

HISTORY

Paper 0977/12
Paper 12

Key messages

It is important that candidates read the question very carefully before they begin their response, in order to understand exactly what is being asked and thus only include relevant factual details. They should note the particular focus of any given question.

Any given dates in the question should be carefully noted to ensure that responses only include knowledge within the time span of the question.

Candidates should avoid 'listing' points and they should write in continuous prose. In more extensive responses, ideas should be organised into distinct paragraphs - otherwise points can become blurred together or candidates can be prone to losing focus on the original question.

General comments

Strong responses were able to demonstrate good factual knowledge and understanding of both the Core 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 responses included conclusions that were more than purely summative and in which candidates came to a judgement and justified this by reference to the balance of evidence cited in their essays.

In weaker responses candidates, 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 description and lists of facts, with no explanation.

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. There is no need for background information. Explanation is not required. Most candidates now realise that responses to **(a)** questions can be short and concise.

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 a description of what happened. Strong responses were carefully organised, using separate paragraphs for the different reasons that were being explained. Long introductions which 'set the scene' are 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 focussed only on one side of the argument. These could have been 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 any meaningful comments to be made.

Questions 5 and 6

These were the two most popular questions in the Core Section.

Question 5

- (a) There were mixed responses to this question. Strong responses demonstrated good understanding of the territorial terms of the Treaty of St Germain. Credit was given for the naming of both countries which became independent and the territory that was awarded to specific countries. Knowledge awarded included that: 'The treaty dealt with Austria', 'The Austro-Hungarian Empire was broken up', 'The union of Austria and Germany was forbidden' and 'Hungary became an independent country'. Weaker responses included information on the non-territorial terms of this Treaty which were not relevant to this question. A number of candidates either confused the Treaty of St Germain with the Treaty of Versailles and discussed Germany's territorial losses or made very general statements, such as 'they lost land'. A common misconception was that 'Austria was not allowed to reunite with Germany'.
- (b) This question was well answered. Most candidates were familiar with the reasons why Lloyd George did not want to punish Germany harshly. Two well explained reasons were needed. Two commonly explained reasons were firstly, that prior to the First World War Germany had been Britain's second major trading partner and secondly, that there was also a concern that a weakened Germany may turn to communism. Strong responses supported their statements with clear examples, such as: 'Before the First World War Germany had been a major trading partner of Great Britain. After the War, Lloyd George didn't want Germany to be too crippled, as he wanted to resume trade with Germany in order to improve Britain's economy, whether it was importing or exporting materials, but especially providing British jobs. The German economy would not flourish and help the British economy if reparations were set high and industrial areas removed from Germany.' Weaker responses readily included identification of reasons such as: 'Germany would want revenge if it was treated too harshly' or 'Lloyd George didn't want France to become too powerful', without any explanation. It is important to support statements with factual details. Some responses drifted from the focus of the question to discuss the terms of the Treaty of Versailles and whether Lloyd George liked them or not which lacked relevance to this question. It is important for candidates to link the points that they make to the question set. A small number of candidates confused Lloyd George with Woodrow Wilson.
- (c) The strongest responses were well organised and produced a balanced answer by explaining how both Clemenceau and Wilson had to compromise during the peace negotiations in Paris. These strong responses usually identified an aim of either Clemenceau or Wilson and then linked a term to a specific aim to address how far it had been a compromise. For example: 'Clemenceau was concerned about French security and wanted the Rhineland to be an independent state and the German army to be disarmed completely, as France had been invaded by Germany twice in the last fifty years. In the final Treaty he had to compromise because Lloyd George and Wilson didn't agree and didn't want France to become too powerful. He had to accept that the Rhineland was only demilitarised and the German army was allowed 100 000 men.' Others stated that: 'One of Wilson's Fourteen Points was self-determination for all countries. However, this wasn't achieved and he had to compromise because of the imperialistic ambitions of Britain and France. They wanted to keep control of their empire and in the Treaty of Versailles former German colonies became mandates controlled by the League of Nations which effectively meant that Britain and France controlled them.' Weaker responses tended to include lengthy explanations of the aims of both Clemenceau and Wilson and the reasons behind these aims, without specifically mentioning the precise terms of the Treaty, which had led them to compromise. Others concentrated their answers on what Clemenceau or Wilson achieved in the Treaty, with no mention of compromise. Two common misconceptions were that Clemenceau wanted to split Germany into small states. This was the view of Poincare, not Clemenceau. The second one was that Clemenceau wanted the Rhineland to be demilitarised. In fact, he wanted it to be an independent state.

Question 6

- (a) This question worked well for most candidates, who were able to describe Germany's relationship with the League of Nations between 1920 and 1939. There were lots of relevant examples that candidates could have included in their responses. Relevant points included: 'Initially Germany was not allowed to join the League of Nations, until it proved it was a peaceful nation. After the Locarno Treaties in 1926, Germany was accepted into the League of Nations.' Marks were also awarded for examples of Hitler's relationship with the League of Nations, including his withdrawal from the Disarmament Conference and subsequent leaving of the League of Nations. Weaker responses included generalised terms such as: 'They had a bad relationship'. It is important to support a general statement with a specific fact, for example a name or a date.
- (b) Weaker responses showed limited knowledge of Haile Selassie. They also confused the chronology and assumed that Haile Selassie addressed the League of Nations at the start of the Italian invasion of Abyssinia in 1935, whereas the date in the question was June 1936. There were often in answers lengthy details of the background to the Abyssinian Crisis, including why the Italians invaded Abyssinia, which lacked relevance to this question. Strong responses identified and explained two reasons. The reasons explained included: the ruthlessness of the invading Italians, the demand for more sanctions, including the closure of the Suez Canal, and the outrage at the contents of the leaked Hoare-Laval Pact.
- (c) Most responses demonstrated some understanding of the League of Nations handling of the Manchurian Crisis. Strong responses were well organised and considered both sides of the argument. There was a strong feeling that the League of Nations did as much as they could in view of their limitations. The most common reason for this view was that they did send an investigation to find out what had happened, the Lytton Report fed back their results and they morally condemned Japan for the invasion. These responses then explained that, although the Japanese ignored the advice of the League and withdrew from the League of Nations, they could not have done much more because the USA and Russia were not members of the League. If they had imposed sanctions these would not have been effective because the USA, not being in the League, would continue to trade with Japan. In addition, the League had no army and without the powerful American and Russian armies it would be very difficult to beat the Japanese army. Strong responses also explained reasons on the other side of the argument for the League not doing as much as it could, most notably the self-interest of Britain and France. Responses highlighted that it was a good excuse that Japan was too far away, as they did not want to annoy Japan as they wanted to continue trading with their colonies in the Far East. The Lytton Report could be used on either side of the argument because, despite the sending of officials to Manchuria to assess the situation, it was a full year after the invasion before they presented their report. Weaker responses were less secure on the chronology of events and often drifted away from the question to include general details why the League failed, often including examples from other failures, such as Corfu, which lacked relevance to this question. Some also wrote in detail the reasons why Japan invaded Manchuria, which was not relevant to this question. A common misconception was that sanctions were imposed on Japan.

Question 7

- (a) Responses to this question were varied, with the stronger responses able to identify key areas of disagreement at the Potsdam Conference. Reparations, Germany, Poland and Eastern Europe were the most frequently mentioned. Candidates gained marks for including details such as: 'Stalin wanted to cripple Germany with steep reparations, whereas Truman did not want to make the same mistakes as the Treaty of Versailles. The future of Poland also caused disagreement as Stalin wanted it to be under the Soviet sphere of influence, rather than to have free elections as Truman wished'. Stalin's wish to become involved in the war against Japan gained credit in a small number of scripts, while de-Nazification was rarely included. Weaker responses tended either to set the scene (covering Roosevelt's death and the succession of Truman, as well as Atlee replacing Churchill) or to focus less on the contentious issues and more on broader matters such as Truman's antipathy to communism or Stalin being informed by Truman of the USA's development of an atomic bomb. These may have contributed to the atmosphere but were not specific subjects of dispute at Potsdam. A small number of candidates wrote about the decisions taken at Yalta, rather than the differences evident at Potsdam.

- (b) This question was well answered, with most responses able to provide at least one explanation as to why the blockade of Berlin failed. Nearly all identified and explained how the Allied airlift was the main reason for failure. Responses included details of the types of things that were flown in and the number of journeys the planes made. Strong responses were then able to develop paragraphs either exploring Stalin's reluctance to escalate to full scale war by shooting down planes or explaining the counterproductive effects of the blockade in terms of propaganda and/or the impact on East Germany. Weaker responses often included details of why Stalin blockaded Berlin or confused the blockade with the building of the Berlin Wall and the events of 1961.
- (c) There were many strong responses to this question, which demonstrated a good understanding of both sides of the argument. In support of Stalin's policies being defensive, the Marshall Plan and the Truman Doctrine were well discussed, as were the genuine Soviet fears of invasion following Hitler's attack in 1941 and of US military capabilities, following the use of atomic bombs at the end of the Second World War. On the other side of the argument, Stalin's salami tactics, his use of rigged elections and the breaking of previous promises were all used effectively to demonstrate Stalin's expansionism and aggression. The strongest responses were able to offer specific cases of countries affected, such as Czechoslovakia where the events of 1948 were often used convincingly and succinctly as evidence of Soviet aggression. Strong responses often included Cominform and Comecon on one or other side of the argument but there was occasional confusion about the purpose of each of these and of their starting dates. Other responses strayed outside the parameters of the question to include the formation of the Warsaw Pact (though some thought this was an instant reaction to the formation of NATO in 1949) and the quelling of the Hungarian Uprising (1956). It is important to read the dates given in the question to ensure that only relevant details are included in the response.

Question 8

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

Section B: Depth Studies

Questions 9 and 10

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

Question 11

This was the most popular question of the Depth Studies.

- (a) The majority of candidates demonstrated a good understanding of the Dawes Plan and gained high marks. Appropriate factual knowledge included that in 1924 the Dawes Plan was arranged between Charles Dawes, an American banker, and Stresemann. It gave loans to Germany to help relieve their economic crisis and helped them in the payment of reparations. It did mean, however, that Germany was heavily reliant on these loans and when the Wall Street Crash occurred in 1929, it impacted hard on the German economy. A small number of responses confused the Dawes Plan with the Young Plan.
- (b) There were many strong responses to this question, which demonstrated a good understanding of the reasons why Germany introduced a new currency in 1923. Two explanations were needed. Most responses considered the reasons for and the impact of hyperinflation on the German economy. They explained some of the events leading up to hyperinflation including Germany's failure to pay reparations resulted in the French and Belgian occupation of the Ruhr taking what was owed to them in the form of raw materials and goods. The German workers went on strike and the Government printed money to pay the workers, which led to hyperinflation. The most commonly used second explanation was that of the impact of hyperinflation, which included savings becoming worthless and the price of goods skyrocketing. Stresemann introduced a new currency in 1923 to stabilise the economic situation.
- (c) There were some one-sided responses to this question, as candidates were more familiar with the effects of the people's reaction to the Treaty of Versailles on Germany than they were to the effects of the 1918 Revolution on Germany. Some thought that the 1918 Revolution was the Spartacist Uprising. Strong responses to this question were well organised and included carefully selected and relevant details. These responses considered the events and effects of the 1918 Revolution,

highlighting that the sailors mutiny in Kiel had led to the abdication of the Kaiser and the setting up of a new democratic government headed by Chancellor Ebert. This had led the way to increasing voting rights and fundamental changes in the way Germany was governed under a new constitution. This was opposed by extreme groups like the Spartacists who were Communists and tried to lead a revolution to overthrow the government, which had to be rescued by the Freikorps. On the other side of the argument, most responses were familiar with the people's reaction to the Treaty of Versailles and the effect on Germany. These responses explained how the terms of the Treaty had created hatred and resentment leading to the 'stab in the back' myth and that those responsible were labelled as the 'November Criminals', as they were believed to have betrayed their country having accepted such harsh terms. Strong responses included some of the many different impacts of the Treaty on Germany, including the growth of extremism, the Kapp Putsch and the Munich Putsch. Responses often included the high reparations to emphasise the outrage of the Germans and how the non-payment of reparations led to the occupation of the Ruhr in 1923 by French and Belgian troops, which resulted in Germans being willing to take part in passive resistance in the Ruhr. Others detailed how the terms of the Treaty of Versailles led to outcry and the rise of the Nazi Party, as one of Hitler's main aims was to reverse the terms of the Treaty. Weaker responses drifted from the main question and included extensive description of the terms of the Versailles Treaty, without including any emphasis on the importance for Germany.

Question 12

- (a) This question was well answered and most responses gained high marks for identifying features of the League of German Maidens (BDM), such as, it was a youth group for girls, which taught them Nazi values, including their role as homemakers and mothers. Others included the various activities which were set up for them including camping, marching and physical education. Some responses demonstrated no knowledge of the League of German Maidens and thought it was about women and the issue of medals for procreation.
- (b) Strong responses to this question identified reasons why the Nazis made changes to the school curriculum, most commonly, that they wanted to indoctrinate children at a young age with Nazi ideas, including those of race and the role of girls and boys in the future of Germany. They then supported these identifications with examples such as eugenics on the timetable and the increase of physical education in order to make the girls healthy to be mothers and the boys to be strong soldiers. Weaker responses tended to describe the changes to the school curriculum, rather than emphasise why these changes were made.
- (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 racial theories explain why minorities were persecuted in Nazi Germany. Then, on the other side of the argument, they needed to explain other reasons why minorities were persecuted. Responses tended to be stronger on the side of racial theories, with the majority of responses outlining clearly Hitler's view on the superiority of the Aryan Race and how the Jews especially were considered as outcasts. On the other side of the argument, the most commonly used explanation was the view that minorities like mentally handicapped and disabled people, drunks and beggars were weakening the Nazi state. They were persecuted by the Nazis because they believed they were undesirables who were not contributing to society and were a drain on German resources. Some responses included the Jews on both sides of the argument due to Hitler's hate and jealousy of the Jews who were often rich and successful business people. Weaker responses were characterised by long descriptions of the treatment of the Jews and could have been improved by an explanation of why they were persecuted. Others identified minorities but would have benefited from explaining why they were persecuted.

Questions 13 and 14

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

Question 15

- (a) This question was very well answered, with most responses describing four ways in which the lives of many young women in cities changed during the 1920s. Women gained the vote, they could smoke and drink in public, their fashions changed and they no longer needed a chaperone to go out were some of the examples used.

- (b) The majority of responses identified reasons why restrictions on immigration were introduced in the 1920s. Most commonly used were the Red Scare and the fact that Americans thought that immigrants would take their jobs. The best answers supported these identifications with factual detail. For example: 'Restrictions were introduced because the Red Scare made many more Americans afraid of immigrants. The rise of communism in Russia made them worry about these ideas coming to America and they thought that immigrants from Eastern Europe were bringing these ideas into the country. These fears were made worse when there were a number of bomb attacks in America by anarchists.'
- (c) There were mixed responses to this question and some were one sided. Candidates were more confident discussing the other problems caused by prohibition, rather than the corruption of police and judges, with weaker responses not developing identifications to explain ways in which the police and judges were corrupt. Others tended to list the problems together in one paragraph, rather than taking a paragraph to explain each problem. Strong responses produced a balanced argument by explaining that the gangs running the production and selling of alcohol bribed the police and judges with money. This meant that many in the police would ignore what the gangs were doing and the judges would let them off if they appeared in court. On the other side of the argument, strong responses were able to identify and explain other problems caused by prohibition. The growth of gangs and the resulting increase in violence in the cities, people making their own illegal moonshine which was often poisonous, and the growth of speakeasies were the most frequently mentioned. Other responses lost focus on the question set and included details such as why prohibition was introduced.

Questions 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21 and 22

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

HISTORY

Paper 0977/22
Paper 22

Key messages

Candidates should read through all the sources and plan their answers. Questions need to be answered directly, starting in the first sentence of the response. Sources should not be summarised or described. Knowledge and understanding of the topic can be used to help interpret the sources. When interpreting written or pictorial sources, it is important that candidates consider the overall point that is being made. Knowledge and understanding of the topic should help them explain why sources were published, or when evaluating sources. When quoting from a source, candidates must avoid using truncated versions of quotations. If a quote is worth using, then to make it work it needs to be given in full. When answering **Question 6**, candidates need to use the content of sources to explain **how** they agree or disagree with the hypothesis.

General comments

There were many more scripts on the twentieth century option than on the nineteenth century. The overall standard was good, with very few candidates struggling with the sources or unclear about what it was they had to do. Almost all candidates comfortably completed all six questions. Very often, sources were sensibly interpreted and candidates cross-referencing of sources was effective. Many candidates also understood when it was appropriate to evaluate sources. In some instances, candidates needed to directly address the question earlier in their answers. They tended to write about the sources and only gradually come round to the question towards the end of their answers. However, overall, the performance was strong, with a wide range of source skills being demonstrated, all set in a sound grasp of the historical context.

Comments on specific questions

Option A: Nineteenth century topic

Question 1

This question was generally answered well. Most candidates managed to find agreements between the two sources by explaining that they both state that the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) was mysterious and that people at the time thought it was doing some good. In terms of disagreements, many candidates spotted that Source A claims the KKK was organised, while Source B says it was not organised. This question was answered best by planning the answer first. Candidates need to go through both sources carefully making matches and mismatches. Once they are clear about these, they can explain both. This avoids the need to produce long summaries of both sources which can distract from clear and direct point-by-point comparisons. Some candidates made it harder to produce point-by-point comparisons by summarising the two sources and stating that the summaries did somewhere contain agreements and disagreements. A number of candidates managed to produce strong answers by explaining that Source A is generally favourable towards the Klan, while Source B is more critical. This needed to be supported with examples from the sources.

Question 2

To answer this question well candidates needed to first understand that the cartoon is criticising the situation in the USA in the period after the Civil War. It is about the period of Reconstruction and is clearly suggesting that the treatment of black Americans was worse than before the war. Organisations like the KKK and the White League are being blamed for this state of affairs. Many candidates were able to use this understanding to explain how the cartoon is useful for telling us all this. Many candidates could have gone further by using their knowledge or by cross-referencing to other sources to support the situation portrayed in

the cartoon. The best answers showed an understanding that the cartoon's real use is as evidence that there were at the time people and magazines critical of the KKK or of Reconstruction. A number of candidates produced good interpretations of the cartoon but neglected to explain how this made the cartoon useful. A few candidates misinterpreted the cartoon or made assertions about it being biased and therefore not useful.

Question 3

The key feature of Source D that candidates needed to focus on is that it is a law being passed by a Southern legislature against the KKK. Some answers missed this central point and focused instead on the details of Source D. However, by using contextual knowledge and/or other sources, a large number of candidates were still able to provide strong responses. The best ones focused on the fact that a Southern legislature was taking strong action against the KKK and explained why this is surprising. A few candidates were not surprised. They were able to explain that by the late 1860s the tide had turned against the KKK and that much legislation was being passed against it. It is crucial in questions such as this one that candidates focus on whether they are surprised or not. A number wrote sensibly about the source and its context but did not use it to say whether they were surprised.

Question 4

A small number of candidates struggled to find any connection between the content of the two sources. However, most candidates were able to explain that Source E is supportive of the KKK while Source F is critical. This led to the conclusion that Source F does make us doubt the account in Source E, although a number of candidates did not address the issue of doubt. The best answers did not stop at the differences between the two sources and went on to evaluate at least one of them, for example, the account in Source E is questionable because it comes from Tennessee where there was much support for the KKK.

Question 5

This question produced a wide range of answers. A large number of candidates wrote that Forrest denied saying what is reported in the source because much of it shows him supporting outrageous actions. Better answers focused more on the possible consequences of these hearings for the KKK, while the best answers recognised the significance of the date and argued that by 1871 the tide had definitely turned against the KKK and that Forrest realised the weakness of his position. Less successful answers identified parts of Source G that Forrest might want to deny but were unable to suggest any valid reason for this.

Question 6

The task in **Question 6** is to use the sources to test the hypothesis, which was about whether people supported the KKK. Some weaker responses appeared to be based on a different hypothesis about whether the Klan behaved well. However, many candidates responded well to the actual hypothesis. When answering this question, there needs to be specific use of the content of a source.

Option B: Twentieth century topic

Question 1

Candidates generally performed well on this question. Most were able to identify and explain agreements and disagreements. For example, the sources agree that Jaruzelski was expected to deal with the protests more forcefully, while they disagree over whether the Soviets had made any preparations for military intervention. This question is answered best by planning the answer first. Candidates need to go through both sources carefully making matches and mismatches. Once they are clear about these, they can explain both. This avoids the need to produce long summaries of both sources which can distract from clear and direct point-by-point comparisons. A small number of candidates produced weaker responses. Their difficulties were usually caused by starting with summarising the sources, rather than using a point-by-point approach. However, they usually managed to compare the provenance of the two sources. A small number of the strongest candidates managed to compare the big messages of the sources: Source A says that the Soviets did not want to intervene but Jaruzelski wanted them to, while Source B claims that they planned to intervene, while Jaruzelski did not want them to.

Question 2

This question asked candidates to extrapolate from the cartoons whether the cartoonists would have agreed with each other. There was a tendency for candidates to describe both cartoons. There is no need to do this.

Candidates need to spend a few minutes thinking about the cartoons and looking for instances where the cartoons make points about same thing. For example, they both have something to say about the intervention of the Soviets and about the strength of Solidarity compared to that of the Soviets. Recognising and explaining points of agreement or disagreement (sub-messages) took most candidates to a reasonable level of response. The best answers focused on the points of view of the cartoonists and explained how they were both criticising the Soviets or Brezhnev. Candidates should always try to consider the point of view of the person who produced the cartoon. These answers had to be supported. Answers that were almost as strong were those that compared the big messages of the two cartoons. They both show the Soviets being aggressive, while claiming not to be. In Source C the Soviets make the ridiculous claim that they are coming to the aid of the Polish government which is being threatened by Solidarity, while in Source D Brezhnev makes the equally absurd claim that they would never interfere in Poland's affairs. A small number of candidates misinterpreted one or both of the cartoons by taking at face value the claims of the Soviets and an equally small number only managed to describe what was happening. When trying to explain cartoons candidates should not first refer to the surface details. They should infer what the cartoon is saying about the people or organisations that are being represented in the cartoons. Reference to surface detail might then be useful to support their interpretations.

Question 3

The starting point for answering this question is to identify the crucial point that the two sources agree or disagree about. In Source E Andropov is clear that there will not be a Soviet invasion of Poland, while in Source B Strong is reporting that the Soviets plan to invade. Most candidates understood this and consequently were able to produce a reasonable response, as long as they used their understanding to address the issue of whether Andropov was lying. A large number of candidates understood that the disagreement between the sources did not necessarily prove that Andropov was lying. They realised that at least one of the sources needed to be evaluated. This was done well by many candidates. Some questioned Andropov, for example he might have been challenging Brezhnev, while others questioned Strong's motives. In the strongest answers, evaluation was carried out in a developed and informed way. A number of candidates would have benefited from stating whether or not they thought Andropov was lying, as required by the question. The best answers were those where the candidate had done planning and knew what their answer was going to be before they started to write it.

Question 4

There were many good answers to this question, with most candidates able to interpret at least sub-messages of the cartoon, for example Brezhnev is worried about Solidarity, the Soviets control Eastern Europe and Eastern Bloc countries might be attracted by Solidarity's ideas. Better answers explained the big message – that Brezhnev was worried that Solidarity could threaten Soviet control of Eastern Europe. The question is about the cartoonist's message, and this led the best answers focusing on the cartoonist's point of view – that the cartoonist is making fun of, or is critical of, Brezhnev for being scared of Solidarity. These answers were mostly carefully explained and supported by relevant contextual knowledge, although some lost control and wrote a lot about Solidarity. A small number of candidates misinterpreted the cartoon. They thought that the cartoonist was praising Brezhnev as the protector of Eastern Europe.

Question 5

There was a wide range of interesting answers to this question. Many good answers simply used contextual knowledge or other sources to explain whether they were surprised by the content of Source H. There is plenty of scope to be both surprised and not surprised, especially in relation to other sources, for example in Source H Jaruzelski gives the clear impression that he is against Soviet intervention, but in Source A he was demanding it. Less successful answers either made far more general claims (valid in a general way) or used everyday empathy to explain why they were surprised or not surprised by aspects of Source H. However, a good number of candidates realised the significance of the date of the source – 1995, a few years after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the fall of communism in Poland and the rest of eastern Europe. This helped many of them provide very strong responses by arguing that they were not surprised by the fact that Jaruzelski was attempting to rewrite history with himself as the staunch defender of Poland facing up to the bullying Soviet Union. Some candidates did not go quite so far and simply stated that they were not surprised he was writing this account of himself because he wanted to keep on the right side of the West. While a good number of candidates explained there were good reasons for being surprised and not surprised, a number of others would have improved their responses by remembering to address the issue of 'surprise'.

Question 6

There were many very good answers. The strength of these answers was the fact that they explained how each source they used supported or was against the hypothesis. A very small number of responses just asserted for each source that the Soviet Union wanted or did not want to send armed forces to Poland. The vast majority of candidates, however, avoided this and gave explanations specific to particular sources. Very few candidates failed to base their answer on the sources. The main weakness was attempts at evaluation. These were often assertions or added on in a way or in a section of the answer that was completely separate from the main arguments about the sources.

HISTORY

Paper 0977/03
Coursework

Key messages

Candidates should be familiar with the idea of significance and with using a range of criteria to assess it. They should be aware that a person, development or event can be significant in some ways but not in others. Coursework assignment titles must be appropriate and allow candidates to assess significance. Lengthy description is not required but assessment and the use of argument and counter-argument are needed. Candidates should aim to write developed and supported conclusions about the most important way in which their subject was significant.

General comments

The standard of work was high, with many candidates showing an impressive understanding of the concept of significance and how to assess it. Most of the marking was accurate and included useful summative comments on the candidates' work. The relevant forms were generally correctly completed.

Comments on specific questions

Most of the titles used by centres worked well. They allowed candidates to focus on the assessment of significance. There are a number of reasons why titles such as 'Assess the significance of Stresemann' or 'Assess the significance of the New Deal' work well. Firstly, they stress the idea of 'significance', and allow candidates to focus on the subject. Secondly, they focus on assessment, rather than description or explanation. Thirdly, they allow candidates to use a range of criteria to investigate the different ways in which their subject may or may not have been significant. Finally, they give candidates enormous scope in how far they want to take their answers in terms of long-term significance.

Titles such as 'How significant was the Depression in Hitler coming to power?' do not work as well. This is because it is not a question about significance as such but one in which the wording encourages answers about causation. It is likely to lead to candidates comparing the importance of a number of factors that led to Hitler coming to power. Candidates will write about the Depression, but they will also write about the role of other factors and possibly spend over half the answer on these other factors. The focus on the Depression is therefore lost, as is the focus on the concept of significance. A title such as 'Assess the significance of the Depression for Germany' is more open and should lead to a very different type of answer.

The main exception to what has been said above is titles about turning points. A title such as 'How far was the Reichstag Fire a turning point for Germany?' can work very well. However, it is important that candidates focus closely on the attributes of turning points. For example, did their event/individual change the course of events or merely hasten developments that were already underway? Criteria are also useful when using these titles because an event or an individual can be a turning point in some ways but not in others.

Many candidates now use a range of criteria in their answers. However, in some centres all of the candidates used the same criteria and presented it in the same order. If possible, candidates should be introduced during normal lesson time to the different types of criteria that can be used. They should then be free to choose which they think will work best in their coursework. The best answers were nearly always those where the candidates had developed their own ideas and arguments.

The best answers did not just explain how an event or individual was significant, they assessed its significance using criteria. This led many of them to use argument and counter argument to decide that it was significant for some reasons but not for others. It is also important to remember that just explaining what an event led to, or what an individual did or achieved, is not a very convincing way of establishing why they were significant. Candidates need to assess how far what the event led to, or what the individual did or

achieved, mattered at the time and later. The best responses took this approach, and such an approach also helps candidates to avoid lengthy description.

The beginning and the conclusion of some answers could have been improved. At the beginning, some candidates wrote a long introduction, rather than starting their assessment. Conclusions often summarised what had been written earlier. The best answers, however, used the conclusion to develop and support their view about the most important reason why their event or individual was significant.

Much of the marking of the coursework was accurate. The mark scheme should be used in a holistic way. The overall characteristics of an answer should be identified and then a 'best-fit' match made with the most appropriate level. Comments at the end of a candidate's answer briefly explaining why a certain level was awarded were very helpful. Judgement about the levels should only be made about the whole answer, although it can be helpful to indicate parts of an answer that contribute towards the answer achieving a certain level.

HISTORY

Paper 0977/42
Alternative to Coursework

Key messages

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

Depth Study B: Germany, 1918–45 was the most popular choice this examination session, followed by Depth Study D: The United States, 1919–41. There were also a number of responses to Depth Study A: The First World War, 1914–18, Depth Study C: Russia, 1905–41, Depth Study E: China, c.1930–c.1990 and Depth Study G: Israelis and Palestinians since 1945. There were too few attempts at Depth Study F (South Africa) to make any meaningful comments. Good responses 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 more could have provided a sustained line of argument throughout the response. There were very few rubric errors. Less successful answers contained much narrative or description or did not properly address the question that was set. These answers provided much information about the topic in general, instead of focussing on the parameters set by the question. Some candidates also drifted from the chronology set out in the question which sometimes led to significant 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

Question 1

A small number of strong answers were able to correctly define the term ‘war of attrition’ and explain how new and improved weapons such as machine guns, artillery and gas contributed to its development on the Western Front. These answers examined the nature of the stalemate on the Western Front and cited some good examples of battles where the war of attrition could be observed. This was then balanced by other factors such as the trench system and its conditions, the lack of effective tactics used by the commanders on both sides and the use of conscription to continually bolster the size of the armies. Weaker responses tended to misinterpret or misdefine the term ‘war of attrition’, which often led to overviews of the different weapons used over the course of the war which was not the focus of the question.

Question 2

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

Depth Study B: Germany, 1918–45

Question 3

This was the more popular question from this Depth Study and it was generally well answered. Candidates had a sound knowledge of the Stresemann era and were able to provide balanced answers that examined his economic policies, such as the introduction of the Rentenmark and the Dawes Plan, and examine alternative policies such as the Locarno Treaties and Germany’s entry into the League of Nations. The best

answers also had a wider scope and considered how Hindenburg's election helped stabilise the Weimar Republic and many also examined the cultural revival and explained how this had a stabilising effect in the cities. Strong answers tended to be very accurate chronologically and were able to give a high level of detail about each of the different factors and explain how it did or did not have a stabilising effect which allowed some of the best responses to draw convincing conclusions and make substantiated judgements. Weaker responses were more narrative in style and often gave a narrative of the Weimar Republic from 1919, missing the chronological parameters set out in the question. These answers also tended to be more descriptive, lacked in-depth contextual knowledge and made errors concerning dates, names and places.

Question 4

Some candidates misinterpreted or misdefined the term 'resistance group' and instead provided material on all opponents of the Nazis after 1933. A few other responses included the SA and the purge carried out in the Night of the Long Knives, which lacked relevance. Stronger answers examined a range of resistance groups such as youth opposition like the Edelweiss Pirates and the White Rose, church resistance such as the Confessing Church, and army and conservative opposition organisations. Most commonly, balance was provided by counterargument and candidates tended to examine the nature of the Nazi police state and how effectively it, along with propaganda, dealt with resistance groups to the point that they were hardly a threat for most of the Nazi rule. A small number of the best responses contained detailed examples and explanations, with many of them drawing valid conclusions with a convincing argument.

Depth Study C: Russia, 1905–41

Question 5

Some strong responses were seen, and many candidates were able to confidently get to grips with the question. The strongest answers demonstrated a solid grasp of the importance Russia's continued involvement in the First World War as a reason for increased Bolshevik support in the Provisional Government era. Many answers stressed the socio-economic issues caused by the war such as food and fuel shortages, the consequences of the Summer Offensive for Kerensky's government and the continued desertions on the eastern front. This was then most commonly given balance by examining the impact of Bolshevik propaganda and Lenin's April Theses, the strong leadership of the Bolshevik Party, the role of Lenin and Trotsky and the impact of the Kornilov Affair on Bolshevik support. Weaker responses tended to lack accurate knowledge or confused the November and March Revolutions of 1917 and so examined the tsarist period.

Question 6

This question was generally answered convincingly. Some of the best answers had a good understanding of the significance of the gulag system as an aspect of Stalin's system of control in the USSR after 1928. Many candidates were able to cite accurate figures and link these to the purges of the 1930s. To provide balance, many candidates also examined other significant factors such as Stalin's cult of personality, Communist Party propaganda, control over the education system and young people, as well as the suppression of non-Russian culture. Less successful responses often did not accurately define the term 'gulag' and gave vague responses to the question, sometimes with errors linked to chronology. Other answers also examined factors pre-1928 which was outside the parameters of this question

Depth Study D: The United States, 1919–41

Question 7

There were some very strong responses from candidates. Many candidates were able to provide a detailed and comprehensive set of explanations that examined the importance of government policies, which included low taxation, protectionism and a laissez-faire approach to business. Many of the best answers were able to give detailed explanations of how the policies contributed to the boom years and supported these with relevant examples. This was then balanced against other factors such as mass production and the development of the assembly line, the availability of credit, the importance of the First World War and new innovations. A few of the best answers made comparative evaluations of the different factors and reached convincing judgements about the most important factor. Other responses tended to focus too much on social aspects of the 1920s and examined the impact of the prosperity on the people, culture and their behaviours, which was not the focus of this question.

Question 8

Many responses to this question tended to focus on the issues faced by agriculture in the 1920s such as tariffs, overproduction and foreign competition from countries like Canada, rather than examine the problems faced by agriculture during the Depression years of the 1930s. Although many of the issues were the same, most candidates that did this cited examples from the 1920s rather than the 1930s and so their material was less convincing. Other weaker responses focused too much on the causes of the Depression rather than examining aspects of the Depression which include its consequences for the economy, society and political system. Stronger responses focused on the question and were able to give relevant examples which included the migration of many black American labourers to the cities, the impact of the Dust Bowl and the introduction of further tariffs by Hoover. Balance was provided by explaining the significance of other aspects of the Depression such as unemployment in industry, decline in trade and production, lower wages, homelessness, the impact of the Bonus March and the political implications for Hoover and Roosevelt's election and his New Deal programme. The best answers contained well selected and accurate examples and assessed relative significance in their explanations.

Depth Study E: China: c.1930–c.1990

Question 9

This was answered well in most cases. Candidates were able to examine in some detail the impact of the Japanese invasion of China for Communist support. Answers often cited how the Communists were able to win the support of the peasant villages, while the Nationalists were seen as corrupt and ineffective in fighting the invaders. Balance was provided by examining other factors that helped bolster Communist support such as the nature of Mao's leadership and ideology, the effective propaganda and indoctrination at Yen-an, the weaknesses of Chiang Kai-shek's leadership and the support built up during the Long March. The best answers were able to make some comparative assessments of the different factors and reach valid conclusions, supported by good explanations. Weaker responses would have been improved by more detailed contextual knowledge. They often gave generalised narratives of the period or limited descriptions of events.

Question 10

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

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

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

Depth Study G: Israelis and Palestinians since 1945

Question 13

This question was generally very well answered. Contextual knowledge of the Middle East in the period up to 1948 was very strong and many candidates were able to give convincing explanations of the importance of Jewish immigration to tension in the region. Many cited the impact of Zionism and how it led to an increase in Jewish settlers, the impact of immigration after the Second World War and how US support for immigration increased tension in the region with Palestinians and neighbouring Arab states. This was then balanced by addressing other important factors that led to increased tension such as the role played by the British mandate, the role of Jewish resistance movements such as Irgun and Lehi, increasing Arab nationalism and the failure of the UN partition plan. The best answers were well organised and contained a sustained line of argument which included continual assessment of the relative importance of the different factors. A small number of weaker responses would have benefited from being less narrative and descriptive in approach, in order to properly explain the material.

Question 14

This question was very well answered for the most part. Candidates had a detailed and accurate knowledge of the Yom Kippur War and were able to provide a well-balanced argument assessing the significance of the different reasons that determined the outcome of the war. Many answers gave a breadth of detailed examples on the significance of Israeli military tactics, which most commonly included references to the speed of the Israeli counterattack, the use of air power and superior firepower and tactics. This was then

balanced by examining other relevant factors such as the role played by the USA, which included an influx of arms and the use of the oil weapon. The strongest answers explained each factor and assessed its relative significance against other factors throughout the response and drew convincing judgements in their conclusions. A small number of the other responses were more narrative and descriptive in approach, with some focussing too much on background causes.