

HISTORY

Paper 9389/11
Document Question 11

Key messages

- This assessment focusses on source comprehension, analysis and evaluation so this should be central to candidates approach.
- When reading sources candidates should ensure that they take notice of the overall message of the source in order to understand the argument or point of view of the author. This means that the source should be viewed holistically rather than divided into individual sentences or part sentences which, taken alone, can convey different ideas to that which the source as a whole has.
- Analysis of source content provides the foundation of sound answers to (a) and (b). In order to be valid, the analysis must be focused on the specific question asked.
- To reach Levels 4 and 5, specific source evaluation is required. Candidates should consider exactly when the source was written and, most importantly, the motive for doing so. Provenance should then be linked with specific contextual knowledge that the candidate should already have. Combining the two enables candidates to decide how reliable a source is in answering the particular assertion being considered. It is important that source evaluation is focused on the specific question.
- Time-keeping is vitally important. Candidates need to make sure they leave enough time to write complete answers to both questions.

General comments

Most candidates know that the **(a)** question requires an identification of similarities and differences and that answers to **(b)** questions require an explanation of how each source either supports or challenges the prompt in the question. Stronger candidates appreciate that they need to support the points they make with quotations or direct paraphrases from the relevant sources.

Weaker responses to part **(a)** were often rushed. Candidates often made inappropriate 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 cannot be properly validated, they cannot be credited. This was less of an issue with regard to **(b)** questions. Weaker responses often included large sections of contextual knowledge

There is still a minority of candidates who interpret 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. A minority of candidates ran out of time, usually after writing long introductions which contributed little to their answer. If candidates are to do justice to their knowledge and understanding and subject skills they should focus more on the specific source analysis in their answers.

When analysing the sources many candidates confused themselves by picking out sections of text which ran counter to the overall message of the source. It is important to consider the message of the source as whole rather than dissected sections of it when making links to the questions and further judgements. To achieve higher evaluation marks it is necessary to explain why the nature, origin or purpose of the source makes it more or less useful when answering the question rather than just stating the date or type of source and saying it is unreliable.

Comments on specific questions

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

- 1 (a) 'Compare and contrast the view in Sources B and C about the impact of the Zollverein on Germany'

The crucial words in the question were 'impact of'. Weaker responses did not identify this and simply compared the two sources' views of the Zollverein. This was particularly significant when considering source C. Many used the second sentence and especially '[it] was not seen as a stepping stone to anything greater' to contrast with Source B's assertion that the Zollverein would lead to greater things. Source C's use of 'stepping stone' referred to the origins of the Zollverein, not its impact. Many responses stated that Source C argued that the Zollverein did have a positive impact, creating a sense of unity, in other words that it was a stepping stone. Thus this particular contrast, often made, was invalid. Valid contrasts included B focusing more on economic impact and Source C on political.

1 (b) 'After 1815, German nationalists wanted to create a single nation state.' How far do Sources A to D support this view?

A majority of candidates found enough evidence in the sources to both challenge and support the hypothesis. A weaker minority of responses Source A to support the hypothesis, seeing the word 'unite' in the first sentence of the Articles and jumped to the wrong conclusion. They also saw the last Article, with its talk of protecting 'Germany as a whole' as evidence of a commitment to support a single nation state. Stronger responses demonstrated accurate source analysis, sometimes supported by sound contextual knowledge, enabling them to correctly identify that Source A was challenging the hypothesis. Article 2 states that the aim of the Confederation was to maintain the independence of individual German states. Contextual knowledge was used to confirm that the aim of the treaty-makers in 1815 was to prevent the formation of a single German state. Accurate analysis of Source A was significant because the other sources all quite clearly supported the hypothesis.

Many candidates attempted to evaluate the sources in order to reach Level 4 but few provided the detailed evidence needed to do so. With Source C, for example, many argued it was reliable because it was written by an Englishman. Stronger responses identified that a more substantial aspect of the provenance of Source C is its date, 1840. If the Source is reported to Parliament in 1840, the research behind it was carried out a year or two before and much closer to the formation of the Zollverein. By the later 1830s, there was little evidence to suggest that the Zollverein was a harbinger of German unity. Source C's predictions of the future of Germany were to be proved accurate. However, they were not soundly based.

Section B, the American Option: The Origins of the Civil War, 1846–1861

2 (a) To what extent do Sources B and C agree about the way Senator Douglas conducted his campaign?

Many weaker responses compared the campaigns of Douglas and Lincoln, which is not what the question asked; the focus was on Douglas. Stronger responses identified that both sources show Douglas contesting the election across the state of Illinois and that his campaign attracted large crowds., and that they differ in that Source B says that Douglas's campaign had been one triumphal march whereas Source C maintains that Douglas had lost support by campaigning. Many candidates found the differences easier to identify than the similarities.

2 (b) How far do Sources A to D support the view that the result of the contest between Lincoln and Douglas was an unexpected triumph for Douglas?

A significant minority of candidates overlooked the key word in the question, 'unexpected'. Instead they used the sources to consider whether they showed that the election was a triumph for Douglas. These responses also usually misinterpreted the content of the Sources. Most of the responses who did focus on the 'unexpected' element of the question, however, did provide a sound and accurate analyse of all four sources.

Many candidates attempted to evaluate the sources, usually as a separate section of their answer, which was not always successful. In weaker responses evaluation rarely went beyond generic statements about the state in which the source originated from. Evaluation can only be credited when there is a clear explanation as to why the nature, origin or purpose of the source makes it more or less useful in relations to the hypothesis given in the question. Stronger responses did provide detailed source evaluation, often supporting their argument with carefully selected contextual knowledge.

Section C, International Option: The Search for International Peace and Security, 1919–1945

3 (a) Compare and contrast the views of Senator Norris (Source A) and Harding (Source C) on the role the USA should adopt in international relations.

The majority of responses chose to compare the sources with regard to whether the USA should join the League of Nations rather than its role in international relations. Not addressing the question actually set inevitably limited the marks which could be awarded as it was difficult to identify valid comparisons and contrasts. Many of the responses which did focus on the USA's role in international relations were able to identify similarities, but often struggled with identifying contrasts. The strongest responses identified that Source A did want some role for the USA, namely being involved in disarmament, while Source C was much less specific, asserting only that 'Americans will not fail civilization on the advancement of peace'.

3 (b) How far do Sources A to D support the view that joining the League of Nations would lead to the USA's involvement in war?

Most candidates were able to correctly identify which of the four sources on either side of the argument. Sources A and C supported the assertion, Sources B and D challenged it. A minority of weaker responses altered the focus of their analysis by answering a different question, namely how far the existence of the League would result in war. Less successful responses found it difficult to demonstrate valid evaluation of the sources. The most usual comment was that Sources A and C were biased against the League because they came from Republican politicians and Republicans were isolationist. Conversely, Sources B and C were biased because they came from Democratic politicians and Democrats were in favour of the League of Nations. Stronger responses went beyond general statements and included specific analysis, often considering the times in which the letter and speeches, all made public, were communicated. Sources A and D were written in 1918 and 1920, even-numbered years. In the USA, even-numbered years mean federal elections. 1918 was a mid-term election year, 1920 a presidential election year. Sources B and D were spoken in 1919, the year of the Versailles Peace Conference which established the League of Nations. President Wilson was the driving force behind the League. He was a Democrat. Thus, Sources B and D would enviably be in support of the League.

HISTORY

<p>Paper 9389/12 Document Question 12</p>

Key messages

- This assessment focusses on source comprehension, analysis and evaluation so this should be central to candidates approach.
- When reading sources candidates should ensure that they take notice of the overall message of the source in order to understand the argument or point of view of the author. This means that the source should be viewed holistically rather than divided into individual sentences or part sentences which, taken alone, can convey different ideas to that which the source as a whole has.
- Analysis of source content provides the foundation of sound answers to (a) and (b). In order to be valid, the analysis must be focused on the specific question asked.
- To reach Levels 4 and 5, specific source evaluation is required. Candidates should consider exactly when the source was written and, most importantly, the motive for doing so. Provenance should then be linked with specific contextual knowledge that the candidate should already have. Combining the two enables candidates to decide how reliable a source is in answering the particular assertion being considered. It is important that source evaluation is focused on the specific question.
- Time-keeping is vitally important. Candidates need to make sure they leave enough time to write complete answers to both questions.

General comments

Most candidates know that the **(a)** question requires an identification of similarities and differences and that answers to **(b)** questions require an explanation of how each source either supports or challenges the prompt in the question. Stronger candidates appreciate that they need to support the points they make with quotations or direct paraphrases from the relevant sources.

Weaker responses to part **(a)** were often rushed. Candidates often made inappropriate 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 cannot be properly validated, they cannot be credited. This was less of an issue with regard to **(b)** questions. Weaker responses often included large sections of contextual knowledge

There is still a minority of candidates who interpret 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. A minority of candidates ran out of time, usually after writing long introductions which contributed little to their answer. If candidates are to do justice to their knowledge and understanding and subject skills they should focus more on the specific source analysis in their answers.

When analysing the sources many candidates confused themselves by picking out sections of text which ran counter to the overall message of the source. It is important to consider the message of the source as whole rather than dissected sections of it when making links to the questions and further judgements. To achieve higher evaluation marks it is necessary to explain why the nature, origin or purpose of the source makes it more or less useful when answering the question rather than just stating the date or type of source and saying it is unreliable.

Comments on specific questions

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

1 (a) Compare and contrast the views in Sources A and B on Mazzini and the Roman Republic.

These two sources were intriguing as they both came from people who had been supporters of Mazzini during the Roman Republic. This meant that it may have been assumed that they held quite similar views but in fact there many differences in their opinions of both Mazzini and the reasons the republic fell. There were some similarities between the two sources particularly in regard to the reactions that Mazzini's cause provoked. Both suggest that some feared social change – 'conservative landlords feared what it might bring' (Source A), 'they marched to war under the banner of privilege and Catholicism' (Source B). However, both recognise that Mazzini was able to increase the feelings of Italian pride and nationalist feeling to some extent. Candidates generally tackled this question successfully as long as they did not allow themselves to become distracted by the mention of Catholic feelings in both sources. Some weaker responses tried to draw this as a similarity without really understanding the overall message of the sources.

1 (b) 'Mazzini played a vital part in advancing the cause of Italian unity.' How far do Sources A to D support this view?

Overall this question was well attempted by many candidates. The strongest responses demonstrated a sound knowledge of the period and were able to use that specifically to test the sources provided. The sources with the clearest positive attitude towards Mazzini were A and D. Both written by supporters or by Garibaldi in the case of Source D they were keen to prove how important Mazzini had been to the cause of unification. Stronger responses used these sources to pick out the ideas of support but also to question the weight we can give to sources which are so obviously written to praise an individual. Source A, especially, has a rather romantic view of Mazzini and Garibaldi could be accused of a certain rose-tinted hindsight as he writes in 1889. Some weaker responses tended to include generic statements about the provenance of the sources, with many arguing that because Margaret Fuller was an American she would be lacking in knowledge of Italy. It is clear that the source is written whilst she is in Rome at the time of the Republic so arguably she would have had a good idea of what was happening. Source C from Cavour is clearly the most hostile to Mazzini and many stronger responses were able to place this description in the context of Cavour's wider struggle with the populist ideas of Mazzini. Source B offered an interesting chance for candidates to question the thoughts of Pisacane and stronger responses commented on the interesting juxtaposition of his provenance and his opinion as a critic of Mazzini, with some responses also able to contextualise this source in 1851 a few years after the Republic.

Section B, the American Option: The Origins of the Civil War, 1846–1861

2 (a) To what extent do Sources A and B agree in their assessment of the situation facing Fillmore when he became President?

Some candidates had some difficulty in fully understanding these sources, often as a result of not having adequate contextual knowledge of the political discussions which took place leading up to the Compromise of 1850. Close reading of the sources did help some candidates to remember that Seward was an abolitionist whilst new President Fillmore, who took on the post after the sudden death of Zachary Taylor, was of a more pragmatic mind. Candidates that were able to use this knowledge were able to draw clear contrasts between the two sources which were mostly encompassed by Source A showing the opportunities that face Fillmore to unite the sections and move the country to a new understanding versus Seward who portrayed Fillmore as a man out of his depth and surrounded by enemies. Most candidates were able to recognise that both sources described a period of turmoil with politicians running 'here and there' (Source A) and the prevalence of 'rumours and discontent' (Source B). Candidates who were able to look beyond the obvious point that both sources had links to New York were able to comment on the relative balance shown by the New York Herald as opposed to the entrenched, and self-interested, views of Seward and put these ideas to good use when commenting on the relative usefulness of the sources.

2 (b) How far do Sources A to D support the assertion that, in supporting the 1850 Compromise, President Fillmore would unite the country?

This question was well attempted by many candidates who were able to look for evidence of unity or division and apply it to the choices that Fillmore faced in 1850 i.e. whether to adopt the Great Compromise or not. Sources A and B clearly hold different views of his ability to unite the nation; Source A being favourable to the Compromise as well as to his chances of gaining unity and Source B being dismissive of both. Responses which used contextual knowledge of the career of Seward to make valid inferences about the utility of Source B were successful. Source C proved problematic in some responses as some candidates missed the slight subtlety it uses when it talks about 'a liberal

policy towards the South', i.e. the Compromise. It should also be remembered that Tennessee was a border state and so did not have wholly Southern sympathies. Responses which used contextual knowledge to interpret Source C were able to successfully argue that it offered perhaps the most balanced view of the four. Source D proved challenging for some candidates who struggled to connect a split in the Whig party with a split in the nation. Those who were able to use contextual knowledge to explain how the move from a national Whig party to a sectional Republican party a few years later, were able to interpret this source with much more nuance. Overall many candidates were able to make some good general comments on this question but many needed more contextual knowledge to move beyond general points.

Section C, International Option: The Search for International Peace and Security, 1919–1945

3 (a) Compare and contrast the views of Sources A and B regarding the causes of the crisis in Manchuria.

These sources which came from the Chinese and Japanese government respectively were, understandably, very different in their characterisation of the causes of the crisis in Manchuria. Most responses identified that the source blame each other for the crisis and both accuse the other country of committing acts of aggression either through violence or propaganda. Most candidates were able to recognise this and make simple comments on the intentions of both governments when making a statement to the League of Nations. Weaker responses struggled to identify similarities in these sources but stronger responses were able to recognise that whilst both sources claimed to support the work of the League of Nations and be committed to membership, there is also implicit criticism of the effectiveness of the League in both sources. Candidates who had a sound working knowledge of the chronology of the crisis were able to comment on what was happening within the League and as part of its response at the time of each source. The strongest responses were able to identify the satisfaction of the Japanese government at relatively little action having been taken by November 1932. Some weaker responses offered only general knowledge about the wider crisis which lacked relevance to these two sources.

3 (b) 'In the period from September 1931 to February 1933, the League of Nations took effective action over the crisis in Manchuria.' How far do Sources A to D support this view?

The idea central to this question is what would be 'effective action' for the League to take in this period. Many candidates had a strong idea of the different avenues pursued by League so were able to successfully link this knowledge to the sources. Source A from the Chinese government gave perhaps the strongest challenge to the question as the statement speaks of the failures of the League. Some candidates found sources B and C difficult as they suggest a change in the way the Japanese responded to the League but, once again those who knew that by early 1933 the Lytton Report had been fully adopted by the League of Nations General Assembly were able to account for this change and the language used by the Japanese government as they prepared to leave the League. Stronger responses were able to use Source D successfully through considering both the author and the time it was written. This source took a different definition of effective action i.e. a more technocratic idea of writing a report and stronger responses were able to use the provenance to suggest limitations. Overall this question was well attempted by those candidates who had a notion of the different actions the League could have taken but weaker responses struggled to link the sources clearly with the assertion made.

HISTORY

Paper 9389/13
Document Question 13

- This assessment focusses on source comprehension, analysis and evaluation so this should be central to candidates approach.
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- Time-keeping is vitally important. Candidates need to make sure they leave enough time to write complete answers to both questions.

General comments

Most candidates know that the **(a)** question requires an identification of similarities and differences and that answers to **(b)** questions require an explanation of how each source either supports or challenges the prompt in the question. Stronger candidates appreciate that they need to support the points they make with quotations or direct paraphrases from the relevant sources.

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There is still a minority of candidates who interpret 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. A minority of candidates ran out of time, usually after writing long introductions which contributed little to their answer. If candidates are to do justice to their knowledge and understanding and subject skills they should focus more on the specific source analysis in their answers.

When analysing the sources many candidates confused themselves by picking out sections of text which ran counter to the overall message of the source. It is important to consider the message of the source as whole rather than dissected sections of it when making links to the questions and further judgements. To achieve higher evaluation marks it is necessary to explain why the nature, origin or purpose of the source makes it more or less useful when answering the question rather than just stating the date or type of source and saying it is unreliable.

Comments on specific questions

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

1 (a) To what extent do Sources A and B agree about Austria's attitude to German unity?

These sources showed clear similarities in their dismissal of Austria and her attitude to German unity. Most candidates were able to successfully show how both sources claimed that Austria was

fearful of new political thinking whether it was liberalism or nationalism and took a generally reactionary view on Germany moving closer towards unity. Many candidates were also able to highlight the fact that both sources portrayed Austria being more concerned with preserving her empire than being involved in new political unions and stronger responses were able to use sound contextual knowledge to expand on the worries that Austrian leaders had about nationalist movements within the empire. Weaker responses found it more difficult to identify differences between the two sources. Stronger answers were able to identify a mismatch in emphasis where Source B suggested that Austria was more concerned about the movements of German nationalism whereas Source A suggested that Austria was just worried about securing her own borders. Many candidates demonstrated that they had a good understanding of the events surrounding Austria and German nationalism. Stronger responses were able to use their knowledge of the liberal princes to suggest ideas about the provenance particularly of Source A.

1 (b) 'It was Prussia's economic strength that enabled her to lead the struggle for German unification.' How far do Sources A to D support this view?

A majority of responses were able to recognise that Source C dealt directly with Prussia's economic strengths and made good use of the source to show support for the assertion in the question. There were however a minority of weaker responses were unsure what was meant by 'economic strength' and were consequently confused by the sources. Source B was used successfully in some responses to show both sides of the argument as it mentions the Zollverein as well as enlightenment ideas which helped to make Prussia a more open society. Stronger responses were able to place these ideas in a wider context with knowledge of the Zollverein and civic life in Prussia. Source D suggested that the military was more important than other factors in giving Prussia strength and a minority of answers linked this to economic strength allowing for military strength. Where this was clearly linked and explained this was credited although the source lends itself more clearly to challenging the assertion regarding economics. Weaker responses often found Source A the most challenging to link to the question, but stronger responses argued that the views of Ernst II showed that this was about more than economics. Better responses were able to use the provenance of the sources to weigh up the answer to the question and many found Source C particularly useful as it was from a trained French observer of the Prussians. Where these ideas were clearly linked to both the source and the question they were the most successful.

Section B, the American Option: The Origins of the Civil War, 1846–1861

2 (a) Compare and contrast the opinions of the raid on Harpers Ferry expressed in Sources A and B.

Many candidates approached this question with a good knowledge of the Harpers Ferry Raid but not all responses were able to use this knowledge to interpret the sources accurately. Stronger responses used their knowledge to analyse and interpret the sources, in this case to look at similarities and differences rather than reproduce large sections of 'story'. Some responses struggled with analysis of Source B as it showed a New Yorker having serious concerns about the raid on Harpers Ferry. Stronger responses used their knowledge to discuss why the raid upset many in the North either because they felt it was a step too far or were unsure about their views on slavery – an issue particularly relevant to the port city of New York. Most responses identified that, whilst Source A saw the raids in a generally positive light, Anne Botta in Source B saw them in an extremely negative way. Stronger responses were also able to identify similarities in conceding that violence will be a feature of abolishing slavery and the clear opinion of both writers that this was an important event. Generally this question was answered successfully although candidates should be careful not to presume they know what a writer will say just because of their origin.

2 (b) How far do Sources A to D support the view that the North welcomed the idea of anti-slavery insurrections?

Central to this question was being able to relate the idea of the 'North' to the growing Republican Party, especially when it came to analysing Sources C and D. Most candidates were able to do this successfully using their contextual knowledge of the period and of Douglas and Lincoln but there were a minority who struggled because they could not make this connection. The source most responses identified in support of the assertion was Source C where Douglas attempts to make a clear connection between the Republican Party and violence including the 'Harpers Ferry crime'. Many responses successfully used their contextual knowledge of Douglas to explain his views in 1860 and cross reference with those of Lincoln in Source D which reject the connection between

violence and Republicans. Weaker responses did not maintain focus on the sources and wrote large sections of unconnected knowledge on the 1860 election which was not relevant to this question. Some candidates dealt with the more nuanced Sources A and B which demonstrated that Northerners tended to disagree about the use of force. The strongest responses were able to also read Source B against the grain and recognise the idea that clearly some Northerners were supportive of force in the line 'allowing their instincts and passions to guide them in this great crisis'. Overall those candidates who were able to make a clear definition of what they meant by the North tackled this question well and there were some strong attempts at evaluating the sources.

Section C, International Option: The Search for International Peace and Security, 1919–1945

3 (a) Compare and contrast the views of Vansittart (Source A) and Lloyd George (Source C) regarding how Britain should respond to the Abyssinian crisis.

Weaker responses were unable to interpret the overall message of Lloyd George in Source C. Some presumed that Lloyd George was speaking as Prime Minister (even though the source was written in 1935) and others struggled to analyse sections of the source which show that he is clearly against the negotiations which were taking place between Britain, France and Italy whilst ignoring the League. In short he is anti-appeasement and the pushing aside of the League of Nations. Responses which recognised this were able to apply this knowledge to both sources and identify that they fundamentally disagree over Britain and France appeasing Mussolini. It was also important to identify that even though Source A speaks in favour of Collective Security (a similarity it shares with Source C), the overall message of the source is one where Vansittart feels it is better to appease Mussolini than to follow the strict rules of the League. Stronger responses were able to use their contextual knowledge of these events to interpret these sources but there were candidates who struggled to with Source C, and so had difficulty in making valid comparisons.

3 (b) How far do Sources A to D show that, by 1935, British politicians and government officials no longer supported the League of Nations?

Many candidates were able to spot sections of the sources which supported the idea that many politicians no longer supported the League of Nations, although weaker responses struggled to see the nuance in Source C between what Lloyd George was observing and what he felt himself. Source A and D also included a section which supported both sides of the question, for example in Source A Vansittart claims to support Collective Security but actively encourages a policy of appeasement which would undermine the League of Nations. Thus, it was necessary for candidates to be able to see the difference between what politicians wanted and what they wanted people to think. Stronger responses recognised this and there were many successful attempts to discuss the different issues that the League of Nations was facing by 1935 as well as linking this to the provenance of the sources. Duff Cooper in Source D offered a particularly interesting view in hindsight although many candidates were able to usefully comment on the purpose that this source might have for a politician involved at the time who wished to defend his and other actions. Overall this question proved difficult for those who did not have an adequate grasp of the issue facing the League. There were some very strong answers which successfully blended source analysis, evaluation and contextual knowledge.

HISTORY

<p>Paper 9389/21 Outline Study 21</p>

Key messages

- Careful reading of all the questions in the relevant section of the paper before selecting two questions to answer is essential to a successful performance. There have been instances where a whole **part (a)** question has been written, only to be crossed out because of problems with answering the **part (b)** – a significant misuse of the limited time available.
- For **part (a)** questions the key element is explaining why something happened. Identifying several reasons is an important first step but to reach higher levels of the mark scheme it is necessary to show how the factors inter-reacted and to assess their relative significance.
- For **part (b)** questions candidates should address the question rather than the topic, maintain a balanced approach and ensure that arguments are appropriately supported. A well written but one-sided analysis will not allow the candidate to reach their full potential.
- Candidates with substantial topic knowledge need to ensure that they apply their knowledge to the specific question set.

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 responses did not sustain consistent quality across all four question parts. 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 and many candidates clearly appreciated this.

Part (a) questions were generally well done by a large majority of candidates. 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 interacted and developing judgements regarding their relative significance. Most candidates were able to identify some relevant causal factors and many were able to add at least some basic explanation to this list of actors. The weakest responses were characterised by a tendency to drift into irrelevancy and factual inaccuracy; they were over-reliant on vague and generalised assertions and demonstrated little engagement with the issue being examined.

Part (b) questions elicited a wider range of response quality. Stronger responses demonstrated an awareness that historical issues can be interpreted in many different, and, often, contradictory ways. The most successful 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. There is some evidence that candidates, faced with a very familiar topic were not able to adapt their knowledge to the specific question asked in this paper. Less successful responses fell into one of two categories – narrative/descriptive accounts of the topic with only implicit reference to the actual question; or relevant arguments based on factual support which was limited in range and depth.

Comments on specific questions

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

Question 1 – France, 1789–1814

(a) Why was there increasing hostility towards the king from 1789 to 1793?

Good responses grasped the focus of ‘increasing’ and were able to trace the growing hostility over the period 1789–93. Less successful responses could have been improved by focusing on the timeframe and avoiding a narrative of the causes of the French Revolution.

(b) To what extent did Napoleon’s reforms maintain the principles of the Revolution?

Effective responses had a clear understanding of the question focus with appropriate references to press control, censorship and the creation of an authoritarian regime with all decisions taken by the emperor as undermining revolutionary principles. This was then set against equality before the law in the Civil Code, along with the idea of a ‘career open to the talents’ as showing revolutionary ideals. Very effective responses were able to provide a brief outline of revolutionary principles to assess Napoleon’s actions against. Less well-focused responses provided a narrative of Napoleon’s action and/or an account of his military campaigns.

Question 2 – The Industrial Revolution c.1800–c.1890

(a) Why were changes in the methods of textile production so important in causing Industrialisation?

Some good responses were able to place the changing methods of textile production and their role in causing industrialisation against a range of factors, such as the need to transport goods in bulk leading to developments in transportation, and the stimulus the success of the textile factories provided to other industries to follow suit, along with the boost to coal production as a result of the increased demand for energy. Weaker responses lost the question focus and described the various changes in the methods of textile production.

(b) ‘Industrialisation brought real benefits to all social classes’. How far do you agree?

Some good responses to this question were seen, these responses contained meaningful comparison between the circumstances of the various social classes in Britain and elsewhere in Europe. Less successful responses dealt with more general issues relating to industrialisation, usually confined to the poor conditions suffered by the urban poor and dealt only with Britain.

Question 3 – The Origins of World War I, 1900–1914

(a) Why did Britain see the German invasion of Belgium as such a threat?

The most effective responses were based on detailed contextual understanding, with particular reference to on-going Anglo-German tensions and the reasons why the German invasion of Belgium appeared to pose a threat to British interests and security. Less focused responses were narrative in style and these tended to set out why Germany invaded Belgium (for example, by outlining the Schlieffen Plan) rather than focusing on the reasons for Britain’s reaction to the invasion.

(b) ‘It was the existence of an Alliance System which meant that responses to the Sarajevo assassination escalated into a World War.’ How far do you agree?

Good responses were characterised by the development of fully-focused and balanced arguments, leading to well-reasoned judgements supported by appropriate factual evidence. Less well-focused responses were based on a largely narrative approach, in which various causes of the First World War were described without analysis of their relative significance. Weaker responses described how the Alliance System emerged, going back to Bismarck, rather than assessing its impact, compared to other factors, in leading to the outbreak of war.

Question 4 – The Russian Revolution c. 1894–1917

(a) Why was Bloody Sunday important in causing the 1905 Revolution?

Effective responses were characterised by the identification and explanation of several key factors, such as the wide-spread anger felt at the killing of peaceful marchers leading many to see strikes and violence as the only way to get the Tsarist government to listen. Less successful responses simply described the events of 'Bloody Sunday', in varying levels of detail and accuracy, so that focus on the actual question was, at best, implicit only. Candidates can improve by directing their knowledge to address the specific focus of the question.

(b) To what extent did Nicholas II bring about his own downfall in 1917?

Many of the candidates made a genuine effort to remain fully-focused on the requirements of the question. 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 undermined his own position 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 the First World War were superimposed onto pre-existing animosity towards the tsarist regime, thereby further weakening his hold on power.

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

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

(a) Why did the USA join the First World War on the side of the Allies?

Most candidates were able to demonstrate a range of factors to explain why the USA joined the Allies in the First World War, for example the growing anti-German feeling amongst many in the USA due to German disregard for American protestations over Germany's U-boat campaign, compounded, finally, by German duplicity as revealed in the Zimmermann telegram. Other responses could have been improved by avoiding lengthy narrative accounts of the sinking of the 'Lusitania' in 1915.

(b) How far, by 1920, had Central America and the Caribbean become an American Empire in all but name?

Most candidates could make reference to relevant aspects, such as the Platt Amendment, the Roosevelt Corollary, banana wars and dollar diplomacy, and so were able to differentiate between direct rule and indirect influence through commercial treaties. Some well-focused responses provided a brief definition of 'Empire' to use as a template for their argument. Less-focused responses provided narrative accounts of American actions in Hawaii and/or the Philippines.

Question 6 – Civil War and Reconstruction, 1861–1877

(a) Why did Reconstruction face such opposition from the South?

Many candidates were aware that the South greatly resented the imposition of legislation by Northern politicians, bolstered by military occupation, especially when it threatened their determination to uphold white supremacy. The depth and accuracy of the supporting evidence determined the quality of the responses. The responses of some candidates could have been improved by keeping the question's focus and avoiding narratives regarding the activities of the Ku Klux Klan or the use of the Black Codes.

(b) How great were the hardships of civil war experienced by people in the South?

Effective responses were able to differentiate between different groups of people in the South and so demonstrate some understanding of the ways in which various factors had an impact on people in the South. Reference was commonly made, for example to the adverse economic effects of the naval blockade and the undermining of slavery after the Emancipation Proclamation. Similarly, the fact that most of the actual fighting took place in the South was widely seen as inevitably causing significant damage to property, together with heavy military and civilian casualties. Less successful

responses were descriptive, rather than evaluative, in approach, and focused on 'the South', not the people of the South, so that the demands of the question were only implicitly addressed. Other responses lost their focus on the question and wrote at length about Reconstruction.

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

- (a) **Why was the building of the transcontinental railroads so significant in causing the development of the USA in the later nineteenth century?**

The most successful responses were fully focused on the requirements of the question, and were able to demonstrate a range of factors to explain the transcontinental railroads' significance for development of the USA in this period. For example, the demand for labour, both for railroad construction and for industries supporting their construction, such as coal and steel. Other less successful responses were confined to a description of the advantages of railroads, with no attempt to explain their impact on the USA's development.

- (b) **How successful was the Progressive Movement in the period from 1900 to 1920?**

Many candidates were able to outline several of the Progressive Movement's reforms, such as women in American gaining the vote, the direct election of senators to the US Senate and food and drug laws. This was then balanced with, for example, the neglect of African-American society, especially under the presidency of Woodrow Wilson, a noted Progressive. Weaker responses showed confusion over what the Progressive Movement was and wrote about the Gilded Age.

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

- (a) **Why did President Roosevelt take so much action in his first 100 days?**

The most effective responses were explicitly focused on the requirements of the question, identifying a range of social, economic and political factors which led Roosevelt to take such decisive action. Less well-focused responses were based on a narrative approach centred on Roosevelt's desire to address the problems caused by the Great Depression and produced a list of his actions.

- (b) **On the basis of his domestic policies, how far does Franklin Roosevelt deserve his reputation as a great President?**

There were a number of excellent responses to this question. Analytical throughout, and supported by appropriately selected factual evidence, these responses developed fully focused arguments and reached well-reasoned conclusions. Other responses looked at Roosevelt's New Deal policies, with some reference to their effectiveness, but there was a general acceptance that his domestic policies had been an unqualified success and so these responses lacked balance. Weaker responses described Roosevelt's domestic policies.

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

Question 9 – International Relations, 1871–1918

- (a) **Why did the war against Spain in 1898 lead to the USA's adoption of a less isolationist foreign policy?**

Many candidates were able to provide some evidence to demonstrate why the USA adopted a less isolationist foreign policy following the war with Spain, reference being made to issues such as territorial gain as a result of the war and McKinley's victory in the 1900 election indicating a public mood in favour of a less isolationist foreign policy. Some responses were descriptive in approach, whilst others showed confusion regarding the Monroe Doctrine, many candidates suggesting that it was devised in the late nineteenth century and should be seen as evidence of the USA's abandonment of isolationism.

(b) To what extent was the ‘scramble for Africa’ caused by European countries’ desire for trade?

There were some very good responses to this question, based on a fully-focused and balanced assessment. The search for raw materials and markets was balanced against the desire for international prestige, strategic considerations and the idea of European superiority leading to a sense of mission to promote European values. Other responses relied on a narrative/descriptive approach; several factors which led to the ‘scramble for Africa’ were identified and only implicit reference was made to the relative significance of the desire for trade by Europeans and the ‘scramble for Africa’.

Question 10: International Relations, 1919–1933

(a) Why, in 1922, did the Genoa Conference take place?

Most responses were aware of the roles that the issue of German reparations, the need to improve Franco-German relations and Britain’s desire to restore the German economy to boost trade all played in the calling of the Genoa Conference in 1922. Some responses were limited in the supporting detail they provided and others were confused about the chronology of events, with references being made, for example, to the occupation of the Ruhr (1923), the Dawes Plan (1924) and the Locarno Treaties (1925).

(b) ‘The best that could be achieved under the circumstances’. How far do you agree with this assessment of the Paris Peace Settlement?

Most candidates were able to identify appropriate evidence in support of the statement. It was common to see a discussion of the differing aims with which Wilson, Lloyd George and Clemenceau attended the Paris peace talks and how this acted as a constraint. More detailed responses went beyond the opinions of the ‘Big Three’ to evaluate the ways in which other countries, such as Germany, Italy and Russia were dissatisfied with the outcome of the peace talks. Less successful responses took the approach that it was ‘not the best that could be achieved’ because it did not prevent (or could be seen as responsible for) the outbreak of the Second World War. This led to lengthy description of events such as the rise of Hitler and his foreign policy in the 1930s.

Question 11: International Relations, 1933–1939

(a) Why did the League of Nations take no effective action regarding the Spanish Civil War?

Good responses were able to explain how the League’s view that it could not interfere in an internal matter, its disingenuous approach to German and Italian aid to the Nationalists and the central importance of British and French attitudes all contributed to the League’s lack of action. Other responses dealt with general weaknesses of the League, for example the lack of armed forces, but without specific reference to the Spanish Civil War.

(b) ‘An opportunist with no long-term foreign policy plan’. How far do you agree with this assessment of Hitler?

Candidates who were able to remain fully focused on the question’s requirements, provided detailed analysis of a wide range of factual evidence to develop balanced arguments and reach reasoned conclusions. Responses which were less successful adopted a purely narrative approach, describing Hitler’s actions, to varying degrees of depth and accuracy. Weaker responses did not understand the term ‘opportunist’, seeing, for example the Nazi-Soviet Pact as the product of long-term planning.

Question 12: China and Japan, 1919–1945

(a) Why, in 1927, did Chiang Kai-shek turn against the Kuomintang’s communist allies?

Only a small minority of candidates attempted this question. Good responses understood that Chiang Kai-shek saw the Communists as a threat because their policies, such as land re-distribution and industrial cooperatives, undermined the interests of his supporters, wealthy

landowners and industrialists. Less successful responses described the methods Chiang Kai-shek used against the Communists after 1927.

(b) To what extent was the military takeover of Manchuria responsible the collapse of democracy in Japan?

Only a small minority of candidates attempted this question. The best responses were characterised by the development of fully-focused and balanced arguments, leading to well-reasoned judgements based on appropriately selected evidence. Other responses saw candidates adopt a largely narrative approach, describing various factors which led to the collapse of democracy in Japan.

HISTORY

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Key messages

- Careful reading of all the questions in the relevant section of the paper before selecting two questions to answer is essential to a successful performance. There have been instances where a whole **part (a)** question has been written, only to be crossed out because of problems with answering the **part (b)** – a significant misuse of the limited time available.
- For **part (a)** questions the key element is explaining why something happened. Identifying several reasons is an important first step but to reach higher levels of the mark scheme it is necessary to show how the factors interacted and to assess their relative significance.
- For **part (b)** questions candidates should address the question rather than the topic, maintain a balanced approach and ensure that arguments are appropriately supported. A well written but one-sided analysis will not allow the candidate to reach their full potential.
- Candidates with substantial topic knowledge need to ensure that they apply their knowledge to the specific question set.

General comments

In line with the requirements of the examination, most candidates attempted two complete questions from one section of the paper. Section A questions were the most popular, reflecting teaching choices with regard to topics. 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 responses did not sustain consistent quality across all four question parts. 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 and many candidates clearly appreciated this.

Part (a) questions were generally well done by a large majority of candidates. 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 interacted and developing judgements regarding their relative significance. Most candidates were able to identify some relevant causal factors and many were able to add at least some basic explanation to this list of actors. The weakest responses were characterised by a tendency to drift into irrelevancy and factual inaccuracy; they were over-reliant on vague and generalised assertions and demonstrated little engagement with the issue being examined.

Part (b) questions elicited a wider range of response quality. Stronger responses demonstrated an awareness that historical issues can be interpreted in many different, and, often, contradictory ways. The most successful 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. There is some evidence that candidates, faced with a very familiar topic were not able to adapt their knowledge to the specific question asked in this paper (see comments on **Question 3(b)**). Less successful responses fell into one of two categories – narrative/descriptive accounts of the topic with only implicit reference to the actual question; or relevant arguments based on factual support which was limited in range and depth.

Comments on specific questions

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

Question 1 – France, 1789–1814

(a) Why was Louis XVI unwilling to accept a constitutional monarchy?

This was a popular question producing a wide range of responses. The best showed a good understanding of the events of 1789–92 and why the changes made during this period had little appeal to Louis. Many wrote in more general terms about Louis' weaknesses and failings. Weaker responses often did not focus on Louis very much at all and wrote generally about either events in 1789 or generic weaknesses of the Ancien Regime.

(b) To what extent was Napoleon a dictator?

Most candidates were able to write with confidence about the achievements of Napoleon, though some produced an account of only general highlights. More challenging was the issue of dictatorship and weaker answers struggled with how to differentiate between dictatorial style and other alternative interpretations of his actions. The best answers found alternative interpretations and were able to resolve the apparent conflicts in his behaviour, for example suggesting that whilst his methods were often dictatorial his motives were often based on stabilising the best achievements of the revolution.

Question 2 – The Industrial Revolution c.1800–c.1890

(a) Why did towns grow so rapidly in this period?

Weaker, simplistic, answers suggested it was due to urbanisation – which in itself growth of towns. There were some good answers that highlighted a number of factors with the strongest even differentiating between 'push' and 'pull' factors, though some responses displayed a lack of accurate understanding of the chronology of change, citing things like steam power as leading to the agricultural revolution freeing labour in the eighteenth century.

(b) Assess the importance of steam power to the Industrial Revolution. Refer to any two countries from Britain, France or Germany in your answer.

There were some very high quality responses to this question with an integrated approach to the importance of steam power in different areas of the economy set against the impact of other factors. Good responses were able to compare the impact in Britain and Germany, though France was used less frequently and less effectively as a comparison. Less successful responses were limited to Britain only, with a few general, unsupported claims about other countries, and were often also limited to the impact of steam power in one area. Other less successful responses included those that interpreted 'steam power' simply in term of steam locomotives or steam ships and a few weak answers suggested that steam was good because it replaced coal as a means of propulsion.

Question 3 – The Origins of World War I, 1900–1914

(a) Why did the Tsar's decision to mobilise his army in 1914 cause such international concern?

Question 3 was the most popular on the paper and produced a wide range of responses. In weaker responses errors in understanding of the chronology of events leading to war is often the biggest single problem in answering questions related to the causes of the outbreak of the First World War. Common mistakes included suggesting that the Tsars actions led to Germany producing the Schlieffen Plan rather than simply activating it, claiming that it was the Tsar's actions that led to Austria declaring war on Serbia, or suggesting that it led to France declaring war on Germany. Misunderstandings like this can undermine an otherwise reasonable attempt at explanation. Stronger responses were very well-structured, showing a full understanding of the impact of the Tsar's action on the decisions of other European powers. Some weaker answers were limited to describing the steps to war that followed from the Tsars actions and thus did not engage properly with the question set.

- (b) **'Imperial rivalries were the main cause of tension in Europe before 1914.' How far do you agree?**

There were some well-crafted responses to this question, paying careful attention to relevant detail and providing balanced accounts of the causes of tension before 1914. There was some variation in the interpretations of 'Imperialism' but as long as these were applied consistently this did not adversely affect the quality of responses. In the strongest responses candidates linked factors to demonstrate their relative importance and make reasoned judgements about them in relation to the effects of imperialism on relationships between the powers. Some weaker responses ignored the fact that the question was about 'tension before 1914' and instead focused on 'the causes of the First World War'. This a good example of the sort of question where candidates have a sound body of basic knowledge about the international situation prior to the outbreak of World War One but have difficulty in using it in a question that does not specifically ask about the causes of the war.

Question 4 – The Russian Revolution c. 1894–1917

- (a) **Why did Lenin issue his April Theses?**

Most candidates demonstrated a sound knowledge of what the April Theses involved and were able to quote relevant slogans that derived from them. However, this, in itself, provided only lower level responses to the question as the focus of the question was why they were issued. Moderate answers argued that one of the main purposes was to win support from significant groups of the population and stronger answers were able to add other factors to this, including re-unifying the Bolshevik group and establishing Lenin's personal authority as well as undermining support for the Provisional Government which was already failing to meet expectations in key areas of policy. Responses that suggested that they were issued to facilitate the October Revolution rather missed the point that they were the 'April' theses and did not score highly.

- (b) **How successful were the social and economic policies of the Tsar's government from 1894 to 1914?**

There were some very successful responses to this question, but this is also a question which was not always properly planned in relation to what was asked of the candidate. Specifically, the question asked about **economic and social reforms**, but some responses focused on the political innovations especially the development of the Duma, made during the reign of Nicholas II in response to the 1905 Revolution. Where the Duma had a specific impact on social or economic achievement this could be used advantageously, but on the whole it was simply identified as a political reform and thus not relevant to answering this question. Most candidates were aware of the key figures of Sergei Witte and Pyotr Stolypin and were able to detail their successes and failures, though weaker responses sometimes confused their work. Some weaker responses also ignored the time frame of this question and wrote about policies adopted during the First World War, seeing the 1917 revolution as the ultimate sign of failure. Such responses did not score well.

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

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

- (a) **Why, in the early twentieth century, did the so-called 'banana wars' take place?**

There were too few responses for meaningful comment.

- (b) **How far did US relations with European Great Powers change between 1865 and 1917?**

There were too few responses for meaningful comment.

Question 6 – Civil War and Reconstruction, 1861–1877

- (a) **Why did President Lincoln introduce the Emancipation Proclamation in two stages?**

Many candidates had good knowledge of the circumstances in which Emancipation was introduced but not all were equally familiar with the timescale of its introduction. Some candidates concentrated solely on the issue of recruiting ex slaves to fight for the North and did not discuss the

issues that led Lincoln to announce the planned Proclamation in September of 1862, whilst not implementing it until January of 1863 in order to avoid problems with the 'border states' where slavery was still practised, but which had not seceded with the Confederate states. Some candidates thought that the 'two stages' were the Emancipation Proclamation in January 1863 and its confirmation in the 13th Amendment in January 1865 and thus did not focus effectively on the period under review. The best responses were well-rounded and analytical with clear and supported judgements.

(b) How far had the South accepted Reconstruction by 1877?

There were some sound general responses, but on the whole few candidates got fully to grips with the question. Weaker responses seemed to get very confused about who did what in relation to the Reconstruction process and so the actions of Lincoln and Johnson are often misinterpreted and few responses mentioned the role of Grant. Better responses provided clear differentiation between what was achieved in terms of legislation and what that actually meant to the inhabitants of the South in terms of changes to their status and opportunities. A few weaker responses wrote lengthily about the 'Jim Crow' laws, which were not relevant to this question, but the problem was not a serious one showing that most candidates recognised the basic parameters of this question, ending their analysis with the Compromise of 1877.

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

(a) Why did the late nineteenth century become known as the 'Gilded Age'?

Many candidates who answered this question slipped up badly here in misinterpreting the phrase 'Gilded Age'. Weaker answers wrote about the period as being a 'golden' age, supporting this with detailed description of growth, progress, achievement and growing wealth in the US economy. Such responses, if properly explained, could achieve the bottom of Level 3 of the mark scheme as an explanation of the success of the period was necessary, but this needed to be contrasted to the poverty and corruption that underpinned the glittering successes of a few key individuals like Carnegie et al. The best answers did demonstrate this contrast effectively and scored highly as a result.

(b) How great were the domestic achievements of the presidency of Theodore Roosevelt?

Basic description of the key elements of the Presidency of Theodore Roosevelt was generally sound, though the level of detail provided was variable and sometime there was a degree of confusion with the work of later presidents of the Progressive era. Most candidates responded effectively to the need to identify success and failings in the work of Roosevelt but whilst some responses gave significant examples of both and thus achieved a balanced and detailed analysis, others provided only broad generalisations and therefore remained at a much lower level of attainment.

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

(a) Why is there a debate about the greatness of Franklin Roosevelt as president?

This question is about the debate over greatness not about the achievements of Roosevelt. Many responses demonstrated detailed knowledge about the reforms and policies of FDR. Stronger responses used this knowledge to answer the specific question and weaker responses were characterised by simply describing the key actions of the Roosevelt administration. Good responses used key details to show why the supporters of the idea consider Roosevelt to be 'great' and alternative evidence to support the rival assertion. Responses which simply described support and opposition to Roosevelt during his terms as president did not achieve an effective answer to the question.

(b) 'Race was the greatest division in American society in the 1920s.' How far do you agree?

Responses to this question often had difficulty in focusing on the requirements of the question. The first issue arose from the definition of 'race' and whilst it is most regularly interpreted as the Afro-American minority some candidates chose to include opposition to other ethnic groups which, if it was explained with relevant examples, could provide an effective approach. Other factors were highly variable and included wealth and poverty, agriculture vs industry and north vs south, all of

which were valid areas for examining inequality. However, supporting evidence for these differences was often very limited as was any comparison with the issue of race so there were few responses that got beyond a very basic level of analysis.

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

Question 9 – International Relations, 1871–1918

(a) Why were European nations involved in imperial expansion in the late nineteenth century?

Most responses demonstrated a solid understanding of the reasons for European global expansion in the latter half of the nineteenth century. The biggest difference between responses was the level of detail provided and the examples used. Weaker answers tended to be limited and provided a list of reasons for expansion whilst better ones provided significant examples. These most commonly referred to the ‘Scramble for Africa’ but the stronger responses were able to draw on more widespread examples to support their arguments.

(b) To what extent was its economic growth responsible for the USA’s emergence as a world power by 1914?

Some candidates struggled with balance in their answer to this question providing little detail of economic growth. Weaker responses were limited to an account of the Spanish–American War and the commercial benefits of the gains made from it. Stronger responses linked this to the growing recognition that internal economic factors were pushing the US toward a less isolationist foreign policy which was fuelled by the attitude of expansionist presidents like McKinley and Roosevelt and by the increasingly vociferous media and public opinion as well as increasing concern about European expansionist ambitions in the late nineteenth century with reference to the Monroe Doctrine. All of these issues featured in the best responses.

Question 10: International Relations, 1919–1933

(a) Why, in 1929, was the Young Plan agreed?

Many candidates wrote in detail about the Dawes Plan rather than the Young Plan and did not refer to a key point that the Dawes Plan was intended to be reviewed after 5 years which could have established a relevant point about the reasons for the Young Plan. Weaker responses sometimes referred to issues that had already been solved before the Young Plan like the extreme inflation of the early ‘20s and others explained the Young Plan in terms of a response to the Wall Street Crash – which of course it pre-dated, though it was not formally adopted until after the Crash. Stronger responses often planned their answer and produced an effective list of reasons with supported explanation, of why the Young Plan was introduced in 1929.

(b) How far did Clemenceau achieve his aims in the Paris Peace Settlement?

Many responses demonstrated a solid knowledge of the aims of the three main powers at the Paris Peace Conference and an ability to write with a greater or lesser degree of detail about the conference and its outcomes, although not always directly related to Clemenceau. Weaker responses wrote extensively about the terms of the Versailles Treaty and then added a brief comment about which were acceptable to Clemenceau with only an implicit suggestion that they were testing the hypothesis that Clemenceau achieved what he hoped for at the conference. Sometimes candidates also wrote in detail about ‘the aims of the Big Three’ but again did not relate these to the question being asked.

Question 11: International Relations, 1933–1939

(a) Why did many of Germany’s generals advise Hitler against invading Poland in 1939?

Most candidates who did this question were able to focus successfully on the central issue of the potential response of the Western Allies who had made specific promises to Poland following the occupation of the rest of Czechoslovakia in March 1939. In weaker responses this was often as far as the answer went and the amount of detail was sometimes limited. Better answers were able to

offer a range of options and were often aware that the advice may have varied depending when in 1939 it was being offered, especially in relation to the potential threat of the Soviet Union.

- (b) **'Fear of communism was the main reason why Britain and France followed a policy of appeasement during the 1930s.' How far do you agree?**

This was a generally a well answered question. Understanding of the reasons why the western allies sought a policy of appeasement seem to be well embedded in basic understanding of the period and in most cases was well explained, though with varying degrees of detail. Stronger answers were also able to write in general terms about the effects of fear of communism on policy making and the better ones were able to provide specific examples of the influence of this such as the response of Britain and France to the appeal of the democratically elected Republican government for aid in their resistance to a military takeover by General Franco in the Spanish Civil War.

Question 12: China and Japan, 1919–1945

- (a) **Why was Japan unable to maintain a democratic government during the 1930s?**

Many responses demonstrated a sound basic idea of the reasons for the weakness of democratic processes in Japan and were able to explain them with a reasonable degree of accuracy, though often a little limited in specific details. The appeal of militarism, weakness of the democratic process and respect for the emperor were the basis of a number of relatively successful responses.

- (b) **How far was the Kuomintang's success in the period from 1925 to 1928 dependent on the support it received from Soviet Russia?**

This was less well done than part (a) with limited understanding of the links between the KMT and the Soviet Union shown. Better responses did refer to Chiang's specific links with the Soviet military system. Some of the less successful answers tended to focus mainly on the role of the Chinese Communist Party in the success of the Northern Expedition.

HISTORY

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Key messages

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- For **part (a)** questions the key element is explaining why something happened. Identifying several reasons is an important first step but to reach higher levels of the mark scheme it is necessary to show how the factors interacted and to assess their relative significance.
- For **part (b)** questions candidates should address the question rather than the topic, maintain a balanced approach and ensure that arguments are appropriately supported. A well written but one-sided analysis will not allow the candidate to reach their full potential.
- Candidates with substantial topic knowledge need to ensure that they apply their knowledge to the specific question set.

General comments

In line with the requirements of the examination, most candidates attempted two complete questions from one section of the paper. Section A questions were the most popular, reflecting teaching choices with regard to topics. 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 responses did not sustain consistent quality across all four question parts. 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 and many candidates clearly appreciated this.

Part (a) questions were generally well done by a large majority of candidates. 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 interacted and developing judgements regarding their relative significance. Most candidates were able to identify some relevant causal factors and many were able to add at least some basic explanation to this list of actors. The weakest responses were characterised by a tendency to drift into irrelevancy and factual inaccuracy; they were over-reliant on vague and generalised assertions and demonstrated little engagement with the issue being examined.

Part (b) questions elicited a wider range of response quality. Stronger responses demonstrated an awareness that historical issues can be interpreted in many different, and, often, contradictory ways. The most successful 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. There is some evidence that candidates, faced with a very familiar topic were not able to adapt their knowledge to the specific question asked in this paper (see comments on **Question 3(b)**). Less successful responses fell into one of two categories – narrative/descriptive accounts of the topic with only implicit reference to the actual question; or relevant arguments based on factual support which was limited in range and depth.

Comments on specific questions

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

Question 1 – France, 1789–1814

(a) Why was a Republic created in 1792?

A common approach was to outline the flaws in the Ancien Regime which, whilst it provided some useful background, was not the whole answer and certainly not in those cases that did not go much beyond 1789. Good responses concentrated on the failure of Louis to engage with the reforms introduced after 1789, culminating in his 'Flight to Varennes'. Additionally, they looked at the effect of this on the more extreme revolutionaries and their growing popularity especially amongst the Sans Culottes. Some of the less successful answers suggested that it was the execution of Louis that created the Republic, but this actually happened several months after it was created.

(b) To what extent was maintaining order Napoleon's principal domestic aim?

Most responses demonstrated a sound knowledge of Napoleons reforms and there were some clear accounts of how these reforms helped to establish a level of stability in comparison to the upheavals of the previous decade. Stronger responses were able to suggest differences in motive behind his reforms pointing out that though some, like the Concordat, gave back some of the more stabilising elements of society, or rationalised a confusing array of reform introduced during the revolutionary period, others were more about Napoleon's personal power and re-creating a hierarchical society with Napoleon and his family at the top. Less successful answers were limited to descriptions of what Napoleon did.

Question 2 – The Industrial Revolution c.1800–c.1890

(a) Why did the agricultural revolution lead to an increase in production?

There were too few responses for meaningful comment.

(b) Assess the importance of changes in communications to industrialisation. Refer to any two countries from Britain, France or Germany in your answer.

There were too few responses for meaningful comment.

Question 3 – The Origins of World War I, 1900–1914

(a) Why was the Austrian ultimatum to Serbia in 1914 so important in causing the outbreak of the First World War?

The majority of responses concentrated effectively on the events that followed the ultimatum leading up to the outbreak of war. The biggest different between these was that whilst weaker responses described the events that led from the issuing of the ultimatum to development of full scale war by 4th August, stronger responses made sound suggestions about the reasons for these moves which highlighted the significance of the ultimatum. A few less successful responses simply described the events surrounding the assassination of Franz Ferdinand which led to the ultimatum.

(b) To what extent should Germany take responsibility for causing the arms race before 1914?

Many candidates wrote a detailed and full response about the topic in general rather than to the question which has been set. The question required a consideration of German responsibility for the arms race between the various European powers but a number of candidates simply wrote about the Anglo-German Naval Race and, though they were able to provide quite detailed alternative accounts of British and German responsibility, they did not achieve higher levels of marks because they did not consider the arms race on continental Europe and things like the effects of military planning and expansion in France, Russia and Germany.

Question 4 – The Russian Revolution c. 1894–1917

- (a) **Why was the Kornilov affair important in bringing about the downfall of the Provisional Government?**

Question 4 was the most popular question on the paper and part a. produced some very good responses showing a clear understanding of the relationship between different groups involved in the Kornilov Affair and the effect this had on the eventual fate of the Provisional Government. Some weaker answers showed serious confusion between Kornilov and Kerensky and about the role of Lenin and the April Theses at this point in the Revolution. Weaker answers were also often narratives of the events of October 1917.

- (b) **'In the period to 1914, the main reason the Tsarist regime survived was the weakness of the opposition.' How far do you agree?**

Most responses demonstrated some good knowledge about the period and many were aware of the work of Witte and Stolypin in trying to build a more modern economy and at the attempts to reform the government of Russia in the wake of the 1905 Revolution. Some of the explanation of these factors did deal to some extent with the weakness of the opposition in that they demonstrated how reforms created a degree of satisfaction amongst previously dissatisfied groups. However, there was less success in dealing with those groups that remained dissatisfied but disunited. Many otherwise good answers did not achieve a real balance between the weaknesses of the opposition as a reason for the regimes survival and other factors.

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

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

- (a) **Why did the USA support the Republic of China following its formation in 1912?**

Few candidates answered this question. Weaker answers wrote generally about US relations with China in the nineteenth century and not about relations with the Chinese Republic after 1912.

- (b) **How far was US policy towards Native Americans in the later nineteenth century simply one of force and repression?**

This question was not well answered. Few responses detailed knowledge or understanding of the measures taken by the US government to control the Native American population in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

Question 6 – Civil War and Reconstruction, 1861–1877

- (a) **Why did the South surrender in 1865 and not before?**

Many candidates demonstrated a good knowledge and understanding of the course of the Civil War. The best responses showed an understanding that the main aim of the South was not winning but making sure they didn't lose, in the expectation that divisions in the North would eventually lead to a compromise solution. Stronger answers demonstrated how this option was gradually closed down by the Emancipation Proclamation which changed the focus of the war, and the 1864 elections which confirmed Lincoln in office and ended hopes of a more sympathetic Union leadership. Weaker responses were limited to descriptions of the relative strengths and weaknesses of the two sides or simply wrote about the military campaigns without any clear focus on the issue of '...1865 and not before'.

- (b) **How far did Reconstruction help to reunite the American people after the Civil War?**

The quality of part (b) responses often did not match that of part (a) ones. There was often confusion about the exact process of Reconstruction and many candidates tended to focus on the key features of the immediate post-war period to 1870 and the Reconstructions Amendments and showed little perception about the progress of reconstruction under Grant. There was a tendency to leap from the initial problems of Presidential vs Congressional Reconstruction to the Compromise of 1877 with little explanation of what happened in between.

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

- (a) **Why were many leading industrialists of the later nineteenth century known as ‘robber barons’?**

There were a limited number of responses to this question but most seemed to have some idea of the issues that led to this epithet in a way that went beyond simple description of what they did but showed some understanding of why their actions may have attracted a degree of disapproval.

- (b) **How emancipated had American women become by 1920?**

Candidates who performed well on part (a) of this question often seemed to struggle with part (b). Answers tended to be restricted to enfranchisement, the opportunities offered by the war and involvement in the Prohibition campaign. There was often little in the way of counter argument and weaker responses ignored the limitation of ‘...by 1920’ and wrote about the situation beyond this date.

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

- (a) **Why did President Hoover’s measures to contain the harmful effects of the Great Crash fail?**

Many responses to this question were based on the ‘too little, too late’ argument, commenting also on Hoover’s belief that ‘rugged individualism’ would supply the answer. Moderate responses presented a general argument about what Hoover failed to do or did wrong on things like the issue of the unemployed or the imposition of tariffs. Stronger responses were more specific about the measures taken like the President’s Organisation for Unemployment Relief or the setting up of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. Most responses produced a reasonable level of explanation.

- (b) **To what extent did the Supreme Court oppose the New Deal?**

Many candidates knew which particular aspects of the New Deal were opposed by the Supreme Court and many quoted the ‘Sick Chicken Case’ amongst other specific references. However, this was not always followed through with a consideration of the ways in which the hypothesis could be challenged. Few candidates made reference to the popular term for the ‘conservative’ judges, ‘the Four Horsemen’, or attempted to differentiate between the responses of the Court to the First and the Second New Deals. Many of the responses could have been improved by providing a greater level of balance between supporting and challenging the idea of Supreme Court opposition.

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

Question 9 – International Relations, 1871–1918

- (a) **Why, in the late nineteenth century, did the USA want to develop trade with China?**

There were some good responses to this question which often started from the key issue of the continuing and rapid expansion of the US economy and the need to find new markets. From this, stronger answers often developed the question of ‘... why China?’ and set it in the context of the whole growth of US imperialism with the acquisition of former Spanish territories in the Pacific. Most responses demonstrated a good understanding of the ‘Open Door’ policy and the reasons for its adoption in the case of China. Weaker responses were often distracted by referring to earlier developments like the opening up of Japan to US trade.

- (b) **To what extent were the Boer Wars responsible for Britain’s decision to end its policy of ‘splendid isolation’?**

Weaker responses were characterised by having a limited understanding of the Boer War and wrote about it in very general, and often inaccurate, terms. Sometimes such responses still gained credit for presenting a reasoned alternative explanation for the abandonment of ‘splendid isolation’. Stronger responses linked key elements like the Kruger Telegram and the Anglo German Naval Race to produce reasoned explanations and reach the higher levels of the marks scheme. Answers which included general understanding could have been improved if it was supported by sufficient accurate detail.

Question 10: International Relations, 1919–1933

- (a) **Why, during the 1920s, did Russia enjoy better relations with Germany than it did with Britain and France?**

Most responses demonstrated a solid core of knowledge about issues creating tensions between the four powers. Most centred on the premise that both Russia and Germany, for different reasons, were international outcasts following the end of World War One. Many answers referred to the pivotal importance of the Genoa Conference in establishing a firm relationship between Russia and Germany that endured until the end of the decade, though some candidates lost track of the question and continued their analysis into the 30's with the rise of Hitler. Such extended analysis could not be credited as it was outside the scope of the question. Issues between the two powers and France and Britain were generally understood with the strongest responses even raising the issue of Soviet support for Indian nationalists as a significant factor.

- (b) **'The Dawes Plan was the most important factor in improving international relations in the 1920s.' How far do you agree?**

The Dawes Plan and the circumstances in which it was agreed, were generally understood by most candidates and there was reasonable attention to detail on this aspect of the question. Candidates were less successful in identifying and supporting a clear alternative argument. Most responses used the Locarno treaties as an alternative turning point in international relations though few gave substantial details of these. Other major settlements that were mentioned included the Washington Naval Treaties, the Genoa Conference and the Young Plan and some better responses even mentioned the improvement brought about by the personal relationship between Briand and Stresemann. The work of the League of Nations in settling international disputes in this period was also acknowledged in some of the more perceptive answers.

Question 11: International Relations, 1933–1939

- (a) **Why was the attempt to achieve Anschluss in 1934 unsuccessful?**

This question was generally well answered. There was a clear understanding of the role of Mussolini in preventing the German takeover of Austria following the assassination of Chancellor Dolfuss. Many candidates were also aware of the speculative nature of Hitler's attempt at this time and were able to point out and explain why the military state of Germany actually prevented any serious attempt at Anschluss should such an attempt be met with any resistance. On the whole statements about these two main factors were well supported but few candidates attempted to demonstrate relative importance.

- (b) **How successful was Mussolini's foreign policy?**

Many responses adopted a chronological approach to this question. In weaker responses this approach led to a simple narrative with little attempt to focus on the question set. There was an awareness that 1934 can be viewed as a significant turning point in the foreign policy actions and intentions of Mussolini and this was used to good effect in many of the responses. There was sometimes a tendency to interpret the invasion Abyssinia as a positive achievement but some of the more perceptive answers questioned how far it was a real success or simply a propaganda exercise. This theme was used successfully in many of the better responses.

Question 12: China and Japan, 1919–1945

- (a) **Why did the ending of the First World War lead to economic problems in Japan?**

There were few responses to this, but on the whole they were well done showing a sound understanding of how the War had led to rapid growth in Japans industrial capacity and why the ending of the war led to the collapse of the market for these industries.

- (b) **How successful was the Kuomintang in its attempt to achieve control over China in the period from 1925 to 1935?**

The few candidates who did this question showed a good understanding of the problems facing the KMT in maintaining control and why the extent of such control was, at best, limited. Success in the

Northern Expedition was successfully offset against the effects of the conflict with the CCP and there was an awareness of the reasons why Chiang failed to win more general support for the KMT.

HISTORY

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

Key messages

- The extract should be read thoroughly, the key statements within it – those crucial points that determine what the interpretation must be, and which therefore will form the core of the response – need to be identified, and their significance considered.
- The best responses view the extract as a whole and understand that historians will not contradict themselves within the extract.
- The question asks for the historian’s interpretation to be inferred from the extract. It is important that candidates use the extract to demonstrate how these inferences have been reached.

General comments

Almost all candidates produced positive and valid answers to the question, writing about the extract, rather than the historical topic to which the extract related, and they attempted to use what the extract says to comment on the historian’s interpretation.

The best responses demonstrate an understanding that everything the historian says within the extract will in some way relate to the interpretation, and that everything will be consistent with the interpretation. They can identify the interpretation and demonstrate how they have inferred it from what the historian has said in the extract. They understand that historians will not contradict themselves, and will have used evidence to reach their conclusions. Weaker responses often struggle to see the interpretation as a whole and will claim that an extract includes several interpretations that are mutually inconsistent, or that the historian might have produced a ‘better’ interpretation if they had adopted an alternative approach.

A majority of weaker answers work through the extract, commenting on each paragraph in turn. This tends not to be an effective approach, as in most cases conclusions about one paragraph can then contradict comments on the next. Such answers often dwell at length on individual sections of the extract, without considering its significance to the overall interpretation, and then give less consideration to the latter part of the extract which may contain points of more significance. Knowing what one believes to be the historian’s main interpretation before starting to write is therefore highly important, as the focus of the answer can then be placed on those points of the extract that best support the interpretation.

There was a significant proportion of answers that started, in their first paragraph, by correctly identifying the historian’s interpretation, but the rest of the answer was limited to paraphrasing the extract. The required technique in using the extract as support is to make a point about the interpretation, and then indicate those parts of the extract that demonstrate the validity of the point. There must be a clear link between the two – the point and the support.

Comments on specific questions

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

The central argument of the historian who wrote this extract is that whereas up to the 1870s the only part of the ‘formal’ empire vital to the British economy was India, thereafter despite difficulties/competition, it became increasingly important elsewhere. The best answers recognised both these aspects of the interpretation and illustrated them using material from the extract. Weaker responses were limited, seeing the extract as illustrating an economic interpretation of imperialism. The weakest answers often paraphrased points in the extract, or wrote about the Empire with no reference to the extract.

Section B – The Holocaust

The central argument of the historian who wrote this extract is that the USA and Britain were (pre-war) half-hearted about helping the Jews, and that learning about the Holocaust, if anything, hardened their attitudes, and that the historian disapproved of this reluctance. Illustrating the first aspect of this interpretation required a point being made about the continuity of US–British attitudes even once they knew of genocide. The best answers recognised both the aspects of the interpretation and illustrated them using material from the extract. In practice, whilst many candidates detected the author's disapproval, relatively few made an explicit point about continuity, and commented instead merely on the reluctance of the USA and Britain to help (which could, for example, have applied merely to the pre-war period). As has happened before when extracts have dealt with 'bystanders', weaker responses tried to apply a causation label to the interpretation, calling it intentionalist or functionalist which indicated a lack of understanding. There was also exaggeration, with some candidates claiming that the interpretation showed that the Allies were to blame for the Holocaust. The weakest answers paraphrased points in the extract, or wrote about the Holocaust with no reference to the extract.

Section C – The Origins and Development of the Cold War, 1941–1950

The central argument of the historian who wrote this extract is that the USA bears most of the blame for the Cold War as a result of its own expansionism, and for exaggerating the Soviet threat to help them achieve their ends (i.e. deliberately misrepresenting the situation). The best answers recognised both these aspects of the interpretation and illustrated them using material from the extract. This extract provided an excellent example of why it is vital to view the extract as a whole. Stronger responses identified that, though it contained some references to the USSR that seemed to view it as threatening, the overall balance of the interpretation was clearly on blaming the USA for deliberately over-playing the Soviet threat. The extract contained several of those kinds of comments that, almost on their own, clinch the interpretation – for example, 'The US would have been an expansionist power whether or not the obstructionist Soviets were lurking about.' Thus, claiming that the interpretation was post-revisionist because it blamed both sides was clearly missing the much greater message of the USA being most to blame. Those that thought post-revisionism was the correct approach also tended to use what the US thought as evidence, rather than what the historian thought. So 'The Soviets stood as the world's bully' was taken to show that the USSR was expansionist, rather than that the USA perceived it as expansionist. The weakest answers paraphrased points in the extract, or wrote about the Cold War with no reference to the extract.

HISTORY

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

Key messages

- The extract should be read thoroughly, the key statements within it – those crucial points that determine what the interpretation must be, and which therefore will form the core of the response – need to be identified, and their significance considered.
- The best responses view the extract as a whole and understand that historians will not contradict themselves within the extract.
- The question asks for the historian’s interpretation to be inferred from the extract. It is important that candidates use the extract to demonstrate how these inferences have been reached.

General comments

Almost all candidates produced positive and valid answers to the question, writing about the extract, rather than the historical topic to which the extract related, and they attempted to use what the extract says to comment on the historian’s interpretation.

The best responses demonstrate an understanding that everything the historian says within the extract will in some way relate to the interpretation, and that everything will be consistent with the interpretation. They can identify the interpretation and demonstrate how they have inferred it from what the historian has said in the extract. They understand that historians will not contradict themselves, and will have used evidence to reach their conclusions. Weaker responses often struggle to see the interpretation as a whole and will claim that an extract includes several interpretations that are mutually inconsistent, or that the historian might have produced a ‘better’ interpretation if they had adopted an alternative approach.

A majority of weaker answers work through the extract, commenting on each paragraph in turn. This tends not to be an effective approach, as in most cases conclusions about one paragraph can then contradict comments on the next. Such answers often dwell at length on individual sections of the extract, without considering its significance to the overall interpretation, and then give less consideration to the latter part of the extract which may contain points of more significance. Knowing what one believes to be the historian’s main interpretation before starting to write is therefore highly important, as the focus of the answer can then be placed on those points of the extract that best support the interpretation.

There was a significant proportion of answers that started, in their first paragraph, by correctly identifying the historian’s interpretation, but the rest of the answer was limited to paraphrasing the extract. The required technique in using the extract as support is to make a point about the interpretation, and then indicate those parts of the extract that demonstrate the validity of the point. There must be a clear link between the two – the point and the support.

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 the arrival of white women in the Empire coincided with a deterioration of race relations, though they were not the only cause of this. The best responses recognised both aspects of the interpretation and illustrated them using material from the extract. Often this was accompanied by an awareness of the traditional view of the impact of white wives, and how this interpretation questions it. This was an excellent example of an extract which need to be viewed as a whole. Candidates who worked through each paragraph in turn struggled to see how the first paragraph related to the interpretation, missing the way in which it set the scene by looking at race relations before the

arrival of white women. Without this awareness, the idea of change, before and after, would have been missing from the interpretation. The weakest answers fell into two broad categories. First, those that repeated or paraphrased the extract without engaging in the historian's interpretation, and second, those that wrote about the Empire with no reference to the extract.

Section B: The Holocaust

The central argument of the historian who wrote the extract is that 'a' Final Solution was always intended, but the Nazi leadership took the opportunities offered by war to push for a more radical approach. The best responses recognised both these aspects of the interpretation and illustrated them using material from the extract. This was again an extract that needed to be viewed as a whole. Many candidates saw the suggestions that genocide was driven from the centre, and that there was a prior intention for mass murder, as indications of intentionalism. Others saw the impact of the war, and suggestions that the periphery was important, as indications of functionalism. But a full understanding of the interpretation required all these to be incorporated into the explanation. An argument for a synthesis interpretation was sustainable, but the way in which the relationship between centre and periphery was described also allowed for explanations that favoured intentionalism. The candidates who saw the extract as functionalist or even structuralist were less successful, often lapsing into arguments about 'cumulative radicalisation' that did not work with this extract, and ignoring important elements of what the historian said. The weakest answers fell into two broad categories. First, those that repeated or paraphrased the extract without engaging in 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, 1941–1950

The central argument of the historian who wrote the extract is that the USA and Britain were responsible for the souring of relations at Potsdam, and that Stalin's position at the conference was more logical or justifiable. The best responses recognised both these aspects of the interpretation and illustrated them using material from the extract. A vital clue to the interpretation was the way in which the extract focused on Stalin, yet clearly did not hold him responsible for the weakening of the alliance. Better responses identified that the extract contained several similar comments that, almost on their own, clinch the interpretation – for example, that Stalin 'had justified cause for concern', and 'Stalin felt that he was talking not to allies but to long-standing rivals.....and he was not mistaken.' The only 'label' that could plausibly be applied to the interpretation was revisionist. Some weaker responses argued that as the extract was focusing on Stalin it must be traditionalist or post-post-revisionist, and then forced the evidence to fit their interpretation. For example, 'Stalin took his revenge.....on the Oder-Neisse line' became an indication of Stalin's expansionism, rather than, as suggested by the extract, an exasperated response to the intransigence of the Western Allies. Answers which adopted the paragraph by paragraph approach to the extract often struggled with the lack of clues to the interpretation in the first two paragraphs, suggesting, for example, that Stalin was to blame for being at the peak of his world fame, or for having a 'sacred cult'. When these candidates later came across material that was damning on the behaviour of the West, they could only conclude that the interpretation must be post-revisionist since it blamed both sides, thus providing further evidence of the importance of viewing the extract as a whole. The weakest answers fell into two broad categories. First, those that repeated or paraphrased the extract without engaging in 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>

Key messages

- The extract should be read thoroughly, the key statements within it – those crucial points that determine what the interpretation must be, and which therefore will form the core of the response – need to be identified, and their significance considered.
- The best responses view the extract as a whole and understand that historians will not contradict themselves within the extract.
- The question asks for the historian's interpretation to be inferred from the extract. It is important that candidates use the extract to demonstrate how these inferences have been reached.

General comments

Almost all candidates produced positive and valid answers to the question, writing about the extract, rather than the historical topic to which the extract related, and they attempted to use what the extract says to comment on the historian's interpretation.

The best responses demonstrate an understanding that everything the historian says within the extract will in some way relate to the interpretation, and that everything will be consistent with the interpretation. They can identify the interpretation and demonstrate how they have inferred it from what the historian has said in the extract. They understand that historians will not contradict themselves, and will have used evidence to reach their conclusions. Weaker responses often struggle to see the interpretation as a whole and will claim that an extract includes several interpretations that are mutually inconsistent, or that the historian might have produced a 'better' interpretation if they had adopted an alternative approach.

A majority of weaker answers work through the extract, commenting on each paragraph in turn. This tends not to be an effective approach, as in most cases conclusions about one paragraph can then contradict comments on the next. Such answers often dwell at length on individual sections of the extract, without considering its significance to the overall interpretation, and then give less consideration to the latter part of the extract which may contain points of more significance. Knowing what one believes to be the historian's main interpretation before starting to write is therefore highly important, as the focus of the answer can then be placed on those points of the extract that best support the interpretation.

There was a significant proportion of answers that started, in their first paragraph, by correctly identifying the historian's interpretation, but the rest of the answer was limited to paraphrasing the extract. The required technique in using the extract as support is to make a point about the interpretation, and then indicate those parts of the extract that demonstrate the validity of the point. There must be a clear link between the two – the point and the support.

Comments on specific questions

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

The central argument of the historian who wrote this extract is that by the 1930s the British hold on India was weakening, and that even aggressive measures to stop this were doomed to fail. The best responses recognised both these aspects of the interpretation and illustrated them using material from the extract. Many answers tended to focus on sub-messages, for example that India was still economically important to Britain, or that Britain repressed opposition. The weakest answers fell into two broad categories. First, those that repeated or paraphrased the extract without engaging in the historian's interpretation, and second, those that wrote about the Empire with no reference to the extract.

Section B – The Holocaust

The central argument of the historian who wrote this extract is that it was the circumstances of war that created the Holocaust, and that its implementation was as surprisingly haphazard as earlier phases of Judenpolitik. The best responses recognised both these aspects of the interpretation and illustrated them using material from the extract. Many candidates recognised the importance of war, though explaining its particular role in this interpretation often proved challenging. The strongest answers saw the continuity argument that the historian was making about the chaotic and unfocused nature of Jewish policy throughout the Nazi years, identified through considering the extract as a whole. Many candidates adopted a paragraph by paragraph approach, which often produced misleading conclusions. The very first sentence led many candidates to conclude that the interpretation was a synthesis, since ‘the fate of the Jews was rooted in anti-Semitism but shaped by war’. However, taking the extract as a whole, the historian believes there was no prior intent to the Holocaust, and that even the conditions of war did not at first lead to a decision for genocide, though eventually the pressure of events did. In short, the functionalist nature of the extract is unquestionable. Some answers were misled by references to radicalisation into thinking that the historian was arguing for some form of competitive cumulative radicalisation typical of structuralist interpretations, whereas the historian was actually making the argument for confusion and improvisation as the true background for mass murder, by pointing out, for example, that even the soaring death rate in the ghettos was ‘not a case of planned destruction’. The weakest answers fell into two broad categories. First, those that repeated or paraphrased the extract without engaging in 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, 1941–1950

The central argument of the historian who wrote this extract is that the Soviet Union rejected the Marshall Plan because of fears about US domination/interference in Europe, and that it was self-defeating or wrong to do so. The best responses recognised both these aspects of the interpretation and illustrated them using material from the extract. This was an extract in which the first couple of paragraphs served mainly to set the scene, identifying Molotov’s attitudes, rather than commenting on them. For those candidates whose approach was to work through each paragraph in turn, rather than to view the extract as a whole, this sometimes caused problems as they sought to find interpretative significance in what was essentially factual material. Some weaker answers suggested that the West was being blamed since Bevin is shown as stubborn. Alternatively, some took Molotov’s arguments to be those of the historian, so that the US was seen as wishing to interfere in the national affairs of European countries, and thus being blamed, rather than Molotov perceiving the situation in this way. The main material to support the interpretation was located in the last two paragraphs, where the traditionalist nature of the historian’s approach became apparent, so candidates who had spent time on studying the extract and reaching their conclusions before writing were able to support their answers with the material key to this interpretation. Those who argued for a post-post-revisionist interpretation were able to reach plausible conclusions, despite the lack of focus on Stalin. What was not sound was to conclude that the interpretation was revisionist or post-revisionist. The weakest answers fell into two broad categories. First, those that repeated or paraphrased the extract without engaging in the historian’s interpretation, and second, those that wrote about the Cold War with no reference to the extract.

HISTORY

Paper 9389/41
Depth Study

Key messages

- Candidates perform best when they keep a focus on the specific nature of the question set throughout their answer.
- It is important that each point of the argument is fully supported by relevant factual information. Answers which contain greater depth are more successful.
- Candidates should ensure that their answer is analytical in nature and balanced in approach. Providing a list of a case for and against does not demonstrate the skills required in the top bands of the Generic Levels of Response.

General comments

Many candidates demonstrated that they had thought very carefully about exactly what the question was asking. Weaker responses often attempted to try and turn their response to the question in a different direction where they possibly knew more detail, which resulted in the inclusion of irrelevant material. An example of this was in **Question 2** where some candidates placed their focus on Mussolini's rise to power, and had limited focus on fascism. Good responses kept the focus on fascism, arguing in some cases, that it was Mussolini's ability to play on the elites fear of communism that was so important. There was ample evidence given of depth of knowledge on the topic as a whole. However, one of the discriminators in the quality of responses was often the ability to stay within the date or topic parameters of the question.

Successful responses included a sustained and supported judgment. Candidates should not be afraid to come to a judgement, as long as the judgement is fully supported. In both the popular **Question 9** and **Question 10**, some responses provided impressive detail of what the superpowers had done in 9 and the work of both Gorbachev and Regan in 10, but never actually gave an answer as to where they felt responsibility/gaining credit should fall or give any reasons behind their thinking. The best responses seen argued strongly in for what they felt was the most convincing side of the argument, while taking care to dismiss, or at least consider, the case for the other.

Comments on specific questions

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

1 To what extent were Lenin's policies determined by necessity rather than by ideology?

The strongest responses kept a focus firmly on the reasoning behind Lenin's policies and avoided giving a narrative description of them. There were some very sound answers which dealt well with the 'extent' part of the question. Another characteristic of good responses was the very wide range of policies that were used to illustrate valid points, ranging from the closing of the Constituent Assembly, through War Communism and the NEP to the way in which the nationalities were managed and Brest-Litovsk. The outstanding responses invariably started with a very firm answer to the question of extent, developed a clear case proving it, but also showed awareness of an alternative view.

2 To what extent can the rise of Fascism in Italy be attributed to the fear of communism?

This question produced some excellent responses which looked at a broad period of Italian politics from the early twentieth century to Mussolini's consolidation of power. While some placed a focus primarily on Mussolini himself, the best responses kept their focus firmly on fascism and looked at a range of other causative factors in addition to the fear of communism. Many argued that this fear was an

influential factor in encouraging a range of elites, such as northern manufacturers, the Church and the monarchy, to look favourably on the idea and on Mussolini himself.

3 How far did Stalin modernise the Soviet economy?

Successful responses to this question kept the focus firmly on the concept of 'modernise' rather than describing collectivisation and industrialisation in depth. Good responses tended to consider carefully what 'modernise' might involve in the context of Russia in the 1930s. There were some impressive answers which argued that while the creation of new industries and creating the capacity to fight Germany could be seen to have 'modernised' the Soviet economy, basing it on terror, slave labour and ludicrous quotas was not a modern approach. Collectivisation was often argued to have been 'modernising' in theory, but a great step backward in practice. Weaker responses did not reflect on what modernisation might be.

4 'The main reason why Hitler faced so little opposition was because he brought real benefits to the German people.' How far do you agree?

Weaker responses to this question provided a narrative of the 'rise of Hitler' and did not focus on the period after 1933 in any detail. Stronger responses focused on the period that Hitler was in power and considered carefully what a 'real benefit' might be, looking at issues such as employment and the restoration of Germany's position in Europe after the humiliation of Versailles. Some exceptional responses argued that there were few, if any benefits, just propaganda. Other reasons for the lack of opposition were usually well covered, with terror, propaganda, indoctrination and the apparent legality and legitimacy of the Nazi takeover of power being the factors usually mentioned.

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

5 Assess the causes and consequences of the 'move to the suburbs' in the 1950s.

This was the most popular of all the questions in this section. The best answers covered not only the causes and the consequences in depth, but took great care to assess the various factors rather than just describing them. The most successful responses considered the various causes and then commented on the relative importance of them, supporting their arguments with well-chosen and detailed examples. Most saw the GI Bill of Rights and the building of the Levittown's as the key factors in causing the move, and the results of the White Flight as the principal consequence. While some weaker responses contained some valid ideas on both parts, often there was a lack of sufficient depth to support these points.

6 'Attempts in the 1960s and 1970s to improve their lives proved short-lived and unsuccessful.' How accurate is this statement with regard to either Hispanics or Native Americans?

This question was less well-answered than the other questions within this section. Many responses did not demonstrate sufficient knowledge of the policies that were introduced during the 1960s and 1970s to improve the lives of either group. Many weaker responses discussed, in detail, the various attempts to improve the lives of African-Americans, which was not relevant to answering this specific question.

7 'The rise of the New Right in the 1980s was sudden in speed and dramatic in impact.' How far do you agree?

There were some outstanding responses to this question which dealt in detail on the rise of the New Right, mostly arguing that it was hardly sudden and looked at the rise of the right going back to Goldwater and Nixon. There tended to be less secure coverage of the impact of the New Right. Stronger responses provided a detailed assessment not only on Reagan's foreign policy, but also on his version of economic management and the implications of the first trillion dollar deficit.

8 How successful was US policy towards Cuba in the period from 1956 to 1963?

While popular, responses to this question tended to be less successful. Many candidates made little reference to the period before 1961. Responses could be very good indeed on the implications of the Bay of Pigs and the missile crisis as a whole, but the attitude of the USA towards Batista and the early stages of the Cuban revolution was seldom covered.

Depth Study 3: International History, 1945–1991

9 Which of the two superpowers was more responsible for causing the globalisation of the Cold War in the period from 1950 to 1975?

Many responses contained detailed coverage of the whole process of globalisation of the Cold War and demonstrated a good command of the role of both superpowers in the various conflicts. Whilst weaker responses did include relevant knowledge on the events of the period, they were characterised by a reluctance to identify which power should be held primarily responsible and give reasons for that view. There was a tendency among many responses to focus at the role of both powers and end the essay with a single sentence saying, for example, 'It was the United States that was responsible', without giving any reasons for coming to this conclusion. In some cases most of the evidence listed seemed to contradict the final conclusion.

10 'The person who deserves most of the credit for ending the Cold War is Mikhail Gorbachev.' How far do you agree?

The most successful responses kept a clear focus on the Cold War, and avoided spending a large amount of time on discussing the collapse of the USSR. The best responses considered very carefully the work of Gorbachev and contrasted it with the role of Reagan and his conservative advisers, and also looked at the role of other factors such as Thatcher and the pressure from the Eastern European satellite states.

11 'A strategy for identifying and dealing with dissidents.' How far do you agree with this assessment of the Hundred Flowers Campaign?

Few candidates answered this question, but it was usually well done. There was some good analysis of the initial intentions behind the Hundred Flowers Campaign. Most responses suggested that identifying and suppressing dissent was not the original intention, but once serious criticism began, its authors were identified and punished. Weaker responses provided limited support for their view.

12 To what extent was Israel's victory in the Six Day War the result of its superior air power?

Few responses to this question were seen. A majority of the responses tended to lack the depth necessary to deal with the question effectively. Most agreed with the hypothesis, but this was not always supported with evidence. Some suggested that the military incompetence of Israel's enemies was a more significant factor, but again lacked the necessary detail to develop the point appropriately.

HISTORY

Paper 9389/42
Depth Study

Key messages

- Candidates perform best when they keep a focus on the specific nature of the question set throughout their answer.
- It is important that each point of the argument is fully supported by relevant factual information. Answers which contain greater depth are more successful.
- Candidates should ensure that their answer is analytical in nature and balanced in approach. Providing a list of a case for and against does not demonstrate the skills required in the top bands of the Generic Levels of Response.

General comments

Many candidates demonstrated that they had thought very carefully about exactly what the question was asking. Weaker responses often attempted to try and turn their response to the question in a different direction where they possibly knew more detail, which resulted in the inclusion of irrelevant material. An example of this was in **Question 2** where some candidates spent a long time dealing with the issue of whether Mussolini was a success or a failure and not reflecting on his strengths or weaknesses as a national leader. There was ample evidence given of depth of knowledge on the topic as a whole. However, one of the discriminators in the quality of responses was often the ability to stay within the date or topic parameters of the question.

Successful responses included a sustained and supported judgment. Candidates should not be afraid to come to a judgement, as long as the judgement is fully supported. In both the popular **Question 9** and **Question 10**, some responses listed in impressive detail in **Question 9** the various influences which led to détente (as well as much detail on why the US lost!) but never dealt with the issue of 'extent'. Much the same often happened with **Question 10** where there was substantial detail shown on the Accords themselves, but no judgement to the question of their effectiveness in improving relations between East and West. The best responses seen argued strongly in for what they felt was the most convincing side of the argument, while taking care to dismiss, or at least consider, the case for the other.

Comments on specific questions

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

1 'Nothing but a brutal dictatorship.' How far do you agree with this view of Lenin's government from 1918 to 1924?

This was a popular question to which candidates produce some very good responses. Stronger responses included detailed analysis of what Lenin achieved during this period, and then considered whether this could be seen as the work of a 'brutal dictator'. The range of evidence which was used in developing a case for and against the hypothesis was very good in many of the responses seen with a wide range of factors being brought in on both sides, and not just a focus on War Communism and the NEP. The best responses included a clear judgement that was well-supported.

2 Assess the strengths and weaknesses of Mussolini as a national leader.

The most successful responses to this question considered the full tenure of Mussolini as a whole and considered what might be seen as both strengths and weaknesses. Weaker responses tended to

contain detailed descriptions of the various 'Battles' and the Concordat, but they often did not include any indication of how this might relate to his strength as a national leader.

3 'Motivated more by ideology than by practical considerations.' Discuss this view of Stalin's economic policies.

Very good responses to this question included detailed analysis of what the possible motives behind Stalin's various policies were. Some argued that the two suggested factors were intertwined, and often subordinated to a desire for personal power. The strongest responses deployed a lot of detailed knowledge to support the ideas put forward.

4 To what extent was Hitler 'Master of the Third Reich'?

Stronger responses provided a clear definition of what a 'Master of the Third Reich' might imply, and then analysed in detail the nature and extent of Hitler's domination of Germany during the period. In such responses, once criteria was established for the term, candidates went on to successfully develop a strong argument one way or the other. In weaker responses there was evidence that some candidates thought that the question was entirely about whether Hitler ordered the Holocaust or not and got very involved with the historiography of this issue. These responses had little relevance to the question set and much of the content was also outside the period required.

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

5 How far was the prosperity of the USA in the fifteen years after the Second World War caused by American dominance of the world economy?

The better responses to this question explained and analysed a variety of factors which could be attributed to the USA's prosperity after the Second World War, ranging from its successful transition from a wartime to peace time economy to the fact that so many of its potential commercial rivals had been devastated during the war itself. In weaker responses there was often a lack of knowledge about the extent to which the USA did dominate the world economy, but the grasp of internal US economic matters tended to be very sound.

6 How far was President Nixon personally responsible for his resignation as US President in 1974?

This question was generally well-answered. Responses seen tended to be knowledgeable about the end of Nixon's presidency. They addressed the 'how far' aspect of the question very competently, supporting their argument with well-chosen supporting information. Many responses showed an awareness of Nixon's responsibility for the whole Watergate affair and subsequent cover-up, but also looked at the wider issues, such as his economic and foreign policies, which also played a part in his unpopularity.

7 How effectively did the US government respond to the AIDS epidemic of the 1980s?

There were too few responses to make any comment appropriate.

8 Assess the reasons why US policies towards China in the 1950s were so hostile.

There were too few responses to make any comment appropriate.

Depth Study 3: International History, 1945–1991

9 To what extent was the USA's defeat in the Vietnam War responsible for the development of détente in the 1970s?

Successful responses to this question kept the focus firmly on the reasons for détente, and avoiding a long analysis of why the USA was defeated in Vietnam. A significant number of weaker responses focused solely on the nature of the USA's defeat in Vietnam. Good responses assessed a wide range of causal factors, both American and the Soviet Union, and also considered pressures from Europe as well as the various economic issues which influenced the two major powers.

10 How effective were the Helsinki Accords in improving East–West relations?

Limited responses showed a really sound knowledge of the Helsinki Accords, but tended to comment generally on whether they were a success or a failure. Very few answers placed the emphasis of their response on the extent to which East–West relations actually improved, or failed to improve. Some weaker responses also spent a long time focusing why détente failed and looked at the invasion of Afghanistan and the rise of the neo-conservatives under Reagan, which was not relevant to this question.

11 ‘The victory of the Chinese Communist Party in 1949 was caused by the unpopularity of the Kuomintang.’ How far do you agree?

Answers to this question were generally of a high standard, there tended to be both good depth and good focus in the responses seen. The strongest responses demonstrated a good knowledge of the many factors which led to communist victory, and provided some balanced analysis which weighed up carefully the failings of the Kuomintang against the leadership of the communists.

12 ‘Israel’s involvement in the Suez War ended in failure.’ How far do you agree?

Few responses to this question were seen. Successful responses reflected carefully on what ‘failure’ might imply in this context rather than spending too much time on providing a narrative of the causes of the conflict. There were some very well argued debates seen, with the best answers supporting their judgement. Many candidates argued that what might be seen as failure in the short term could work out as a success in the longer term.

HISTORY

Paper 9389/43
Depth Study

Key messages

- Candidates perform best when they keep a focus on the specific nature of the question set throughout their answer.
- It is important that each point of the argument is fully supported by relevant factual information. Answers which contain greater depth are more successful.
- Candidates should ensure that their answer is analytical in nature and balanced in approach. Providing a list of a case for and against does not demonstrate the skills required in the top bands of the Generic Levels of Response.

General comments

Many candidates demonstrated that they had thought very carefully about exactly what the question was asking. Weaker responses often attempted to try and turn their response to the question in a different direction where they possibly knew more detail, which resulted in the inclusion of irrelevant material. An example of this was in **Question 6**, where candidates provided detailed descriptions of the Civil Rights movement in general, commenting on how successful it was, without addressing the Black Power movement. There was ample evidence given of depth of knowledge on the topic as a whole. However, one of the discriminators in the quality of responses was often the ability to stay within the date or topic parameters of the question.

Successful responses included a sustained and supported judgment. Candidates should not be afraid to come to a judgement, as long as the judgement is fully supported. In response to **Question 4** there was often a comprehensive list of factors which enabled Hitler to consolidate his power, but weaker responses were characterised by a reluctance to assess them. The best responses seen argued strongly in for what they felt was the most convincing side of the argument, while taking care to dismiss, or at least consider, the case for the other.

Comments on specific questions

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

1 ‘The Bolsheviks were responsible for causing the Civil War in Russia.’ How far do you agree?

Responses to this question were generally good. The strongest responses started with a clear allocation of responsibility and then developed a valid case one way or the other to support the judgement. It was interesting to see how many different parties were considered as being responsible for causing the Civil War. Less effective responses tended to write a long list of groups that could be blamed, such as the Greens, the Whites, the Reds and the Allies, but did not provide any analysis of their responsibility or an overall judgement. The weakest responses often provided an overview of the Civil War itself, rather than addressing the causes.

2 To what extent do his political skills explain Mussolini’s rise to power?

Stronger responses demonstrated a good knowledge of Mussolini’s political skills. There was a wide-range of ideas about what could be viewed as political skills. Some responses argued successfully that his political skills were essential, while other equally good responses maintained that, given the fear of communism and the chaos caused by the war and liberal incompetence, Mussolini had an easy task. There were many responses which demonstrate independent thinking and quality analysis.

3 'Creating a totalitarian state was much more important to Stalin than creating a communist state.' How far do you agree?

Stronger responses remained well-focussed on the specific nature of the question. The arguments included analysis that was supported by appropriately detailed factual information. Responses which remained focussed on assessing what motivated Stalin did very well. Weaker responses were characterised by providing a narrative of the industrialisation and collectivisation policies, often focussing on economic factors, rather than considering a wider range of events related to creating a 'totalitarian state' such as the implications of the purges.

4 Assess the factors which enabled Hitler to consolidate his power during 1933 and 1934.

The most successful responses to this question remained focussed on just the period of consolidation, as given in the question. Weaker responses were characterised by the inclusion of analysis of the rise of Hitler of the later period after 1934. Responses which provided an assessment, rather than a description, of the various factors which enabled Hitler to go from the slightly tenuous position he held at the beginning of 1933 to the almost unassailable one he had achieved by the end of 1934 were the most successful. Generally the level of detail provided to support the arguments being made was accurate and there was real quality seen in much of the analysis.

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

Very few responses were seen on this section.

5 'Though short-lived, it had a great impact in the late 1940s and 1950s.' Assess this view of the Red Scare in the USA.

Moderate responses provided some good descriptions of what the Red Scare was, but few really considered the 'short-lived' aspect of the question and did not include much consideration of the impact of the Red Scare in the 1950s. Whilst most responses claimed that the Red Scare was short lived, weaker responses did not address its roots in the late 1930s or actually consider its impact on life in the US in the 1950s. Most responses tended to focus on McCarthy himself and his infamous 'lists' and there were few references seen to the HUAC and its work.

6 How powerful was the Black Power movement?

This question was less well-done. Weaker responses provided descriptions of the movement, but did not comment in depth on its power or influence. Another feature of weaker responses was a tendency to focus on the Civil Rights movement as a whole, often writing in depth about the work of Martin Luther King, rather than addressing the question set.

7 Assess the causes and consequences of the growing deficit in the federal government budget during the 1980s.

There were too few answers to make any comment appropriate

8 Assess the continuing impact of the Vietnam War on US foreign policy following its conclusion in 1975.

There were too few answers to make any comment appropriate.

Depth Study 3: International History, 1945–1991

9 'The Cuban Missile Crisis brought the world close to nuclear war.' How far do you agree?

The best responses avoided providing a description of the crisis or just developing a case for and against the hypothesis without reaching any conclusion, and really argued in a convincing manner. Some argued that while there was always a risk of an accident which could trigger a thermonuclear conflict, the policies and actions of both Kennedy and Khrushchev ensured that it would be unlikely to happen. Others argued that given the pressures of their militaries on both men, as well as internal political pressures, there was a substantial risk.

10 To what extent did the SALT Treaties improve East-West relations?

While there were many very detailed and accurate descriptions of the various Treaties, there was a tendency to focus on whether they were successes or failures, and not on whether or not they improved relations between the East and the West. There were some good discussions about whether the improvements in the relationship seen were essentially short term and superficial, or actually had some real meaning.

11 To what extent were Mao Zedong's policies designed to maintain control over the Chinese population?

There were too few answers to make any comment appropriate.

12 'President Sadat of Egypt undermined the cause of Arab unity.' How far do you agree?

There were too few answers to make any comment appropriate.