

HISTORY

Paper 0977/11
Paper 11

Key messages

Candidates need to read the questions carefully to ensure that their responses only include relevant information. They should carefully note the particular focus of any given question and focus their answers accordingly. Any given dates in the question should be carefully noted to ensure that their responses only include knowledge within the time span of the question.

Candidates should avoid 'listing points' and write in continuous prose. In more extensive responses they should be encouraged to organise their ideas into distinct paragraphs, otherwise points can become blurred together or, alternatively, candidates can lose focus on the question set.

General comments

Strong responses reflected sound understanding and good knowledge in both the Core Content and Depth Study questions. These responses included a clear and accurate communication of ideas, whether explaining the reasons for past events and historical features or building an argument to reach a balanced historical judgement. These included conclusions that were more than purely summative and in which they came to a judgement and justified this by reference to the balance of evidence cited in their essay.

Weaker responses, whilst often demonstrating sound factual knowledge, found it difficult to apply the knowledge to the question set. These responses tended not to be divided into paragraphs and were characterised by a descriptive list of facts and no explanation. Some of the weaker responses were very brief and generalised, with few supporting factual details.

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

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

Part (a) responses should focus on description and only include relevant details. Background information is not needed. Explanation is not required. Most candidates realised that responses to **(a)** questions could be short and concise. Many answered these questions in the form of a short paragraph, which was an appropriate approach.

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

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

Comments on specific questions

Section A: Core Content

Questions 1, 2, 3 and 4

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

Questions 5 and 6

These were the two most frequently answered questions in the Core Content Section.

Question 5

- (a) There were mixed responses to this question. Strong responses demonstrated understanding of how the Corfu incident of 1923 was resolved. The best answers typically featured four details such as, ‘Greece appealed to the League of Nations’, ‘the League condemned Mussolini’s invasion’, ‘Mussolini insisted the League refer the case to the Conference of Ambassadors’ and ‘Greece was made to pay reparations to Italy’. Credit was also gained for stating that, ‘Greece was made to apologise to Italy’ and ‘the Italians left Corfu.’ The focus of the question was on how the incident was resolved and lengthy descriptions of the build up to the incident were not needed. A number of candidates lacked knowledge of the Corfu Crisis and either left the response blank or confused it with another incident.
- (b) Successful responses included two well explained reasons why the Vilna dispute was a challenge to the League of Nations. They explained that the dispute was between Poland and Lithuania. Vilna was the capital of Lithuania and included many Poles, so Poland invaded Vilna. The League found this a challenge because they asked the Poles to leave Vilna and they refused. This made the League seem weak. A second explained reason was that one of the League’s major countries, France, did not want to offend Poland as they wanted Poland as a future ally against Germany. Britain was unwilling to act alone therefore no sanctions were given to Poland and it retained Vilna. Less successful responses included general details about the failure of the League of Nations, with no specific reference to the Vilna dispute. There were also some blank responses to this question.
- (c) Most responses demonstrated some understanding of the weaknesses of the League of Nations. The strongest responses were well organised and produced a balanced answer by explaining why the absence of the USA was the main reason for the weakness of the League. They were able to explain that the USA’s military and economic power, which had not been weakened by the First World War, would have given strength to the League when enforcing decisions. They were also able to explain that without the USA it would be difficult to effectively enforce economic sanctions because the USA would continue to trade with the offending nations, resulting in the limited impact of any sanctions. Responses usually included examples from the Corfu, Manchurian, or Abyssinian crises to emphasise these points. They balanced the absence of the USA with other factors that increased the weakness of the League, such as, the absence of Germany and Russia, the effects of the Great Depression, the self-interest of Britain and France and the weaknesses in the structure of the League. Most commonly explained was the self-interest of Britain and France, especially during the Abyssinian Crisis when they did not close the Suez Canal or impose sanctions on oil because they wanted to keep Mussolini as an ally against the rise of Hitler’s Germany. Other responses were able to identify weaknesses in the structure of the League, such as the Assembly and the Council not meeting often, that votes had to be unanimous, a veto could be used in the Council and there was no standing army. These responses would have benefited from emphasising that these weaknesses resulted in slow decision making and meant a lack of decisive action by the League because it was difficult to enforce decisions. Examples that could have been used included the crises of Vilna, Corfu, Manchuria and Abyssinia. Some responses included details of why the USA did not join the League and the successes of the League both of which lacked relevance to the question.

Question 6

- (a) This question worked well for most candidates, who were able to describe Hitler’s preparations for war before 1936. Successful responses were confined to the time scale in the question, matching dates and events between these dates. Examples included Germany leaving the League of Nations in 1933, secret rearmament followed by a major rearmament in 1935, the introduction of

conscription and the naval agreement with Britain. However, some candidates focused on Hitler's aims (for example, tearing up the Treaty of Versailles) and used as evidence events outside the scope of the question, particularly the remilitarisation of the Rhineland, Germany's participation in the Spanish Civil War and the Anschluss with Austria 1938.

- (b) There were mixed responses to this question. The majority were aware that 'lebensraum' meant 'living space' but few were able to explain that this would involve taking over land to the east of Germany at the expense of Poland and Russia, with a view to resettlement and exploitation of resources in these areas. Some strong responses also alluded to the racial entitlement (belief in Aryan superiority) implicit in this policy. More responses could have considered what lebensraum would mean for the populations of the lands to the east of Germany. Some responses conflated 'lebensraum' with the union of Germany and Austria or the annexation of the Sudetenland or saw it as part of Hitler's aim to overthrow the Treaty of Versailles. Other candidates appeared to be unfamiliar with this term, for example regarding it as part of Hitler's domestic policies. A small number of responses were left blank.
- (c) Though most candidates were familiar with and understood these two agreements, responses tended to be rather general in nature, and could have been improved by the inclusion of specific detail which could have turned an identification into an explanation. For example, most were able to say that after the Nazi-Soviet Pact was agreed, Hitler had cleared the way to invade Poland. Stronger responses developed these points by referring to the secret nature of the Polish clause and the subsequent enhanced Anglo-French commitment in Poland. They also linked the invasion of Poland to the collapse of the Munich Agreement caused by Hitler's takeover of Czechoslovakia in March 1939. To balance the argument strong responses could explain the impact of the Munich Agreement - the boost given to Hitler's confidence that Britain and France presented no threat and, often less exactly, the impact of Hitler's breach of the agreement in March 1939. Strong responses were also able to explain how the Munich Agreement brought war closer because it led to Stalin being receptive to making the Nazi-Soviet Pact. Weaker responses often muddled the chronology of events around the Munich Agreement. Some candidates found it difficult to give two explanations of the significance of the Nazi-Soviet Pact, the most common explanation being the avoidance of war on two fronts, providing Hitler with a green light to attack Poland. Some confused the Munich Agreement with the Munich Putsch of 1923.

Question 7

- (a) Responses to this question were mixed. Stronger responses gained credit for identifying the agreements made at Potsdam. Examples included 'Germany was divided into four parts', 'the Nazi Party was banned', 'Nazi leaders were to be tried as war criminals' and 'Germany had to pay reparations'. Less successful responses confused the agreements made at Potsdam with those made at Yalta a few months earlier, although credit was given for responses which stated that 'some of the agreements made at Yalta were confirmed'. There were some responses that discussed why there were disagreements at Potsdam, which was not the focus of the question.
- (b) Strong responses to this question tended to explain two reasons why Stalin imposed a blockade on Berlin in 1948. They demonstrated a good understanding of the division of Berlin, after World War II, between the Soviet Union, the USA, France, and Britain, and how the Western Allies had joined their zones together and introduced a new currency. The western powers were trying to make West Berlin strong, and Stalin felt threatened by this. They went on to explain that he blockaded Berlin because he wanted to remove the western powers from West Berlin and control all of Berlin, as it was deep inside Eastern Germany. Weaker responses often included details of why the blockade failed, which lacked relevance to the question, and/or confused the geography of Berlin and which side had East and West Berlin. Some responses detailed reasons why the Berlin Wall was built.
- (c) There were mixed responses to this question, 'Which did more to damage relations between the USA and USSR: disagreements over Poland or Marshall Aid?' Candidates were more confident explaining the impact of Marshall Aid on relationships than they were on the explaining the damage inflicted on relationships as a result of disagreements over Poland. Responses identified that Marshall Aid was part of the USA's policy of containment and was designed to prevent countries falling to communism. The strongest responses were then able to develop paragraphs explaining the impact of USA's action. For example: 'The USA had interpreted the Soviet take-over of Eastern Europe as the start of the spread of communism around the world. Marshal Aid was a package of financial support which was to help strengthen vulnerable European economies suffering from the effects of war. Stalin felt threatened by this policy and forbade any of the eastern European states

to apply for Marshall Aid.’ On the other side of the argument, strong responses explained that Stalin had not done what was agreed at Yalta and allowed free elections to be held in Poland to choose the government that they wanted. He had fixed elections in order to achieve a provisional government of pro- Soviet Lublin Poles and exiled London Poles. His failure to do what was agreed had angered the USA. Weaker responses often included general comments on the differences in ideology and would have benefited from showing more understanding, especially of the disagreements over Poland.

Question 8

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

Section B: Depth Studies

Questions 9 and 10

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

Question 11

This was the most popular question of the Depth Studies among candidates.

- (a) This question was well answered and most candidates demonstrated a good understanding of the demands of the question. They were able to identify four aims of the Spartacists, most commonly the overthrow of the Weimar Republic, the establishment of a communist state, using the Bolshevik Revolution as an example, the establishment of a more equal society and the common ownership of property. Some candidates, whilst often making one or two relevant points, drifted into a description of the Spartacist rising, describing the role of the Freikorps and the fate of the Spartacist leaders, which lacked relevance to the question set.
- (b) Some candidates struggled to focus on the importance of the Kapp Putsch for the Weimar government. Candidates were often knowledgeable about the events surrounding the putsch but could not relate these into implications for the Weimar government. Strong responses were able to point to the strength of the anti-democratic and pro-monarchical feeling, the fragility of the Weimar Republic when it could not rely on the loyalty of the army and the general support for the Weimar government amongst the workers and population of Berlin. Some less successful responses confused the putsch with other insurgencies.
- (c) There were some strong responses to this question in which candidates had a good understanding of why proportional representation was a serious weakness of the Weimar constitution. These responses explained how proportional representation worked and how it led to a string of unstable governments in the 1920s. They also referred to the foothold that the system gave to extremist parties. Some also included the lack of a threshold which allowed such extremist parties to gain seats. On the other side of the argument, responses included details of the problems caused by Article 48 of the constitution. In most cases explanations here were less certain than for proportional representation and usually only one explanation on this side (most commonly that the president alone could decide what constituted an emergency) was included. Strong responses included a second explanation, showing how Hindenburg used these powers during the critical period of 1930 – 1933, and how this facilitated Hitler’s grip on power in 1933. It was evident from weaker responses that the word ‘constitution’ was not clearly understood and these responses drifted from the question to write about the weaknesses and failures (mainly economic) of the Weimar government.

Question 12

- (a) This question was well answered and most responses identified four features of the Hitler Youth such as, it had separate sections for boys and girls, it was used to indoctrinate the youth with Nazi ideas, the activities it offered were to turn boys into good soldiers and it was made compulsory in 1936. Others gained credit for saying that the members wore uniform and that it was established in the 1920s.

- (b) Most candidates could identify that the Nazi regime provided jobs and better working conditions for the workers. Stronger responses to this question identified and explained two reasons why many workers were happy with life under the Nazi regime. They explained that under the Weimar Republic, as a result of the Great Depression, there had been massive unemployment. One of Hitler's aims was to provide employment for workers which he did by providing jobs in the armed forces, in public work schemes, in building the Olympic Stadium and numerous autobahns. A second valid explanation was an explanation of the benefits brought to the workers through 'The Beauty of Labour' and 'Strength through Joy' programmes. A misconception among some candidates was that Hitler gave them higher wages.
- (c) There were some good responses to this question which were well organised and included carefully selected and relevant details. Candidates needed to produce a balanced answer by explaining how far Nazi policies towards women were successful. The strongest responses stated clearly what the policy was, Hitler's view on the role of Nazi women and the impact of his policies. Most candidates had a good understanding of the Nazi policy towards women, including encouraging women to give up their jobs, stay at home, get married and have lots of children. Weaker responses were limited in that they understood the role of women but there was no assessment of the success of the policy. Stronger responses were able to explain that, as a result, the population would rise, which the Nazis believed in the long term would provide more soldiers for the armed forces. Some linked the increase in population to the domination of the Aryan race, which Hitler so desired. Strong responses explained that this worked until about 1937 when, with men joining the army, there was a shortage of labour and therefore women were increasingly required to return to work, and Nazi policies now had become contradictory.

Questions 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21 and 22

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

HISTORY

Paper 0977/21
Paper 21

Key messages

It is important to answer the questions on either the nineteenth century or the twentieth century option. Candidates should not answer some questions from both options.

It is important to remember that all the questions are about the sources. All answers should therefore be based on interpretation and evaluation of the sources. All answers should be supported by using the content of the sources. This is important for all the questions. On **Question 6**, a number of candidates did not make use of the sources and wrote general essays.

Sometimes it can be useful to use a quote from a source to support a point being made in an answer. It is important to give the quotation in full. Ellipses should not be used as they often lead to crucial parts of the quotation being missed out.

When examining cartoons, especially for ‘message’ questions, candidates should be asking themselves, ‘What is the point of view of the cartoonist?’

Candidates are advised to think about the questions and carefully plan their answers before writing their answers. This will help them understand exactly what the questions are asking and help them to directly address the questions in their answers. It will also help them avoid repeating or paraphrasing sources at the beginning of their answers.

It is important to answer the question which is set. For example, in **Question 2** in the twentieth century option, it is not enough to explain the message of the cartoon. Candidates need to explain that the message is the reason for publication. Similarly, in **Question 4** in the nineteenth century option, it is not enough to compare or evaluate the sources. Candidates need to use their analysis of the sources to explain whether they think Source E makes Source F surprising.

General comments

Most candidates answered the questions on the twentieth century option, although a good number attempted the nineteenth century option. A good standard of answers was seen but a number of candidates wrote generally about the sources or the topic and did not directly address the questions. Many candidates had the required contextual knowledge and were able to interpret and compare sources, but some were less ready to evaluate sources. Candidates need to decide when a question is asking them to evaluate and then decide the best method of evaluation for that particular question and those particular sources. Sources can be evaluated by using contextual knowledge or other sources to check the claims made by a source or by considering the purpose of the author of the source. A number of candidates on the nineteenth century option did not use the sources in their answers to **Question 6** and struggled to evaluate when tackling **Questions 3** and **4**.

Comments on specific questions

Option A: Nineteenth century topic

Question 1

This question was generally answered well, with many candidates finding agreements such as Germany promising independence/sovereignty and demanding a conference. In terms of disagreements, a reasonable

number of candidates explained that Source A states that the Entente was under threat, while Source B disagrees with this. The best answers compared the two sources point by point. Some less successful responses summarised each source and then asserted that they agree or disagree.

Question 2

Most candidates were able to use parts of the cartoon (including the caption) to explain valid sub-messages, for example Germany was hostile towards Britain and France, and that Britain and France were allies. To explain the big message it is necessary to consider all the main parts of the cartoon. The title, 'The match-maker despite herself', is a big help. A small number of candidates put these elements together and were able to explain that the cartoon is suggesting that Germany's hostility towards Britain and France (aimed at testing and even breaking the entente) has been counter-productive and had brought the two closer together. It is important to note that the question is about the cartoonist's message. This suggests that the point of view of the cartoonist is required – he is showing approval of the fact that Germany's move has been counter-productive.

Question 3

A number of candidates struggled with their responses to this question. When evaluating a source it is often useful to consider the possible purpose of the author. In the case of Source D, the context (Germany's desire to destroy the entente), can be used to suggest the purpose of the German diplomat in writing the kind of account he has written. However, many candidates did not consider purpose. Instead, they attempted to evaluate Source D by checking details against other sources or their contextual knowledge. This was often a struggle, with candidates simply asserting that various details in Source D are not true. This was surprising as several sources, as well as the Background information, provide material that could be used, for example Source B states that the Kaiser stated his support for the Sultan's sovereignty, supporting Source D which tells us that the Kaiser described the Sultan as 'the free ruler of an independent country'. A number of candidates did reject the account in Source D because it was written by a German diplomat, but they needed to go on and develop their answers.

Question 4

A reasonable number of candidates found disagreements or agreements between the two sources and used them to explain surprise or lack of surprise. In Source E Fisher is keen on war and Grey in Source F does not rule it out. However, Fisher is keen on an alliance with France and on war with Germany, while Grey is much more cautious and does not want to act too early or go beyond the terms of the entente. A number of candidates wrote about the sources without addressing the question in a meaningful way. The best answers used the provenance and the content of the sources to argue that it is not surprising that Fisher was more keen on war because he was a military man, while Grey was a diplomat.

Question 5

Most candidates were able to provide a valid sub-message for Source G, for example the Kaiser is threatening Morocco, France and Britain are worried about the Kaiser's actions. For Source H, a reasonable number explained how the Kaiser appears to be a threatening figure. A number of candidates interpreted both cartoons but would have improved their answers by producing a comparison. Many of those that did manage a comparison were able to explain how the Kaiser appears to be up to no good or to be causing trouble in both sources. A small number of stronger responses got to the cartoonists' points of view – they both appear to disapprove of the Kaiser and what he is doing. A few candidates struggled to move beyond surface descriptions.

Question 6

This question is based on use of the sources. It is primarily about the sources, as well as the motivation of Germany in its actions over Morocco. However, a good number of candidates missed the sources and just wrote about the Moroccan Crisis or the details in the sources, without identifying any particular sources. Candidates need to test the hypothesis given in the question (Germany's aim in interfering in Morocco was to break the Anglo-French Entente) against the evidence in the sources and explain which sources support the hypothesis, and which do not. In doing this they need to clearly identify which sources they are using, clearly state whether each one supports or disagrees with the hypothesis, and make specific use of the content of sources to support their answers, for example 'Source C supports the statement because Germany is looking disapprovingly at the close relations between France and Britain. The caption says about Germany that it has been the match-maker, despite itself, meaning that it meant to break the relationship between

France and Britain but has achieved the opposite.’ To ensure that proper use is made of individual sources, candidates should be encouraged not to group the sources. This often led to very general statements being made about the group as a whole, with no use of particular sources in that group.

Option B: Twentieth century topic

Question 1

This question was generally answered well. Most candidates were able to find agreements between the two sources and a good number also found disagreements. For example, both sources state that Lloyd George kept changing his mind, that Clemenceau was not interested in the League of Nations and that there were difficulties in the negotiations. There are also disagreements over whether or not Wilson and Clemenceau were able to work together and how far Wilson engaged with the other leaders. A small number of candidates summarised both sources without making any point-by-point comparisons. The best answers were those that went beyond the details of the sources and looked at them in the round. They explained that, on the whole, Source A suggests the Big Three got on fairly well, while Source B suggests the opposite.

Question 2

This question produced a wide range of answers. It required candidates to use their contextual knowledge to interpret the intended message of the cartoon and to infer the purpose of the artist. Not using their contextual knowledge led some candidates to claim that the cartoon is about the Treaty of Versailles when it is about the negotiations. (The date of the cartoon is March 1919, while the Treaty was signed 28 June 1919.) Some answers were less clear, suggesting in places that it is about the negotiations, but also stating it is about the Treaty. This question asks about the reason for the publication of the cartoon in March 1919. It is therefore important to give and explain a reason for publication. Some candidates suggested it was published in March because that is when the negotiations were taking place. Better answers focused more on the messages of the cartoon. Some just explained that, for example in the negotiations France was demanding heavy punishments for Germany, but others went further and explained the big message – disapproval of France’s harsh attitude towards Germany. It is important to note that these messages must be presented by candidates as the reasons for why the cartoon was being published. It is not enough to simply interpret the cartoon. The following is an example of what is required, ‘This cartoon was published to tell people that France wanted harsh punishments for Germany in the peace negotiations and that such harsh punishments would be a big mistake.’ The best answers explain a possible purpose for the publication, for example to persuade MPs or the British public to oppose harsh punishments for Germany.

Question 3

This question also produced an interesting range of answers. The best answers rested on an understanding that the authorship of the source matters as much as what the source says. Candidates are told that Lansing was replaced by House as his chief advisor. A small number of candidates used this information to explain that they were not surprised by Source D because of his criticism of House. Other candidates focused on House and his position as Wilson’s chief advisor. They explained their surprise at House’s actions in Source D because of Wilson’s belief in the League of Nations. Some candidates used their contextual knowledge to select an aspect of Source D and explain why they were, or were not, surprised by it. For example, it comes as no surprise that the French preferred an alliance with the United States and Britain to a League of Nations. Weaker answers often selected something that was, or was not, surprising, but neglected to produce a satisfactory explanation, while others produced perfectly good reasons for being surprised or not surprised, but did not state whether they were actually surprised or not. In questions like this it is crucial that candidates clearly state whether they are surprised or not.

Question 4

Some candidates struggled with this question because they focused on particular instances of Wilson’s behaviour, for example he resented the accusations or he got angry, rather than making an inference about the kind of man Wilson was from the evidence in Source E. Some candidates struggled with ‘impressions’ and copied the source or produced a paraphrase, and a few wrote about Wilson using their contextual knowledge, with no use of the source. However, there were many candidates who suggested and supported valid impressions, for example ‘idealistic’, ‘rational’, ‘short tempered’, ‘passionate’, ‘confident’ and ‘thin skinned’. In better responses, candidates supported one or two valid impressions by reference to the content of Source E.

Question 5

Most candidates were able to interpret at least the sub-messages of the cartoons, although some did not compare them. Both cartoons contain two elements: Wilson and the nations. Many candidates were able to use one of these to produce a sub-message, for example the nations were interested in their own interests, or Wilson wanted a just peace. Fewer candidates went on to use all the elements in the cartoons to reach and compare the big messages – in Source F Wilson is unaware of the problems facing him in his pursuit of a just peace, while in Source G he is aware. Two important points come out of candidates' answers: candidates should not interpret the cartoons separately, but should make a direct comparison of their messages, and try and use all the elements in the cartoon to reach an interpretation. Interpretations should not be based on just one part of the cartoon.

Question 6

Many candidates did well with this question. They used details of the sources to produce clear explanations of how some sources support the hypothesis and how some do not. The explanations must use the content of the sources, for example 'Source B does not support the idea that Wilson's difficulties were caused by Clemenceau because it says that Lloyd George caused difficulties because he changed his mind so much and so was difficult for Wilson to work with.' This answer contains the following crucial elements: it makes clear whether or not the source supports the hypothesis, it makes reference to specific content in Source B, and it explains how this content shows that Source B disagrees with the statement. Weaknesses in other answers included: not using the sources, not explicitly stating whether the source supports or does not support the hypothesis, and not referring to a specific statement in the source. Candidates should avoid grouping the sources and making a general assertion that is meant to apply to all of the sources in the group. Each source needs to be dealt with individually.

HISTORY

Paper 0977/03
Coursework

There were too few candidates for a meaningful report to be produced.

HISTORY

Paper 0470/41
Alternative to Coursework

Key messages

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

General comments

A range of Depth Studies were undertaken. Depth Study B: Germany, 1918 – 45 was the most popular choice among candidates, followed by Depth Study D: The United States, 1919 – 41. A number of candidates attempted Depth Study A: The First World War, 1914-18 and Depth Study C: Russia, 1905 – 41. There were too few responses to Depth Study E: China, c.1930-c.1990, Depth Study F: South Africa, c.1940-c.1994 and Depth Study G: Israelis and Palestinians since 1945, to make any meaningful comments. Good answers had been well-planned and were able to use a wide range of material to give balanced responses, with supported explanations. The best answers also gave supported judgements and conclusions, but few managed to provide a sustained line of argument throughout the response. There were some rubric infringements where candidates had attempted both questions from the Depth Study or multiple Depth Studies. Less successful answers contained too much narrative or description or did not properly address the question that was set. These candidates often wrote at great length about the topic or Depth Study in general, instead of focussing on the parameters set by the question. Some candidates also strayed from the chronology set out in the question, which sometimes led to large sections of the response lacking relevance. Candidates need to read the question carefully before answering and ensure that their response focuses on importance or significance.

Comments on specific questions

Depth Study A: The First World War, 1914 – 18

Both **Question 1** and **Question 2** were answered by a large number of candidates.

Question 1 saw a number of struggling responses. A small number of good answers were able to correctly define the term ‘race to the sea’ and explain how this led to a prolonged war. These candidates examined how, after the first Battle of the Marne in 1914, both sides dug in defensive lines of trenches and attempted to outflank each other as they raced for control of the Channel ports, which led to the end of mobile warfare on the Western Front. This was then balanced against other factors such as the new weapons and technology like the machine gun, the lack of effective military tactics to launch offensives and the failure of the Schlieffen Plan. The best responses were able to provide a good level of detail and chronological accuracy. Weaker responses often confused the chronology or examined events much later in the war, at which point a stalemate was already in existence. A number of candidates confused the term ‘race to the sea’ with the war at sea.

Question 2 responses tended to be more focused and accurate than **Question 1** responses. Good answers were able to give detailed descriptions and explanations of the significance of the German Revolution, both from above and below, often including material on the Kiel Mutiny. This was then balanced against other factors, such as the war weariness and shortages in Germany by 1916 caused by the British naval blockade of German ports, US entry into the war and the failure of the Spring Offensive in 1918. Some less successful responses tended to confuse the chronology of events in 1918 and a few answers also examined many events throughout the war in one long narrative, rather than focussing on the demands of the question.

Depth Study B: Germany, 1918 – 45

Question 3 and **Question 4** were answered by a large number of candidates.

Question 3 was generally well answered. The best responses tended to focus on the crises in 1923 that were linked to Germany's failure to pay its second instalment of the war reparations. Descriptions on the Ruhr occupation and the hyperinflation were often detailed, and some attempts were made to explain why this was an important cause of disorder in Germany. This was then balanced against other important factors such as the military and territorial terms of the Treaty of Versailles, the War Guilt Clause, as well as the various uprisings in Germany by far-left and far-right groups. Weaker responses tended to give a generalised narrative of the period 1919 – 23 and would have benefited from explaining how these events caused disorder in Germany. A small number of answers made very universal statements about 'all Germans' hating the Weimar government or turning against Ebert. Candidates need to be more specific and focused with their comments, using in-depth supporting evidence to substantiate explanations.

Question 4 responses tended to be equally good as **Question 3** responses. Good answers were able to examine the effects the Depression had on Germany, such as high unemployment, and explain why this was a significant factor in increasing Nazi support up to 1933. Many candidates looked at how middle-class voters and industrialists turned their support to the Nazis in fear of a communist revolution and how the Nazis used negative cohesion to drive anti-Weimar feeling in the population. This was balanced against other factors such as the Nazi propaganda campaign, Hitler's leadership and the actions of the SA. The best answers were able to explain how significant each factor was in securing Nazi support in the elections of 1932 – 33. Other responses focused too much on events after the March 1933 elections such as the Night of the Long Knives or the death of Hindenburg, which happened in 1934, and therefore lacked relevance to this question. Other weaker answers also looked back too far to events in the early years of the Weimar Republic and suggested this increased Nazi support, often not producing a convincing argument.

Depth Study C: Russia, 1905 – 41

A good number of candidates attempted this Depth Study. **Question 5** and **Question 6** were both popular choices.

Question 5 produced some good responses but a number were hampered by a lack of precision in the answer. These responses focused too much on events between March and November 1917 before the Bolsheviks had seized power from the Provisional Government, examining events such as Lenin's reveal of his April Theses, the July Days and the Kornilov Affair. These events were factors that explained why the Provisional Government failed and was overthrown by the Bolsheviks, rather than the Bolsheviks' consolidation of power. The stronger answers examined Lenin's actions once in power such as his decrees, the introduction of War Communism and later the New Economic Policy. This was then balanced against other important factors such as Trotsky's leadership of the Red Army during the Civil War, the Red Terror and the use of the Cheka. These answers demonstrated depth and breadth of contextual knowledge and were able to assess relative importance.

Question 6 also saw fewer stronger responses. Many candidates examined the Five-Year Plans in some detail and gave detailed descriptions of their achievements and consequences for the Soviet people. However, the question required candidates to compare the significance of the different factors that led Stalin to introduce the plans, rather than the impact they had on the Soviet Union. Some good responses were able to compare the economic factors, such as the need to modernise the Soviet economy and compete against the Western capitalist powers, versus other factors, such as the need to modernise the Soviet defensive capabilities or ideological reasons, which included Stalin's desire to scrap the New Economic Policy and create a centralised, command economy in line with Marxism-Leninism.

Depth Study D: The United States, 1919 – 41

This was the second most widely answered Depth Study, with **Question 7** proving slightly more popular than **Question 8**.

Question 7 produced some strong responses in which candidates were able to accurately explain how US tariffs in the 1920s led to retaliatory tariffs from foreign nations which, in turn, meant that US foodstuffs became too expensive, causing prices to drop. Less successful responses did not grasp this fact and suggested that it was the US tariffs that made agricultural produce more expensive. Balance was provided by examining other important factors that meant farmers did not share in the prosperity in the 1920s such as mechanisation during the First World War, which led to overproduction and foreign competition from Canada

and Argentina. A small number of responses provided too much material on the boom in the 1920s in general and examined the growth of new industries in urban areas, which lacked relevance to the question.

Question 8 was generally better answered than **Question 7**. The strongest responses had a good knowledge and understanding of the impact Hoover's reaction to the Bonus Marchers had on his presidency and cited MacArthur's use of tear gas to clear the peaceful protestors. This was then balanced against other significant factors such as Roosevelt's election campaign, Hoover's perceived lack of effective action to tackle the effects of the Depression and many people's alienation with Republican policies. Other responses were often overly generalised and provided limited narratives of events during the Depression. A few answers also examined the New Deal era in too much detail which lacked relevance to this question.

Depth Study E: China, c.1930 – c.1990

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

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

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

Depth Study G: Israelis and Palestinians since 1945

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