

HISTORY

Paper 0977/12

Paper 12

Key messages

Candidates should read the questions very carefully in order to give themselves the opportunity to write focused, balanced and relevant answers. Any given dates in a question should be closely noted to help ensure that answers include only relevant material.

Good answers were able to demonstrate sound factual knowledge of both the Core and the Depth Study for which they had been prepared. These candidates were able to use their knowledge to good effect in writing well-developed explanations and arguments in answer to their chosen questions. Less successful responses, whilst demonstrating sound factual knowledge, found it difficult to use the knowledge effectively to answer the question set.

There were very few rubric errors and most candidates had used the time allocated effectively and completed the paper.

General comments

Part (a) questions demand recall, so answers should focus on specific detail or information. Explanation is not required, and many responses seemed to grasp this.

Parts (b) and (c) questions require understanding and explanation. Candidates must be selective of the factual knowledge needed to explain events, rather than using a narrative approach or long introductions which 'set the scene'. Part (b) saw many good, explanatory responses, and Part (c) produced many good responses which contained detailed arguments on either side of the debate. Other responses needed to develop thoroughly explained/more detailed arguments. To achieve most credit candidates must argue both for and against the focus of the question in order to reach a valid conclusion. Successful conclusions included analysis and addressed "how far" or "to what extent". Less successful conclusions tended to rely on summarising the reasons already included in their essay.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: Core Content

Questions 1, 2 and 3

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

Question 4

- (a) This question requires recall and description and, therefore, can be a short answer for full marks. Candidates gained credit for naming Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy and identifying that benefits of the Triple Alliance included that they had security from each other and that Germany was a powerful ally for Austria– Hungary and Italy. Weaker responses included generalisations rather than specific details and/or confused the Triple Alliance with the Triple Entente.
- (b) Successful responses to this question explained why the Kaiser became involved in Morocco, showing a thorough understanding of the Kaiser's motives. These responses usually included the desire of the Kaiser to extend his North African Empire and the fact that he was testing the 1904

Entente Cordiale. Weaker responses included a narrative of events of the 1905 and/or 1911 Moroccan Crises, with little or no explanation of why the Kaiser became involved in Morocco.

- (c) There were some well-developed responses to this question, with candidates demonstrating a clear and detailed understanding of the reasons why war broke out in 1914. Effective responses to this question understood the Schlieffen Plan and how the very existence of the plan showed that Germany had highlighted France and Russia as potential enemies. They also appreciated the 'knock on effect' it had on other countries when war broke out. For example, Germany's invasion of Belgium led to Britain entering the war to defend Belgium's neutrality, as promised in the 1839 Treaty of London. Candidates producing strong responses then went on to explain other reasons why war broke out, usually including the impact of the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, the rival alliance systems and the war plans of France. Less successful responses, despite showing a sound knowledge of the causes of World War I, tended to write them as a list of reasons, rather than explaining why they led to war.

Question 5

- (a) This question required recall and description and, therefore, could be a short answer for full marks. Many candidates achieved full marks in two short sentences by stating that a plebiscite was a referendum or vote and it determined which country would govern a disputed area. A good example was the Saar, which was to be administered by the League of Nations for 15 years before a plebiscite was held. The Saar was the most popular example given but it was pleasing that some candidates mentioned that Denmark received North Schleswig after a plebiscite. Some candidates produced a very long answer, which is not required in an answer to part (a). Often the maximum marks were gained in the first few lines but some continued for nearly a side, writing about other aspects of the peace settlement which were not relevant to the plebiscites. This took time away from parts (b) and (c) which require explanation. Candidates also need to look carefully at the question for dates. The plebiscite for Austria did not fall into 1919–20 and was not part of the peace settlement. A number of candidates did not know what a plebiscite was and either gave no response or gave a long account of the treaties in general.
- (b) This question was well answered by the majority of candidates, who kept to the focus of the question. The focus of this question was why Lloyd George was generally satisfied with the peace treaties. Some candidates just provided the aims of Lloyd George or discussed why he was not satisfied with the peace treaties. However, candidates needed to provide two well-explained reasons for his satisfaction. Most successful candidates explained Lloyd George's satisfaction with the dominance of the Royal Navy as a result of the reductions in the German navy depriving Germany of most of its fleet. Many candidates explained Lloyd George's pleasure, as a result of being able to moderate Clemenceau's demands over reparations and, as a result, allow Britain to continue trading with Germany. Although most candidates took their examples from the Treaty of Versailles, a small number took aspects of the treaties with Austria, Turkey and Bulgaria to explain Lloyd George's satisfaction. These responses often explained Lloyd George's satisfaction at gaining Turkish provinces in the Middle East.
- (c) To achieve high marks in this question, candidates needed to produce a well-balanced answer explaining that the 'diktat' and other aspects of the Treaty of Versailles were the main reasons for German bitterness. A small number of candidates, despite understanding other reasons why the Germans were bitter over the Treaty of Versailles, including the war guilt clause and reparations, did not understand the meaning of the term 'diktat' which limited the credit they could receive. There were, however, many very good responses which explained the bitterness caused by the lack of negotiation allowed at the peace conference, followed by detailed explanations of the bitterness caused by the terms involving reparations, military limitations, war guilt and the loss of colonies. Explanations of the 'diktat' and other aspects led to some strong answers which then allowed candidates to form a judgement.

Question 6

- (a) Some candidates had a very good understanding of the Anglo-German Naval Agreement signed in 1935. They wrote that the agreement allowed Germany to break the Treaty of Versailles, as Germany was allowed to build submarines and could increase her fleet up to 35% the size of Britain's, and that the terms of the agreement angered the French. A small minority of candidates did not know the terms of the agreement and did not attempt the question, whilst others wrote generally about military rearmament with no specific link to the navy.

- (b) This question was not fully understood by some candidates, who limited their answers to why some countries were dissatisfied with the treaties in the 1920s with no reference at all to the 1930s. Most successful responses usually used Germany and Hitler as an example of dissatisfaction in the 1930s, highlighting disarmament as a reason, that by the 1933 World Disarmament Conference most countries still had not disarmed. In addition Hitler considered that his vision of a Greater Germany was restricted by the Treaty of Versailles as he wanted to regain lost territory and unite with Austria. A common misconception was that he wanted to re-unite with Austria. Some candidates gained credit for explaining why Italy remained dissatisfied by the 1930s.
- (b) There were some well-developed responses to this question and many candidates performed strongly by showing a good understanding of both sides of the argument. Responses that explained that Chamberlain was wrong to sign the Munich Agreement of 1938 usually gave at least two explanations, including that the signing of the Munich Agreement led to the loss of support of the USSR and the signing of the Nazi-Soviet Pact, and the fact that it was felt morally wrong to allow Hitler to go unchallenged and abandon Czechoslovakia. Explanations on the other side of the argument often included explanations related to the fear of another war, that Chamberlain feared communism more than Nazism, and the fact that it was felt that Britain was not yet prepared to fight another war, especially as it was uncertain as to whether the USA or Commonwealth countries would give their support. Weaker responses spent much time describing Chamberlain's meetings with Hitler, rather than explaining whether Chamberlain was correct to sign the agreement.

Question 7

- (a) This question was answered well by many candidates, although some responses confused what was agreed at Yalta with what was decided at Potsdam in July 1945. Less successful responses also focused on disagreements between the allies, rather than what decisions were made about Germany. It is important to read the question carefully, as the focus of the question is on decisions about Germany and not disputes between the allies. Simple factual statements were all that were needed to answer this question, including factors such as the division of Germany into four sectors, each controlled by one of the main allied powers, Berlin being divided into four parts and leading Nazis to be hunted down and tried as war criminals.
- (b) Responses to this question varied significantly in quality, with the strongest responses identifying and explaining why the wartime unity of the allies was beginning to break down by the time of the Yalta Conference of February 1945. Successful responses explained the on-going ideological differences of Communism and Capitalism, the growing lack of trust as the war against Germany was drawing to an end, the failure of the Americans and British to open up a second front (Operation Overlord) as quickly as Stalin wanted and the growing sphere of influence that the USSR was creating in Eastern Europe. A common misconception was to confuse the Yalta conference with Potsdam.
- (c) There were some well-developed answers to this question, with candidates explaining both how the Berlin Crisis of 1948–1949 and other factors, such as the increasing threat of the USSR's influence in Europe, led to the formation of NATO. The key to these explanations was being able to establish the purpose behind the formation of NATO as an organisation that recognised the need of the Western Powers to work together to combat the increasing threat posed by the USSR and Communism. Weaker responses tended to be characterised by descriptive accounts, usually of the Berlin Blockade and Airlift and/or the expansion of the USSR's influence in Eastern Europe, without explaining why these events caused the formation of NATO as an organisation for collective security for the western powers. A small number of candidates confused the Berlin Crisis of 1948–49 with the building of the Berlin Wall in 1961.

Question 8

- (a) There were many clear and concise responses to this question. Strong responses included four key features of the quarantine of Cuba imposed by the USA in October 1962. Most knew that it was a blockade imposed by the USA to prevent USSR ships carrying missiles from entering Cuba. Some candidates mentioned why the term 'quarantine', rather than blockade was used. Other candidates appeared not to have heard of the term and left the question blank, whilst others misunderstood the term and thought that it was linked to trade sanctions. A small minority of candidates wrote lengthy answers about the events of the crisis, with minimal reference to the quarantine.

- (b) This question was very well answered and the majority of candidates were able to explain two reasons why America's policy of containment was a failure in Vietnam. Reasons explained included, America's inability to combat guerrilla warfare, America's ineffective tactics and the expansion of communism to South Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. Responses which focussed on reasons why the communist Vietcong were popular in the south, including the failure of the strategic hamlets initiative and corruption of the South Vietnamese government also gained credit. There was also a clear understanding of events such as My Lai and their impact on American domestic public opinion. All of these reasons were acceptable provided that they were linked the reason to the failure of containment.
- (c) There were mixed responses to this question. Most candidates were able to identify ways in which the approach of the USA to containment in Korea and Cuba were a success or failure. Many candidates understood the nature of the different successes, including that South Korea was kept free of communism and the USSR removed their missiles on Cuba. In less successful responses candidates found it more difficult to explain either or both with relevant contextual knowledge. Weaker responses also included lengthy descriptions of events in Korea and/or Cuba, with no reference to the success or failure of containing communism. A number of candidates attempted to compare both conflicts throughout their answer which often affected the structure of the essay and became more of a list and led to confusion. Stronger responses dealt with the USA's approach to containment with each situation separately and then made a comparative conclusion. Good responses were able to explain the positive results of the USA and United Nations working together in Korea. They explained that their approach was successful because the spread of communism into South Korea had been prevented and the domino effect, which the Americans feared, did not happen, therefore pressure was taken off Formosa and Japan. These strong responses then went on to evaluate the success of the American approach to containment when dealing with Cuba, often including the failure in The Bay of Pigs.

Section B: Depth Studies

Questions 9 and 10

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

Question 11

- (a) There were many candidates who gained very high marks for this question as a result of their good understanding of the Spartacists Uprising and its impact on the German Republic. Good responses included the fact that the Spartacists attempted to overthrow democracy, they seized the newspaper offices in Berlin, they organised a general strike and were defeated by the Freikorps, who were fighting on the side of the Weimar Government.
- (b) The majority of the candidates showed a good understanding of why the Freikorps were important in the early years of the Weimar Republic. Good responses explained two reasons, firstly the role played by the Freikorps in defending the Weimar Government by defeating the Spartacists and the general strikes in the Ruhr, Rhineland and Saxony; secondly, by explaining that as well as defending the Weimar Republic, they attempted to overthrow the Government in the Kapp Putsch and failed.
- (b) The number of good responses revealed that this question had been clearly understood. Many very good responses contained detailed arguments on either side of the debate. Strong responses explained the economic recovery of Germany after 1923, including how Stresemann ended inflation by replacing the temporary currency with the Reichsmark and the impact of the Dawes Plan. There was excellent use of statistics to support the economic recovery. These responses then went on to give a balanced argument by explaining other achievements of Weimar Germany, including cultural revival, political stability and the improvement in international relations. In their analysis, good responses explained the limitations of the American loans and how the Wall Street Crash negated the economic achievements prior to 1929. Weaker responses included too much narrative on the events of the 1923 Ruhr Crisis and/or tended to list the other achievements rather than explain their impact.

Question 12

- (a) This question was particularly well-answered. Some responses focussed on the opportunity the games provided to promote Nazi propaganda and to demonstrate how organised Nazi Germany was. Others considered how technologically advanced the Nazis were, noting the use of modern lighting and television cameras. Answers which included that Goebbels could demonstrate the extent of the Nazi recovery from depression or the downplaying of the anti-Semitic messages during the Olympics also gained marks. A small number of candidates did not show specific knowledge of the Berlin Olympics and wrote generally about the work of Goebbels.
- (b) Answers to this question were variable in quality, with weaker responses focusing on ‘how’ the Nazis controlled the hearts and minds of young people, rather than ‘why’, which was the focus of the question. These responses often included long narratives of Nazi education policies and/or the activities of the Hitler Youth and League of German Maidens, with no reference to why they were set up. Most candidates were able to identify reasons why he wanted to control the hearts and minds of young people, the most common ones being to indoctrinate the young and to produce young fit men for the army. Candidates needed to provide two well-explained reasons; most candidates were able to identify reasons and then explain one reason, which most frequently was the purpose of indoctrination, in terms of ensuring the longevity of the Nazi regime and Hitler’s plan for the Third Reich to last 1000 years. Others developed the point regarding loyalty, in order to ensure future soldiers for the army or mothers producing Aryan children. A number of candidates also focused on the importance of reducing opposition to the regime and considered how young people could be manipulated to instil loyalty and spy on, or report those that opposed the regime, including their own parents.
- (c) Effective answers to this question used examples from the mass media and culture to explain control and then to balance their argument, explained how the secret police controlled the German people. It must be stressed that the key word in the question was “control”. Weaker responses included lots of description of the different types of media, most commonly newspapers and the distribution of cheap radios, but needed to explain how these methods of propaganda and censorship controlled the population through indoctrination and brainwashing by ensuring that only Nazi ideas and policies were promoted. Candidates found it easier to explain the control exercised by the secret police in terms of instilling fear. Strong responses explained that because of the unlimited powers of the Gestapo to search houses and arrest people without charge and send them to concentration camps, Germans were frightened to speak out against the regime. Another valid explanation was related to the unwillingness to criticise due to the use of a network of informants, the tapping of telephones and intercepting of mail and not knowing who in your circle of friends and neighbours was working for the secret police.

Question 13

- (a) The focus of this question was the impact of the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–05 on the people of Russia. Candidates who realised this gained marks by including that the war was an embarrassing failure for Russia as Japan was regarded as a third-rate military power. Food became scarce which led to starvation and Father Gapon’s Petition included an end to the war with Japan. Less successful responses often focused on the events of the war or reasons why the war started.
- (b) Candidates displayed sound knowledge on the reasons why the Dumas failed to turn Russia into a parliamentary democracy. Strong responses included the explanation that the Tsar issued the Fundamental Laws before the first Duma met, which stated that ministers were responsible to the Tsar alone and could not be removed by a vote of censure in the Duma. Weaker responses tended to identify reasons, such as the Tsar broke the terms of the October Manifesto but included no further information..
- (c) Strong responses were characterised by detailed explanations on both sides of the hypothesis. Candidates gained credit for examining the role of the Tsarina’s friendship with Rasputin and his influence on the appointment of government positions, especially when it meant removing good quality ministers and replacing them with second rate ministers. They were then able to gain credit by explaining other factors which led to the collapse of the Tsarist regime, such as the Tsar taking command on the Eastern Front and the food shortages which subsequently affected Russia. Weaker responses tended to be mainly one-sided answers, because although most candidates agreed with the hypothesis and were able to give detailed descriptions of Rasputin’s character and

his relationship with the Tsarina, they were unable to explain the impact of their friendship on the collapse of the Tsarist regime.

Question 14

- (a) There were many candidates who gained very high marks for this question by focusing on the key features of the New Economic Policy, providing statements such as 'it was a policy announced by Lenin', 'it began in March 1921', 'it brought an end to War Communism' and 'it allowed peasants to sell surplus grain on the open market'.
- (b) A small number of candidates struggled with the 'plausible' part of the question but despite this there were some good responses. The most well explained reason was that Stalin's ideas seemed more realistic than Trotsky's ideas. Communist Party leaders were concerned by Trotsky's radicalism and belief in permanent revolution, which meant that the USSR would be obliged to help communist groups in other countries. Stalin believed in 'socialism in one country', which would allow the USSR to concentrate on establishing communism at home first. This was more acceptable to Communist Party Leaders.
- (c) Overall, the responses of the candidates revealed that the question had been clearly understood. Most candidates could give detailed explanations on how art and culture was used to control the Soviet people, most often explaining the cult of Stalin' and the censorship of books, art and films. These candidates then explained other ways in which Stalin controlled the Soviet people, including the creation of a new constitution and the purges and show trials which were carried out to remove any opposition. Other responses were limited to description, especially of the art and culture, making no direct link to control.

Question 15

- (a) This question was generally well answered. Nearly all candidates were aware that tariffs made foreign imports expensive and were designed to protect American businesses from foreign competition. Most were able to point to the positive effects, particularly the growth of American industries, the boom of the 1920s, increased employment and the growth of consumerism. Some, but fewer, were able to cite the negative effects of retaliatory tariffs.
- (b) Most candidates were able to identify reasons why the growth of mail order and nationwide advertising were important factors in the economic boom. Strong responses included two explanations, for example, how the use of newspaper and radio advertising created consumer demand and how both mail order and national advertising had enabled people in rural areas, who had previously been isolated, to access goods and increase the market. Less successful responses needed to add explanation to points such as 'they led to increased demand' or 'they led to more sales'.
- (c) Strong responses to this question included explanations of how overproduction led to difficulties faced by farmers, including what caused prices to fall, the impact on mortgage and rent payments and the increase in rural employment. Candidates developed the impact of improved machinery and the growing efficiency of American farming in the 1920s and highlighted the difficulties faced by farmers as a result, often including the negative knock on effects on tenant farmers, whose problems were intensified. In many cases, explanations about Canadian competition were less confident, the cheapness of Canadian wheat being the main factor cited, followed by the greater efficiency of Canadian farmers. Strong responses on this side of the question had clearly developed explanations, with reference to the impact of the American tariffs as a disincentive to European countries to buy American products, including agricultural produce, thus allowing Canadian farmers to make major inroads into a market which had benefited US farmers in the First World War. Weaker responses simply identified why there was overproduction or competition from Canada but made no reference to the difficulties faced by farmers.

Question 16

- (a) The responses to this question showed that candidates had a good understanding of the Social Security Act of 1935. Statements detailing what the act provided, for example, old age pensions, unemployment benefit, a national insurance scheme and help for the sick and disabled, led to high marks being achieved.

- (b) Candidates performed well in this question and overall had a very good understanding as to why Roosevelt's 'Hundred Days' had the effect of restoring confidence. Well-explained reasons included detailed accounts of how Roosevelt restored faith in the banks (such as the closure and the backing by the federal reserve), and how this led to an improvement in confidence, as, when banks reopened, people were willing to deposit their money in the system. Many responses also included Roosevelt's 'fireside chats' and how he was able to use these to restore a general feeling of confidence in the people that things would be improving with the New Deal. Weaker responses identified and described the 'alphabet agencies' but candidates needed to ensure that they thought carefully about how Roosevelt's actions translated into improved confidence. For example, if alphabet agencies are being described, they need to explain how the extent of government legislation, to provide work and opportunities, signalled that there would be jobs for people, which inspired confidence that unemployment would decrease and thus people gained the confidence to start spending again.
- (c) Many candidates performed strongly on this question by explaining the Supreme Court criticism to the New Deal and then explaining the criticism from other groups and individuals, most notably Huey Long and Father Coughlin. Criticisms from others were less commonly cited (such as the Liberty League, Dr. Townsend and state governors). The most successful responses were able to produce a balanced argument and then evaluate the relative seriousness of the threats, for example, by explaining that the Supreme Court posed the greater threat and was thus 'more serious' because it was only the Supreme Court that had vetoing power and had the power to actually change the law. Other responses, although familiar with some of the criticisms from individuals and groups, tended to feature narratives of what they did not like about the New Deal, rather than explanations of why the criticism was serious.

Questions 17 to 22

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

HISTORY

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Paper 22

Key messages

Candidates should spend a few minutes carefully considering the questions and the relevant source(s). Then they should plan answers before beginning to write. This will enable candidates to provide the answer in the opening sentence, for example, 'Source C does make Source D surprising because...' or 'The cartoonist's message is...' The rest of the answer should then be spent using the source(s) and knowledge to explain and support the opening statement.

Contextual knowledge should never be used for its own sake. Answers should not begin with descriptions of the context (or descriptions of the sources). Knowledge should only be used to improve and support the points being made about the sources, whether it be interpreting, evaluating or comparing them.

If quotations from the sources are used, and this can be particularly useful when answering **Question 6**, candidates should not use an abbreviated form of quotation that misses out some of the words. The words that are used must do the job the candidates want them to do, so giving the quotation in full is important.

When using a source that comments on the views of others, for example Source A (twentieth century) describing the position of Britain towards Japan, candidates should be careful to distinguish between what the author of the source is saying and what the point of view of Britain was. In other words, Source A does not say that Japan had a strong case in Manchuria, but the British government did. Neglecting to make this distinction can undermine attempts at comparing what sources say, as in **Question 1**.

When comparing sources, common criteria should be used. In other words, candidates should decide which aspects of the sources they are going to compare. If they start, for example, with what Source A (twentieth century) says about France, when they move to Source B, they should only look for what it has to say about France.

General comments

The majority of scripts were on the twentieth-century option, but the quality was fairly even across the two options. Nearly all candidates completed all six questions, with only a very small number running out of time. Few candidates appeared to be struggling with their understanding the sources. The overall standard was high, with many candidates able to problem solve, think through tricky issues and respond in thoughtful ways, thus displaying a range of source skills and much understanding of the nature of historical sources and the issues that surround them. Contextual knowledge and understanding was strong, although this was not always used in the most appropriate ways. This should always be to strengthen and support what is being written about the sources.

Candidates are advised to read all the sources before beginning to write any answers. This will give them an understanding of the main issue of the Paper and of a range of perspectives. This understanding will feed into all of their answers, as well as helping to identify opportunities for cross-referencing.

Comments on specific questions

Option A - 19th century topic

Question 1

To answer this question well it was necessary to explain how the overall views of these two sources differ.

Source A describes Bismarck as a planner, while Source B sees him as an opportunist. Although a reasonable number of candidates were able to explain this, answers that focused on agreements or disagreements of detail were more common. Many candidates were able to explain agreements such as Austria playing into Germany's hands or those wanting a united Germany looking to Austria, but fewer found agreements and disagreements. Examples of the latter are Source A claiming that Germany was unified, while Source B claims it was a conquest. A small number of candidates paraphrased both sources and then claimed that they agreed without actually matching any agreements or disagreements.

Question 2

Most candidates explained how Sources C and D disagree – in Source C Bismarck expects a war against Austria, while in Source D he claims he wants to work with Austria. These candidates used this difference as a reason why Source C makes Source D surprising and gained reasonable marks. However, the valid use of contextual knowledge would have improved a number of responses. Relevant contextual knowledge tells us that Bismarck had very good reasons for writing what he did in both sources, leading to the conclusion that Source C does not necessarily make Source D surprising. For example, it can be argued that in Source D Bismarck was already planning conflict with Austria after the war with Denmark, but obviously did not want Austria to know this. It is important in questions like this to actually answer the question about surprise. Some candidates compared the two sources, even used their contextual knowledge, but did not state whether they thought that Source C made Source D surprising.

Question 3

A good number of candidates were able to explain how this exchange of letters can be used as evidence about the relationship between Prussia and Austria. It is clearly tense. The best responses used the context of 1865 to confirm this. Some candidates did not get as far as the relationship between the two countries but did make valid inferences, for example they clearly disagree about Austria's position in Germany. The weakest answers failed to use the content of the sources and focused instead on the provenance of the sources.

Question 4

This question produced many good answers. Many explained that the cartoon suggests that Austria will triumph in a war with Prussia, which has no idea what is going to happen. The best answers added to this by explaining the point of view of the Austrian cartoonist, for example, he is gloating about what will happen to Prussia. The majority of the remaining candidates did not get quite this far but were still able to explain valid sub-messages of the cartoon, for example, there was going to be war between Austria and Prussia, Prussia was going to be defeated by Austria. There were few surface descriptions or misinterpretations.

Question 5

This is a 'purpose' question and the best answers focused on William's purpose in making this speech, for example, to encourage the Prussian people to support their country in the war that was just about to begin against Austria. To qualify as a proper 'purpose' answer, it is necessary to explain the intended impact on the audience. A number of answers instead simply paraphrased what William said, without explaining why he was saying it, or explained the context (weeks before war with Austria) but didn't use this as a reason for the proclamation.

Question 6

Most candidates understood what they had to do in this question and many provided very strong responses by explaining how some sources support the hypothesis and how others do not. It is not enough to just identify which sources support or disagree with the hypothesis. There were many careful explanations, for example, 'Source A agrees with the idea that Bismarck was responsible for the war because it says that he thought such a struggle was inevitable and steadily prepared for it. It explains how he planned for the war and claims that he 'provoked' the war.' A small number of candidates did not make use of any of the sources and wrote essays about the causes of the Austro-Prussian War.

Option B - 20th century topic**Question 1**

An encouraging number of candidates managed to produce very strong answers by taking each source as a whole and explaining that the failure of the League over Manchuria was due to the Great Powers in Source A, but that Source B blames the League. There were many answers that analysed the two sources carefully and were able to explain agreements, for example, Britain sympathised with Japan, France was not keen on acting against Japan, and it was a test for the League's authority, and/or disagreements, for example, in Source A the League was Eurocentric, in Source B it was not. There were, however, some answers that did not make proper comparisons. The best way to carry out comparisons is to use a common criterion – first focus on a point about a particular subject that is made in one source and then to see if the other source says the same thing about that subject, for example, Source A says the USA was suspicious of the League – does Source B have anything to say about this, and if it does, does it agree or disagree?

Question 2

There was a wide range of responses to this question. As some candidates pointed out, at first sight it might seem obvious that Source C is surprising as the League (or a leading member of the League) is refusing to help China against Japanese aggression. It was the purpose of the League to act in such cases. However, more careful consideration will suggest other possible responses. For example, the League did not have the resources to act and did not have a good track record against major powers. The source actually comes from Britain and answers based on this fact, and explaining a lack of surprise, were generally very strong. There were a good number of candidates who, aware of Britain's economic and imperial interests in the Far East, produced excellent answers. There was also some good relevant cross-referencing to Sources A and B.

The best answers explained how contextual knowledge leads to surprise or not surprised, but there were a number of answers that simply identified a contextual point, for example, the League did not have an army, or Britain traded in the Far East, and failed to explain its significance. It is crucial in questions about 'surprise' that candidates do make clear whether or not they are surprised. A number of candidates used and analysed the sources appropriately, but nowhere did they actually say whether they were surprised or not.

Question 3

This question was generally answered well. The best answers were produced only after the candidates had considered the two cartoons carefully and decided what they wanted to write. Candidates who did not take this approach tended to write about each cartoon in turn and struggled to directly compare them. The former type of answers avoided description and compared the cartoons point by point. This included: Japan is aggressive in both, the League is at fault or powerless in both, and the League is weak in Source D but simply refusing to act in Source E. The best answers compared the big messages – in Source D Japan is being criticised, while in Source E the main target of the cartoonist is the Great Powers.

Question 4

There were many reasonable, but few very strong, answers to this question. There was a tendency to focus on the background to Source F in terms of the Lytton Report, rather than on its message. Contextual knowledge is important in answers to questions like this, but it should be used to help explain the message and not to write a long introduction. There was also a tendency to write answers in terms of teachers, school classrooms and naughty candidates, rather than in terms of the historical events and players. The detail in a cartoon needs to be mentioned to support an interpretation but it should not be the main focus. However, many candidates did understand either that Japan was being defiant or that the League was weak (this is where the Lytton Report could come in). Few focused on both Japan and the League, even though the cartoon is criticising both Japan and the League. Candidates should also remember that it is always helpful to consider the point of view of the cartoonist. This cartoon does suggest that the League was weak, but the artist is also criticising the League.

There were some misinterpretations of the cartoon. These were usually about the League being too forceful and bullying the unfortunate Japan.

Question 5

Some candidates explained the historical context of the telegram and used this as the reason for sending it. Understanding the context is useful but the content (the message) of the telegram should be the main focus,

as this will take candidates to the purpose of the Japanese government. The majority of candidates did provide solid answers. They did this by explaining how Japan was trying to justify its actions in Manchuria. However, all the claims in the telegram about the incompetence of the League, the chaos in Manchuria and the unreasonable treatment of Japan are really being used to explain, or to justify, Japan's departure from the League. Answers explaining this were generally stronger, with the best answers placing this purpose in its appropriate historical context. Answers that just paraphrased the source, without using it as a reason, could not achieve many marks.

Question 6

This question was generally answered well, with only a small number of candidates neglecting to make use of the sources. A few candidates struggled with the distinction between the Great Powers and the League but most coped. Most candidates understood that their answers had to be about the sources but some were unsure of how to use these sources. First, some approaches that candidates used but which should be avoided: **(i)** Writing about the sources in groups of two or three. What is written about each group has to be valid in terms of each source in the group, and this was often not the case. **(ii)** Using abbreviated versions of quotations. If a quote is to be used, it should be used in full. **(iii)** Simply asserting that a source supports the hypothesis. The candidates' first move in preparing an answer to this question should be to identify which sources support the hypothesis, and which go against it. It does not matter whether a candidate then writes about the sources in the order in which they appear or sources supporting the hypothesis first and then sources against the hypothesis. What matters is that clear explanations of how sources agree or disagree with the hypothesis are produced. Here is an example: 'Source E supports the claim that the Great Powers were responsible for the failure of the League because it shows them deliberately ignoring events in Manchuria and claiming that it was too risky to intervene.' It should be noted that this is brief, relevant and to the point. There is no need to write any more about this source. Some more successful responses provided material such as this. Candidates should use this approach to explain how some sources support the hypothesis, while others disagree with it. Not all the sources have to be used, but there should be an attempt to use most of them. There are marks for evaluation, but this needs to be properly developed evaluation. Considering the purpose of a source, using its content, its provenance and its context, is often a useful way forward.

HISTORY

Paper 0977/03
Coursework

Key messages

Titles are crucial. They need to be appropriate to enable candidates to demonstrate the necessary skills and understandings.

It is important that candidates understand they need to assess significance in its broadest sense. This means that they need to ask themselves how far someone or something was significant for different reasons and in different ways.

It is also helpful if candidates understand that they need to assess significance, rather than simply explain or describe it. They should attempt to do this throughout their answers and leave out passages of description, narrative or background.

Candidates often claim that someone or something is significant because it led to a particular outcome. They also need to assess how far the outcome mattered.

General comments

The overall standard of the work was high, with many candidates using appropriate titles and demonstrating a good understanding of how to assess significance. The Germany Depth Study was used by most centres but the Depth Studies on the USA and Russia were also used. A small number of centres developed their own Depth Studies for coursework. These enabled the centres to study aspects of their own local or national history. Some very interesting work was produced.

Nearly all centres carried out the administration of their coursework efficiently. The appropriate forms were correctly completed and the requested sample of work was promptly dispatched, often with helpful letters explaining the context in which the coursework was taught and completed.

Comments on specific questions

Although there were a few titles this year that did not focus on significance at all, most of the titles were appropriate and worked well. Those that worked best were worded 'Assess the significance of X' or were very similar to this. The advantages of this type of title are that it puts the focus on assessment and is open. Naming an outcome is deliberately avoided. If a title asks 'How significant was X in helping Hitler to consolidate his power?' this openness is lost. Such a title puts the focus on the consolidation of power instead of on 'X' and will lead many candidates into a causation-style answer, where they compare the importance of a range of factors that contributed to the consolidation of power. This is not what is required. The first type of title mentioned above allows candidates to consider the different ways in which 'X' may have been significant. They can use a range of criteria to help them do this and they can assess whether it was more significant in some ways than in others. Titles such as 'Explain the significance of X' or 'How was X significant' encourage candidates to explain how someone/something was significant, rather than assess how far it was significant.

The choice of subject is important. Some work better than others. Some can simply be too big and often overwhelm the candidates. The title 'Assess the significance of Hitler' follows the approach advocated earlier and has been seen to work, but it involves a massive topic making it hard for candidates to control and organise. It would also be rather difficult to argue that Hitler was of little significance. Subjects of a medium size often worked best – not too large to control and get on top of, but large enough to raise a range of

possible approaches and arguments. Excellent work has been seen this year on topics such as the Reichstag Fire, the Munich Putsch, the New Deal, Prohibition and the 1905 revolution in Russia.

The one exception to these comments about titles is if the focus is to be on 'the idea of a 'turning point'. However, the same format can be used, for example, 'Assess how far X was a turning point.'

There were many excellent answers this year and the overall standard was very high, demonstrating a good understanding of the concept of significance and of the approaches used to assess it. The best answers were well organised, with a consistent focus on assessment of significance. It was significant that this assessment was not left to conclusions at the end of the answers but was present throughout the responses. They contained little description, narrative or long introductions. Good knowledge and understanding of the historical period was used to support arguments and conclusions. A significant feature of these answers was that they took the form of an argument about significance which gradually built and developed. There was a sense that the candidates were in control and knew exactly where they were going. They investigated different ways in which their subject might or might not be significant, using argument and counter-argument. One way in which these answers were distinguishable from less successful ones was that they made effective use of counter-argument to explore arguments that their subject was not so significant. Other answers simply gave lots of examples of how their subjects were significant. The best answers also demonstrated some understanding that judgements about significance are provisional and can change according to the criteria used to measure significance. These answers often showed candidates developing their own ideas and taking some risks, often using ideas such as 'turning point' and 'tipping point'. There were often conclusions that compared the different ways in which their subjects were significant and reached supported, argued overall judgements.

Although candidates are encouraged to use a range of criteria to measure significance, these criteria should not be used mechanically, nor should they be listed at the beginning of answers and then not revisited. Candidates need to choose the criteria and approaches that they think are most appropriate for their subject.

The best answers did not base judgements about significance simply on what an individual did or achieved, or on the results of an event or development. Instead, they investigated why these achievements or results mattered. This might be in an economic, political, social or cultural sense. Long and short-term impact might be considered. It might involve assessing the impact on different groups and considering the depth, breadth and duration of the impact. Some candidates produced some very interesting work by asking whether failures could be significant. In contrast to answers that tended to repeat more predictable arguments, much of the best work focused on assessments of significance, used interesting ideas and took some risks with arguments which were fresh and genuinely based on the candidates' own ideas.

Most centres correctly used the generic mark scheme which can be found in the syllabus booklet. This mark scheme should be used exactly as it is and should not be adapted. It should be used holistically. Candidates' answers also need to be considered as whole with their overall qualities then matched to the overall demands of one of the levels in the mark scheme. Exact matches are not expected and so a 'best-fit' approach needs to be used.

Overall, the marking this year was accurate, although some centres had their marks adjusted. Many centres provided very useful detailed marginal and summative comments on their candidates' work. Marginal comments are most useful when they identify key features of an answer such as passages of description or effective assessment. The summative comments should be used to explain why a certain level has been awarded and direct reference to the features of the level should be made.

HISTORY

Paper 0977/42
Alternative to Coursework

Key messages

Successful candidates:

- Planned their answers carefully
- Addressed the key words of the question such as ‘importance’ or ‘significance’.
- Supported their arguments with detailed contextual knowledge.

General comments

A range of Depth Studies were undertaken. Depth Study B: Germany, 1918–45 and Depth Study D: The USA, 1919–41 received the most responses. There were also a good number of answers on Depth Studies A (First World War), C (Russia) and G (Israelis and Palestinians), with very few candidates choosing Depth Studies E (China) or F (South Africa).

Good responses had been well-planned and were able to use a wide range of material to give balanced responses with supported explanations. The very best answers also gave well supported and sustained arguments, but a number of responses would have benefited from providing supported judgements and conclusions. Less successful answers contained much narrative or description, or did not properly address the question that was set. Some candidates simply provided much information about a particular topic or Depth Study, rather than focusing on the parameters set by the question. Candidates need to read the question carefully before answering and ensure that their response focuses on importance or significance. The other key point for candidates is that this is a Depth Study paper and this means that it requires a wide range of detailed knowledge to support arguments and explanations. Some rubric errors were seen, with the most common being an attempt to answer both questions within the Depth Study or multiple questions in a number of Depth Studies. It is imperative that candidates read the instructions carefully before starting their responses.

Comments on specific questions

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

There were responses for both **Question 1** and **Question 2**, although **Question 1** proved the more popular.

Question 1 required candidates to focus on the development of the stalemate on the Western Front. The best answers were very focused on explaining how the use of artillery led to the development of the trench system by both the Allies and the Germans, and provided balance by examining the importance of other factors, such as the use of the machine gun, the lack of tactics, the failure of the Schlieffen Plan and the actual nature and conditions of the trenches. Good answers gave detailed examples and factual detail, coupled with some explicit explanations of how each factor led to the development of the stalemate. Weaker responses tended to not address the question properly and focused on how different weapons and tactics tried to break the stalemate instead.

Question 2 was less popular as a choice, but well answered when chosen. Some candidates had a good understanding of the significance of the German U-boat campaign and its impact on civilian life in Britain – most notably, candidates referenced the food shortages and rationing introduced later in 1918. This was then balanced by examining the significance of other factors such as the introduction of DORA, the recruitment campaign and later conscription, as well as women’s war work. Explanations were generally very convincing and focused on addressing the question. A small number of candidates also evaluated the impact

the U-boat campaign had on civilian life, as Britain dealt with the U-boats, with the convoy system and Q-boats, and only had to introduce rationing near the end of the war. Less successful responses tended to be descriptive or one-sided, or focused on the war at sea, rather than on civilian life.

Depth Study B: Germany, 1918–1945

Both questions were attempted by candidates, though **Question 3** was the more popular choice.

Question 3 was the better answered out of the two questions available. Many candidates were able to identify some of the inherent weaknesses in the Weimar Constitution and develop their paragraphs by explaining how this caused Germany problems, although weaker responses tended to be quite implicit when doing this. The strongest responses examined the most common weaknesses in the Weimar Constitution, such as proportional representation and Article 48, to explain how these led to problems such as weak coalitions and the rule by Presidential Decree, as well as how it aided the rise of the Nazi Party after 1930. This was then balanced with a wide variety of alternative factors such as the aftermath of the First World War and its impact on society and the economy, the resentment towards the various terms of the Treaty of Versailles, the problems caused by extremist groups, the crises of 1923 and the impact of the Wall Street Crash and Depression. A few of the best responses drew valid conclusions and judgements about the most important factor, with strong examples used to support the argument. Other responses tended to conflate the Weimar Constitution with the Weimar government in general, and so confused the knowledge they had to refer to and ended up giving one-sided answers.

Question 4 was, in general, poorly answered compared to **Question 3**. Less successful responses struggled to refer to a wide variety of material on 'Mein Kampf' and how it helped Hitler to win support. Stronger responses were able to critically evaluate the success of the book in the 1920s compared to later on, but also pointed to the fact that Mein Kampf attracted greater membership in the Nazi Party and the SA in the later 1920s, as well as map out the ideological and strategic route for Hitler, particularly the change in Nazi methods of assuming political power from violent coup to democratic methods. Candidates tended to have a wider variety of knowledge on other factors that helped Hitler gain support, such as propaganda, the focus on anti-communism and negative cohesion, Hitler's speaking and leadership qualities and the change in the role of the SA. The weakest responses tended to be descriptive and lacked factual detail.

Depth Study C: Russia, 1905–1941

Candidates attempted both questions in this Depth Study, but **Question 6** was the more frequently answered question.

Question 5 varied in the quality of responses it received. The best answers understood what the July Days were and how they led to growing resentment towards the Provisional Government and Kerensky in particular. Successful responses were able to critically evaluate the July Days and explain how it both helped lead to the downfall of the Provisional Government, but also removed some key Bolshevik leaders and sent Lenin into exile again. This was then balanced by examining a range of other factors, such as the Kornilov Coup, the role of Lenin and Trotsky and the failures of the Provisional Government in solving the social and economic issues in Russia, such as the peasants' land issue and the war shortages. Weaker responses tended to give a narrative of Russia in 1917, with some answers going even further back in time. Some candidates were also not versed in what exactly the July Days were, which led to one-sided responses.

Question 6 was more popular and often answered better than **Question 5**. Many responses had a good knowledge of the Five-Year Plans, as well as many other key significant factors that helped Stalin maintain his dictatorship, such as the use of terror with the NKVD, the Purges and Show Trials, propaganda and the Cult of Personality and the policy of Russification. The strongest answers contained lots of precise factual detail and focused their explanations clearly on addressing the maintenance of the dictatorship. Weaker responses tended to confuse the Five-Year Plans and the collectivisation of agriculture, often seeing them as the same thing. Although they were linked, it would be inaccurate to see collectivisation as a Five-Year Plan for industry. Some candidates would have benefited from linking these factors to the maintenance of the dictatorship, rather than just describing what they were. It is crucial that candidates read the question carefully and plan their answers before they begin writing.

Depth Study D: The USA, 1919–1941

This was a popular topic among candidates, with both **Question 7** and **Question 8** receiving many responses. However, there were more **Question 7** responses this session.

Question 7 was generally well-answered. Candidates were often able to explain the importance of new industries such as the motor industry, radios, refrigerators, electricity, entertainment and advertising, and to explain how these helped fuel the economic boom in the 1920s. Many candidates explained how these industries had knock-on effects with other sectors of the economy and led to higher wages, higher employment in the cities and increased share prices, as profits increased. The strongest responses balanced their answers by examining the importance of other factors that led to economic growth – most notably, the policies of the Republican governments was commonly cited, as well as the impact the First World War had on the US economy, the USA's natural resources and the increased confidence in the stock market at the time. Successful candidates were able to draw valid and supported conclusions from their arguments. Other responses tended to confuse old and new industries – some even included agriculture as a cause for economic growth in the 1920s. These responses would have been improved by the inclusion of more detail and less description.

Question 8 produced some strong responses that had a good grasp of racial intolerance in the USA in the 1920s. Commonly cited in these answers were the growth of the Ku Klux Klan, the nature of segregation in the southern states and the impact of immigration. This was then balanced by examining the nature of the Red Scare, religious fundamentalism and Prohibition. Less successful responses tended to be very thin on detail and lacked focused explanations of how these factors changed the nature of US society.

Depth Study E: China, c. 1930–c. 1990

There were too few responses to **Questions 9** and **10** for meaningful comments to be made.

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

There were too few responses to **Questions 11** and **12** for meaningful comments to be made.

Depth Study G: Israelis and Palestinians since 1945

A small number of candidates chose this Depth Study. **Question 13** was the more popular of the two questions.

Question 13 was generally very well-answered. Candidates were well-prepared for a question on the 1948–49 war and responses contained accurate and precise detail. Candidates were able to examine how external support from the USA, the United Nations and other European countries aided the Israelis in their final victory against the Arab states, and then compare the importance of this factor with other factors such as Israeli determination, the quality of leadership and Arab disunity. Strong responses showed sustained judgement and focused explanations which were well-supported by well-selected and sometimes very impressive factual knowledge. A few less successful responses tended to still be reasonably strong on detail, but lacked the explicit explanations required to produce the strongest answers.

Question 14 was also well answered. Strong responses showed a detailed knowledge of the refugee crisis and were able to explain how this led to hostility between Israel and its Arab neighbours. Explanations were convincing and well-supported by examples, and many answers were able to reach a strong judgement in the conclusion. Other responses tended to be slightly over-descriptive in style and lacked the focused explanation needed for stronger answers.