

HISTORY

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

Key messages

- Stronger responses kept a focus on the specific questions rather than writing in general about the sources.
- When reading sources candidates should ensure that they take notice of the overall message of the source in order to understand the argument or point of view of the author. This means viewing the source holistically rather than as being divided into individual sentences or part sentences which, taken alone, can convey different ideas to that which the source as a whole has.
- Evaluating a source is a two-stage process: first, decide on the reliability of a source by checking the source's argument against either source provenance or contextual knowledge; second, decide how the (un)reliable source affects the balance of the challenge versus support argument. Comments about source evaluation should always be related to answering the question posed.
- Time-keeping is important. Candidates need to make sure they leave enough time to write complete answers to both questions.

In summary, the key message is for candidates to read the sources very carefully, making sure that they understand both the particular details of the source and its overall argument. This will ensure candidates are better prepared to tackle both questions.

General comments

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

Weaker responses to **part (a)** were often rushed and in a significant minority of cases this was a result of the **part (a)** question being completed last. Although there is no required order for the question to be answered it should be noted that the **part (a)** question is designed to prepare candidates for the longer essay style question. Candidates often made inappropriate points of comparison. They claimed similarities for points which were not actually similar and differences for points which were not really different. If the comparisons cannot be properly validated, they cannot be credited. The focus of the **(a)** question is to identify valid similarity and difference of the content of the sources. Weaker responses often included large sections of contextual knowledge or stock paragraphs of 'evaluation' rather than tackling the main focus of the question. Although there are marks in the top level for commenting on the usefulness of the sources, the main focus of the question should be on making a developed comparison, i.e. identifying similarities and differences.

There is a notable minority who interpret the **(b)** question, which always asks about Sources A to D, i.e. all four sources, as requiring examination of only Sources A and D. A minority of candidates ran out of time, usually after writing long introductions which contributed little to their answer. If candidates are to fully demonstrate their knowledge and conceptual understanding, effective time management is essential.

When analysing the sources many candidates confused themselves by picking out sections of text which ran counter to the overall message of the source. An example from this paper can be found in **Section C**, Source A which is from a speech by Winston Churchill. In analysing the views of Churchill some candidates picked out the section which reads '*It has been argued that economic sanctions will not really embarrass Mussolini and he knows this or else he would have bowed to them*' and tried to suggest that Churchill was not in favour of sanctions against Italy. However, in the context of the rest of the source this section is being used as a rhetorical device to diminish others arguments. Thus, candidates should be careful to look at the whole source not dissected sections of it when making links to the questions and further judgements.

To achieve higher evaluation marks it is necessary to explain why the nature, origin or purpose of the source makes it more or less useful when answering the question. One example was in **Section A** where Source A from 'The National Zeitung' was provided. Some candidates were able to comment on how the context of the source being published in 1849 meant that it had little hindsight on the actual success of the Constitution and that as a Liberal newspaper it is only to be expected that it would offer such vocal support for the document. In addition, when using these ideas it is important that candidates explain why this makes the source more or less useful for the question rather than just stating the date or type of source and saying it is unreliable.

Comments on specific questions

Section A, the European Option

1(a) Compare and contrast the views expressed in Sources A and D of the Constitution.

There were many strong responses to this question and candidates clearly understood the period and vocabulary involved. Most candidates were able to identify the similarities in the sources, Source A describes the Constitution as 'remarkable' and refers to it as 'this fine Constitution' and Source D praises it as 'a considerable advance' and a 'significant move' towards achieving one nation and liberalism. Stronger responses also identified differences between the two sources, although these were more subtle, Source A says that there has been 'universal support' for the Constitution whilst Source D refers to its defects and points out in contrast that it did 'not really represent the views of many'.

1(b) 'The revolutions of 1848–49 had a positive impact on the cause of German nationalism.' How far do sources A to D support this view?

This question was generally well answered and stronger responses demonstrated an ability to use the sources to both support and challenge the assertion given in the question. Most candidates identified that strong support for the assertion was shown in Sources A and D which described the step forward that was being taken at the time by launching a Constitution as well as other impacts of the revolutions. In addition, it could be shown that Engels in Source B considered this a valuable 'first step' in undoing the old order and shifting power even if it had not been realised straight away. Many candidates also used Source B to challenge the statement by pointing out the facts which Engels highlights, which were that after the initial spark of the revolution the old order remained in power and not much had changed in a short space of time. Some also used section of Source D to suggest that by 1853 things did not look quite as positive as they did for 'The National Zeitung' in Source A. Source C from Bismarck caused some difficulty for candidates as a result of his rhetorical style. It should be remembered that when Bismarck made this speech to the German Diet he was not a German nationalist; he believed firmly in promoting the power of Prussia; and it was only later that he changed his mind. Thus, this speech must be taken in the context of Bismarck's views at the time. As a result his damnation of the actions of the King may be taken as a positive for German nationalism as Frederick William has accepted the Constitution and strengthened the nationalist cause.

Section B, the American Option

2(a) Compare and contrast the responses of Sources B and C to the publication of Uncle Tom's Cabin.

Some candidates had some difficulty in comparing these sources because Source C did not live up to their expectations of what would be published in a Northern state. Source C is written by an abolitionist but sees the novel as the enemy of the abolitionist cause because the book did not go far enough in its portrayal of the horrors of slavery. Most candidates were able to identify some similarities and differences between these two sources. The most commonly identified similarity was that both sources believe the book to be inaccurate. So, according to the author of Source B 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' is described 'as a most wild and unreal picture of slavery'; whilst in Source C, too, it is not regarded as 'a faithful record'. The main difference is also related to this when Source B thinks it is too harsh on slavery and Source C implies it is not harsh enough – the reason that the abolitionist in Source C is not a fan of the book. The strongest answers used contextual knowledge that the book was not an unqualified success in the Northern states and were able to suggest that some abolitionists thought is offered a rather rose-tinted view of the horrors of the slave trade.

2(b) How far do Sources A to D support the assertion that Uncle Tom's Cabin advanced the abolitionist cause?

Candidates who attempted this question generally used the sources successfully and identified examples of support and challenge for the assertion. The clearest support for the positive impact of Uncle Tom's Cabin comes from Sources A and D which both clearly have reasons for exaggerating its importance, and the strongest answers discussed the ways in which these two sources lacked weight. The other two sources needed careful reading to ensure clear analysis. Source B was fearful that the book would 'excite the fanaticism' of abolitionists; so offered some support for the assertion. However, the author was also of the opinion that the book would further divide the country making the abolitionist goal harder to achieve. Source C offers challenge to the assertion by implying that there would be no need to abolish slavery if it was as described in the book. The best responses were able to use their contextual knowledge of the period to discuss the growing sectional tension of the 1850s and place the publication of the novel into this picture.

Section C, International Option

3(a) Compare and contrast Sources A and B as evidence of British politicians' opinions about the League of Nations.

These two sources, which came from British politicians at the time of the Italian crisis, required careful reading and application of contextual knowledge. Many candidates were able to apply both of these in order to identify similarities and differences between the sources but there were a significant minority who struggled with some of the language and syntax used; especially in the Churchill source (Source A). Stronger responses applied their contextual knowledge and identified that this source comes from a period before Churchill was the Prime Minister. The sources disagree about the effectiveness of the League of Nations i.e. Source A regards the League as coming to life and that it 'has passed from shadow into substance' now that it is dealing with Italy; whereas Source B comments that the League 'clearly does not work'. They also disagree about sanctions although it should be noted that this is not the focus of this question. Some candidates who chose to complete the **part (b)** question first were overly focussed on the issue of sanctions when answering **part (a)**. Both sources do agree that sanctions may not stop Mussolini from entering Abyssinia.

3(b) How far do Sources A to D support the view that economic sanctions against Italy never had a chance of succeeding?

Overall, there were some strong answers to this question. This question required some consideration of what 'success' would look like in regard to the application of sanctions against Italy and what the sources considered to be important in this discussion. Stronger responses took this approach and so could identify support and challenge from the sources. Weaker responses sometimes got distracted into determinism because they knew that the sanctions had failed. Source A gave clear evidence that Churchill believed the sanctions could be successful if carried out over a long period of time and this was supported by Source D. However, Litvinov was more ambivalent suggesting that it would be difficult to stop Mussolini. Source B supported the idea that sanctions could never work; whilst Source C offered a local perspective which could be used to support or challenge the statement. Weaker responses found contextualising the sources difficult. Stronger responses considered when the sources were written as well as who wrote them, and used this effectively to evaluate the utility of the source.

HISTORY

<p>Paper 9389/22 Outline Study 22</p>

Key messages

- Candidates should read all of the questions in the relevant section of the paper before selecting two questions to answer. There have been instances where a whole **part (a)** question has been written, only to be crossed out because of problems with answering the **part (b)** – a significant misuse of the limited time available.
- For **part (a)** questions the key element is explaining why something happened. Identifying several reasons is an important first step but to reach higher levels of the mark scheme it is necessary to show how the factors inter-reacted and to assess their relative significance.
- For **part (b)** questions candidates should address the question rather than the topic, maintain a balanced approach and ensure that arguments are appropriately supported. A well written but one-sided analysis will not allow the candidate to reach their full potential.
- Candidates with substantial topic knowledge need to ensure that they apply their knowledge to the specific focus of 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. **Section A** questions were by far the most popular, reflecting teaching choices with regard to topics. Generally, candidates deployed their time effectively, devoting an appropriate amount to each question. Most candidates were able to demonstrate sound factual knowledge in their answers, but less successful responses did not sustain consistent quality across all four question parts. It was not uncommon for candidates to produce satisfactory or better responses to one part of a question, yet weaker (and, in some cases, no) answers to the other part. There is a fundamental difference in focus between **part (a)** and **part (b)** questions and many candidates clearly appreciated this.

Part (a) questions were generally well done. Most candidates are well aware of the need to explain the reasons for actions or events, and even for those with limited factual knowledge it was often possible to produce a creditable simple explanation with some supporting detail. Good responses offered an explanation of several significant factors with, sometimes very full, supporting detail. Only a small number of candidates made the final step to identifying and justifying a prioritisation of these factors by establishing the ways in which they were linked to demonstrate which was most important in order to achieve Level 4.

In answering **part (b)** questions candidates demonstrated a good grasp of basic knowledge about a topic but were not always confident in using that knowledge in answering a question which was not entirely what they might have expected. Consequently, weaker responses were often limited to a descriptive account of events around the topic or, sometimes, focussing on the wrong aspect of a topic – for example writing a general account of factors leading to the outbreak of the First World War when the question asks about the stabilising effect of alliances and ententes. There were many good responses with plenty of relevant detail and a balanced analysis, but only a few which took the final step of making and justifying a comparative judgement about the relative merits of different arguments.

Comments on specific questions

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

Question 1 – France, 1789–1814

(a) Why was the Bastille stormed?

Most candidates demonstrated a sound knowledge of the events surrounding the beginning of the French Revolution but the ways in which they used this knowledge separated the good from the weaker responses. Strong responses kept a clear focus on the specific event in the question and argued it was the result of the king's actions in relation to the meeting of the National Assembly and his dismissal of the popular finance minister, coupled with the fears of the population of Paris that the king was moving a large armed force to surround the city and their belief that the Bastille had a large store of gunpowder/weapons. Weaker responses wrote generally about the Estates General and the problems of France without focussing on the specific issues of why the Bastille was stormed.

(b) Which better describes the period of the Directory: 'revolutionary chaos' or 'a period of real achievement'?

Many candidates who attempted this question showed a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the Directory government. Stronger answers often included a comparison of the relative stability of the late 1790s with the real 'chaos' that preceded it under Robespierre and went on to look at other achievements like constructing balanced system of government, holding democratic elections, reducing debt etc. and generally returning to trying to achieve the revolutionary aims the early 1790s. The 'chaos' argument linked to this included the number of attempted coups, financial weakness, general discontent and dependence on the army to maintain order – a relationship that eventually led to its overthrow. Weaker responses were often limited to discussing the failures, Robespierre or they wrote about Napoleon's coup and its consequences, not addressing the focus of the question.

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

(a) Why did countries introduce tariffs during the nineteenth century?

There were few responses to this question and they demonstrated a limited understanding of tariffs. The strongest responses were able to explain the benefits of protecting newly founded domestic industries and raising revenue for government, but more modest answers simply described tariffs as general taxes on trade (i.e. both imports and exports) and thus could not explain accurately the reasons for imposing them.

(b) 'Rising demand for goods was the major factor in encouraging industrialisation in this period.' How far do you agree? Refer to any two countries from Britain, France or Germany in your answer.

Few candidates were able to suggest ways in which increased demand encouraged industrialisation and many did the opposite, explaining the technical developments that led to increased production and thus increased demand. Some wrote about agricultural improvements that increase supply. The weakest responses did not provide any reference to any country other than Britain or wrote about industrialisation in general without relating it to the question.

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

(a) Why did nationalism increase tension in the Balkans?

This question was generally well answered. Most candidates were able to explain why nationalism grew as the power of the Ottoman Empire waned and why this led to struggles in the Balkans often providing accurate and useful detail of the various Balkan conflicts of the late nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. Good responses were able to show how nationalism also drew in the Austrians who worried about nationalistic movements within their multinational empire, and the Russians who saw themselves gaining influence through supporting nationalistic movements amongst the various

Slav groups. Weaker responses mainly focussed on Austro-Russian conflict with little reference to 'nationalism'.

(b) 'The system of alliances and ententes made Europe more stable.' How far do you agree?

There were many good responses to this question which used relevant details of the different alliances and ententes to demonstrate the two alternative perspectives. Arguments about stability often included examples about the settlement of disputes between members as in the Anglo-French and Anglo-Russian ententes which reduced the risk of conflict in Africa and the Far East respectively. Other examples used included German support of Austria that led to a 'peaceful' end to the Bosnian Crisis in 1908 and the 'resolution' of the two Moroccan Crises when Anglo-French co-operation forced Germany to step down. The alternative argument provided often referred to the same examples as steadily increasing tensions and resentment so that the July crisis became the trigger for an all-out conflict between the two alliance systems. Weaker answers were often limited to accounts of the causes of the War, writing about the naval race, imperialism and nationalist conflict in the Balkans rather than about alliances and ententes. Many weaker responses also described the outbreak of war and the role of Belgium suggesting that the Treaty of London, that triggered British action, was a part of the alliance system.

Question 4 – The Russian Revolution c.1894–1917

(a) Why, in January 1905, was there a march on the Winter Palace?

This was the most popular question on the paper and it was well answered. Strong answers demonstrated a clear understanding of the issues that led Father Gapon to lead the industrial workers of St Petersburg on this march to present a petition to the Tsar, a long-accepted means of seeking help from the Tsar. Good responses explained this with the support of relevant detail, including poor working and living conditions and the effects of shortages caused by the war, as relevant causal factors. However, some weaker responses missed the significance of the specific date and wrote instead about the causes of the 1905 revolution suggesting factors like the loss of the war with Japan and peasant dissatisfaction amongst the causes when they were not relevant to this initial march in January, but led to much larger protests later that were a part of the result of how Father Gapon's protest was dealt with. A few weak responses wrote about the consequences of the protest rather than its causes.

(b) 'The collapse of Tsarism was caused by its failure to keep the support of the industrial workers.' How far do you agree?

There were many good responses to this question, but some candidates struggled to establish a balanced analysis and others did not necessarily fulfil the requirements of the question. Good responses usually began with a consideration of the difficulties of the Tsar's relationship with the industrial workers over the longer period but focussing on their influence on the events of February 1917 which led to the downfall of the regime. From there they analysed other events leading to the fall of the regime, mainly focussing on the other problems caused by the war including inadequate government, loss of support of the army, the consequences of the Tsars absence from Petrograd and the effect of opposition groups in the run up to the events of 1917. The best responses presented reasoned judgements about relative importance and thus reached the highest level. Weaker responses were often a general essay about the weaknesses of the Tsarist regime and wrote a description of failings, often rooted in the events of 1905 rather than the immediate causes of collapse in February 1917.

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

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

(a) Why, in the 1850s, did the USA send naval fleets to Japan?

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

(b) Assess the significance of the Mexican-American War of 1846–48 for the United States

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

Question 6 – Civil War and Reconstruction, 1861–1877

(a) Why was the North unable to achieve all its aims for the reconstruction of the South?

There were some responses to this question that showed a good understanding of the difficulties that the North faced in imposing its Reconstruction plans on the southern states. The best explained both what these plans included and demonstrated why they were difficult to implement, giving specific examples of southern resistance. Good responses often also considered the difficulties that the North had in even deciding how it should deal with the South. Weaker responses often confused the work of different presidents and few went beyond the issue of southern resistance in general terms, or beyond description of what happened in the 1860's in the immediate aftermath of the Civil War.

(b) Assess the strengths and weaknesses of Jefferson Davis's leadership of the Confederacy.

Stronger responses considered the strengths Davis's military experience and any particular advantages that the South might have that gave him an advantage. These were assessed against his perceived disadvantages like micro-management and resistance from individual states to an overall Confederate policy. This approach produced a balanced response with the overall level depending of the depth of detail provided. Weaker responses demonstrated a limited knowledge of Davis and provided a general comparison of the advantages and disadvantages of Davis compared to Lincoln or wrote essays about the military advantages of the North compared to the South without any real reference to Davis as leader of the Confederacy.

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

(a) Why did business trusts become the focus of much criticism?

Most candidates who answered this question wrote confidently about some of the complaints about business trusts including poor treatment of workers, unfair business practices, undermining of competitors and corrupt links with federal government, often providing specific examples to support their arguments. Moderate answers did not cover all the possibilities, but were able to present some explanation of the most obvious reasons for criticism. Weaker responses often described the work of some of the leading 'robber barons' or wrote detailed descriptions of worker conditions without making links to the question.

(b) 'The Progressive Movement democratised the American political system.' How valid is this assertion?

Most candidates demonstrated sound knowledge of the Progressive Movement and of the main issues within the political system during the period of its prominence. Stronger responses included detail about the principal constitutional amendments of the period (18th, 19th, and 20th), and explained their purpose in terms of legal changes to the Constitution. This was the positive side of the democratisation process. A common counter-argument was that in practice these changes to the constitution did not lead to great changes in the political system immediately because of other factors which were then explained. The strongest answers showed a commendable understanding of the difference between State and Federal actions with limited progress at Federal level but much better progressive improvement at state level, providing good supporting detail such as party Primaries and State referenda (introduced in 1904). Some weaker responses mistook democratised to be Democratic and wrote about the political parties and their presidents during the early 1900s.

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

(a) Why did the US economy return to recession in 1937–38?

This was a popular question in this section of the paper and it was generally well answered. Common themes for solid responses included the short term nature of many of the measures introduced in the First New Deal, a return to recession as part of the normal business cycle following the years of recovery from the Great Depression and the effects of a change in policy by Roosevelt in order to return to a balanced budget. Weaker responses focussed mainly on the actions of the Supreme Court in opposing some of Roosevelt's measures, but this was a relatively minor issue in the return to recession.

(b) How far did the 1920s deserve to be called ‘the Roaring Twenties’?

Stronger responses demonstrated a good understanding of the things that made this era ‘the Roaring Twenties’ with the best responses covering the whole range from cultural and social changes to industrial and financial developments and even the criminal sub-culture related to ‘Speakeasies’ and Prohibition. Having established the ‘good’ aspects of the Twenties candidates examined those who ‘missed out’ particularly the African-American population, poor farmers, some immigrant groups and women. The best answers then provided a fully supported judgement. Weaker responses described key features of the ‘Roaring Twenties’ and often had a very narrow focus on entertainment and lifestyle with little balance.

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

Question 9 – International Relations, 1871–1918

(a) Why was the Anglo–Russian Entente agreed in 1907?

Stronger responses explained a number of changes in relationships that made the Entente possible including the effects of the Russo–Japanese War and the settlement of issues over control in Afghanistan and Persia. Mutual issues with Germany were included as relevant contributors to the making of the agreement and the significance of each country’s relationship with the French was mentioned in some of the better responses. Some weaker responses focussed on the problems caused by Germany rather than on Russian and British motives.

(b) Which date better marks the emergence of Japan as a world power: 1905 or 1918?

The most common approach to this question was to produce an essay of two halves centred around 1905 and 1918 and finish with a conclusion. This approach did produce some strong responses with good balance and relevant detail. Many candidates traced the rise of Japan from a ‘medieval’ state in the mid-nineteenth century to a significant power in 1905. This was often the better half of the answer but good responses were able to identify significant differences by 1918. The best responses differentiated between the idea of a regional power in 1905 and a world power in 1918. Weaker responses tended to be one sided, descriptive and focused mainly on 1905.

Question 10 – International Relations, 1919–1933

(a) Why did the French occupation of the Ruhr damage relations between France and Britain?

Many candidates were able to provide a clear account of the occupation and why it happened, relating it to the outcome of the Versailles settlement. Weaker responses were limited to providing a general narrative of events. Better responses took Versailles as a starting point to the consideration of strains in the relationship between France and Britain over the eventual settlement and used the different motives that the countries had at Versailles as a basis for explaining why French actions in the Ruhr further worsened Anglo-French relations. Issues of reparations, trade and the risk of worsening conflict were central to successful responses.

(b) To what extent did the Locarno Treaties of 1925 reduce international tensions?

Most candidates demonstrated a good knowledge of the main terms of the Locarno Treaties and were able to describe them in reasonable detail. Stronger answers outlined some of the issues that Locarno didn’t settle like the possibility of boundary conflicts in Eastern Europe and the dissatisfaction of some countries especially Poland, over this. Other approaches of stronger responses was to set the Locarno process in a wider context including previous efforts like the Genoa Conference or the Dawes Plan, or later developments like the Kellogg-Briand Pact or the Young plan in order to consider what the Treaties did and didn’t achieve.

Question 11 – International Relations, c.1933–1939

- (a) **Why, given his hatred of communism, did Hitler sign a non-aggression pact with Soviet Russia in 1939?**

The terms of the Nazi Soviet Pact were well understood and described in some detail by most candidates. Good responses gave reasoned analysis of the circumstances in which it was signed and related them to Hitler's short- and longer-term motives and his perception of the possible response of the Western Allies. Weaker answers tried to suggest that the major reason was so that he could go and attack France and Britain without fear of reprisals from Russia, failing to recognise that he did not expect them to take action in the light of their previous appeasement policy. A few weaker responses discussed of Stalin's motives, though the question was about Hitler.

- (b) **'A foolish strategy, for which there can be no justification.' How far do you agree with this assessment of Britain's appeasement policy?**

Most candidates wrote confidently about the policy of appeasement and provided a range of detailed examples. Stronger responses demonstrated a good understanding of the reasons why this seemed like a good idea at the time in terms of public response and the economic and military circumstances of the 1930's. Balance was an issue with some answers, though better ones explained why at each stage it simply gave Hitler more confidence and some even pointed out situations in which he could have been forced to back down with more positive opposition with examples like the first attempt at Anschluss and the re-militarisation of the Rhineland. Weaker responses struggled with the concept of 'foolish strategy' or ignored it and wrote about the pros and cons of the policy.

Question 12 – China and Japan, 1919–1945

- (a) **Why did Sun Yat-sen establish 'The Three Principles'?**

There were few responses to this question and mostly they described the Three Principles, without examining the underlying circumstances in China that led to their creation. Moderate responses provided a general description of the situation in China at the time, but few gave specific details.

- (b) **How far do you agree that the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor ended in failure?**

Weak responses were limited to a basic narrative built around the premise that it ended in failure because the Japanese were defeated in the end. Better responses focussed on the successes and failures of the attack set against the possible motives of the Japanese and/or considered short term vs. long term indicators of failure. Most answers were still not well-balanced.

HISTORY

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

Key messages

- Before starting their answer, candidates should read the extract carefully and to spend some time identifying the parts of the extract they can use to illustrate the historian's interpretation.
- The question asks about the historian's interpretation and approach. These are not what the historian writes; they are things you can infer from what s/he writes. Stronger answers use the extract to show how inferences about the interpretation and approach have been reached.
- The historian's interpretation is valid for the whole of the extract. Answers which suggest that an extract has more than one interpretation indicate a lack of understanding. If candidates see what appear to be inconsistencies in the extract these need to be resolved in their understanding of the interpretation, for example maybe the historian has deliberately raised a point in order to reject it or maybe the historian is acknowledging alternative arguments even though not agreeing with them.
- Good answers are not necessarily long answers. Rather they keep a consistent focus on explaining the interpretation using relevant parts of the extract.

General comments

The strongest answers were concise and focused. They stated what they thought the historian's main interpretation is, and then constructed the answer around those sections of the extract that illustrate this interpretation. These answers continually referred back to the interpretation, explaining how the extract reveals it. Their conclusion was often a summary of the points made throughout the answer, explicitly linking them to the interpretation. Weaker answers did not maintain a consistent focus. This may simply be a matter of being distracted temporarily into writing about the topic, in which case the threads of the argument can still be picked up later. Many candidates start their answers by asserting the historian's interpretation, but then continue to paraphrase the extract, rather than linking this back to the interpretation by using specific points from the extract to illustrate it.

Stronger answers tend not to be constructed by working through the extract paragraph by paragraph. Instead they select the parts of the extract they will need to use in explaining the interpretation. One disadvantage to the paragraph by paragraph approach is that often the answer does not provide an overview of the extract as there is greater focus with points of detail rather than with the historians' broader arguments. This can lead to inconsistencies in the argument as conclusions are reached on part, and not the whole, of the extract. Weaker responses were characterised by including contradictions or arguing that there were multiple interpretations. If candidates realise that their answer contains apparent inconsistencies, they should try to resolve them.

Finally, there were some instances of candidates attempting to illustrate points using truncated, incomplete quotes from the extract – e.g. *I can tell the historian is a revisionist because the extract says 'It is equally... ..western politicians'*. This often affected the flow of the arguments and weakened the strength of support. Candidates are advised to give the full material they are offering as support for a point.

Comments on specific questions

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

The central argument of the historian who wrote this extract is that the First World War dealt a terminal blow to the British Empire, despite attempts in the inter-war period to carry on as normal. The best answers recognised both aspects of the interpretation and illustrated them using material from the extract. Many answers were based around the idea that the extract dealt with imperial decline, but importantly did not link

this to the impact of the First World War. Weaker responses, often worked through the extract a paragraph at a time were misled by the first paragraph into thinking that the interpretation was economic in nature, or that it was about the growth of the Empire. Other weaker answers simply paraphrased points in the extract, or wrote about the Empire with no reference to the extract.

Section B: The Holocaust

The central argument of the historian who wrote this extract is that whilst Hitler willed some kind of final reckoning with the Jews, he did not order the Holocaust, but rather left it to others to determine what in practice would happen. The best answers recognised both aspects of the interpretation and illustrated them using material from the extract. A central aspect of this extract was the lack of an order for genocide. Many candidates undermined their answers by not reading the first paragraph carefully enough, and by claiming that it said Hitler had ordered the physical destruction of the Jews. But these were not the words of the historian – they were Eichmann recalling what Heydrich had said to him. The historian immediately cast doubt on this by questioning whether a decision to kill the Jews had been made even by autumn 1941. Weaker answers found it hard to address was the position of the war in the explanation. Because the time covered by the extract coincided with the war, many candidates assumed that the historian was arguing that the Final Solution occurred because of the war. There is little in the extract to sustain this. Instead there are structuralist arguments reflecting the notion that when Hitler indicated a direction for policy to take, he could rely on others putting his wishes into effect without needing precise orders. But here too some responses thought they detected elements to the interpretation that simply were not there. They thought they saw Hitler as a weak dictator and subordinates competing for his favour, but the extract made no such suggestions. Overall numbers few responses detected the precise nature of the intentionalist/structuralist synthesis in this interpretation, with many answers restricted to the obviously flawed interpretation that Hitler ordered the Holocaust, but his subordinates actually carried it out. 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, 1941–1950

The central argument of the historian who wrote this extract is that in the immediate post-war period both sides gave the other reasons for suspicion, but that overall the United States was more to blame for this than the Soviet Union. The strongest answers recognised both aspects of the interpretation and illustrated them using material from the extract. There were good numbers of candidates who saw the interpretation as post-revisionist, with blame being attached to both sides. There were perhaps even more answers that saw the interpretation as revisionist, with the United States being blamed. There were, however, very few who managed to reconcile these two aspects as the historian clearly suggests. This was an extract where the usual historiographical labels did not quite summarise the nature of the interpretation. Answers which argued for post-revisionism included plenty of support in the references to mutual suspicion and each other's hostile intentions, but were unable to accommodate the clearly more hostile portrayal of Truman compared with that of Stalin. Answers which argued for revisionism faced the same problem of contradictory evidence simply posed the other way around. Post-revisionism was argued in the stronger responses as it included the criticism of the United States but added to it the element of blame placed on Stalin, but without the qualification on greater blame for the United States, it still was not a complete resolution of the interpretation. A few answers tried to argue that the extract showed the Soviet Union was to blame, but this was not convincing given the overall content of the extract. The weakest answers simply paraphrased points in the extract, or wrote about the Cold War with no reference to the extract.

HISTORY

Paper 9389/42
Depth Study

Key messages

- Keeping a sustained focus on the specific focus of the question, rather than the topic in general, is essential to access the higher levels of the mark scheme.
- Answers should be analytical throughout and attempt to address all aspects of the question.
- Analysis must be supported by relevant and accurate factual information and this knowledge should be in depth.
- Candidates should pay careful attention to the chronological timeframe of the question.

General comments

Higher quality answers were clearly analytical in approach and had a well-argued case that was supported with good levels of relevant subject knowledge and then reached a logical final judgement. A good example of this was **Question 3**, where stronger answers examined both the benefits and the negative results of Stalin's rule. They ended with a balanced judgement, supported by very good in-depth factual knowledge. Weaker responses tended to just describe the events of the period and offered no real opinion.

Lack of subject knowledge sometimes hampered candidates, and this was illustrated in **Question 6**, where many candidates did not explain who the 'silent majority' were, nor what their impact was. Many of the answers chose instead to describe the successes of the minority groups and did not fully engage with the question.

Maintaining a balanced answer is very important. **Question 10** highlighted this, and strong answers debated the importance of the national uprisings in Eastern Europe and tried to assess whether they were a cause or a consequence or possibly even a little of both. They then reached a logical and cogently argued conclusion and there was a clear argument throughout the answer.

Comments on specific questions

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

1 How far did the Bolshevik party change in the period from 1918 to 1924?

The key to success was focusing on the party and the very best responses did. They examined the policies, structure, membership and general approach and how it changed and to an extent how it remained the same. The Ban on Factions featured prominently. Weaker responses tended to give an account of the events between 1917 and 1924 and focused at length on War Communism and the New Economic Policy. The best answers had a clear structure, argument and reasoned and supported judgement.

2 How successfully did Mussolini manage opposition to his regime?

This was a popular question and was often done very well. High quality responses explained the idea of 'managed' and examined the use of policies to placate the influential elites in society and the use of the Acerbo Law, the Concordat with the Roman Catholic Church and the clever use of propaganda and populist policies. The use of terror and brute force was also explained and assessed. There was also a clear judgement as to how successful his approach was. Weaker responses tended to describe the events of the period but not integrate that subject knowledge with analysis to fully address the question.

3 'The benefits of Stalin's rule to the Soviet Union outweighed the harm.' How far do you agree?

This question produced many high quality answers and the subject material was clearly well known and understood by many candidates. Stronger responses showed balance and a clear weighing of the benefits and negatives of Stalin's rule. There were some interesting discussions as to whether all the suffering was a necessary feature of modernising the Soviet Union. Better answers kept a clear focus on the Soviet Union and avoided lengthy narrative sections on the Purges and the Five Year Plans. More sophisticated answers assessed by topic, looking at both the benefits and drawbacks of each policy rather than just producing a list of positive and negative features of his rule.

4 'During 1933–1934 Hitler established his dictatorship using lawful methods.' How far do you agree?

There were many very good and excellent answers to this question. It was a popular choice and both subject knowledge and understanding were clearly evidenced. Stronger answers kept to the prescribed time frame of the question and examined the methods used and also assessed whether they were legal or not. Some candidates even suggested that Hitler tried to give a veneer of legality, whilst actually using illegal methods and brute force. Weaker responses tended to either give a chronological description of the period or to look at the rise to power and not at his consolidation of power in the period 1933–1934, and did not provide an analytical answer that discussed the question posed.

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

5 Assess the causes of US economic growth in the 1950s.

This was a very popular question. Weaker responses tended to describe the outward signs of economic prosperity and look at the consequences rather than the causes of economic growth in the 1950s, or at times they gave a list of causes, but 'assess' was not examined. Higher quality responses examined the multiple causes, both domestic and global, and the very best answers examined each cause and tried to assess the importance of that factor and how the factors might have been interlinked.

6 How far did the 'silent majority' limit the influence of the vocal minorities of the 1960s and 1970s?

Weaker responses did not really understand or define the 'silent majority' and tended to give extensive narrative descriptions of the activities of minority groups in the 1960s and 1970s. There was also a tendency to recount the successes of various minority groups and to ignore the influence of the 'silent majority'. Better answers did look at the people and groups that made up the silent majority and what political and social influence they had. The strongest responses clearly tried to gauge the influence of both the vocal minorities and the silent majority and come to a reasoned judgement.

7 'The dominance of the Republican Party in the 1980s was based more on ideology than on their choice of presidential candidates.' How valid is this judgement?

This question was quite popular and candidates demonstrated good subject knowledge about President Reagan, but they often ignored President Bush. Less-developed answers tended to recount the policies and successes of Reagan, but without addressing the question of whether it was ideology or personality or a mixture that resulted in Republican success. The unpopularity of the Democrats was often examined. Stronger responses tried to assess the relative importance of ideology, personality and the Democrats and how each might be judged. The impact of the New Right and the Moral Majority was assessed together with its impact on Republican ideology and political tactics.

8 How far did the Eisenhower administration follow the policy of rollback to which the Republican Party had committed itself in 1952?

This was not a popular question. Stronger answers defined the policy of rollback and then attempted to show the foreign policy actions of the Eisenhower administration and analyse the extent to which these actions fulfilled the commitment to rollback. Analysis, rather than pure description, characterised better answers.

Depth Study 3: International History, 1945–1991

9 Assess the impact of the nuclear arms race on the conduct of the Cold War in the period from 1950 to 1963.

Stronger answers to this question focused firmly on ‘assess’ and ‘impact’. There were some impressive answers that combined a clearly analytical approach with in-depth subject knowledge. A close examination of the Cold War from Korea to Cuba and the role of nuclear weapons characterised the highest quality responses. Weaker answers fell back on a description of the Cold War in the stated period but did not get to grips with the actual question. A few candidates ignored the stated timeframe of the question and included material that was beyond the time period and therefore not relevant.

10 ‘National uprisings in Eastern Europe were a consequence, rather than a cause, of the decline of the Soviet Union in the 1980s.’ How far do you agree?

Weaker answers were prone to describing the fall of the Soviet Union, often in some detail but not addressing the issue of the national uprisings in Eastern Europe and the role they played. Others discussed national uprisings but sometimes went back to Hungary in 1956 or they explained the end of the Cold War. Stronger answers looked at the role and importance of the national uprisings to the fall of the Soviet Union and addressed whether they were a cause or consequence or indeed a mixture of both. The reforms of Gorbachev, the abandoning of the Brezhnev Doctrine and the rise of nationalism in Eastern Europe were all analysed well in stronger answers.

11 Should Deng Xiaoping be seen more as a reformer than a hardliner?

This was a popular question and produced some very good answers. Most argued that he was a reformer in economic terms, but a hardliner politically. There was good depth of subject knowledge and many answers examined both reformer and hardliner and then attempted a reasoned judgement. Several candidates suggested that he was both reformer and hardliner and substantiated their view. Weaker answers lacked analysis and tended to be descriptive or failed to try to reach a judgement on the question asked.

12 ‘The Suez crisis of 1956 was caused by Western fears regarding Egypt’s increasingly close relations with the Soviet Union.’ How far do you agree?

There were some very strong answers to this question which demonstrated real independence of thought. Many argued that Nasser wished to be non-aligned and was simply an Arab nationalist. The role of the Soviet Union was examined, as were the motives of Britain, France and Israel and the self-interest of each nation was explained. Strong answers included firm and rational judgements that were supported by in-depth subject knowledge. The weaker responses relied on descriptions of the Suez crisis and did not fully engage with the question asked.