisation was an important cause of its failure in 1914. The strongest responses were able to examine the impact Russia's mobilisation in the early months of the war had on the Schlieffen Plan and provide detailed evidence to support their explanations, often citing precise examples in their answers. This was then balanced against other important factors such as the changes made to the original plan by von Moltke, Belgian resistance, the BEF's entry into the war and key battles such as the Battle of the Marne and the subsequent race to the sea. Some candidates demonstrated relative importance by comparing the different factors and assessing their overall impact on the failure of the Schlieffen Plan, often in a concluding paragraph. Weaker answers tended to be descriptive or a narrative of the early months of the war and would have benefited from providing more assessment of importance.

Question 2

There were too few responses for meaningful comments to be made.

Depth Study B: Germany, 1918 – 1945

Question 3 and **Question 4** were both popular choices among candidates.

Question 3

This question was generally well answered, though there was confusion in weaker responses over the term 'Weimar Constitution'. This term, which refers to the set of rules governing the new German Republic signed in August 1919, was often confused with the 'Weimar Republic' or 'Weimar government', which refers to the institution itself. Good answers focused on the aspects of the Constitution which caused instability in Germany between 1919 and 1933, such as proportional representation and Article 48. This was then balanced against other factors such as the impact of the terms of the Treaty of Versailles, uprisings by the extreme left and right, the Wall Street Crash and Depression amongst others. The best responses explained the relative importance of these factors and used specific examples to support their arguments; some candidates made valid and convincing judgements in their conclusions. Less successful responses misinterpreted or misread the question or provided answers which were very thin on detail or contained large numbers of errors; many of these were chronological.

Question 4

Candidates tended to lack specific contextual knowledge of how the churches in Germany opposed aspects of Nazi rule and this often led to very generalised answers. Many candidates also confused Catholic and Protestant churches or referred to them as the same entity. Some good responses did provide accurate and well deployed examples in their arguments, such as Bishop Galen's opposition to the T-4 euthanasia programme and Niemoller and Bonhoeffer's Confessing Church, which was set up to oppose the Reich Church. This was then balanced against other forms of opposition in Nazi Germany, such as youth opposition, army opposition and conservative opposition. Some candidates were able to provide assessments of the significance of each form of opposition to Nazi rule and support these with a broad range of examples. Other responses, however, would have been improved by greater depth, breadth and focus. Some answers refocused the question onto control in Nazi Germany, which led to material on the SS, concentration camps, the Gestapo and propaganda, which was not the focus of this question.

Depth Study C: Russia, 1905 – 1941

There were more responses to **Question 5** than there were to **Question 6**.

Question 5

This question produced some strong responses. The best answers demonstrated a solid grasp of the importance of agriculture as a cause of Russia's problems by March 1917. Candidates focused on the peasant land issue, food shortages and famines, as well as the lack of impact of Stolypin's reforms for poorer peasant families. This was then balanced by assessing the relative importance of other key factors such as the nature of the tsarist autocracy, the actions of Nicholas II, the impact of the Russo-Japanese War and the First World War, as well as the socio-economic consequences these had for many Russians. Weaker responses tended to lack a detailed knowledge of agricultural problems in Russia before 1917 and often only provided very generalised contextual knowledge in the arguments.

Question 6

This was generally answered convincingly. Many candidates had a strong knowledge and understanding of the how significant War Communism was in the consolidation of Bolshevik rule up to 1924 and commonly cited how the Bolsheviks used the policy to nationalise industry and the banks, coordinate grain requisitioning to feed the soldiers and workers and launch the Red Terror against the Russian population who opposed Bolshevik rule. This was then balanced with other significant factors, such as the role of Lenin and Trotsky, the victory for the Reds in the Russian Civil War, Lenin's decrees, and the NEP. The best responses provided judgements on the relative significance of various different factors and explained their arguments with strong supporting examples. Other responses were often descriptive or narrative in approach, with a significant number of candidates focusing on why the Reds won the Russian Civil War which, although a relevant factor, was not the actual question set.

Depth Study D: The United States, 1919 – 1941

This answered by many candidates, with **Question 7** proving slightly more popular than **Question 8**.

Question 7

There were some strong responses from candidates. Many were able to provide a detailed and comprehensive set of explanations that focused on how important electricity was as a reason for economic growth in the 1920s. Most stronger answers focused on how electricity was used to power assembly lines in factories to increase efficiency and decrease prices, as well as how it led to a boom in consumer appliances like the radio and washing machine. This was then balanced against other factors such as the impact of Republican policies, the legacy of the First World War, mass advertising and the availability of credit. Many candidates were able to explain the relative importance of the different causes of economic growth in this period and used specific examples to support their arguments, with some reaching substantiated conclusions and judgements. Weaker responses did not grasp how electricity helped industry boom and some were confused and referred to cars and agricultural machinery being electric during this period. Some candidates focused their answers on the social impact of electricity, such as its use in cinemas, and then provided explanations of how this improved people's lives, which was not the focus of this question.

Question 8

This question was generally well answered and most candidates were able to provide good depth and range to the material they incorporated in their arguments. The strongest answers were able to examine how the impact of Prohibition changed the lives of many Americans, especially in the cities during the period 1919 – 33. Commonly cited were the increase in sales and production of illegal alcohol, smuggling and the control of the trade by organised crime. This was then balanced by examining other significant factors that changed people's lives such as the movie industry, the increase in popularity of jazz music, new sports and leisure activities made possible by the widespread adoption of the car, religious intolerance, the Red Scare and issues linked to immigration and racial discrimination. Some candidates were able to assess significance well and linked factors together with convincing explanations. This helped some provide clinching arguments in their conclusions, supported by well-selected examples. Less successful responses focused too much on the causes of Prohibition in the USA which was not the focus of the question. Other candidates refocused their answers onto the causes of the economic boom in the 1920s, especially when examining alternative factors in their responses.

Depth Study E: China, c. 1930 – c. 1990

There were too few responses for meaningful comments to be made.

Depth Study F: South Africa, c. 1940 – c. 1994

There were too few responses for meaningful comments to be made.

Depth Study G: Israelis and Palestinians since 1945

There were too few responses for meaningful comments to be made.