

HISTORY

Paper 9489/11 Document Question 11

Key messages

- The most effective responses are closely focused on the terms of the question.
- It is important to use source content to support points made in both sections of the question paper. Quotations should be precisely selected rather than a section of the sources being identified in general.
- In **part (a)** evidence from the sources should be given to support the comparison being made.
- In **part (b)** source content should be used to explain how the source supports or challenges the statement in the question. It is important that the argument is explained rather than asserted.
- In **part (a)** the purpose of evaluating the sources is to explain the similarities or differences between them. Commentaries on the context, or discussions on reliability, are not relevant unless they are used in this way.
- In **part (b)** the purpose of evaluating the sources is to decide which side of the argument (support or challenge) is stronger. Sources should be placed in context and evaluated to decide whether they lend weight to the argument. Commentaries on the context or reliability of sources are not creditworthy unless they serve the question.

General comments

Most responses demonstrated understanding that the **(a)** question requires identification and explanation of similarities **and** differences, and that **part (b)** requires an explanation of how each source either supports or challenges the statement or prompt in the question. Most responses used source content and provided relevant quotations or direct paraphrases to support the comparison or explain the support/challenge argument. However, in **Question 1(a)** it was quite common to see comparisons which were not supported by source details, or comments that Source A mentioned one event and Source B did not. Comparisons need to be like for like to be creditworthy.

In each of the **(a)** questions candidates were required to make comparisons based on 'events' in **Question 1(a)**, 'presidential power' in **Question 2(a)** and 'German imperial ambitions' in **Question 3(a)**. Where answers were weak, this often resulted from overlooking these specific terms. This was most noticeable in responses to **Question 3(a)**. To be valid, the comparison must be based on a detail, inference or sub-message which is addressed by both sources and relates to the question. Some responses contained detailed comparisons of the sources which were not focused on the question. Weaker responses sometimes asserted similarities or differences for points which were not comparable or simply wrote about the provenance.

Some responses lacked contextual understanding which would have encouraged more effective reading of the sources beyond face value. Knowledge is also key to achieving marks in the higher levels. In **part (a)**, explaining the similarities or differences between the sources is important. This can be done using contextual knowledge. In **part (b)** the reward of higher level marks requires evaluation of the sources to assess their weight as evidence. However, it should be noted that evaluating the sources is not creditworthy unless the evaluation is linked to the question. Many responses contain lengthy sections of background information or unfocused commentary on the bias and reliability of sources. More effective responses to **part (a)** explain how the sources are similar and different and to consider why the similarities or differences exist. For instance, in **Question 3(a)** it was possible to use contextual knowledge about the development of the German Empire to explain the similarities between the sources. In **part (b)**, it is useful for candidates to ask themselves whether their knowledge of the topic supports the claims made in the sources. If so, that might increase the value of a source. Alternatively, if a source was written for a specific purpose or audience, they should consider how that affects its weight as evidence. For example, some used their knowledge of strikes during the Progressive Era to assess whether the mine owners' arguments were valid.

It was notable that many candidates had planned their time carefully and appropriately. However, some responses were undeveloped as a result of poor time management. A significant proportion of responses addressed **part (b)** first. This approach can have a negative impact and this was observed in responses which struggled to focus on **part (a)** as a result of completing that part of the assessment last. It is worth bearing in mind that the assessment is structured to be helpful to candidates. By focusing on two sources, **part (a)** is designed to help the candidates ease themselves into the sources and the topic before moving onto **part (b)** which requires work on all four sources.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: European option: France, 1774 – 1814

Question 1

- (a) **Read Source A and Source B. Compare and contrast these two sources as evidence about the events of 14 July 1789?**

Most responses identified relevant similarities between the sources, the most frequently discussed being the fate of de Launay and the violence which met the crowd which entered the Bastille. At best, these similarities were supported with effective use of source details. For example, many pointed out that de Launay stood trial in Source B, albeit '*a quick trial*', while he was prevented from reaching his place of trial in Source A. However, it was noted that many responses identified the comparison but did not provide the source details to support it. Comparisons also needed to be linked to events as required by the question. Many tried to compare the tone of the sources without making a clear link to events. Some comparisons fell short because they simply pointed out that one source mentioned that the crowd went to the Bastille '*to seize ammunition*' while the other source did not discuss this issue. To be relevant, the comparison should be matched to a directly similar or different point in the other source. Many responses also identified a valid difference, seeing that the number who crossed the drawbridge in Source A was '*600*' while Source B argued that only '*40*' were admitted. In some instances, possible differences were missed as a result of misreading. For example. It was not valid to claim that de Launay put out a flag of peace in both sources. Many responses demonstrated contextual knowledge, explaining the background to the French Revolution and explaining why the crowd were so angry with the government and Louis XVI.

- (b) **'The storming of the Bastille had widespread support.' How far do these sources support this view?**

Many candidates gave a two-sided response to the question and there was evidence of effective source use in most answers. Source A was identified as a support source, responses explaining that the '*enormous cheering crowd*', the celebrations in the evening and the comment that '*Blessed liberty, for the first time, has been introduced*' were clear signs that people supported the storming of the Bastille. Source B was also seen as a support source, although some responses tried to argue that it was neutral. The most effective answers used their knowledge of the context and understood that the concluding comments about France being a '*free country*' and the '*nobility reduced to a level with the rest of the nation*' were indications that the British Ambassador thought these were positive developments. Some responses pointed out that the fact the British were supportive indeed indicated the widespread nature of support. Source C was seen by some as a support source, responses generally pointing out that having '*200,000 Parisian men in arms*' indicated a huge level of support within Paris. However, this was a nuanced source which could also be used as a challenge. The writer of the source noted the extent of support for the storming of the Bastille but seemed concerned by the men being '*already altered by bloodshed*' and '*little accustomed to discipline*' and some of the more perceptive answers used this as evidence to challenge. Although contextual knowledge could be used to explain Source D as a supporting source as it showed the liberation of the Third Estate, many answers offered a more face value reading of the source, arguing that the First and Second Estates were frightened by what was happening so the source challenged the prompt. Some responses demonstrated contextual knowledge, often about the Three Estates or problems facing the French government and people in 1789. Responses which used their knowledge to evaluate the sources to decide whether the support or challenge element of the argument was stronger were seen very rarely. Most attempts to evaluate were general, often stating that the source was biased or unreliable because it was from an Ambassadorial report or a diary without making any link to the context or the question. A

significant minority of responses took a one-sided approach to the question, and it is important to note that the sources will always offer opportunities to address both elements of the argument.

Section B: American Option: The Gilded Age and Progressive Era, 1870s to 1920

Question 2

- (a) **Read Sources C and D. Compare and contrast these two sources as evidence about presidential power.**

Many responses identified valid points of similarity and difference between the sources. The most frequently explained similarity was that both the mine operators and Theodore Roosevelt understood that Presidential actions had been taken which could be described as *'illegal'* or outside the Constitution. Source C argued that the President had acted in a way *'not specified by the Constitution'* and in Source D, Roosevelt seemed to agree, stating that his action was *'not required by the Constitution.'* Another equally valid but less common similarity was that both sources showed that the mine operators had accepted Roosevelt's right to create a commission. A considerable proportion of candidates also pointed out a difference between the sources, often focusing on the idea that Source C argued that the President had overstepped his power while Source D argued he was well within his rights to act as he saw fit. Source A compared Roosevelt's action to what might be seen in wartime and as a challenge to the *'very principles upon which this country is based.'* Meanwhile, Roosevelt argued in Source D that he had a duty to prevent a national crisis and was *'compelled to assume he had the legal right'* to do so. Some responses lost focus on the question and made comparisons which were not based on the issue of presidential power, focusing instead on who was to blame for the strike. Others wrote about each of the sources in turn without making a link between them. Many responses added a paragraph of contextual knowledge, or a discussion of the provenance and reliability, which did not serve the needs of the question. To be valid, contextual knowledge should have been used to explain the similarities or differences between the sources.

- (b) **'The mine operators were responsible for the difficulty in resolving the coal strike of 1902.' How far do these sources support this view.**

Many responses made effective use of the sources and produced a balanced answer. Source A was argued as a supporting source although some responses struggled to explain why this was the case. Most used the words *'no arbitration'* on the hammer to explain that this showed the mine operators were being obstructive and were therefore responsible for the difficulty in resolving the strike. Source B was used as a challenge source and responses often pointed out the comment that the mine owners would *'accept arbitration'* but *'the Miner Workers' Union'* would not. Some also considered the arguments in the source which dealt with pay and conditions to argue that the operators were doing their best in difficult circumstances and should not be blamed for problems in resolution. Source C was generally seen as a challenge source, but it was also possible to use it as a support. Many argued that the mine owners were not to blame but instead Theodore Roosevelt was responsible for the difficulties in solving the dispute through his unconstitutional actions. Some preceptive responses saw through the constitutional arguments of the mine operators, arguing that they were looking for excuses to avoid arbitration and concluded that the source supported the prompt. Others argued that responsibility should lie with the miners' leaders who had *'destroyed any opportunity for arbitration'*. However, some confused the mine owners with the miners' leaders and wrongly argued this as a supporting source. Source D was generally used effectively as a support source, arguing that the mine owners refused to *'negotiate or concede'*. While some candidates attempted to consider the authorship of the sources and comment on their reliability, usually dismissing Sources B and C as being unreliable as they were written by the mine owners, this often fell short of evaluation. It was common to see stock evaluation such as Source C was bound to be unreliable as it was from a magazine article. Few one-sided responses were seen although some confused the issue and wrote about who was responsible for the strike rather than the difficulty in resolving it.

Section C: International Option: Empire and the emergence of world powers, 1870 – 1919

Question 3

- (a) **Read Source A and Source D. Compare and contrast these two sources as evidence about German ambitions for imperial expansion.**

Many answers supported a valid similarity that Germany was ambitious to extend their empire. Source A's comment that Germany wanted '*enormous stretches of territory*' was matched with the idea from Source D that Germany wanted to '*acquire territory*'. Another similarity which was often discussed was the idea that both sources showed similar reasons for German expansion. In Source A, there was a reference to the development of '*new fields of industry and trade*' and Source D wanted expansion to '*serve the needs of commerce*'. Some responses misread the reference to '*a base*' as being a military requirement by Germany when what was intended was refuelling bases for merchant shipping. A number of answers compared the sources on the basis that Germany was dependent to some degree on Britain agreeing to their requests to expand their empire. While this was relevant and could be supported from both sources, it often led to long discussions about the relationship between Britain and Germany, Britain's world position and the increase in tensions between the two powers. None of these issues were relevant to a discussion about German imperial ambitions and a significant number of responses demonstrated a weak focus on the question. Likewise, it was not valid to argue that both sources showed that Germany wanted to expand in Africa. Indeed, one of the easiest differences to spot was that Germany wanted land in Africa in Source A, but was focused on opening up '*China to international trade*' in Source D. Another valid difference which was argued in a minority of responses was that the scale of German ambitions was portrayed differently in each source. In Source A '*enormous stretches*' of land were required while Source D suggested much more modest ambitions in the form of '*refuelling bases*.' Weaker responses generally resulted from losing focus on the question. Such answers often made comparisons about Britain rather than Germany.

(b) How far do the sources support the view that imperial expansion caused tensions between the colonial powers?

Most responses made effective use of the sources to support and challenge the idea that imperial expansion caused tensions. Although some attempted to use Source A as a challenge source, it was correctly used as a support source in many answers. Quotations such as '*We would risk the happy agreement between the two governments*' were understood as evidence that Britain wanted to avoid tension and had made agreements with Germany so that they could both '*develop the vast untrodden fields of Africa*'. Source B was used as a support source. Many candidates pointed out that conflict had increased, quoting the comment that instead of there being only one sensitive spot between imperial powers, '*now there are a dozen*'. Source C was mostly used as a challenge source but could be used on both sides of the argument. The comments that '*Germany would always keep distanced from politics*' were interpreted as meaning that Germany would rather stay away from international disputes, also backed up by the idea that Germany refused to be involved in humiliating Britain. On the other hand, France and Russia had tried to humiliate Britain which suggested some tension and the German public were '*hostile*' towards Britain. Source D was generally argued as a supporting source with relations being broken off '*in a rather impolite manner*' between Britain and Germany. Some candidates used their contextual knowledge to support or challenge the claims made in Source B and Source D, sometimes giving other examples of international tension such as the Agadir Crisis or Fashoda. This was only creditable if it was used to evaluate the source, rather than illustrate the points it was making, and if it was linked to the question. Weaker responses sometimes resulted from misreading sources such as Source A, therefore arguing that all the sources showed tension arising from imperial expansion.

HISTORY

Paper 9489/12 Document question
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Key messages

- The most effective responses are closely focused on the terms of the question.
- It is important to use source content to support points made in both sections of the question paper. Quotations should be precisely selected rather than a section of the source being identified in general.
- In **part (a)** evidence from the sources should be given to support the comparison being made.
- In **part (b)** source content should be used to explain how the source supports or challenges the statement in the question. It is important that the argument is explained rather than asserted.
- In **part (a)** the purpose of evaluating the sources is to explain the similarities or differences between them. Commentaries on the context, or discussions on reliability, are not relevant unless they are used in this way.
- In **part (b)** the purpose of evaluating the sources is to decide which side of the argument (support or challenge) is stronger. Sources should be placed in context and evaluated to decide whether they lend weight to the argument. Commentaries on the context or reliability of sources are not creditworthy unless they serve the question.

General comments

Most responses showed positive characteristics and demonstrated understanding that the **(a)** question requires identification and explanation of similarities and differences, and that **part (b)** requires an explanation of how each source either supports or challenges the statement or prompt in the question. Most responses used source content and provided relevant quotations or direct paraphrases to support the comparison or explain the support/challenge argument. However, in **Question 1(a)** it was quite common to see comparisons which were not supported by source details, or comments that Source A mentioned one event and Source B did not. Comparisons need to be like for like to be creditworthy.

In each of the **(a)** questions candidates were required to make comparisons based on views on Calonne's agency as a key individual in **Question 1(a)**, 'impact of the eight-hour day' in **Question 2(a)** and the 'economic impact of colonies' in **Question 3(a)**. Where answers were weak, this often resulted from overlooking these specific terms, for example attempting to assess overall impact rather than specifically economic impact. This was most noticeable in responses to **Question 3(a)**. To be valid, the comparison must be based on a detail, inference or sub-message which is addressed by both sources and relates to the question. Some responses contained detailed comparisons of the sources which were not focused on the question. Weaker responses sometimes asserted similarities or differences for points which were not comparable or simply wrote about the provenance.

Some responses lacked contextual understanding which would have encouraged more effective reading of the sources beyond face value. Knowledge is also key to achieving marks in the higher levels. In **part (a)**, explaining the similarities or differences between the sources is important. This can be done using contextual knowledge. In **part (b)** the reward of higher level marks requires evaluation of the sources to assess their weight as evidence. However, it should be noted that evaluating the sources is not creditworthy unless the evaluation is linked to the question. Many responses contain lengthy sections of background information or unfocused commentary on the bias and reliability of sources. More effective responses to **part (a)** explain how the sources are similar and different and to consider why the similarities or differences exist. For instance, in **Question 1(a)** it was possible to use knowledge of the financial state of France to explain the similarities between the sources about the situation facing Calonne. In **part (b)**, it is useful for candidates to ask themselves whether their knowledge of the topic supports the claims made in the sources. If so, that might increase the value of a source. Alternatively, if a source was written for a specific purpose or audience, they should consider how that affects its weight as evidence. For example, in **Question 2(b)** it was possible

to use contextual knowledge of Roosevelt's interventions in major cases to evaluate industrial and political democracy in the sources.

It was notable that many candidates had planned their time carefully and appropriately. However, some responses were undeveloped as a result of poor time management. A significant proportion of responses addressed **part (b)** first. This approach can have a negative impact and this was observed in responses which struggled to focus on **part (a)** as a result of completing that part of the assessment last. It is worth bearing in mind that the assessment is structured to be helpful to candidates. By focusing on two sources, **part (a)** is designed to help the candidates ease themselves into the sources and the topic before moving onto **part (b)** which requires work on all four sources.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: European option: France, 1774–1814

Question 1

(a) Compare and contrast these two sources as evidence of views about Calonne.

Most responses identified relevant differences between the sources; the most frequently discussed being the difference as to whether Calonne had much to offer in the situation and the strength of Calonne's plan. For the most part this was supported by effective use of source details about the Calonne's '*bold and wide-ranging plan*' and Source A's implication that his ideas were of no use. Fewer responses compared the portrayal of Calonne in each source, but some did so with good use of contextual detail of plans undertaken after the dismissal of Necker. However, some responses compared the sources as a whole without taking care to focus specifically on views of Calonne and focused on the actions of the King instead.

Many responses identified valid similarities with the sources, with most candidates identifying the difficulties of Calonne's situation and the financial situation in France. Fewer responses identified the differences regarding the supporters of Calonne, (including the author of the source). Weaker responses struggled to make clear points of comparison because they did not know enough about the Assembly of Notables, its constitution or actions, and concentrated on detail in the source rather than the different portrayals of Calonne in the sources to explain why this was different.

(b) 'The Assembly of Notables was likely to fail.' How far do these sources support this view?

Many candidates gave a substantial response to the question and there was evidence of effective source use in most answers. Source A was identified as a support source, with many candidates identifying that the Ambassador's opinion that the financial issues which '*Calonne cannot resolve and which he has not the courage to face*' meant that special assembly was likely to fail with '*little real advantage is to be expected*' coming from it. Some candidates reflected on the Ambassador's reflections on the role of the King and his unwillingness to directly blame the King himself for the financial state of France and identified the detail that '*The friends and well-wishers of Calonne are warm in their praises of him*' which added to the belittling tone, to support the view. Source B was also seen as a support source, although many candidates found the satirical nature of the source difficult to explain. A number of responses struggled to contextualise the source because they did not know enough about the composition of the Assembly of Notables and the difference between the assembly, parliaments and the Estates General. Some candidates spent too much time attempting to explain details of the visual elements of the source rather than explaining the meaning in context. Most responses used Source C effectively as a challenge source. Many candidates were able to recognise both support and challenge in Source D and good responses used clear quotations to support their points that '*The Notables were naturally bound to oppose the ending of abuses from which they profited*' but also that '*most were well-intentioned*', with the author absolving them of blame having been fully aware of the impact of the failure of the Assembly on subsequent events.

Responses that used knowledge to evaluate the sources to decide whether the support or challenge element of the argument was stronger were not seen very often. Most attempts to evaluate were general, often stating that the source was biased or unreliable because it was from an Ambassadorial report or a diary without making any link to the context or the question. A significant minority of responses took a one-sided approach to the question, and it is important to note that the sources will always offer opportunities to address both elements of the argument.

Section B: American Option: The Gilded Age and Progressive Era, 1870s–1920

Question 2

- (a) **Compare and contrast the views in these two sources about the impact of the eight-hour day.**

Most responses dealt with this question very well and could clearly draw similarities and differences between the two sources. Some responses added a paragraph of contextual knowledge, or a discussion of the provenance and reliability, which did not serve the needs of the question. Contextual knowledge – noting that the sources were aimed at very different audiences – could have been used to explain the similarities or differences between the sources and the wider debate on working hours and to consider the influential role of Congress. However, to be credit worthy, contextual detail must be specific to the question in hand to improve the explanation of difference between the sources, with introductions using generalised context rarely adding to the quality of the response.

- (b) **‘The growth of workers’ unions would benefit the US economy.’ How far do the sources support this view?**

Most responses made effective use of the sources to support and challenge the idea that the growth of the workers’ unions would benefit the economy. Source A was argued as a challenge source, with most candidates explaining the visual elements of the source well to show the hostile view of Unions through the damaging impact on families which was illustrated in the source. Source B was strongly argued as a support source and many candidates identified the detail that the union would encourage arbitration which would lessen the chance of strikes damaging the economy. Most responses used Source C effectively as a challenge source with many candidates identifying the ‘*threat to good management*’ as well as the adverse effect on share prices and overall damaging impact of the national economy. Some used effective contextual knowledge to emphasise hostility to unions, for example steel industry employers such as United States Steel. Many candidates were able to recognise both support and challenge in Source D, with many using Roosevelt’s comments about ‘*unwarranted strikes*’ as challenge but using his stress on ‘*the enormous economic, moral and political possibilities of unions*’ to strongly support the view. While some weaker responses attempted to consider the authorship of the sources, this was often perfunctory and attempts to comment on reliability added little to the attempted evaluation.

Section C: International Option: Empire and the emergence of world powers, 1870–1919

Question 3

- (a) **Compare and contrast these two sources as evidence about the economic impact of colonies.**

This question required candidates to focus on the economic impact detailed in both sources. Some responses confused this with trying to look at the impact of colonisation more widely which overlapped with the focus of **part (b)**. Therefore, it should be remembered that **part (a)** questions have a specific focus. Most candidates were able to recognise both similarities and differences in the sources as detailed in the mark scheme. Many answers identified that the colonies were a great potential source of material wealth with Source B detailing ‘*great riches*’ and Source C’s identification of the ‘*acquisition of gold, gold, and more gold*’. Many responses also identified the necessity of state backing with ‘*subsidies*’ and ‘*taxpayers*’ support detailed in both sources. Most responses identified relevant differences between the sources which included the different tone in Source C about the perceived benefits to the German public. The best responses began to use their knowledge of the period to explain the differences between them using provenance in context which went beyond rote evaluation.

(b) How far do the sources agree that there was support in Germany for the acquisition of colonies?

Most responses made effective use of the sources to support and challenge the idea that there was support in Germany for the acquisition of colonies, with the best responses using contextual detail to explain why this changed over time. Most responses used evidence from the sources to clearly support their argument. Source A was particularly well used as a challenge, with Bismarck's changing policies placing the source in context. Sources B and D were used as support sources with a good understanding from many candidates about the policy of *Weltpolitik*, with many candidates cross-referencing these sources to determine clear motives of the needs of German emigrants. Some responses lost focus by attempting to evaluate the Socialist perspectives in Source C without considering how widely these views might be shared in Germany, although this source was confidently used by most candidates as a supporting source. The best responses used knowledge of the period to evaluate the sources and explain how this evaluation made them more or less useful when answering the question.

HISTORY

Paper 9489/13 Document question
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Key messages

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- In **part (b)** source content should be used to explain how the source supports or challenges the statement in the question. It is important that the argument is explained rather than asserted.
- In **part (a)** the purpose of evaluating the sources is to explain the similarities or differences between them. Commentaries on the context, or discussions on reliability, are not relevant unless they are used in this way.
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General comments

Most responses showed positive characteristics and demonstrated understanding that the **(a)** question requires identification and explanation of similarities and differences, and that **part (b)** requires an explanation of how each source either supports or challenges the statement or prompt in the question. Most responses used source content and provided relevant quotations or direct paraphrases to support the comparison or explain the support/challenge argument. However, in **Question 1(a)** it was quite common to see comparisons which were not supported by source details, or comments that Source A mentioned one event and Source B did not. Comparisons need to be like for like to be creditworthy.

In each of the **(a)** questions candidates were required to make comparisons on the work of the National Constituent Assembly in **Question 1(a)**, views of the Sherman Anti-Trust Act in **Question 2(a)** and evidence of the motives or the Scramble for Africa in **Question 3(a)**. Where answers were weak, this often resulted from overlooking these specific terms, for example attempting to assess colonial methods rather than motivations in **Question 3(a)**. To be valid, the comparison must be based on a detail, inference or sub-message which is addressed by both sources and relates to the question. Some responses contained detailed comparisons of the sources which were not focused on the question. Weaker responses sometimes asserted similarities or differences for points which were not comparable or simply wrote about the provenance.

Some responses lacked contextual understanding which would have encouraged more effective reading of the sources beyond face value. Knowledge is also key to achieving marks in the higher levels. In **part (a)**, explaining the similarities or differences between the sources is important. This can be done using contextual knowledge. In **part (b)** the reward of higher level marks requires evaluation of the sources to assess their weight as evidence. However, it should be noted that evaluating the sources is not creditworthy unless the evaluation is linked to the question. Many responses contain lengthy sections of background information or unfocused commentary on the bias and reliability of sources. More effective responses to **part (a)** explain how the sources are similar and different and to consider why the similarities or differences exist. For instance, in **Question 1(a)** it was possible to use knowledge of the French feudal system and its impacts to explain similarities. In **part (b)**, it is useful for candidates to ask themselves whether their knowledge of the topic supports the claims made in the sources. If so, that might increase the value of a source. Alternatively, if a source was written for a specific purpose or audience, they should consider how that affects its weight as evidence. For example, in **Question 2(b)** it was possible to use contextual knowledge of Taft's presidency to evaluate trusts and anti-trust campaigns during his administration.

It was notable that many candidates had planned their time carefully and appropriately. However, some issues with poor planning still remain and some responses were undeveloped as a result of poor time management. A significant proportion of responses addressed **part (b)** first. This approach can have a negative impact, and this was observed in responses which struggled to focus on **part (a)** as a result of completing that part of the assessment last. It is worth bearing in mind that the assessment is structured to be helpful to candidates. By focusing on two sources, **part (a)** is designed to help the candidates ease themselves into the sources and the topic before moving onto **part (b)** which requires work on all four sources.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: European option: France, 1774–1814

Question 1

- (a) **Read Sources A and D. Compare and contrast these two sources as evidence about the work of the National Constituent Assembly.**

Most responses identified relevant differences between the sources; the most frequently discussed being the difference as to whether the National Assembly had been effective *‘when all the burdens weighing on the people were abolished’* or had instigated a chaotic and dangerous situation where the masses had *‘devastated the woods, destroyed the countryside and estates and even ruined the crops’*. For the most part, this was supported by effective use of source details. Fewer responses compared the portrayal of the Assembly and its role in controlling events.

Many responses identified valid similarities with the sources, with most candidates identifying the removal of feudal dues and taxes. Weaker responses struggled to make clear points of comparison because they did not know enough about the feudal system and the different taxes and obligations to identify items of similarity, which groups were included or exempt, or were unsure about which estates were included in the new National Assembly. Stronger responses made effective use of knowledge and used relevant details to explain the similarities or differences between the sources and showing a firm understanding about the French government and decision making after June 1789.

- (b) **‘There were good prospects for the revolution to proceed peacefully.’ How far do these sources support this view?**

Many candidates gave good responses to the question and there was evidence of effective source use in most answers. Source A was used confidently as a support source, with many candidates identifying the positive tone of *‘a night for radical change and for public happiness’*. Some candidates reflected on the President’s motives for his reflections and stronger responses cross-referenced this with knowledge of the Great Fear and the August Decrees. Source B was used well as a challenge source. Source C was a nuanced source, which could have been used to support or challenge based on the specific contextual knowledge utilised by the candidate. Many responses used Source C effectively as a challenge source citing knowledge of the March of the Women and some stronger responses used this source well to evidence support for the King on his return to Paris. However, a great deal of responses did not have sufficient chronological knowledge and confused the source with the later events of the Flight to Varennes. Responses which struggled to contextualise the sources did so as they did not know enough about events of 1789 and the complexities involved. Many candidates were able to recognise both support and challenge in Source D and stronger responses used clear quotations to support their points using Washington’s views that it was *‘wonderful in nature’* but that *‘problems not visible at present may give rise to an even more oppressive government than the one which existed before’*. A minority of responses took a one-sided approach to the question and it is important to note that the sources will always offer opportunities to address both elements of the argument.

Section B, the American Option: The Gilded Age and Progressive Era, 1870s–1920

Question 2

- (a) Compare and contrast the views given in these two sources of the Sherman Anti-Trust Act.**

This question required responses to focus on the Sherman Anti-Trust Act in both source extracts. Some responses confused this with trying to look at the problems and issues of trusts in general – this was not credit worthy as it often overlapped with the focus of the second question. Therefore, it should be remembered that **part (a)** questions have a specific focus. Most candidates were able to recognise both similarities and differences in the sources as detailed in the mark scheme. Better responses were able to use their knowledge of the period to contextualise these sources and clarify or explain the positions taken in them, this was particularly useful when discussing the position taken by Taft in his autobiography. The strongest responses used their knowledge of the period to explain the differences between them using provenance which went beyond rote evaluation.

- (b) How far do the sources support the view that the impact of trusts was harmful?**

This question was well answered with candidates able to use all the sources to support and challenge the statement. Some responses used the cartoon in Source A particularly well and were able to use their contextual knowledge to discuss the views and work of the cartoonist. Other successful responses also used Source D in context to discuss the actions taken by different presidents and the purpose of Taft in his autobiography. Weaker responses struggled to contextualise the sources because they did not know enough about the arguments surrounding trusts and the complexities involved in the economics of this period.

Section C: International Option: Empire and the emergence of world powers, 1870–1919

Question 3

- (a) Compare and contrast these two sources as evidence about the motives for the Scramble for Africa.**

This question required candidates to focus on both sources as evidence for the motivations from colonising powers for the Scramble for Africa. Some candidates confused this with attempting to compare and contrast the methods of colonisers which overlapped with the focus of part (b). It should be remembered that **part (a)** questions have a specific focus. Most candidates were able to recognise both similarities and differences in the sources as detailed in the mark scheme. Candidates identified the similarities concerning stimulation and development of trade, with fewer responses identifying differences such as mutual co-operation in contrast to direct colonial interest. Stronger responses were able to use knowledge of the period to contextualise these sources and clarify or explain the positions taken in them.

- (b) How far do the sources support the view that people at the time believed that colonisation would be a disaster for the native populations?**

Most responses engaged effectively with the sources to offer support and challenge for the assertion that people at the time believed native populations would be affected disastrously by colonisation. There was plenty of scope to discuss different colonial powers, and the strongest responses used precise contextual knowledge to do this. Many candidates were able to use all four sources to clearly evidence their arguments. Source D was used particularly well as an emphatic support of the view, with some well-chosen contextual knowledge concerning Leopold II and evidence from Congo. Source A was used as an effective challenge, with many candidates demonstrating good knowledge regarding the Act of the Berlin Conference. Source C was a nuanced source, which could have been used to support or challenge based on the specific contextual knowledge utilised by the candidate. Many responses used Source C effectively as a challenge source citing the author's suggestion that '*we may also bring many advantages to Africa*' and some candidates also successfully used this source to identify issues where people '*rose in revolt against other nations*' such as '*Germany, France, Portugal, and Spain*'. The strongest responses used their knowledge of the period to evaluate the sources and explain how this evaluation made them more or less useful when answering the question.

HISTORY

Paper 9489/21 Outline Study 21

Key messages

- Candidates should develop a good understanding of the chronology of key events as this will help them to link factors accurately and build effective arguments.
- In **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 give a clear understanding of the connections between causes to reach a supported conclusion.
- In **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 the top Level of the mark scheme.
- Candidates should note and act on any timeframe given in the question. This will enable the response to be focused on the question set.

General comments

In line with the requirements of the examination, most candidates attempted two complete questions from one section of the paper. Candidates, generally, 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. It was not uncommon for candidates to produce solid responses to one part of a question, yet weaker (and, in some cases, no) answers to the other part.

Part (a) questions are about causation. Effective answers were distinguished by detailed knowledge and understanding of the reasons why a specific event occurred or why someone adopted a particular course of action. This is because causation can only be adequately explained by an appreciation of the combined effect of several factors, both long and short-term. The most effective responses focused clearly on the key issue of causation and contained analysis of a wide range of factors, demonstrating how they were connected and produced reasoned conclusions. Most candidates made the identification and explanation of some relevant causal factors. Less successful answers tended to drift into narrative or descriptive accounts of how something occurred, rather than why. The weaker responses were characterised by a tendency to drift into irrelevancy and factual inaccuracy and/or confused chronology; they were over-reliant on generalised assertions that lacked appropriate factual support.

The most successful **Part (b)** 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. Other responses provided arguments which considered one interpretation of the issue. There is some evidence that candidates, faced with a familiar topic, were not able to adapt their knowledge to the specific question asked in the paper. Less successful responses fell into one of two categories – narrative/descriptive accounts of the topic with only implicit reference to the specific nature of the question set, or relevant arguments based on factual support which was limited in range and depth. The weakest responses were often the result of confusion over the requirements of the question; they were characterised by factual inaccuracy and/or chronological confusion, assertions based on inadequate factual support or a tendency to drift away from the timeframes given.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: Modern Europe, 1750–1921

Question 1

The Industrial Revolution in Britain, 1750–1850

- (a) Explain why the development of steam power was important to the Industrial Revolution.**

Good responses were able to provide several explained reasons as to why the development of steam power was important to the Industrial Revolution. These responses could have been improved by showing the connection between the factors explained. Other responses identified some factors or a factor. Less successful answers were characterised by the lack of both specific arguments and extensive factual support.

- (b) ‘All social classes benefitted from the Industrial Revolution.’ How far do you agree?**

Answers which were successful covered the social groups (aristocracy/middle class/working class) producing an assessment of the extent to which the particular group benefitted from the Industrial Revolution. Other responses focused on one group but examined either benefits or lack of benefits. As a result, these responses were unbalanced. Weaker responses were descriptive, did not cover the social groups and focused on either benefits or lack of benefits. Often, confusion was present in such responses, with reference being made to ‘The First/Second/Third Estates.’

Question 2

Liberalism and nationalism in Germany, 1815–71

- (a) Explain why the creation of the German Confederation discouraged the development of German nationalism.**

Responses which were successful identified and explained several reasons as to why the German Confederation discouraged German nationalism’s development, with Metternich’s role being well understood. Answers which were less successful described actions taken by the Confederation to hinder nationalism’s development amongst the member states.

- (b) To what extent was the Frankfurt Parliament’s failure caused by disagreements amongst its Members?**

Impressive responses were characterised by the development of fully focused and balanced arguments, supported by appropriate and accurate factual evidence. The divisions within the parliament (e. g. Gross Deutschland v. Klein Deutschland) were examined against the influence of actions taken by Frederick William IV, lack of political experience amongst representatives and the resurgence of conservative opponents. Answers which were less successful focused solely on internal disagreements which meant they were unbalanced. Weaker responses lost the question focus and wrote at length about the humiliation of Olmütz and/or Bismarck’s actions in the 1860s.

Question 3

The Russian Revolution, 1894–1921

- (a) Explain why the Russian Civil War broke out in 1918.**

Effective responses were characterised by the identification and explanation of several key factors (disquiet over the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly by the Bolsheviks/anger over the terms of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk/national minorities seeking independence). Less successful responses described the outbreak of the Russian Civil War whilst weaker responses showed a lack of focus by writing about why the Bolsheviks were successful in the Civil War, or describing why the Tsar lost power and/or the events of October 1917.

- (b) **How far was the February Revolution of 1917 caused by the Tsar's lack of commitment to reform?**

Successful answers assessed the Tsar's lack of commitment to reform alongside the influence of other factors in bringing about the February Revolution in 1917. Such responses were detailed in the evidence they deployed and balanced in their range of assessment. Less successful answers focused solely on the lack of commitment to reform which meant they lacked both detailed evidence and balance. Weaker responses showed confusion over chronology by writing at length about the October Revolution of 1917.

Section B: The history of the USA, 1820–1941

Question 4

The origins of the Civil War, 1820–61

- (a) **Explain why seven states had seceded from the Union by February 1861.**

Answers which were successful identified and explained reasons as to why the seven states had seceded by February 1861. These were often a combination of short-term (e. g. Lincoln's election victory in 1860) and long-term (e. g. differing natures of Northern and Southern societies created ever growing sectional tensions). These responses could have been improved by showing the connection between the factors explained. Less successful responses identified factors or a factor. Weaker answers lost the question's focus and wrote about the events of the Civil War.

- (b) **To what extent were increased sectional tensions between 1850 and 1856 caused by the violence seen in 'Bleeding Kansas'?**

Responses which were successful grasped the need to focus on the timeframe, 1850–1856 and were able to produce high-quality analysis based on the deployment of appropriate factual evidence to aid the development of fully focused and balanced arguments. The violence of 'Bleeding Kansas' was assessed against the influence of, for example, the Compromise of 1850, the reinvigorated Fugitive Slave Act and the impact of the publication of 'Uncle Tom's Cabin.' Less successful answers were unbalanced, focusing solely on 'Bleeding Kansas.' Weaker responses described what happened in Kansas and/or ignored the timeframe and wrote at length about Dred Scott/Harper's Ferry.

Question 5

Civil War and Reconstruction, 1861–77

- (a) **Explain why leaders were accused of being anti-democratic during the Civil War.**

Good answers grasped the meaning of 'anti-democratic' and explained several factors highlighting attacks upon civil liberties conducted by both Lincoln and Davis. Less successful answers described actions taken in the North and the South. Weaker answers misunderstood 'anti-democratic' and wrote about problems the Democratic Party faced.

- (b) **'Grant made Reconstruction a success.' How far do you agree?**

The most impressive responses were based on focused, balanced and well supported assessment of the extent to which Grant made Reconstruction a success. Grant's actions were set against the influence of Congress and the extent to which Reconstruction could, in and of itself, be classed as 'successful.' Less successful answers were unbalanced focusing either on Grant or Radical Republicans. Weaker responses showed limited understanding of what constituted Reconstruction.

Question 6

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

(a) Explain why new industries grew rapidly during the 1920s.

Successful answers grasped the focus of ‘new industries’ and adhered to the ‘1920s’ timeframe. Such responses provided several explained factors (e. g. growth of new products, such as refrigerators/vacuum cleaners/radios, mass production reducing the price of these goods and the ubiquity of advertising). Responses which were less successful identified some factors or a factor whilst weaker responses ignored ‘new’ and wrote at length about well-established industries such as steel and railways.

(b) To what extent was opposition to the New Deal effective?

Some good responses were seen showing clear knowledge and understanding which led to a balanced assessment of the question. Such responses grasped the focus was the extent of the effectiveness of opposition to the New Deal, not the effectiveness of the New Deal. This led to an examination, and assessment, of the opposition from, for example, Long, Townsend, the Republican Party in Congress and the Supreme Court. Other responses focused on either effective or ineffective whilst weaker responses lost the question’s focus and wrote at length about the success/failure of the New Deal.

Section C: International History; International Relations, 1870–1945

Question 7

The League of Nations and international relations in the 1920s

(a) Explain why the successor states of eastern Europe faced political problems in the 1920s.

The identification and explanation of several factors as to why successor states of eastern Europe faced political problems characterised successful answers. These responses could have been improved by showing the connection between the factors explained. Less successful answers identified factors or a factor whilst weaker responses showed confusion as to what constituted a successor state and the geography of Eastern Europe.

(b) How far did the Locarno Treaties improve European international relations in the 1920s?

Responses which were successful were able to produce high-quality responses, based on the deployment of appropriate factual evidence to aid the development of fully focused and balanced arguments. The acceptance of the terms of the Treaty of Versailles by Germany, agreement on the borders of France, Germany and Belgium and the admittance of Germany into the League of Nations following the Locarno Treaties were assessed against the limited nature of the guarantee given by Britain and Italy, the lack of any discussions on what constituted Germany’s eastern border and the impact of the Wall Street Crash in re-releasing dissatisfaction in Germany with the Versailles Treaty. The sole focus on either the success or failure of the Locarno Treaties in improving European international relations was seen in less successful responses. Weaker responses ignored the timeframe and wrote at length about Hitler’s foreign policy in the 1930s.

Question 8

The League of Nations and international relations in the 1930s

(a) Explain why Hitler supported the Nationalists in the Spanish Civil War.

There were good responses to this question which explained several factors behind Hitler’s support of the Nationalists in the Spanish Civil War, showing candidates’ clear knowledge and understanding of this topic. Less successful responses provided an identification of factors or a factor. Weaker responses provided a descriptive account of the Spanish Civil War.

- (b) **To what extent was the League's failure to prevent Mussolini's attack on Abyssinia caused by Britain's reluctance to take action against him?**

Good answers assessed Britain's reluctance to act against other influences on the League in not preventing Mussolini's attack on Abyssinia. These responses were characterised by the development of fully focused and balanced arguments, supported by appropriate and accurate factual evidence (Impact of the First World War/the Great Depression/ the Stresa Front/ organisational weaknesses of the League of Nations). Answers which were less successful either focused on Britain or one other influence, for example, France's reluctance to act, producing an unbalanced assessment. Weaker answers provided a narrative of Mussolini's actions, often showing confusion by writing at length about events from the 1920s.

Question 9

China and Japan, 1912–45

- (a) **Explain why the Chinese Communist Party was able to build a strong base in Yan'an.**

The explanation of several factors led to the production of successful responses. Such responses grasped that the focus was on *why this was a good place for the CCP to set up their HQ*, not why the base helped to put the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in such a strong position by 1945. Responses which were less successful identified factors or a factor. Weaker response provided a narrative of the Long March, its origins and key events, and/or erroneously claimed that building the base at Yan'an made it easier for the Soviet Union to provide materiel to the CCP.

- (b) **'Economic problems were the main cause of Japanese expansionism in the 1930s.' How far do you agree?**

Successful answers assessed economic problems against other influences such as militarism/imperialism/loss of faith in democracy on Japanese expansion in the 1930s. Answers which were less successful focused solely on economic problems which led to an unbalanced assessment. Weaker answers ignored the timeframe, writing, at length, about the Sino-Japanese War, 1894–95 and/or the Russo-Japanese War, 1904–05.

HISTORY

Paper 9489/22 Outline Study 22

Key messages

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General comments

In line with the requirements of the examination, most candidates attempted two complete questions from one section of the paper. Candidates, generally, 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. It was not uncommon for candidates to produce solid responses to one part of a question, yet weaker (and, in some cases, no) answers to the other part.

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Comments on specific questions

Section A: Modern Europe 1750–1921

Question 1



- (a) **Explain why living conditions in cities and towns were bad for the lower classes as a result of industrialisation.**

Most candidates had a clear idea of what living conditions were like in industrial towns and cities in the first half of the nineteenth century. Many provided detail descriptions of these conditions and good candidates were able to offer reasoned suggestions for the existence of such poor living conditions with the best responses linking the factors. For example: *'Rapid the growth of towns due to industrialisation was the most significant factor as other factors, like the poor quality of housing and the lack of proper sanitation and water supply were a consequence of this rapid growth.'* Weaker responses often just provided detailed description without really developing any sort of satisfactory explanation.

- (b) **'Chartism emerged in 1838 because trade unions were weak.' How far do you agree?**

Candidates who understood that Chartism was a movement focused on parliamentary reform did well on this question. Whilst it was not necessary to be able to quote all the demands of the People's Charter it helped enormously to be able to give a general overview of its purpose. Effective responses also understood the position of Trade Unions at this time and why their impact on political and economic life had been quite restricted. Many candidates struggled with linking the two so there were few good responses giving an overall judgement of whether the two movements were linked in any significant way. Weaker responses often had an incomplete understanding of Chartism and wrote about it as a movement to improve the conditions of the working poor, with lengthy description of working and living conditions in towns and cities in the early nineteenth century. Others provided descriptions of other protest movements like Luddites and Captain Swing but missed the political aspect of Chartism.

Question 2

- (a) **Explain why relations between Prussian Liberals and Bismarck improved in the period 1864–1871.**

Good responses showed understanding of the fact that the key issue in this question was the matter of German unification and the role that Prussia should play. Weaker responses provided reasonably accurate descriptions of the role played by the three conflicts that led to the creation of a united Germany under Prussian leadership. Stronger responses fully explained why each of these wars had a specific effect on the relations between Bismarck and the Liberals in moving a step closer to the idea of a united Germany.

- (b) **'The Zollverein's role was economic not political.' How far do you agree?**

Many responses began with an explanation of the founding of the Zollverein as an economic organisation, identifying its economic benefits and effects, and outlining its development to include an increasing number of small and medium sized German states. Weaker responses tended to focus on description rather than analysis but nevertheless showed some understanding of key issues. From this basis many went on to consider the political effects of the formation of the Zollverein, often focusing specifically on the changing relationship between Prussia and Austria. The best responses highlighted the effect of change over time with an initially economic structure taking on an increasingly political role and reached a supported judgment about how far they agreed with the initial assertion that the Zollverein's role was economic not political.

Question 3

- (a) **Explain why the Tsar lost support between 1914 and 1917.**

Many candidates were able to provide several clear and detailed reasons for the decline in support for Nicholas II. These included the effect of initial losses in the war, the Tsar's decision to take personal control and the role this left for the Tsarina and Rasputin at home. Better responses often provided a more general explanation of the effects of the war on the social and economic conditions within Russia. Weaker responses were largely the result of a failure to stick to the time frame given by the question – 1914–17. Such responses regularly included events like the 1905 Revolution, the October Manifesto and the weaknesses of the Duma and a few even included references to Witte and Stolypin.

- (b) **'Agreeing to the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk was a misjudgement by the Bolsheviks.' How far do you agree?**

There were some well-balanced and analytical responses to this question. Most candidates focused on Lenin's promise of 'Peace Bread and Land' as a starting point for considering why it was not a misjudgement. Strong responses highlighted the effect of the failure to end the war on the Tsarist regime and the Provisional Government, using this to emphasise the importance of achieving peace for the Bolsheviks, for example: *'The effect of the revolutions of February and October had left the army unable to function effectively and worker controlled factories were not in a position to support continuing military action against the well organised German This, added to Bolshevik propaganda around their slogan 'Peace, Bread and Land', meant that any attempt to continue the war would probably see the Bolsheviks lose power to other more popular political groups like the SR's.'* The alternative argument usually focused on the loss of land and reparation payments that were a key part of the Treaty. The strongest responses, however, also considered the effect the Treaty had on the other allied powers and their support for the White forces in the Civil War. Some good responses showed an understanding of the underlying belief of many Bolsheviks of the inevitability of worldwide revolutions so that any short-term losses would be recovered in the long run. Weaker responses asserted that it was not a mistake because Russia got the land they lost back when the World War ended, failing to realise that the Bolsheviks were not even invited to the Paris Peace Conference.

Section B: The History of the USA 1820–1941

Question 4

- (a) **Explain why the Missouri Compromise was agreed in 1820.**

Effective responses could explain the reasons for the Missouri Compromise in 1820 however weaker responses did not fully grasp the chronology of developments in the westward expansion of US territory and often included details of later changes like the acceptance of Texas into the Union or the acquisition of the Mexican territories, that were not relevant to the question. Many candidates recognised the importance of the emphasis on 'Missouri' and were able to explain why the admission of Missouri to the Union had to be done alongside the admission of Maine because of the effect this would have on the US Senate. Other factors like the Louisiana Purchase and the effect of westward expansion often formed a key part of successful explanations. Weaker responses tended to describe what was involved in the Compromise without offering significant explanation of why it was necessary other than the fact that it was about slave and non-slave states.

- (b) **'The rise of the Republican Party was the main cause of increased sectional tensions in the 1850s.' How far do you agree?**

Effective responses were able to offer a reasoned explanation for the emergence of the Republican Party as an actively anti-slavery organisation, but weaker responses were less clear about how the Republican Party came about and therefore why it was important in the rise of sectional conflict. Strong responses then went on to consider a range of other factors that were responsible including the Compromise of 1850 and the resultant tightening of the Runaway Slave Law, the Kansas-Nebraska Act and Bleeding Kansas, the publication of Uncle Tom's Cabin and the Lincoln-Douglas Debates. The best drew these threads together in a brief but effective judgement: *'Overall, I partially agree with the statement as it was a huge part of the tensions growing between North and South because the 2 parties (Republican and Democrat) were so prominently different. However, I believe the biggest increase in tensions was caused by slavery becoming a more prominent issue, rather than it just being ignored by the North. A multitude of factors such as the 1850 Compromise, Kansas-Nebraska Act and publication of anti-slavery works such as Uncle Tom's Cabin showed how bad slavery actually was. It was this combination of factors, together with the emergence of a new more radically anti-slavery party, the Republicans, that led to the increase in tension between the two sides in the 1850's.'* However, weaker responses only considered one or two of the many factors and therefore did not give particularly full answers to the question of the cause of the rise of sectional tensions. The least successful responses were descriptions of the issue of slavery with limited reference to the question. Some candidates also wrote about events before or beyond the 1850's like Lincoln's election in 1860, or admission of Texas to the Union in 1845.

Question 5



(a) Explain why there were tensions in the relationship between the Union and Britain during the Civil War.

Many candidates relied on trade in cotton as a major cause of tension even though Britain quickly found other sources of cotton once the war started. Effective responses showed understanding of the whole issue of continuing to trade with the South including gun-running activities and ship building as sources of tension. These responses also mentioned the Trent Affair though some were not very clear about the actual details of the confrontation. Some strong responses also included reference to northern disappointment that a state that had abolished slavery should continue to support the Confederacy which was based on a slave owning culture and economy: *'The Union knew Britain had banned slavery and was a confused as to why they would consider formal negotiations with the CSA and recognise them as a belligerent. This was the opposite of what the Union wanted, they wanted the CSA to be condemned as 'rebel' states and given no aid so that they would quickly be forced to surrender and rejoin the Union. This angered the North and created growing tension when added to other factors like the aid the South continued to receive for private individuals in Great Britain.'*

(b) To what extent had the lives of ex-slaves improved by 1877?

Stronger responses drew valid comparisons between the legal advancement of the black American population and the reality of the discriminatory situation they still found themselves in, particularly in the South. Effective responses gave a clear account of the improvements offered through the Reconstruction amendments and the Freedman's Bureau and then went on to consider practical limitations placed on these basic rights by the circumstances of reconstruction in the South. Some strong responses also recognised the significance of the Compromise of 1877 in bringing many improvements to an end: *'The major amendments may never have been achieved if the Civil War had not taken the path it did, and this meant that African Americans were not slaves any more. This would be hugely important in the future but by 1877 the life improvements of former slaves were still very limited. They had gained their freedom and freedom only. After the Compromise of 1877 and the removal of Union troops from the South Black Americans were subjected to increasing violence and restrictions due to a lack of enforcement by the Union.'* Weaker responses were often very narrative and did not offer any clear distinction between the changes made by each of the Constitutional Amendments.

Question 6

(a) Explain why 'Hoovervilles' were built in some American cities after 1929.

Strong responses established a clear link between the temporary settlements that were created and President Hoover explaining why 'Hoovervilles' was both a derogatory term for the settlements and a comment on the failed efforts of the President to alleviate the worst effects of the depression. Weaker responses described Hoovervilles as slums rather than recognising their particular character as temporary shanty town settlements. Some also wrote about the effects of the Wall Street Crash and/or the Great Depression in general without relating them to Hoovervilles, whilst others characterised them as just being a product of the agricultural depression – referring to the people using them as 'Oakies' who were nothing to do with Hoovervilles.

(b) 'The Second New Deal was more progressive than the First.' How far do you agree?

Effective responses gave careful consideration to the idea of how both New Deals could be characterised as progressive but in different ways: *'Although the First new Deal seemed rather progressive the Second New Deal was certainly more radical for the time. This was primarily due to the purpose of each deal and what Roosevelt was trying to tackle with each one. The First was aimed at stabilising the banking system and using government agencies to create opportunities of the unemployed which the Republican President Hoover and failed to do. The second was about improving the rights of workers and the disadvantaged, another radical change in government policy. So, both were progressive in different ways.'* This approach often produced well-balanced and insightful analysis that presented arguments that demonstrated the extent to which both the First and Second New Deals introduced progressive policies. Weaker responses often did not have a clear idea of what constituted 'progressive' and these tended to produce largely narrative accounts. Some equated 'progressive' with 'left-wing' and did make valid reference to left wing politicians as a

source of pressure on Roosevelt; such accounts tended to lack balance. A few candidates tried to link Roosevelt's ideas back to the Progressive era but with little success.

Section C: International History 1870–1945

Question 7

- (a) Explain why the Washington International Naval Conference was held in 1921–22.**

Strong responses showed clear understanding of the reasons behind the Conference though some thought it was called by the League of Nations not by the USA. Most responses were able to offer some explanation of the issue of a possible naval arms race and the emergence of Japan as a growing threat to US and European interests. Many weaker responses failed to follow through their ideas to a supported judgement.

- (b) 'The Treaty of Saint Germain created more problems than it solved.' How far do you agree?**

Many candidates struggled with the Treaty of Saint Germain. Almost all knew it was part of the Versailles settlement that dealt with Austria but few recognised that the terms of the treaty went beyond that country and also included the creation of new states like Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia and addressed border issue with Italy, Poland and Hungary. The strongest responses showed awareness of these features and were able to produce balanced accounts of the positive and negative outcomes of the treaty. Less effective responses often highlighted some of the key terms of the Treaty of Versailles itself with little reference to the Treaty of Saint Germain.

Question 8

- (a) **Explain why Chamberlain felt that the Munich Conference had been a success.**

The question was about the effects of the Munich agreement in terms of Chamberlain's response to it, but some weaker responses spent a significant part of their essay explaining why the Conference met with little focus on Chamberlain. Effective responses showed awareness of why the outcome of the Conference was satisfactory to Chamberlain and were able to provide detailed and accurate explanations of his motives and intentions, as well as setting his response effectively in the wider context of the possible reaction of the British public.

- (b) **To what extent was the ineffectiveness of the League in the 1930s a result of the rise of dictatorships?**

A significant number of candidates read this as 'result in' and consequently wrote an essay about how the weaknesses of the League encouraged the rise of dictatorship and how other factors may also have been equally or more responsible for the rise of dictatorships. Candidates who read the question carefully often wrote good accounts of how the rise of dictators produced increasingly challenging situations which highlighted the incapacity of the League to deal with strong and determined aggressors. Most candidates made good use of examples like the Japanese seizure of Manchuria and the Italian invasion of Abyssinia. They then identified other factors which made the League weak anyway so: *'The ineffectiveness of the League was a result of the rise of dictatorship to some extent. The rise of dictatorships in Germany, Japan and Spain played a crucial role in the League's failure in the 1930's this undermining credibility... On the other hand other factors played an equally large role in its failure like the great Depression which led to all countries focusing on their own problems...'* These responses produced a balanced analysis that led to a rounded judgement. Sometimes weaker responses included events from the wrong period, like the Corfu incident, or ones that did not involve the League like the Munich Conference.

Question 9

- (a) **Explain why Yuan Shih-kai failed to establish a stable government in China.**

Candidates who knew who Yuan Shi-kai was often produced effective responses, but a few confused him with Sun Yat-sen and were consequently less successful. Most candidates knew something of the role Yuan played in the early years of the Chinese Republic and were able to offer at least some explanation of his failure. Responses most frequently referred to the instability of the country and the rise of the regional warlords as a challenge to his position, but stronger ones also recognised other factors. These included his actively anti-democratic treatment of opposition, his acceptance of the 21 demands from Japan and his attempt to personally ascend to the imperial throne. Candidates who were aware of these factors were able to explain how they contributed to his failure to establish a stable government: *'To sum up, Yuan's failure to establish stable government was due to his violation of democracy, high levels of regional power and the unpopularity of his policy towards Japanese demands. The most important would be the violation of democracy as the Republic was founded based on a desire for democracy so Yuan was seen as a traitor who betrayed this idea. This led to the collapse of stable government.'*

- (b) **'Japan's status as a Great Power was confirmed by the Paris Peace Settlement.' How far do you agree?**

This question was about whether Japan was treated as a great power at Versailles or not and using appropriate evidence to demonstrate alternative views. Effective responses approached this in a positive way, identifying features of the Paris conference that support the statement, like Japan's share in the division of German colonial territories and interests, and features like exclusion from the discussions of the 'Big Three' that undermined this. Similarly, Japan's inclusion on the Council of the League was a positive factor but the rejection of the racial equality clause was a negative one. Effective responses usually also commented on Japan's subsequent treatment at the Washington Naval Conference to confirm or challenge their conclusions about Paris. Weaker responses tended to have a lot of discussion of whether Japan was a great power before 1919 and little on the pros and cons of their treatment at the conference.

HISTORY

Paper 9489/23 Outline Study 23

Key messages

- Candidates should develop a good understanding of the chronology of key events as this will help them to link factors accurately and build effective arguments.
- In **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 give a clear understanding of the connections between causes to reach a supported conclusion.
- In **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 the top Level of the mark scheme.
- Candidates should note and act on any timeframe given in the question. This will enable the response to be focused on the question set.

General comments

In line with the requirements of the examination, most candidates attempted two complete questions from one section of the paper. Candidates, generally, 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. It was not uncommon for candidates to produce solid responses to one part of a question, yet weaker (and, in some cases, no) answers to the other part.

Part (a) questions are about causation. Effective answers were distinguished by detailed knowledge and understanding of the reasons why a specific event occurred or why someone adopted a particular course of action. This is because causation can only be adequately explained by an appreciation of the combined effect of several factors, both long and short-term. The most effective responses focused clearly on the key issue of causation and contained analysis of a wide range of factors, demonstrating how they were connected and produced reasoned conclusions. Most candidates made the identification and explanation of some relevant causal factors. Less successful answers tended to drift into narrative or descriptive accounts of how something occurred, rather than why. The weaker responses were characterised by a tendency to drift into irrelevancy and factual inaccuracy and/or confused chronology; they were over-reliant on generalised assertions that lacked appropriate factual support.

The most successful **Part (b)** 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. Other responses provided arguments which considered one interpretation of the issue. There is some evidence that candidates, faced with a familiar topic, were not able to adapt their knowledge to the specific question asked in the paper. Less successful responses fell into one of two categories – narrative/descriptive accounts of the topic with only implicit reference to the specific nature of the question set, or relevant arguments based on factual support which was limited in range and depth. The weakest responses were often the result of confusion over the requirements of the question; they were characterised by factual inaccuracy and/or chronological confusion, assertions based on inadequate factual support or a tendency to drift away from the timeframes given.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: Modern Europe 1750–1921

Question 1

(a) Explain why changes in agriculture were important for industrialisation.

Candidates were all very familiar with the changes in agriculture that occurred in the late eighteenth century. Effective responses linked these to a number of significant changes that impacted on industrialisation: *'In summary the enclosure movement reduced the number of workers needed in farming and freed them to move to towns and take up jobs in factories. Since the advanced farming could now feed a larger population, this encouraged growth in towns which led to more growth in industry. This then provided an incentive for people who were earning more from advanced farming methods to invest their money in new industries which continued to grow industrialisation.'* Weaker responses used the opportunity to demonstrate how much they actually knew about farming changes, providing detailed information about crop rotation and selective breeding but did not link these directly to industrialisation.

(b) 'The Public Health Act of 1848 was passed because of fear of cholera.' How far do you agree?

Strong responses showed awareness about the outbreak of Cholera and the passage of the Public Health Act both happening in the same year and used this as their start point before going on to consider other factors that led to the Act. After detailing the causes of Cholera and why it was particularly significant in the 1840's because of living conditions in large towns and cities, most candidates were able to balance this against longer term factors. Many were aware of Chadwick's work but only the strongest responses developed ideas of a generally more proactive approach by government with appropriate examples. Some weaker responses tried to link change to theories of disease but were not always particularly successful in these as key developments in the understanding of the transmission of disease came later.

Question 2

(a) Explain why the Erfurt Union collapsed in 1850.

Many responses struggled to explain what the Erfurt Union was and wrote instead about the Frankfurt Parliament of 1848–9. Strong responses were able to explain who was involved in the Union and why the withdrawal of Hannover and Saxony spelled the end of the proposal and were able to offer some reasons for Austrian action. However, even several of these responses were often not very detailed on the aspect of failure. Weaker responses sometimes credited Metternich with undermining the proposed Union and few candidates mentioned the issue of Hesse-Kassel or the Humiliation of Olmutz.

(b) 'Germany was unified under Prussian leadership because of errors made by France.' How far do you agree?

Strong responses wrote expansively about the role of Prussia, or more specifically Bismarck but balanced it with understanding of the part the French played in their own disastrous defeat in the war of 1870. These responses often led to effective overall judgements: *'France undoubtedly made errors in the estimation of their own strength and in underestimation of Prussian capabilities. Napoleon's reaction to Bismarck's provocation also pushed the French into a position where they faced Prussia's challenge alone, However, without the growing sense of nationalism and Bismarck's strategy, which played on this nationalism, the unification of Germany would not have happened just because of French errors.'* Weaker responses demonstrated good knowledge of the unification of Germany under Prussia but often wrote without any reference to the errors made by France which limited the extent of those responses' focus.

Question 3

- (a) **Explain why control of Petrograd and Moscow was important for Bolshevik victory in the Russian Civil War.**

There were many good responses which made full use of knowledge about the Civil War to demonstrate why the control of the key centres of Petrograd and Moscow gave the Bolsheviks a significant advantage. Many good responses used the whole situation of the central position of the two cities to highlight factors like the control of communications, the control of main industrial areas to keep the army supplied, and the way this geographical advantage divided the rival White forces who could not co-ordinate their attacks because they were coming from different directions. Strong responses also suggested that control of the twin capitals gave the Bolsheviks legitimacy in the eyes of many people: *'Control of Moscow and Petrograd gave the Bolsheviks unity and legitimacy. With these secure they were then able to control communications and the railways and take over the production of the key industrial areas to focus them on the war against the Whites.'* A few weaker responses failed to recognise the focus of the question and wrote about the weaknesses of the Provisional Government and Bolshevik success in seizing control in the October Revolution.

- (b) **To what extent was the Russian economy modernised in the period from 1894 to 1914?**

Strong responses showed awareness of the economic issues in Russia in the period before the First World War, after Nicholas II had ascended the throne. The strongest of these were able to provide detailed accounts of the reforms led by Witte and Stolypin which aimed at advancing Russian productivity in all major areas of economic activity. They were able to provide detailed accounts of Witte's 'Great Spurt' and Stolypin's 'Wager on the Strong' and balanced these with an assessment of the things that these two initiatives failed to do. Strong responses were also able to explain the difficulties both ministers faced in trying to modernise the Russian economy. Weaker responses were confused about the period and wrote about War Communism and Lenin's New Economic Policy, whilst others adopted a narrative account of the period which included detailed description of the Russo-Japanese War/Bloody Sunday/the 1905 revolution and consequent political changes involving the Duma.

Section B: The History of the USA 1820–1941

Question 4

- (a) **Explain why the Democratic Party was divided during the 1860 presidential election campaign.**

The strongest responses recognised the specific issues raised by the selection of Senator Douglas as a candidate given the disagreement among Democrats about the Freeport Doctrine and the issue of Popular Sovereignty. Many candidates wrote well about the difference between Northern and Southern Democrats, but weaker responses moved into description of differences between the North and the South over slavery that was not specific to the Democrats and their selection of a candidate for the 1860 presidential campaign.

- (b) **To what extent were increased sectional tensions between 1850 and 1856 caused by the Fugitive Slave Act (1850)?**

Most candidates were able to explain the details of Fugitive Slave Act and why it was a cause of increased sectional tensions in the 1850's: *'The Act was part of the 1850 Compromise. It agreed that slaves were the property of southern slave owners and that they could ask Northerners to help them seize escaped slaves even if they were in states north of the 36°30' line. This made many Northerners angry because they thought it was expanding slavery into the Northern states. Many refused to help the Southerners and even helped slaves escape on the Underground Railway. This increased tensions.'* Strong responses also offered a range of other factors that added to the tensions between slave and free states including the 1850 Compromise itself, and the subsequent issue of popular sovereignty when it was applied to the Kansas Nebraska situation.

A few weaker responses failed to acknowledge the very specific time limit of the question and included events from both before and/or after the dates specified.

Question 5

- (a) **Explain why Grant changed the government's approach to Reconstruction after his election in 1868.**

Strong responses were able to pick out the basic differences in approach between Andrew Johnson's approach to Presidential Reconstruction and Grant's more radical Republican approach and show why the changes happened. Stronger responses recognised that the confrontation that had marked the presidency of Johnson when faced by a Republican congress disappeared with the election a Republican president, Grant. Weaker responses described some of the main issues of the period with little direct reference to the role of the President in these.

- (b) **'During the Civil War, civil liberties were restricted more in the South than in the North.' How far do you agree?**

There were several strong responses to this question, but some responses struggled with the wider concept of Civil Liberties. Most showed awareness of one or two key cases from the Northern side but did not always have a clear picture of the overall situation on both sides, nor did they identify clear examples from the southern side. Many weaker responses were rather one sided and most did not reach an overall conclusion.

Question 6

- (a) **Explain why the banking system collapsed after the Great Crash of 1929.**

Strong responses were often able to distinguish between short term triggers and longer-term issues in explaining why the banking system collapsed after the Great Crash: *'One cause of the collapse was the non-intervention of government... the lack of regulation allowed banks to lend much to risky ventures and investors to 'buy on the margin'.... After the crash bankers could not recover their money and thousands of banks were busted.... Another reason was consumers lack of confidence. Depositors feared the loss their money and their demand created a 'run on the bank' small banks could no return deposits and many collapsed. In conclusion low interest rates and irresponsible lending led to the collapse of banks and the Great Crash created depositor panic that accelerated this to a massive extent.* Responses such as these covered a range of factors, and which were often linked and led to effective overall judgments. Weaker responses often wrote largely descriptive accounts of the effects of the Crash and some just wrote an account of the events leading up to the Crash. Neither of these approaches commented explicitly about the banking collapse.

- (b) **To what extent were Roosevelt's actions in his First Hundred Days focused on helping rural communities?**

Many responses showed a clear understanding of the difference between rural orientated measures and those that had a wider national impact: *'There are prominent examples of help to the rural communities in both the AAA which applied to farmers generally and the Tennessee Valley Authority which aimed to help a particularly hard-hit region. At the same time other reforms were aimed at the banking system and reviving industry to create more jobs for workers in towns and cities which was also an important part of the actions Roosevelt took.'* Introductions such as this led to detailed accounts of how, on the one hand, there was significant help for the hard-hit agricultural sector, but that this was not the sole purpose of Roosevelt's actions. These were also able to provide a detailed analysis of the Alphabet Agencies that were created together with other actions taken during the First Hundred Days, and therefore developed well-balanced accounts with reasoned judgement. Weaker responses provided a narrative account of the various agencies created, often not distinguishing between those aimed at agriculture and those with other purposes. Sometimes these also ignored the focus on the First Hundred Days and just wrote generally about what Roosevelt had done.

Section C: International History 1870–1945

Question 7

- (a) **Explain why the Japanese were unhappy with the outcome of the Washington Naval Conference in 1922.**

Candidates generally demonstrated a good understanding of the terms of the three treaties that emerged from the discussions in Washington and were therefore confident in being able to identify sources of disappointment and anger on the part of the Japanese. The conference was called as a result of growing tensions in South-east Asia around Japan's increasing strength and presence there. Together the treaties limited the size of Japan's Fleet, ended their Treaty with Britain, made them return Shandong Province to China and agree to the restoration an Open Door Policy to trade with China. Strong responses recognised that all of these in different ways were seen as insulting to the Japanese: *'Many Japanese were angry at the loss of territory which had been given to them at the Versailles Settlement and felt this was an insult to the Japanese and a serious loss of status. Likewise, being restricted to a fleet three fifths of the size of the USA or Great Britain was seen as unfairly favourable to the western powers. The loss of the British Alliance also seemed to imply a loss of status to the Japanese military who increasingly opposed the democratic government that had agreed to these terms.'* Weaker responses tended to reiterate some of the main terms of the Treaties, with the weakest stopping at that; others made assertions about Japanese unhappiness without sufficiently clear support.

- (b) **'The League's difficulties in dealing with international disputes in the 1920s were caused by the absence of the USA.' How far do you agree?**

Well-focused responses demonstrated the effect of the US absence on the work of the League and set this against other factors that weakened it. They suggested that whilst the US failure to join reduced the credibility of the League and made it difficult to impose its judgments, for example in terms of economic sanctions, other inherent weaknesses made it difficult for the League to work in the way it had been intended to do. Good responses also began from a thorough understanding of the intentions of the League and its origins in the Versailles Settlement. These responses used relevant examples from the 1920's to good effect in demonstrating the different ways in which the League failed to achieve the objectives of its founders. Weak responses often tried to argue that the League had not failed, using examples like the Aaland Islands and the Silesian Coalfields disputes to demonstrate success which was not the focus of the question.

Question 8

- (a) **Explain why the Non-Intervention Treaty of 1936 failed to stop foreign involvement in the Spanish Civil War.**

There were some very good responses to this question which fully understood the origins of the Agreement and British and French reluctance to get involved in what was, essentially, an internal conflict. These responses were able to demonstrate, with relevant detail, why Germany, Italy and

the Soviet Union all signed the Agreement but then circumvented the agreement to offer support to the rebellious Nationalists of the Republican government. Hitler's wish to test new technology, Mussolini's quest for personal glory and Stalin's need to support fellow communists all featured in the detailed explanations offered by the strongest responses. Some weaker responses mistakenly credited this agreement to the League of Nations and thus characterised it as a failure of the League, rather than concentrating on the reasons why several powers, despite signing the Agreement, still involved themselves in the Civil War. Others just wrote about the Civil War without much reference to the Non-Intervention Agreement.

(b) How far did the Munich Conference show that the policy of appeasement was successful?

Candidates had a good understanding of the Munich Conference, who was involved and what happened there. Analysis was generally along the lines that: *'The conference reflected the success of Appeasement because it maintained peace amongst the major powers and Chamberlain was applauded by many nations and in the media for his bravery in facing up to Hitler and his success – he was even nominated for a Nobel Prize. Also, it delayed Hitler's expansionist moves and gained time for the Western powers.... On the other hand it led to the loss of Czechoslovakia a potentially strong ally against German expansion... it also reduced the credibility of the Western Powers as a possible force to resist Hitler's plansit led to a loss of confidence on the part of the Soviet Union in the West and eventually to the Nazi-Soviet Pact.'* There were many developed answers based on this sort of balanced approach. Weaker responses were often very unbalanced, claiming that Appeasement was just an all-round disaster, or they were very descriptive with no attempt to reach any supported judgments about what was and was not achieved at Munich.

Question 9

(a) Explain why the Xi'an Incident was important in the Chinese war against Japan.

Some responses showed a good understanding of the Incident and impressively managed to remember accurately the names of the generals involved. These candidates were generally able to give an accurate and well-argued explanation of the effects of this event on the Chinese response to Japanese aggression. A clear start was often made with a simple introduction like: *'Two senior KMT generals were convinced that it was more important to meet the growing threat of Japanese incursions into Chinese territory, moves that shortly led to all-out war, than to continue attacks on the CCP, a campaign that was making few gains. They wanted Chiang Kai-shek to end the Civil War and turn his attention to fighting the Japanese.'* From such a start, strong responses were able to build a developed explanation of what happened at Xian and how it affected the approach to the Japanese, identifying the creation of the Second United Front as a crucial development. Some weaker responses asserted that it was Mao Tse-tung who took Chiang prisoner while other such responses just wrote about the conflict between KMT and CCP in general, sometime including details of the Long March.

(b) How important was support for the Three Principles of Sun Yat-sen in the success of the Northern Expedition?

Candidates who knew what the Three Principles were offered effective arguments about the appeal of these principles to the vast population of Chinese peasants, as well as to the intellectual elite of China, and how this appeal provided a strong basis for recruitment of support for the Northern Expedition. Strong responses also recognised that general support had to be organised into a planned campaign and therefore identified other factors, like the role of the Whampoa Academy, in providing a cohort of trained leaders and the support of advisors provided by the Soviet Government in Russia, in giving structure to the Northern Expedition. The significance of these in creating the First United Front was carefully explored in good responses and an overall judgment was reached. Weaker responses tended to be descriptive and often had only a limited understanding of Sun Yat-sen's principles and their role.

HISTORY

Paper 9489/31 Interpretations Question 31
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Key messages

- The question asked concerns the interpretation and approach of the historian, and what can be inferred about these from the given extract. However, the interpretation and approach themselves relate to an overarching Key Question that provides the focus for candidates' study of the topic, and for their answers in the examination. This focus is on who or what was to blame, and everything candidates write in their answers should serve the purpose of explaining how the historian who wrote the extract attributes this blame. In effect, candidates must use what the extract says to illustrate how they have inferred the historian's views on who or what was to blame.
- Answers must be rooted firmly in what the extract says, and candidates should keep in mind that the interpretation will be valid for the whole of the extract, and not just a part of it.
- Writing about context is unnecessary. The question asks about the extract, not about the events. It follows from this that writing about the events is only relevant if it casts light on the historian's interpretation and even then, brief references are likely to be sufficient, whilst lengthy narrative will never be required.

General comments

Responses were mostly well-focused although there was some imbalance between writing about events and writing about the extract. Most responses looked for the historian's interpretation and tried to explain how they have inferred what it is. The best answers were impressive in their ability to synthesise material from the extract with their understanding of the historiography to explain the historian's arguments. Weaker responses often misused historiographical labels to identify the historian's approach. Understanding the characteristics of the different approaches to the topic is a fundamental aspect of the Interpretations Study, and using relevant specialist terminology is appropriate, however candidates should be confident in their use as if their meaning is confused that misunderstanding can affect the quality of the response.

Most candidates are aware that they should be looking at the issue of blame, but despite this many did not achieve a proper focus in their answers. There were two main reasons for this. The first was a matter of technique, where an answer made a clear statement in the introduction about the interpretation and/or approach, which can show that the candidate has understood the historian's main arguments, but which was then followed by a summary of what the extract says, with no proper use of the extract to illustrate and explain these arguments. The second reason relates more to comprehension of what the extract says. Here, some weaker responses thought they were illustrating blame, but in fact were using material which did not point to anything particularly blameworthy. These responses seemed to try and fit the extract to a particular view rather than be guided by what the extract said.

The strongest responses read the extract carefully and were able to select relevant material from it, ensuring that their answers were consistent with the whole of the extract. Less successful answers worked through the extract from beginning to end, remarking on features of it as they went, with no evident overview or structure. These responses were often deflected into marginal or even irrelevant material and had to make constant adjustments to their arguments as they came across new issues raised by the historian.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: The origins of the First World War

There were insufficient scripts on this topic for any meaningful comments to be made.

Section B: The Holocaust

The central argument of the historian who wrote this extract is that the Holocaust was brought about by the nature of the Nazi state, which produced a process of cumulative radicalisation of Jewish policy. The best answers recognised these aspects of the interpretation and illustrated them using material from the extract. A complete analysis of the nature of the Nazi state needed to look both at the way in which Hitler ruled, and at the impact of infighting amongst other Nazi leaders. The extract took a classic structuralist approach to explaining the Holocaust, and whilst many answers recognised this, fewer were able fully to explain it, with misunderstandings about the nature of structuralism being quite common. For example, some candidates appeared to believe that structuralism and functionalism are synonyms. In particular, the extract's portrayal of Hitler as a disinterested figure, giving only a low priority to Jewish policy, appeared to surprise many candidates, who seemed unaware of the structuralist idea of a 'weak dictator' willing to allow subordinates to fight amongst themselves for control over the issue. The weakest answers simply 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

The central argument of the historian who wrote this extract is that the Russians were to blame for the Cold War because of their mistrust of the West and for pursuing aggressive and uncooperative policies, whilst the West are exonerated from blame. The best answers recognised these aspects of the interpretation and illustrated them using material from the extract. The approach of the historian was clearly traditional in its critical view both of the actions and the attitudes of the Soviets, and the extract offered plenty of examples for candidates to use. Fewer answers incorporated the exoneration of the West, which was detectable in some of the language of the extract ('war-hating Americans', 'disheartening conviction' etc.) and in the portrayal of the Allies as being left no real choice over Germany by Russian inflexibility. A few answers thought they also detected blame attributed to the West, but this was usually falsely based on seeing the attitudes of the Soviets as being those of the historian, as in '*the Allies had broken the Potsdam pact*' whilst omitting that this was merely what Moscow was alleging. The weakest answers simply paraphrased points in the extract or wrote about the origins of the Cold War with no reference to the extract.

HISTORY

Paper 9489/32 Interpretations Question 32
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Key messages

- The question asked concerns the interpretation and approach of the historian, and what can be inferred about these from the given extract. However, the interpretation and approach themselves relate to an overarching Key Question that provides the focus for candidates' study of the topic, and for their answers in the examination. This focus is on who or what was to blame, and everything candidates write in their answers should serve the purpose of explaining how the historian who wrote the extract attributes this blame. In effect, candidates must use what the extract says to illustrate how they have inferred the historian's views on who or what was to blame.
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General comments

Responses were mostly well-focused although there was some imbalance between writing about events and writing about the extract. Most responses looked for the historian's interpretation and tried to explain how they have inferred what it is. The best answers were impressive in their ability to synthesise material from the extract with their understanding of the historiography to explain the historian's arguments. Weaker responses often misused historiographical labels to identify the historian's approach. Understanding the characteristics of the different approaches to the topic is a fundamental aspect of the Interpretations Study, and using relevant specialist terminology is appropriate, however candidates should be confident in their use as if their meaning is confused that misunderstanding can affect the quality of the response.

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The strongest responses read the extract carefully and were able to select relevant material from it, ensuring that their answers were consistent with the whole of the extract. Less successful answers worked through the extract from beginning to end, remarking on features of it as they went, with no evident overview or structure. These responses were often deflected into marginal or even irrelevant material and had to make constant adjustments to their arguments as they came across new issues raised by the historian.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: The origins of the First World War

The central argument of the historian who wrote this extract is that Austria was to blame for wanting to fight Serbia, but that, given the Entente's experience of earlier crises, this was likely to cause a general European

war. The best answers recognised these aspects of the interpretation and illustrated them using material from the extract. Only a minority of candidates detected the blame placed on Austria and majority of answers thought that Serbia was being blamed, even though it was clear that Serbia was being forced to act by Austrian aggressiveness (*'Pasic...was clear in his own mind that Austria was squaring up for a fight'*), and despite the historian's portrayal of Austrian carelessness of the consequences of their ultimatum (*'the ambassador had packed his bags before [the deadline] had expired'*). Some saw Russia as being blamed for being the first to move to a military response while others sought to offer a narrative of the lead up to war rather than engage with the interpretation. The weakest answers simply paraphrased points in the extract or wrote about the origins of the First World War with no reference to the extract.

Section B: The Holocaust

The central argument of the historian who wrote this extract was that Hitler was of central importance in providing the impetus behind the development of the Holocaust, but that it was the circumstances of war that brought about a piecemeal search for a 'final solution'. The best answers recognised these aspects of the interpretation and illustrated them using material from the extract. This amounted to a synthesis interpretation which accepted the importance of Hitler but did not view the Final Solution as planned from the start, but rather emerging in a series of radicalisations of policy as a response to wartime developments. Many answers understood the historian's argument about Hitler's role (*'No Hitler, no Holocaust'*) though candidates who wanted to argue for an internationalist approach sometimes struggled to incorporate the extract's insistence that there was no plan or programme. The war was less successfully dealt with. For many candidates, the circumstances of war were enough on their own to signal a functionalist approach, but they did not look at the detail of the extract which stressed a series of steps towards genocide, particularly as responses to the failure of earlier steps. Those taking the functionalist route also had to deal with the extract's final twist, which stated that the Final Solution did not simply emerge from local wartime improvisations, but that decisive steps were also taken at the centre. In short, functionalism alone could not explain the historian's full interpretation. The weakest answers simply 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

The central argument of the historian who wrote this extract was that both the USA and the Soviet Union bear some responsibility for the Cold War, but the USA had the more difficult transition to coping with its new world role and is therefore blamed more. The best answers recognised these aspects of the interpretation and illustrated them using material from the extract. This was a good example of an extract where a candidate's choice of label to apply to the approach mattered less than the explanation of the chosen label. So, the approach could be seen as revisionist, in that its main target for blame was the USA even though a little blame was given to the Soviets, or post-revisionist in that some blame was attributed to both sides. What characterised the best answers was awareness that the USA was blamed *more* however the majority of responses viewed blame as an absolute – either one was blamed, or both were blamed. The extract also raised the issue of what candidates perceived as blameworthy, particularly in relation to what it said about the Soviets, much of which did not blame them much at all. This meant that many candidates who claimed both sides were blamed, only successfully illustrated blame on the USA, since they did not focus on the specific points where the historian clearly signalled Soviet blame, instead using points that did not. The weakest answers simply paraphrased points in the extract or wrote about the origins of the Cold War with no reference to the extract.

HISTORY

Paper 9489/33 Interpretations Question 33
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Key messages

- The question asked concerns the interpretation and approach of the historian, and what can be inferred about these from the given extract. However, the interpretation and approach themselves relate to an overarching Key Question that provides the focus for candidates' study of the topic, and for their answers in the examination. This focus is on who or what was to blame, and everything candidates write in their answers should serve the purpose of explaining how the historian who wrote the extract attributes this blame. In effect, candidates must use what the extract says to illustrate how they have inferred the historian's views on who or what was to blame.
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Most candidates are aware that they should be looking at the issue of blame, but despite this many did not achieve a proper focus in their answers. There were two main reasons for this. The first was a matter of technique, where an answer made a clear statement in the introduction about the interpretation and/or approach, which can show that the candidate has understood the historian's main arguments, but which was then followed by a summary of what the extract says, with no proper use of the extract to illustrate and explain these arguments. The second reason relates more to comprehension of what the extract says. Here, some weaker responses thought they were illustrating blame, but in fact were using material which did not point to anything particularly blameworthy. These responses seemed to try and fit the extract to a particular view rather than be guided by what the extract said.

The strongest responses read the extract carefully and were able to select relevant material from it, ensuring that their answers were consistent with the whole of the extract. Less successful answers worked through the extract from beginning to end, remarking on features of it as they went, with no evident overview or structure. These responses were often deflected into marginal or even irrelevant material and had to make constant adjustments to their arguments as they came across new issues raised by the historian.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: The origins of the First World War

There were insufficient scripts on this topic for any meaningful comments to be made.

Section B: The Holocaust

The central argument of the historian who wrote this extract is that whilst a combination of Hitler's ideological drive coupled with the nature of the Nazi state can explain the increasingly radical measures against the Jews, only the circumstances of war can explain how this developed into a policy of genocide. The best answers recognised these aspects of the interpretation and illustrated them using material from the extract. In effect, the first paragraph of the extract explained how *a Holocaust* could occur, whilst the second paragraph explained how *the Final Solution* came about. Understanding this distinction was fundamental to putting a complete answer together. As the extract contained aspects that could be seen as intentionalist, structuralist or functionalist, there were answers that focused on one or other of these without adequately dealing with the others. Some answers could explain separately the messages/approaches in the two paragraphs but could not see the overall idea of the relationship between the two – that the historian was deliberately pointing out the insufficiency of the intentionalist/structuralist synthesis as an explanation for genocide and indicating what needed to be added to reach a full explanation. Instead, they simply assumed that Hitler and the Nazi state were as important as the war in explaining the Final Solution, and missed the point that the two paragraphs were, in a sense, explaining different things. The weakest answers simply 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

The central argument of the historian who wrote this extract was that both sides bore some responsibility for the Cold War, but the USA was more culpable. The best answers recognised these aspects of the interpretation and illustrated them using material from the extract. This was extract in which the choice of historiographical 'label' for the historian's approach was less important than the quality of explanation offered for it. Either revisionist or post-revisionist would work if argued properly, but the best answers were based on the idea that the USA had prime responsibility and that, whilst the Soviets also did blameworthy things, these were mainly in reaction to what the USA had already done. Weaker responses worked through the extract from beginning to end and often became stuck in the apparent message of the first paragraph, seeing the interpretation as being based on the *'fundamental confrontation.... inevitably linked with the obvious differences in their social structures and ideologies.'* Responses that looked at the extract as a whole were much more likely to start their answers by referencing the first line of the second paragraph – *'The crucial push for the escalation of the conflict was given by the USA'* – and then going on to illustrate how the historian developed the argument for American responsibility. However, answers that saw only blame on the USA missed something essential, as the historian's portrayal of the Soviets is far from approving. Better answers would note, for example, the *'inflexible elements and tendencies within the Soviet leadership'*, enforcing *'alignment of their satellites with the Soviet model'* and *'switching to an aggressive propaganda stance'* as clear indications of the Soviets being blamed too. The weakest answers simply paraphrased points in the extract or wrote about the origins of the Cold War with no reference to the extract.

HISTORY

Paper 9489/41 Depth Study
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Key messages

- A sustained focus on the specific nature of the question posed is critical in allowing candidates to access the higher levels of the mark scheme.
- Strongest answers are typically consistently analytical and address all elements of the question.
- Analysis must be supported by relevant and accurate factual information, which should be wide-ranging, at the highest levels.
- Candidates must have a good chronological understanding and should only use material which is relevant to the time period stipulated in the question. It was noticeable in responses to questions such as **2**, **6** and **8**, that candidates were dependent on material from outside the dates provided.
- Stronger answers provide a fully balanced argument, which considers any factors stated in the question alongside alternative explanations of causes or consequences of events.
- Candidates should read the questions carefully and determine what is required before starting to write their answers. Planning answers before choosing and writing is strongly advised.

General comments

The strongest responses were consistently analytical in their approach and contained a coherent and clearly defined argument, effectively supported with detailed and relevant subject knowledge allowing for a logical final judgement, which was based on a consistent line of reasoning, evident throughout the essay. A good example of this was **Question 8**, where the strongest answers examined the ideological differences between China and USA as bar to improved relations, before then going on to discuss alternative factors, such as the Korean War. This allowed the construction of a balanced judgement, based on precise and relevant factual knowledge and met the requirement to assess the obstacles by measuring one against other possibilities.

Weaker responses were not fully comfortable with the requirement to assess and tended to just describe the events of the period without any clear judgement. The simplest approach is for candidates to compare the significance of different examples, deciding and explaining which had the biggest impact and why.

Comments on specific questions

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

1 Assess the view that Mussolini's economic response to the Great Depression was ineffective.

The focus was on Mussolini's response to the Great Depression and therefore needed to be based on the economic policies of the 1930s, which were specifically designed to meet the challenges of the world-wide slump. Possible examples include public works schemes, the IRI and IMI. However, most responses tended to focus on the battles and the extent to which they were a success and lacked focus on the specific demands of the question as a result. Responses which considered the Corporate State more closely addressed the proposition.

2 'Stalin's main aim in foreign policy was to defend the Soviet Union from attack.' Discuss.

Responses to this question found it difficult to supply many specific examples of foreign policy, with the Nazi-Soviet Pact of 1939 sometimes being the only one. Stronger responses to this question were able to provide some commentary on the Soviet Union's involvement in Spain, although references to the League of Nations, collective security, Comintern etc. were limited.

3 Analyse the reasons for limited opposition to the Nazi regime within Germany in the period 1933–41.

This question was answered well by many candidates. Responses often contained a range of examples, most obviously terror and propaganda. Candidates with the strongest grasp of this issue were able to combine terror tactics aimed at suppressing political opposition, the use of widespread propaganda to emphasise the regime's supposed success, economic policies which brought work and bread and initiatives such as Strength Through Joy. Strong analysis emphasised the relationship between these and discussed their relative significance.

4 Discuss the view that the impact of the First World War was the biggest challenge facing the British economy in the period 1919–29.

There were too few responses for meaningful comment.

Section B: The USA, 1944–92

5 'The US economy depended on domestic consumers to drive its growth in the late 1940s and 1950s.' Evaluate this view.

This was the most popular question on the paper and there was often sound knowledge of the various drivers of the US economy offered, although some candidates were less secure in their ability to evaluate the view put forward in the question. Many of the stronger responses were able to put US economic growth into the wartime context and showed an understanding of how World War II helped to transform the economy. The strongest responses referred to the pent-up demand unleashed following the end of hostilities in explaining increased consumer spending, although this was often implicit. Many responses included information of the nature of consumerism and of the products which were commonly purchased by Americans. Evaluation depended on the ability to distinguish between consumer spending, government action and international trade as drivers of growth. The GI Bill was often included alongside consumerism, but the best responses understand that it, and the Federal Highways Act, were examples of government intervention. Few responses considered military spending as a stimulus to the economy, although there were interesting references to Korea and the arms race. Candidates were generally more comfortable when exploring the impact of war on the economies of other nations and the role of the Marshall Plan. Even where knowledge was sufficient to develop a coherent argument, candidates often failed to offer a clear explanation as to how each development led to growth and tended to assert instead.

6 Assess the impact of the growth of feminism in the 1960s and 1970s.

This was a very popular question and the majority of candidates sitting this paper answered it. The best responses demonstrated both knowledge and understanding of what the feminist movement in this period consisted of and made a balanced assessment of what it achieved. The most common examples provided related to Betty Freidan and the Feminine Mystique, but some responses were able to go into detail about the activities of groups such as NOW and the Redstockings. Other candidates offered valid commentary about the views and opinions associated with feminists in this period, without being able to offer precise examples of the movement in action and this hindered their ability to score highly for AO1. In terms of impact, Roe v Wade was often put forward as an achievement of feminism and many candidates had some knowledge of the failure of the ERA. The most perceptive responses were able to discuss the steady growth of female members of the House of Representatives and Senate and as Federal judges. Other responses were let down by a tendency to assert changes, without providing specific supporting material, which affected scored AO2 marks. Other less successful approaches ignored the time period stipulated in the question and wrote about earlier developments. There was also a significant minority of candidates who claimed that women achieved voting rights during the 1960s and 1970s. Some candidates chose to write about Civil Rights without making clear links to the question itself.

7 'Affirmative Action in the 1980s was much more than just a political slogan.' Assess this view.

Responses to this question were not confident about Affirmative Action and what it entailed. Where responses did offer an example, it was often the Bakke case, and there were misconceptions about the outcome.

8 Assess the obstacles to improving relations between the US and China in the period 1950–63.

The strongest responses understood that a comparison of the impact of different obstacles with a judgement on which was the most significant in maintaining tension was required. A range of examples was drawn upon, from ideology through the Korean War and Taiwan, with astute references in the best examples to the impact of McCarthyism. Some candidates ignored the timeframe set out in the question and included examples from the 1970s which lacked relevance.

Section C: International history, 1945–92

There were insufficient responses to **Questions 9 to 12** for any comment on performance.

HISTORY

Paper 9489/42 Depth Study
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Key messages

- A sustained focus on the specific nature of the question posed is critical in allowing candidates to access the higher levels of the mark scheme.
- Strongest answers are typically consistently analytical and address all elements of the question.
- Analysis must be supported by relevant and accurate factual information, which should be wide-ranging, at the highest levels.
- Candidates must have a good chronological understanding and should only use material which is relevant to the time period stipulated in the question.
- Stronger answers provide a fully balanced argument, which considers any factors stated in the question alongside alternative explanations of causes or consequences of events.
- Candidates should read the questions carefully and determine what is required before starting to write their answers. Planning answers before choosing and writing is strongly advised.

General comments

The strongest responses were consistently analytical in their approach and contained a coherent and clearly defined argument, effectively supported with detailed and relevant subject knowledge allowing for a logical final judgement, which was based on a consistent line of reasoning, evident throughout the essay. A good example of this was **Question 2**, where strong responses examined different examples of Stalin's political skill to explain his rise to power before going on to assess alternative explanations, usually based on Lenin's culpability and the failings of his opponents in the power struggle. This allowed the production of a balanced judgement, based on precise and relevant factual knowledge.

Weaker responses were not fully comfortable with the requirement to assess and tended to just describe the events of the period without any clear judgement. The simplest approach is for candidates to compare the significance of different examples, deciding and explaining which had the biggest impact and why.

Comments on specific questions

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

1 'A period of limited social change.' Assess this view of Italy from 1925 to 1941.

It was crucial that candidates were able to distinguish what was meant by social change for them to address this question effectively and this was not always the case. This could have included, for example, dealings with the church, education and policies on different social groups such as women and young people. Those who were able to locate the correct focus were often able to write with confidence about these policies and the more adept responses often judged that little had actually changed. There were some very interesting discussions of the impact of Mussolini's policies on social class, incorporating Corporatism, and that his desire to appease the élites of society precluded such change. Less successful approaches tended to assert that change had occurred, sometimes contradicting what they had already described.

2 Analyse the view that Stalin's political skill was the main reason for his rise to power by 1929.

This was a very popular and accessible question and drew some good responses. Candidates generally understood the reference to Stalin's political skill, often encompassing his use of key positions to cultivate support within the party. It was a little more surprising to read that some candidates thought that his oratory was a key factor and there were some assertions about propaganda, although generally with little support. Good use was made of Stalin's manoeuvrings during the power struggle in many cases. Alternative explanations often revolved around the weakness and mistakes of his opponents, principally Trotsky, with astute references to how they tended to under-estimate Stalin and his control of the party bureaucracy. Among the best analyses of the situation included arguments that Lenin had properly failed to plan his succession and left a vacuum for Stalin to fill and that Russia was well used to autocrats.

3 'Hitler's foreign policy between 1933 and 1941 followed a clear plan.' Discuss.

Detailed knowledge of the historiography of this issue was certainly not expected, but there is a debate as to whether Hitler had a masterplan for war from the outset or that he was essentially a pragmatist who reacted to events, rather than shaped them. A compromise position, that Hitler did have a clear vision, but was prepared to be flexible within it, is also possible. The best responses grasped these arguments and used examples to adopt a position within this spectrum. Others set out his aims and generally argued that his policies matched them and that there was a clear plan, whilst accepting that he gambled at times and that flexibility could be seen in the Nazi-Soviet Pact, for instance. Less successful approaches set out a narrative and asserted that each event either did or did not provide evidence of planning, with little to support these assertions. Common misconceptions included stating that Anschluss was an example of Lebensraum, rather than pan-Germanism, and that occupying the Sudetenland was a reversal of the Treaty of Versailles.

4 Analyse the reasons for the changing fortunes of the Liberal Party between 1919 and 1931.

There were too few responses for meaningful comment.

Section B: The USA, 1944–92

5 'Urbanisation was the most significant factor in bringing about social change by the end of the 1950s. Discuss.

Responses demonstrated good knowledge and offered a range of examples. Candidates tended to take urbanisation to mean suburbanisation and wrote competently about Levittowns and 'white flight', without addressing the movement of many Americans from rural to urban environments. There was often valid focus placed on the expected examples such as women, teenagers and social mobility. The best responses understood that basing an argument around relative significance was crucial to reaching the highest level for AO2 and did so from the outset, developing a consistent line of reasoning as a result.

6 Evaluate the effects of the oil crisis of 1973 and 1979 on the US economy.

Candidates answering this question were confident on the effects, typically referring to inflation and the impact on US automobile industry, but many were not able to evaluate successfully. Responses demonstrated a good level of knowledge and some offered impressive explanations of exactly what the effect oil price rises/shortages had on the economy, but the 'weighing up' required by the evaluation often got neglected and candidates are encouraged to carefully read the command words in the question.

7 Assess the consequences in the 1980s of the rise of the religious right.

There were too few responses for meaningful comment.

8 'The Marshall Plan was the most important factor in the US leadership of the global economy during the 1940s.' Assess this view.

There were too few responses for meaningful comment.

Section C: International history, 1945–92

9 Analyse the extent to which President Kennedy was responsible for the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962.

By far the most common approach to this question was to balance Kennedy's responsibility against Khrushchev's – often asserting that each was to be blamed to 'some extent' without making clear how far this stretched and why. The strongest responses were clear from the outset as to which leader bore the greatest responsibility, often highlighting that each felt the need to live up to expectations as Cold War warriors. Several strong responses also introduced Dulles/Eisenhower into the argument, and placed Kennedy's actions into context, for example by explaining that he inherited the Bay of Pigs plans. There were also arguments put forward as to Castro's culpability to widen the debate further. Balanced analysis was therefore commonplace, although some weaker responses adopted a more narrative approach.

10 'The formation of SEATO was the most important consequence of US involvement in the Korean War.' Discuss this view.

The best responses knew about SEATO and were often able to express how its impact was clearly limited given other conflicts soon to break out in the region. They were then able to provide valid alternatives, such as US attitudes towards the Far East, the impact on the Cold War generally and the role of the UN. There were some who were able to build an argument, without being able to offer much on the stated factor, limiting the extent to which they were able to provide a truly balanced argument. Better responses understood that the phrasing of the question related to US involvement and that they should tailor their arguments accordingly.

11 Assess the extent to which superpower involvement affected Ethiopia during the Cold War.

There were too few responses for meaningful comment.

12 Assess the extent to which persecution of Jews in Europe led to the creation of the state of Israel.

There was a range of approaches towards how far back to go with persecution of Jews, but some of the most convincing arguments made the case that impetus for the creation of a new state was present by the late 1930s and that the Holocaust hastened what was already inevitable. By doing so, there was a clear emphasis placed on extent. There was discussion of British policy, world opinion and particularly that Truman and the US Jewish lobby was decisive. It was less common to read about the impact of the activities of groups like the Irgun.

HISTORY

Paper 9489/43 Depth Study
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Key messages

- A sustained focus on the specific nature of the question posed is critical in allowing candidates to access the higher levels of the mark scheme.
- Strongest answers are typically consistently analytical and address all elements of the question.
- Analysis must be supported by relevant and accurate factual information, which should be wide-ranging, at the highest levels.
- Candidates must have a good chronological understanding and should only use material which is relevant to the time period stipulated in the question.
- Stronger answers provide a fully balanced argument, which considers any factors stated in the question alongside alternative explanations of causes or consequences of events.
- Candidates should read the questions carefully and determine what is required before starting to write their answers. Planning answers before choosing and writing is strongly advised.

General comments

The strongest responses were consistently analytical in their approach and contained a coherent and clearly defined argument, effectively supported with detailed and relevant subject knowledge allowing for a logical final judgement, which was based on a consistent line of reasoning, evident throughout the essay. A good example of this was **Question 10**, where high-quality answers examined the role played by ideology, before going on to offer alternatives based on the differing views of what the best policy for their respective countries by the leaders of the Soviet Union and China was. Wide-ranging levels of knowledge and understanding were apparent in many responses. This allowed the construction of a balanced judgement, based on precise and relevant factual knowledge and met the requirement to assess the obstacles by measuring one against other possibilities.

Weaker responses were not fully comfortable with the requirement to assess and tended to just describe the events of the period without any clear judgement. The simplest approach is for candidates to compare the significance of different examples, deciding and explaining which had the biggest impact and why.

Comments on specific questions

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

1 Analyse the reasons for the appeal of fascism in the period 1919–25.

Question 1 on Paper 4 of 9489 always relates specifically to Italy and the best answers both maintained a tight focus on Italy and on the appeal of fascism, rather than providing a list of reasons to explain Mussolini's rise to power, which was not the purpose of the question. The strongest responses showed awareness of the fact that Mussolini's ideas were highly flexible and changed both before and after he came to power – allowing answers to continue beyond 1922. Where responses did discuss Italy's post-war problems in depth, candidates who were able to make explicit links to how they enabled support for Mussolini's vision to grow were more successful. Strong answers also considered how fascism appealed to different social classes in Italy and why. Those candidates who adopted a standard rise to power approach were less successful as their responses were not fully focused on the question set.

2 'Stalin's policies towards women and children improved their lives.' Discuss.

There were several thoughtful, focused and balanced responses, which often ultimately disagreed with the hypothesis put forward. Some responses went into some detail on Lenin's policies, allowing for a comparison with Stalin's more conservative approach exemplified in the 'Great Retreat.' There were those who showed good knowledge of both groups, although it was common for responses to be stronger on women, with educational changes often being ignored. Strong responses understood Stalin's policies and motivations and were also able to explore their impacts, both positive and negative. In addition to discussing policies relating to issues such as divorce and abortion, many candidates discussed the enhanced opportunities for women in the workplace, with the more perceptive explaining that true equality was never achieved, or indeed intended, and women still bore the brunt of domestic responsibilities. Weaker responses maintained that Stalin had banned women from the workplace. The question was specifically aimed at testing knowledge of policies towards women and children and so responses which drifted into wider discussions of the purges or collectivisation did not have the necessary focus.

3 Analyse the view that Hitler's consolidation of power in 1933–34 was a 'legal revolution'.

The strongest responses grasped the purpose of the question, aimed for balance and stayed firmly within the timeframe. There were many responses which argued that while many aspects of Hitler's consolidation of power were legal, this was often a veneer. Strong responses understood the details of how Hitler was able to have the Enabling Act approved by parliament, although levels of knowledge about these developments did vary considerably. The strongest responses were able to discuss the use of the SA to intimidate and threaten to achieve this apparently legal outcome and were also aware of the Act's implications and how it was used to consolidate power. It was common for the Night of the Long Knives to be used as an example of the counterargument, although it was not always fully explained as such. Weaker responses included material which lacked specific reference to the question and discussed the question either by explaining how Hitler became chancellor or in discussing the persecution of Jews.

4 Assess the reasons for regional differences in living standards in the period 1929–39.

There were too few responses to allow meaningful comment.

Section B: The USA, 1944–92

5 Assess the impact of federal institutions on civil rights in the late 1940s and 1950s.

Responses rarely went beyond the Supreme Court as an example of a federal institution, and these tended to only use Brown as an example of how that institution impacted upon civil rights. There was little reference to Congress or the presidencies of Truman and Eisenhower. Few responses showed awareness of how the federal system operates which limited the extent to which they could assess 'impact'.

6 Assess the importance of the Stonewall Riots for the gay rights movement.

There were too few responses to allow meaningful comment.

7 Evaluate the reasons for the changing fortunes of the Democrats in the period 1980–92.

There were too few responses to allow meaningful comment.

8 Assess the reasons why US leadership of the global economy was being challenged.

There were too few responses to allow meaningful comment.

Section C: International history, 1945–92

9 Assess how far the United States was responsible for the development of the nuclear arms race in the 1950s and 1960s.

The strongest responses understood Eisenhower's stance and often argued that Stalin was reacting to this and also often made interesting arguments about McCarthyism. There was often reference to the deployment of nuclear weapons rather than the arms race and some weaker responses began to lose

focus by turning into a discussion about the causes of, and development of, Cold War tensions, rather than the actual question posed. Better responses went on to consider how both sides attempted to limit the arms race in the 1960s and sought to apportion responsibility for these actions as well as 'blame' for the increases previously seen.

10 Discuss the extent to which ideological differences affected Sino-Soviet relations in the period 1949–69.

The strongest responses to this question were able to consider the extent of impact and to offer a range of supporting examples of differences. Most responses' starting point was that Mao and Stalin's ideological views were very similar, but the strongest showed understanding of the fact that differences existed from the very beginning and explored the tensions caused by the unequal Sino-Soviet Pact. Many responses understood the implications of Khrushchev's approach and in the best cases grasped how Mao interpreted de-Stalinization as an attack on his leadership style. Strong responses were also able to move beyond ideology to explain how pragmatism was more significant and that differing policies developed out of what each country considered to be its best interest. Several responses discussed the Korean War, Cuban Missile Crisis and its aftermath, Albania and border tensions to explain this point. There was also discussion of the Vietnam War and American involvement in bringing about the split, although there was sometimes some confusion apparent with these points.

11 Evaluate how far the attitudes of colonial powers contributed to African nations gaining their independence.

There were too few responses to allow meaningful comment.

12 'The Gulf War changed little in the region.' Assess this view.

Some responses found it difficult to maintain the focus on the 'region.' The main conclusion tended to be that it put the US firmly 'in situ', and that was to lead to problems later. Other arguments suggested that little changed, as Saddam continued to lead Iraq. Comments on the growing influence of Iran were forthcoming, whilst others looked at the changing role of the Saudis or the impact on Palestinian refugees. Although there were a range of consequences discussed, it was rare to see them fully developed, particularly in order to address the extent of change.

HISTORY

Paper 9489/44 Depth Study
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Key messages

- A sustained focus on the specific nature of the question posed is critical in allowing candidates to access the higher levels of the mark scheme.
- Strongest answers are typically consistently analytical and address all elements of the question.
- Analysis must be supported by relevant and accurate factual information, which should be wide-ranging, at the highest levels.
- Candidates must have a good chronological understanding and should only use material which is relevant to the time period stipulated in the question.
- Stronger answers provide a fully balanced argument, which considers any factors stated in the question alongside alternative explanations of causes or consequences of events.
- Candidates should read the questions carefully and determine what is required before starting to write their answers. Planning answers before choosing and writing is strongly advised.

General comments

The strongest responses were consistently analytical in their approach and contained a coherent and clearly defined argument, effectively supported with detailed and relevant subject knowledge allowing for a logical final judgement, which was based on a consistent line of reasoning, evident throughout the essay. A good example of this was **Question 1**, where high-quality answers examined the role played by dissatisfaction with the political system, before offering alternatives such as the fear of socialism in the post-war period. Wide-ranging levels of knowledge and understanding were apparent in many responses. This allowed the construction of a balanced judgement, based on precise and relevant factual knowledge and met the requirement to assess the obstacles by measuring one against other possibilities.

Weaker responses were not fully comfortable with the requirement to assess and tended to just describe the events of the period without any clear judgement. The simplest approach is for candidates to compare the significance of different examples, deciding and explaining which had the biggest impact and why.

Comments on specific questions

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

- 1 Mussolini came to power in 1922 because of public dissatisfaction with the existing system of government.’ Discuss this view.**

Responses often demonstrated a good understanding of the problems facing Italy in the post-war years and were able to relate them to a lack of enthusiasm for the system of liberal democracy. There were valid references made to *transformismo* and corruption, with very interesting commentary on the size of the electorate meaning that many felt unrepresented by the system. Other valid points made related to economic distress, the ‘Mutilated Victory’ and fear of socialism. Stronger responses were able to link these problems to Mussolini’s appeal in order to build a consistent line of reasoning, for example by showing how the ‘threat’ from the left drove many into support for fascism. The strongest responses committed to a particular argument, rather than laying out a number of explanations without really making it clear which was most significant. Some weaker responses referred to propaganda and terror tactics which were not relevant to the timeframe of the question.

2 Access the extent to which Stalin's policy of agricultural collectivisation achieved its aims.

The strongest responses tended to set Stalin's aims out as criteria and then refer back to them throughout the essay in order to make judgements. These responses recognised the importance of aims that were focused on the need to improve agricultural yield in order to feed the cities and to gain control of the countryside, although some did not fully explore the link between collectivisation and industrialisation. Those that did were then able to show how this aim was realised through forced requisitioning in the face of peasant resistance, leading to famine. There was a good deal of material on the kulaks, although it was not always made clear that collectivisation was a crucial part of building a socialist society. Some responses argued that releasing excess labour from the countryside was a negative, or an unintended, consequence of Stalin's policy, rather than one of its central aims.

3 Analyse the reasons why the Nazi Party followed a policy of persecution against the Jews and other minorities.

Strong responses were able to deal with the reasons for the persecution of Germany's Jews and were confident about what was meant by other minorities, dealing with different examples in turn, and offering accurate explanations. There was a good deal of discussion about racial policies and references to the Aryan Race. The strongest responses were able to discuss Eugenics and Social Darwinism in this context, although it was common to read about 'blonde hair and blue eyes.' Many candidates understood that Jews were used as scapegoats, usually specifically for the Treaty of Versailles, rather than defeat in the war more generally. However, fewer were able to explore the contradictory arguments which linked Jews to international finance, capitalism and banking and also to Bolshevism. Some responses also drew upon the support of the *Mittelstand* for the Nazi Party and linked this to economics. There was also some effective commentary on the pre-existing anti-semitism in German society. A lot of responses spent too long describing policies, at times going beyond 1941 to discuss the Holocaust, without linking to causes and this added little to their analysis. The biggest challenge that many candidates faced was in identifying what was meant by other minorities. Pertinent examples would have included the Roma population of Germany, those with a disability and particularly those with hereditary conditions, homosexuals, Jehovah's Witnesses and asocials – habitual criminals, alcoholics and the 'workshy.' Often these groups were not considered, or dealt with in a cursory manner, with limited analysis.

4 Evaluate the impact that the policies of the National Governments had on the working classes in Britain during the period 1931-39.

There were too few responses to make a general comment appropriate.

Section B: The USA, 1944–92

There were too few responses to **Questions 5 to 8** to allow for meaningful comment.

Section C: International history, 1945–92

9 Analyse the impact of the uprising in Hungary in 1956 on Soviet-US relations.

Many candidates displayed a good range of detailed knowledge about the events but then did not offer developed commentary on their conclusions. Stronger responses understood that although the Soviet Union's actions did disturb the improvement in relations, the USA's failure to respond meant that there was little overall impact and then referred to further examples of rapprochement in the later 1950s. The strongest responses commented on how Khrushchev's confidence was enhanced and how this then affected his actions in Berlin and Cuba. The significance of the acceptance of the status quo and the Soviet sphere of influence was understood by some but was missed by weaker responses. There was also valid discussion of the role played by the Suez Crisis.

10 Evaluate the impact of the Sino-Soviet split on China's relations with the United States in the 1970s and 1980s.

Many candidates seemed unsure of where to put the focus and spent time describing or explaining the causes of the Sino-Soviet split instead of China's relations with the United States. Most responses were able to include relevant material on Kissinger, Nixon and Ping-Pong diplomacy and there was often accurate discussion of the UN, Taiwan and trade developments. However, few responses were able to achieve balance by commenting on the ongoing tensions, with references being made in some

responses to the USA and China as 'allies', failing to fully grasp the nature of the relationship. The strongest responses went into the 1980s and there was occasional discussion of the impact of Tiananmen Square, but this was not common.

11 Assess the economic challenges faced by the newly independent African nations.

There were too few responses to allow for meaningful comment.

12 Analyse the impact of the Israeli victory in the Six-Day War on the Arab Israeli conflict.

Most responses showed good knowledge, although analysis of the outcomes of the conflict was not always as well developed. Most responses understood the outcome of the war and its impact on Israel's standing in the Middle East, as well as on the Arab Nations, particularly Egypt, with much discussion of Nasser seen. These responses offered good detail on the War of Attrition, UN Resolution 242 and the increased activity of groups like the PLO. Some responses drew a line from the 1967 war to 1973 and Yom Kippur, while others went beyond and considered the Camp David Accords. All were considered valid, as was discussion of the wider Cold War impact and the responses of the USA and Soviet Union. The strongest responses were distinguished by their ability to properly analyse those outcomes, considering relative significance, for example.