

## **GCSE (9-1)**

*Examiners' report*

# **HISTORY A**

## **(EXPLAINING THE MODERN WORLD)**

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**J410**

For first teaching in 2016

## **J410/07 Summer 2019 series**

Version 1

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## Introduction

Our examiners' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on candidates' performance in the examinations. They provide useful guidance for future candidates. The reports will include a general commentary on candidates' performance, identify technical aspects examined in the questions and highlight good performance and where performance could be improved. The reports will also explain aspects which caused difficulty and why the difficulties arose, whether through a lack of knowledge, poor examination technique, or any other identifiable and explainable reason.

Where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report. A full copy of the exam paper can be downloaded from OCR.

## Paper 7 series overview

This was the second series of the new Specification A Paper 1. It was very clear that teachers and candidates had prepared thoroughly and learnt lessons from the previous series. They should be congratulated on the high standard of work and their commitment to high quality historical thinking and writing.

## Section A overview

It was clear that centres had devoted more time and planning to the balance in this section between Questions 1 and 2 and the Interpretation based Questions 3 and 4. This resulted in a better performance overall than last year for most candidates.

### Question 1

#### International Relations: the changing international order 1918–c.2001

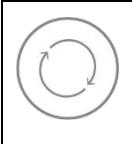
1 Outline how international peace was encouraged in the 1920s.

[5]

This question was generally tackled well with candidates showing impressive knowledge and understanding of the period but also of the issue being asked in the question. As a rule, the most successful answers combined three elements.

- They indicated an approach which was taken to encourage peace, most commonly focusing on international agreements of international organisations. The most common references were to the League of Nations or the Kellogg Briand Pact but candidates also referred to the Disarmament Conference and the Locarno Treaty.
- They explained how these approaches encouraged peace. Therefore, many candidates referred to the League's successful interventions in disputes such as the Aaland Islands or Poland. Other candidates referred to the terms of the Kellogg Briand Pact or the terms of the Locarno Treaty and explained how this encouraged peace.

A substantial number of candidates limited their responses by referring to activities or actions which were not relevant to the issue of encouraging peace. There were, for example, many descriptions of the Dawes Plan, the Treaty of Versailles and the humanitarian work of the League. These activities were not direct attempts to encourage peace and as a rule, candidates did not gain credit for them. A small number successfully argued that such actions improved the general climate, (e.g. the Dawes Plan reducing tension between France and Germany) and so were given. These were rare, and it was hard to escape the impression that candidates were simply writing things which occurred to them rather than focusing on the issue in the question.

	<b>AfL</b>	<p>The key point with Question 1 is to focus on the issue being asked about. Thus, in this instance they needed to focus on what was done to encourage peace rather than describe activities which were only indirectly related to this.</p>
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## Question 2

2 Explain why the USA and USSR clashed over Germany in the period 1945 to 1949.

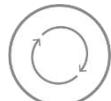
[10]

This question produced a very wide range of responses and approaches. A very common, but unexpected, approach was to argue that the clashes over Germany were part of the wider picture of ideological differences and rivalry between the USSR and the USA. While this was not expected it was accepted by examiners as a valid background cause of the clashes over Germany.

Stronger answers were usually able to combine this general background issue with causal factors which were more specific to Germany. Many candidates effectively linked the wider ideological tensions to the events of the Berlin Blockade very effectively. Other valid responses were the clashes between the USA and USSR at the Potsdam Conference in which the issue of reparations and the treatment of Germany generally was a source of tension.

In some cases candidates struggled to clearly set out an explanation of why a particular factor caused tensions. Typical of this sort of approach were long descriptions of how Germany was divided in 1945 but with no identification of a clash or the reasons for it.

Another common problem was confusion between the events of 1948-49 in Berlin with events immediately before the construction of the Berlin Wall in 1961.

	<b>AfL</b>	<p>Many candidates struggled to organise their thoughts and writing into a response which was coherently focused on the question. In questions of this type, they may find it helpful to think in terms of these simple steps.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clearly identify a factor / event / development / person etc which could be considered a cause of clashes between the USA and USSR, (e.g. competing ideologies).</li> <li>- BRIEFLY describe what the clash was about, (e.g. differences between the ideologies).</li> <li>- Explain how the factor led to the clash, (e.g. each side anxious to impose their ideologies and anxious to prevent the other side from doing the same).</li> </ul>
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## Question 3

### 3 Study Interpretation A.

Do you think this interpretation is a fair comment on the reasons why the Cold War began? Use your knowledge and other interpretations of the early stages of the Cold War to support your answer. [25]

Most examiners agreed that this question was generally handled more effectively than last year, and centres and candidates should be congratulated for this.

The most effective responses usually took a very straightforward approach. They started by setting out the main arguments in Interpretation A. The first sentence argues that Stalin's policies on Eastern Europe were the main cause of the Cold War. The remainder attempts to mitigate this blame by setting out justifications for Stalin's actions.

The stronger responses then went on to explain whether they thought either or both of these aspects of Interpretation A constituted a fair comment. This was usually done by assessing how far particular historians or schools of thought would have supported or criticised these viewpoints.

Here is an example one of the stronger responses (Level 5). The candidate sets out the main arguments of Interpretation A clearly in the opening paragraph. In the second paragraph the candidate argues that A could be considered a fair comment because it would have the support of Orthodox historians. Crucially, the candidate then goes on to explain what the arguments of the Orthodox historians were and cited some examples of the evidence Orthodox historians used. It should be noted that the second half of the second paragraph, in which the candidate describes the context of the Orthodox view and the influence of the context on the Orthodox historians, is not relevant to this question.

### Exemplar 1

Interpretation A states that it was Russia's desire to control Eastern Europe and to weaken Germany which was the main cause of the Cold War. However, this was fuelled by Stalin's fear of the events during the second world war repeating themselves and his need to control eastern Europe to prevent this happening again. This source was written in 1967 when revisionist ideas were starting to circulate.

Many historians would agree that this is a fair interpretation, primarily, the orthodox historians who believe Stalin and the USSR was to blame. One example is Bailey who argued that it was the USSR's intentions for expansion and their plans for a world revolution which fuelled the USA to retaliate and stand up to them. Kennan argued that Stalin needed a tough opponent to excuse his ~~the~~ the USSR's need for a hard-line dictator to protect its people and therefore purposely provoked the USA into retaliation. In addition, Fais argued that Stalin's plans to spread communism around the world forced the USA to attempt to contain this and respond with the Truman doctrine and Marshall Aid. These views may have been brought about as a result of own personal experience as many of these historians were US officials which made decisions themselves. Also, it may have been due to fears of a 'Red Scare' as the US was said to be riddled with Soviet spies. In addition, another historian ~~who~~ who may agree with this interpretation is Gaddis who after the ~~the~~ collapse of communism investigated new Soviet sources and concluded that it was the USSR who was responsible and reverted back to the orthodox view. ~~However~~

However, other historians may disagree and the revisionist view would argue it was the USA who caused ~~over~~ the Cold War. Revisionists such as Williams argued that the orthodox view does not explain the causes of the Cold War but merely excuses US actions. Williams argued that it was the USA's desire to take ~~control~~ economic control of Europe and the rest of the world and its expansionist views to dominate politically which caused the Cold War. Stalin was forced to respond.

There were many other responses which were able to reach Level 4 by effectively using one interpretation to develop an argument that Interpretation A was a fair comment (or not).

A relatively small number of candidates reached Level 3 by developing an argument and using their own factual knowledge to support that argument.

Responses which correctly deployed relevant interpretations to support an argument but did not move significantly beyond naming a particular interpretation, (e.g. Revisionists) were also given at Level 3.

There is a final and important reflection for centres and candidates to consider regarding Question 3. Many candidates attempted to classify Interpretation A as Revisionist, Orthodox, etc. This was an unexpected development and took examiners a little by surprise. It should also be emphasised that it is not required or expected and it generally proved to be unhelpful for two main reasons:

- By trying to categorise Interpretation A candidates neglected to spell out what the arguments of Interpretation A were. This sometimes made it difficult for examiners to determine what candidates were arguing was fair or unfair.
- Some candidates appeared to be trying to find a way to write a pre-rehearsed response by categorising Interpretation A and then critiquing a general school of thought rather than the specific points made in Interpretation A.

In most cases where this happened, it did no harm because the candidate referred to the contents of Interpretation A at other stages in their response. However, it should be emphasised again that it is not a helpful practice and should be discouraged.

Candidates should be made aware that schools of thought are often not homogeneous. Certain groups, such as Revisionists, often disagree on major points and they are only Revisionist because they disagree with previous interpretations, not necessarily agreeing with each other. In addition, in a short extract it is almost impossible to encapsulate a particular type of interpretation wholly and succinctly not least because schools of thought were often groupings imposed on historians after the event and they were not consciously trying to write revisionist or post-revisionist history. Therefore, candidates should be encouraged to simply analyse the main arguments in Interpretation A and build an argument from there.

	<b>AfL</b>	<p>Candidates should pay careful attention to the arguments being made in Interpretation A and should not try to categorise it. Once they have done this, they should try to build an argument from here.</p> <p>Candidates should also try to be as clear as possible about the argument they are making. Some candidates regularly used the phrase 'Interpretation A links to school of thought X'. Examiners found it difficult to understand what point was being made in such responses because 'links to' is unclear. It is better to use clear terminology such as 'Interpretation / school of thought X would regard Interpretation A unfair because A argues .... whereas X argues that ....'</p> <p>Candidates do not need to cover every different interpretation on the issue. Two interpretations used well to support an argument about (un)fairness should be sufficient for Level 5.</p>
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## Question 4

4 Study Interpretation B.

Explain why **not** all historians and commentators have agreed with this interpretation. Use other interpretations and your knowledge to support your answer. [20]

( Spelling, punctuation and grammar and the use of specialist terminology [5]

As with Question 3, this question was handled more effectively than last year. Candidates showed an impressive knowledge of the different interpretations and schools of thought on this controversy.

Unfortunately, many candidates did not help themselves by trying to categorise Interpretation B. As with Question 3, and for the same reasons and contexts, it must be emphasised that this is not necessary and generally turns out to be unhelpful. It is much more constructive to engage directly with the specific points being made in Interpretation B and then assess those in an argument.

The following mid-range answer (Level 3) illustrates how many candidates successfully did this. Interpretation A is analysed correctly and the candidate then goes on to argue that the Popular Majority view in 1938-39 would not have agreed with Interpretation A's assertion that Appeasement was a failure. The candidate then goes on to explain the main tenets of this interpretation and how it disagrees with the view in Interpretation A that Appeasement was a failure. It is worth noting that in this instance the candidate was credited for explaining how the two interpretations differ. S/he makes some attempt to also explain why they differ by referring to the horrors of war but this lacked the requisite detail and explanation to lift the response to Level 4.

Many candidates were able to reach Level 3 by analysing Interpretation B correctly and then arguing that particular interpretations would not have agreed with Interpretation B's assertion that Appeasement was a failure, supporting this with the main tenets of the rival interpretation and how they disagreed with B.

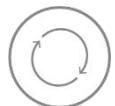
Alternatively, many candidates used the contexts of respective interpretations to explain why these views were held at this particular time and could reach Level 3 in this way.

There were many weaker responses which were only able to reach Level 2. These usually consisted of two broad types: candidates who listed or briefly described several interpretations without addressing how or why it disagreed with Interpretation B; candidates who correctly identified schools of thought which would have agreed or disagreed with Interpretation but did no more than identify and did not develop their comments. Many candidates who could have reached Level 3 or above if they had focused on one or two interpretations ended up stretching themselves too thinly in trying to cover all of them.

## Exemplar 2

In AJP Taylor's book, "English History 1914-45," Taylor's view is that appeasement was a failure and taken advantage of by Hitler but Chamberlain did it in good intentions and faith in diplomacy.

Many historians between 1937 to 38 would disagree with Taylor, they viewed the They followed the 'well done Mr Chamberlain' view, this is the view that Chamberlain stopped war and saved countless lives. This view came about because of the ~~the~~ Munich agreement. Chamberlain came back from Munich with document that Hitler signed saying Britain and Germany wouldn't go to war. People were pleased; they remembered the horrors of WWI and how millions died and how their country was torn. So generally people at the time saw Chamberlain as a hero who saved people lives.

	<b>AfL</b>	<p>As with Question 3, candidates should start by analysing Interpretation A and setting out the main view(s) contained in it. They should then construct an argument that the view(s) would find agreement or disagreement from a particular school of thought and support that argument by explaining what these other interpretations believed and how this differed from the views in Interpretation B. Ideally they should also consider why these other interpretations held the views they did by referring to the contexts in which they were created.</p> <p>Also, as with Question 3, candidates should also try to be as clear as possible about the argument they are making. Some candidates regularly used the phrase 'Interpretation A links to school of thought X'. Examiners found it difficult to understand what point was being made in such responses because 'links to' is unclear. It is better to use clear terminology such as 'Interpretation / school of thought X would disagree with Interpretation B because B argues .... whereas X argues that ....'</p> <p>Candidates do not need to cover every different interpretation on the issue. Two interpretations used well to support an argument about (un)fairness should be sufficient for Level 5.</p>
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## Section B overview

Most candidates handled the questions in this section effectively. They were well prepared for Questions 6 and 8, and while there was a wide range of responses to Questions 7a and 7b there were few candidates who were unable to make use of the sources in some way.

### Question 5

#### The USA 1945–1974: The People and the State

5 Describe **one** consequence of the Stonewall riots of 1969.

[2]

The candidates who scored highly generally cited such developments as the emergence of a Gay Pride movement, better organisation of campaigning or just a general raising of awareness in the press.

	<b>AfL</b>	Candidates need to read the question carefully and make sure they are addressing the issue raised in the question.
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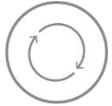
### Question 6

6 Explain why the Civil Rights Act was passed in 1964.

[10]

This was generally tackled very effectively. Candidates used a wide range of arguments and supporting evidence to develop their answers. Arguments included the ambitions of President Johnson, the work of the Civil Rights Movement and also the impact of discrimination on the USA's reputation abroad, particularly in the context of the Cold War.

Some weaker responses struggled to reach higher than Level 2 because they did not identify any events as causes. Usually these responses were descriptions of the civil rights movements or even events such as the murder of Emmet Till or the Brown vs Topeka judgement. It would be possible to make a case that these events had a long term significance but in order to be credited that case needs to be made.

	<b>AfL</b>	<p>Many candidates struggled to organise their thoughts and writing into a response which was coherently focused on the question. In questions of this type, they may find it helpful to think in terms of these simple steps.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clearly identify a factor / event / development / person etc which could be considered a cause.</li> <li>- BRIEFLY describe the factor (eg the march on Washington).</li> <li>- Explain how the factor led to the passing of the Act (eg the publicity generated and the impact on public opinion).</li> </ul>
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## Question 7 (a)

7 (a) Study Source A. Explain why McCarthy made this speech in 1950.

[5]

This question was generally handled well. Many candidates understood McCarthy's purpose of creating panic about Communist influence and supported this well with reference to the source or context, and often both. Many responses showed a very deep understanding of McCarthyism and its workings and his desire for power and influence. If the purpose was not recognised, candidates were still able to reach Level 2 by explaining the message of the source. In these instances the candidate usually understood what McCarthy was saying but did not grasp why he is saying it or what he results he was trying to achieve.

	<b>AfL</b>	<p>Candidates might find it helpful in questions of this type to consider some simple checks which will help guide their answer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Is the source for or against something / someone?</li> <li>- What does this reveal about the aims or intentions of the person or group which produced it?</li> <li>- Why was it produced at this time rather than any other time?</li> </ul>
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## Question 7 (b)

(b) Study Source B. What is the message of the cartoonist?

[5]

This question was generally handled very well. Again, the key distinction was between the message of the cartoon and the view of the cartoonist. Most candidates were able to reach Level 2 by showing that the message of the source was that McCarthy was a liar. The stronger responses went further and pointed to the fact that the cartoonist was extremely hostile to McCarthy and was mocking him by referring to his famous earlier speech (Source A).

	<b>AfL</b>	<p>Many candidates wrote at great length about immigration or the Red Scare. While they were not penalised for this they gained nothing either. Candidates might find it helpful in questions of this type to consider some simple checks which will help guide their answer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Is the source for or against something / someone?</li> <li>- What does this reveal about the aims or intentions of the person or group which produced it?</li> <li>- Why was it produced at this time rather than any other time?</li> </ul>
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## Question 8

8\* 'Malcolm X achieved more for Black Americans than Martin Luther King.' How far do you agree with this view? [18]

Candidates were generally very well informed about Martin Luther King and the Civil Rights movement and candidates drew up some very impressive arguments that King was more important than Malcolm X. These arguments were supported with a wide range of supporting evidence but typical of these was the march on Washington in 1963, the campaigns for voting rights or the Montgomery Bus Boycott. In contrast, for some it proved more challenging with respect to the Malcolm X side of the argument. Stronger responses were able to point to Malcolm X' role and influence on some aspects of the Black American movement including his writing and speeches and also Black Pride and the Black Panthers.

The example below illustrates a strong response which evaluates both figures.

### Exemplar 3

Malcolm X provided African Americans with a sense of pride for their identity. This (separatism) may have had a positive effect on the some African Americans. However, his support of the concept of Black Separatism was not very useful as it was an unrealistic option and was never put into place. This implies he was probably less helpful than Martin Luther King to strengthen my point further, Malcolm X himself decided in 1964 to give up on this more violent ideology and left the Islamic group he was working with. To me, this shows clearly the failure of his beliefs.

Martin Luther King was at the center of the organisation SCLC but did much useful work towards civil rights. He also took inspiration from Rosa Parks in 1955 and turned the bus boycott into a successful and peaceful protest that did lead to desegregation in transport. Martin Luther King had a much greater support than Malcolm X with huge

numbers of African Americans supporting him. His success is shown by the fact that when he and his brothers were staying in Birmingham protest at a inspired many riots throughout the USA, showing his widespread support. Kennedy was forced to get involved.

Additionally Martin Luther King played a large part in setting up the Birmingham protest in 1963. He encouraged children to get involved and this made the media coverage even more shocking when the African American

	<b>AfL</b>	<p>Candidates need to focus on developing an argument relevant to the question rather than writing a narrative about the issue and then trying to draw conclusions. In the case of this question, they could take the following steps.</p> <p>Deal with one side first eg Malcolm X:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Make a clear argument about Malcolm X eg more / less important than King.</li> <li>- Make clear the importance of this role eg in Black Pride.</li> <li>- Provide examples of this happening.</li> </ul> <p>Deal with the other side (Martin Luther King):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Make a clear argument eg King played an important role.</li> <li>- Make clear the importance of this role eg in winning over opponents.</li> <li>- Provide examples of this happening.</li> </ul>
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