

# HISTORY

---

Paper 9389/11  
Document Question

## Key messages

### Candidates do well when they:

- Develop good time-management skills. Divide the hour between three main tasks: reading and understanding; planning answers; writing answers.
- Read the texts, if written, and study pictures and cartoons, if used, with great care to identify the main argument of each source.
- Use relevant contextual knowledge to test the reliability of at least one or two of the sources rather than using contextual knowledge just to explain the argument being made by a source.
- Remain question-focused, making arguments based on detailed and relevant historical evidence.
- 

## General comments

Most candidates made a good attempt at answering the questions on their chosen topics. There were very few rubric infringements, with the problem of answering the **(b)** question by using only Sources A *and* D rather than Sources A *to* D, only occasionally seen. Relatively few candidates found timing to be a problem, as evidenced by their completed responses to both question parts.

Most candidates knew that the **(a)** question requires an identification of similarities and differences. Depending on the sources and the question, either similarities or differences of content could be harder to identify. Careful reading of the sources is required to identify the less prominent points. Explaining them will raise an answer to **(a)** to Level 3. The majority of candidates were able to identify the sources which challenged or supported the hypothesis when answering the part **(b)** question. In order to achieve Level 4 Part **(b)** requires candidates to use all four sources in their answer. Candidates who omit a source completely will limit the marks which can be awarded to their answer.

Most candidates attempted to evaluate the sources for both question parts. Often, attempts to evaluate were too general to be credited, for example, some candidates asserted that a private letter was reliable and a public speech unreliable. Whilst those assertions might be correct, without further explanation of *why*, the attempt to evaluate cannot be credited. The specific letter, or the particular speech, needs considering in context: Who is writing the letter, making the speech and when? How far does contextual knowledge support the assertions made in the letter or speech? Answering these questions by referring to as much specific and contemporary information as possible will provide an appropriate evaluation. Weaker candidates often made the assumption that the sources were inherently reliable. By taking the opposite stance and questioning the purpose of the sources, many candidates would have begun to evaluating them in ways which reach the higher level requirements. Many of the strongest answers had outstanding conclusions. They considered the evaluated sources in order to make a thoughtful and focused answer to the question. This provided clear evidence that the candidate was in control of the argument.

## Comments on specific questions

### **Section A: European Option, Bismarck and France**

#### **(a) To what extent do Sources B and D agree on Bismarck's views on a war with France?**

Most candidates made a good attempt at answering this question. They understood that they had to identify the similarities and the differences between the two sources, and most identified several examples. In source B, Bismarck states that Prussia/Germany should not be seen to cause the war

whereas Source D showed Bismarck more willing to go to war. In both sources, however, he says that some kind of political settlement might be possible. Level 3 responses explained and illustrated this with relevant quotations. Candidates who either explained one side only or provided no supporting quotations, even for both, reached Level 2. Answers which provided the source evaluation and a focused conclusion were awarded Level 4.

**(b) To what extent do Sources A to D show that Prussia was responsible for the war against France?**

Most candidates argued that Sources A and C challenged the hypothesis while Source B and D supported it. Source B was the most problematic source. Many read Bismarck's opening statement, 'that German unity will be forwarded by violent means' as meaning he was planning war with France. However, he goes on to say that (a) 'we must not be seen as the aggressors' and (b) 'there may be the opportunity ... for an agreement with France'. The evidence of Source B is that Bismarck was not planning on causing war with France. This example shows the need to read the sources carefully and then decide the main message. Source C was the most successfully evaluated source – a public speech by the Head of State after war had broken out, which candidates successfully identified as partisan. Whilst weaker candidates asserted this point, the best responses used contextual knowledge – usually the Ems Telegram – or cross-referencing to other sources to provide specific evidence to support their evaluation.

**Section B: American Option, Zachary Taylor and the Wilmot Proviso, 1848**

**(a) To what extent do Sources A and B agree about General Taylor's commitment to Whig principles?**

Weaker responses showed evidence of misreading and did not identify differences between the two Sources: Source A said Taylor had no commitment, Source B said he did. Candidates often focused on the fifth line of Source B – 'that the Whig party have abandoned their principles in adopting him as their candidate' – as being the main message of the Source. In fact Lincoln's speech challenged that assertion. This misreading shows the importance of reading sources as carefully as possible. Other less successful answers identified Lincoln as a Republican in their analysis of Source B and suggested that he would oppose Taylor, who was a Whig. This misunderstanding came despite Source B identifying Lincoln as a Whig in the first line. The most successful responses also identified the similarities between the sources. Both sources show Taylor as trying to please North and South. Both show him accepting the existence of slavery in the South – which was also a principle of the Whigs at the time.

**(b) How far do Sources A to D support the assertion that the Whig party was deeply divided over the extension of slavery?**

Some less successful responses showed evidence of misreading of sources and misinterpreted both Source B and D. Many candidates took the first sentence as meaning Taylor was unsound on the extension of slavery, which they then took as meaning the party would be divided. Such arguments overlooked the first words of the first sentence, 'It has been said'. The main point of Source D was that Taylor was sound in opposing the extension of slavery and that the Whigs would remain united. If candidates misinterpreted both Source B and Source D, this sometimes created problems in finding a source which challenged the hypothesis. Sources B and D did do so, if properly read, as then they could be used to offset Sources A and C, which clearly support the hypothesis. Contextual knowledge of the Wilmot Proviso was notably limited in the weakest responses. Such knowledge is often essential to help evaluate sources and thus to reach Level 4.

**Section C: International Option, The League of Nations and Disarmament, 1919–1921**

**(a) Compare and contrast the views of Lloyd George (Source A) and the French delegate (Source D) regarding the League of Nations' ability to maintain peace and security.**

'The maintenance of peace' is mentioned in the first line of Source B, which then explains the importance of (i) disarmament and (ii) enforcing international agreements. Some less successful Candidates focused on the former and not the latter because both Source A and Source D did so. Most candidates could explain and illustrate the difference between the two sources: Source A

wanted disarmament for all, Source D for Germany only. Also, Source A was optimistic about the League's ability to maintain peace while Source D was much more pessimistic. Candidates found it much harder to identify some similarities, as is required to reach Level 3. Both sources wanted the League to succeed, both stressed the importance of loyalty to the League as necessary to help it do so. Good answers made a contextual contrast between the two victorious Western allies, one wanting disarmament, the other opposed.

**(b) How far do Sources A to D support the view that there was strong support for disarmament in the period from 1919 to 1921?**

Most candidates were able to relate each source to the hypothesis, showing how they either supported or challenged the assertion that there was strong support for disarmament in 1919–21. While this international option does not require detailed knowledge of domestic politics, candidates do need to be aware of the broad history of leading powers in the 1920s and 1930s. Many candidates used Source D most effectively to argue against the hypothesis, including good evaluation. Contextual knowledge was used well to argue that Germany in 1921 was far from stable. Most candidates analysed the other sources well, but found them harder to evaluate. The best answers drew some distinction around the concept of 'strong' support and developed a relevant and reasoned analysis.

# HISTORY

---

Paper 9389/12  
Document Question

## Key messages

### Candidates do well when they:

- Develop good time-management skills. Divide the hour between three main tasks: reading and understanding; planning answers; writing answers.
- Read the texts, if written, and study pictures and cartoons, if used, with great care to identify the main argument of each source.
- Use relevant contextual knowledge to test the reliability of at least one or two of the sources rather than using contextual knowledge just to explain the argument being made by a source.
- Remain question-focused, making arguments based on detailed and relevant historical evidence.

### General comments

Most candidates made a good attempt at answering the questions on their chosen topics. There were very few rubric infringements, with the problem of answering the **(b)** question by using only Sources A and D rather than Sources A to D, only occasionally seen. Relatively few candidates found timing to be a problem, as evidenced by their completed responses to both question parts.

Most candidates knew that the **(a)** question requires an identification of similarities and differences. Depending on the sources and the question, either similarities or differences of content could be harder to identify. Careful reading of the sources is required to identify the less prominent points. Explaining them will raise an answer to **(a)** to Level 3. The majority of candidates were able to identify the sources which challenged or supported the hypothesis when answering the part **(b)** question. In order to achieve Level 4 Part **(b)** requires candidates to use all four sources in their answer. Candidates who omit a source completely will limit the marks which can be awarded to their answer.

Most candidates attempted to evaluate the sources for both question parts. Often, attempts to evaluate were too general to be credited, for example, some candidates asserted that a private letter was reliable and a public speech unreliable. Whilst those assertions might be correct, without further explanation of *why*, the attempt to evaluate cannot be credited. The specific letter, or the particular speech, needs considering in context: Who is writing the letter, making the speech and when? How far does contextual knowledge support the assertions made in the letter or speech? Answering these questions by referring to as much specific and contemporary information as possible will provide an appropriate evaluation. Weaker candidates often made the assumption that the sources were inherently reliable. By taking the opposite stance and questioning the purpose of the sources, many candidates would have begun to evaluating them in ways which reach the higher level requirements. Many of the strongest answers had outstanding conclusions. They considered the evaluated sources in order to make a thoughtful and focused answer to the question. This provided clear evidence that the candidate was in control of the argument.

### Comments on Specific Questions

#### **Section A; European Option, Garibaldi's Sicilian Expedition**

- (a) Compare and contrast Sources C and D as evidence of Cavour's attitude towards Garibaldi's Sicilian expedition.**

Most candidates correctly explained and illustrated the required support/opposition contrast. Few considered the secret/public contrast. As to similarities, some candidates argued that both sources said that Cavour could not stop Garibaldi going to Sicily with his thousand men. Source C says this,

but Source D says in effect that Cavour did not want to stop Garibaldi, even if 'at times' Garibaldi was a force he could not control. Therefore this particular contrast was not supported by the evidence. The main similarity identified was that the two men agreed on the goal of unity. Another was that Cavour worried about the impact of the expedition on existing political opinion, even if the two sources disagreed about which grouping Cavour was more worried about: conservative or liberal. The best answers provided evaluation based on the very different contexts of the two sources.

**(b) 'Italians supported Garibaldi's Sicilian expedition.' To what extent do Sources A to D support this view?**

Three sources could be used either to support or to challenge the hypothesis, A, C and D. Most candidates interpreted these sources as either supporting or challenging the hypothesis. There is no need to do so. If candidates interpret a source to support both sides of the argument, they should say so. Source B was the only source with only one clear message that challenged the hypothesis. Many candidates found this source the hardest to analyse. Weaker responses struggled to make specific and valid points when evaluating the sources. The best responses included some contextual knowledge of the expedition which was used to help evaluate at least one of the sources. The best evaluation seen was of Source D. Contextual knowledge, provenance and cross-referencing; using one, two or all of these elements to assess the reliability of a source ensures a standard of evaluation that merits a Level 4 mark.

**Section B: American Option, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and the Slavery Question**

**(a) To what extent do Sources C and D agree about *Uncle Tom's Cabin*?**

Most candidates correctly identified both similarities and differences. Some candidates, however, misread Source D. They saw the line 'it has been said that *Uncle Tom's Cabin* misrepresents slavery' and took it to mean that Source D saw the book as misrepresenting slavery. This they linked with Source C as a similarity. Careful reading of the source and its provenance was required to avoid this misinterpretation.

**(b) How far do Sources A to D support the assertion that *Uncle Tom's Cabin* did little to change American attitudes towards slavery?**

A majority of candidates identified that Source A was clearly abolitionist in sympathy and used it to challenge the hypothesis. Some candidates used the opportunity to quote as contextual evidence President Lincoln's alleged comment at a meeting he had with Harriet Beecher Stowe in 1862: 'So you're the little woman who wrote the work which made this great war' – or similar such words. While there is no evidence that Lincoln made such a comment, it is so widely believed that it was accepted if used to help evaluate Source A. Many candidates also correctly identified that Source D supports the hypothesis, but few candidates provided specific evaluation to support this point. Sources B and C concern a work that was written to counter *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. In this respect, both sources support the hypothesis. Source B was part of an advertisement. Advertisements by their very nature are unreliable. The best responses commented on this feature of Source B.

**Section C: International Option, Early Support for the Establishment of a League of Nations.**

**(a) Compare and contrast the views of Britain (Source B) and France (Source C) concerning how the League of Nations should deal with warlike nations.**

The question asks about how nations *should* deal with warlike nations rather than *could* or *would*. The best responses remained focused on the specific nature of the question. 'Most candidates were able to explain and illustrate the differences between the two sources. Weaker answers were not able to identify similarities. The best answers identified that both sources accepted the centrality of the League to dealing with warlike countries and both admitted that doing so would pose issues and problems, for either member states (Source B) or the League of Nations (Source C).

**(b) 'There was little prospect of the League succeeding.' How far do Sources A to D support this view?**

All four sources are quite theoretical, considering how the League of Nations might work rather than how it was working in practice. Many candidates were able to analyse the sources and identify likely problems facing the League's peacekeeping role to argue against the hypothesis. All four sources could be seen as supporting the hypothesis. The best responses identified that two sources could also be seen as challenging the hypothesis: Sources A and B see ways forward. Source A wants a practical and effective League, Source B suggests that the League exists to ensure better international co-operation, a more modest goal which does not require an international army. These sources are British, the other two French. Thus the sources reveal different national perspectives. The best answers provided detailed evaluation, while more moderately successful responses identified evidence for and against the hypothesis from the sources.

# HISTORY

---

Paper 9389/13  
Document Question

## Key messages

### Candidates do well when they:

- Develop good time-management skills. Divide the hour between three main tasks: reading and understanding; planning answers; writing answers.
- Read the texts, if written, and study pictures and cartoons, if used, with great care to identify the main argument of each source.
- Use relevant contextual knowledge to test the reliability of at least one or two of the sources rather than using contextual knowledge just to explain the argument being made by a source.
- Remain question-focused, making arguments based on detailed and relevant historical evidence.

### General comments

Most candidates made a good attempt at answering the questions on their chosen topics. There were very few rubric infringements, with the problem of answering the **(b)** question by using only Sources A *and* D rather than Sources A *to* D, only occasionally seen. Relatively few candidates found timing to be a problem, as evidenced by their completed responses to both question parts.

Most candidates knew that the **(a)** question requires an identification of similarities and differences. Depending on the sources and the question, either similarities or differences of content could be harder to identify. Careful reading of the sources is required to identify the less prominent points. Explaining them will raise an answer to **(a)** to Level 3. The majority of candidates were able to identify the sources which challenged or supported the hypothesis when answering the part **(b)** question. In order to achieve Level 4 Part **(b)** requires candidates to use all four sources in their answer. Candidates who omit a source completely will limit the marks which can be awarded to their answer.

Most candidates attempted to evaluate the sources for both question parts. Often, attempts to evaluate were too general to be credited, for example, some candidates asserted that a private letter was reliable and a public speech unreliable. Whilst those assertions might be correct, without further explanation of *why*, the attempt to evaluate cannot be credited. The specific letter, or the particular speech, needs considering in context: Who is writing the letter, making the speech and when? How far does contextual knowledge support the assertions made in the letter or speech? Answering these questions by referring to as much specific and contemporary information as possible will provide an appropriate evaluation. Weaker candidates often made the assumption that the sources were inherently reliable. By taking the opposite stance and questioning the purpose of the sources, many candidates would have begun to evaluating them in ways which reach the higher level requirements. Many of the strongest answers had outstanding conclusions. They considered the evaluated sources in order to make a thoughtful and focused answer to the question. This provided clear evidence that the candidate was in control of the argument.

### Comments on specific questions

#### ***Section A: European Option, The Failure of the Revolutions of 1848–49 in Italy***

- (a) Compare and contrast the views in Sources B and D on the role of the republicans in the Italian revolutions of 1848–49.**

Many candidates found it easier to identify the similarities than the differences. Candidates explained and illustrated how both sources criticised republicans for their part in the failure of the 1848 revolutions. Weaker responses found identifying differences a more difficult task. Stronger

responses identified the main contrast, that Source B blamed republican leaders, whereas Source C argued that the 'republican faction' was to blame, by which it meant the whole republican movement and not just its leaders. Responses which discussed these similarities and differences, if illustrated with appropriate quotations from the two sources, reached Level 3. Weaker answers remained at Level 2 mainly because understanding was confused and the explanations and quotations used did not always match. A minority of answers revealed misunderstanding, for example the view that republicans existed to help prevent revolution.

**(b) How far do Sources A to D show that divisions between Italian states were the reason for the failure of the revolutions of 1848–49?**

There were some key terms which required a proper understanding if candidates were to answer the question. The most fundamental was the concept of the 'state'. Some candidates confused the state with the people – or with a political party. Answers which focused on divisions between parties or people did not score highly. The best responses considered what the aims of the revolutionaries might be, independence, unity or democracy, to establish clear terms in their essay. Most candidates were able to identify at least two of the sources as being for and against the assertion. Many candidates found evaluation of the sources in terms of reliability more difficult. The strongest responses evaluated the sources using specific details, supported by using relevant contextual knowledge.

**Section B: American Option, The Impact of Uncle Tom's Cabin**

**(a) To what extent do Sources B and D agree about *Uncle Tom's Cabin*?**

Most candidates found identifying differences between the two sources more straightforward than identifying the similarities. Source B criticises the misuse of the book, Source D praises it. The best answers appreciated that the two sources identified the same reason for their different views, namely to advance the cause of abolitionism. There were a number of other similarities which candidates occasionally noticed. These included the stirring-up of political agitation and a potential threat to political order. Many candidates demonstrated careful reading of the sources and there were very few misunderstandings of the messages they were communicating. Less successful answers often provided too much information about Sumner when referring to Source D, thereby consuming time which would have been better spent focusing on similarities and differences between the two sources.

**(b) How far do Sources A to D support the assertion that the publication of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* did little to help the abolitionist cause?**

Many candidates started their answers by analysing the source they find easiest to make relevant and to analyse. Source C was the popular choice, and candidates identified that it argued strongly in favour of the assertion. Evaluating Source C was less secure, with many candidates arguing that a British source must be reliable, almost because it's British. The strongest responses did provide some contextual information, usually that the British had already abolished slavery and the slave trade which, it was argued, also made the source reliable. Having abolished the slave trade was more likely to cause the British to support abolitionism in the USA. However, the British also had strong economic and cultural ties with the Southern states, which meant that they would not want the disruption of the South that would follow emancipation. The cotton trade was especially important. This kind of specific awareness provided the basis for some very good evaluation in the best responses. Evaluation should be the priority on the part (b) questions, deciding on the reliability of the sources. Most candidates correctly identified Source A, a private letter from the President of the time, Millard Fillmore, as supporting the hypothesis. Evaluation of Source A required more than arguing that it was reliable because it was a private letter, however. The best responses used specific evidence from the letter and its provenance to and their contextual knowledge.

**Section C: International Option, The USA's rejection of the Paris Peace Settlement and The League of Nations**

**(a) Compare and contrast Sources A and B as evidence of British reactions to the USA's unwillingness to join the League of Nations.**



Most candidates identified the main difference: that the reaction of Source A was essentially negative and pessimistic while Source B was more positive and optimistic. A related difference was that Source A speculates that the UK might follow the USA and withdraw from the League, while Source B stresses the UK's continued commitment to making the League a success. Some candidates explained the difference by saying that Source B said the UK might withdraw while Source D makes no mention of the issue. This line of analysis was unsuccessful because the comparison must be of what both sources do say, not what one mentions and the other omits to mention at all. Most candidates were able to correctly identify differences, with the stronger responses also identifying similarities. The most commonly identified similarity was that both saw the withdrawal of the USA from the League as having important consequences for the League and for international peace. Weaker arguments could have been improved by using relevant quotations from the sources when identifying the similarities and differences. The best responses included comparative evaluation of source type, date and purpose related to some relevant contextual information from 1919–20.

**(b) 'The USA's rejection of the Paris peace settlement completely undermined the League of Nations' prospects of success.' How far do Sources A to D support this view?**

Most candidates were able to identify sources on either side of the argument and achieved Level 3 marks. Sources A and D were usually seen as supporting the assertion, Sources B and C as opposing it. Many candidates found evaluation of the sources more challenging. Modest attempts at evaluation were limited to generic assertions, e.g. 'Source D is a cartoon, it is one person's view, it is one-sided, therefore it is unreliable.' Better answers provided more detailed evaluation, considering how much cartoonist had distorted events when depicting them in a cartoon. Contextual knowledge was used to argue that the US Senate did deliver a great blow to the future of the League of Nations. However, that effect was not fully felt for a long time, not until the 1930s and the Manchurian crisis in particular. Sources A and B were the most successfully evaluated sources. Candidates used the source content and provenance and assessed these details using relevant contextual knowledge.

# HISTORY

---

**Paper 9389/21**  
**Outline Study**

## Key Messages

- In **Part (a) questions**, candidates should focus on the key issue of causation, analysing a wide range of factors to show how they inter-reacted and reaching a judgement regarding their relative significance.
- In **Part (b) questions**, candidates should address the specific wording of the question rather than the topic, maintain a balanced approach and ensure that arguments are appropriately supported.

## General Comments

In line with the requirements of the examination, most candidates attempted two complete questions from one Section of the paper. There were a small number of rubric errors, some candidates attempting too many questions or addressing questions from different sections of the paper. Generally, candidates deployed their time effectively, devoting an appropriate amount to each question. Most candidates were able to demonstrate sound factual knowledge in at least some of their answers, and some were able to sustain consistent quality across all four of their responses. There is a fundamental difference in focus between **Part (a)** and **Part (b)** questions. Many candidates clearly appreciated this and attempted the two **Part (a)** questions consecutively, followed by the two **Part (b)** questions (or vice-versa).

**Part (a) Questions** – These questions are about causation. Effective answers showed detailed knowledge and understanding of the reasons why a specific event occurred or why someone adopted a particular course of action. Invariably, causation can only be adequately explained by an appreciation of the combined effect of a number of factors, both long and short-term. The most effective responses were clearly focused on the key issue of causation and contained analysis of a wide range of factors, demonstrating how they inter-acted and developing judgements regarding their relative significance. Most candidates were able to identify and explain some relevant causal factors, but tended to drift into narrative/descriptive accounts of *how* something occurred rather than *why*. Less successful responses were characterised by mono-causal explanations, a tendency to drift into irrelevancy and factual inaccuracy and/or confused chronology; they were over-reliant on vague and generalised assertions lacking appropriate factual support.

**Part (b) Questions** – Good answers showed an awareness that historical issues can be interpreted in many different, and, often, contradictory ways. For an interpretation to be valid, it must be based on a thorough analysis of appropriate and accurate factual material, and must show due consideration of alternative viewpoints. These questions require candidates to develop such interpretations, to make reasoned judgements and to justify their arguments in a clear, consistent and sustained manner. The most successful responses were based on the development of consistent and balanced arguments, explicitly focused on the requirements of the specific question, leading to reasoned and fully-supported conclusions. Where responses were less successful they fell into one of three categories – narrative/descriptive accounts of the topic with only implicit reference to the actual question; unbalanced arguments based on consideration of only one interpretation of the issue; relevant arguments based on factual support which was limited in range and depth. The weakest responses were often the result of confusion over the requirements of the question; they were characterised by factual inaccuracy and/or chronological confusion, assertions based on inadequate factual support or a tendency to drift into irrelevance (often by ignoring timeframes given in the question).

## Comments on specific questions

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

**1 France, 1789–1814**

**(a) Why was the Estates General called in 1789?**

Most candidates were able to demonstrate some understanding of the huge social, financial, political and national security issues which confronted France in 1789. The most impressive responses explained these problems in depth, with specific factual evidence, showing how all previous attempts to deal with them had failed and how summoning the Estates General was increasingly perceived as the only practical solution. Less successful responses tended to lack such depth, many of them being over-reliant on generalisations which were largely undeveloped and often unsupported.

**(b) 'A great reformer.' How far do you agree with this view of Napoleon?**

Lack of balance was a characteristic of less successful responses to this question, the majority of which were essentially narrative in approach. Most candidates described the various reforms which Napoleon carried out, concluding that, therefore, he was indeed 'a great reformer'. The most effective responses were more analytical in style, considering the motives behind, and the implications of, Napoleon's reforms rather than simply outlining their content. This enabled the development of fully-focused arguments and more convincing conclusions.

**2 The Industrial Revolution, c.1800 – c.1890**

**(a) Why did the Industrial Revolution have such important political effects?**

The best answers were able to demonstrate good understanding of the demands of the question, in particular taking note of the requirement to focus on the 'political effects' of the Industrial Revolution. Less successful responses were general discussions of the effects of industrialisation on living and working conditions, essentially describing its social and economic, rather than its political, implications. Some candidates wrote more relevantly about the extension of the franchise to the middle class and the growth of working-class organisations which sought political representation. Generally, however, these were restricted to consideration of events in Britain, such as the 1832 Reform Act and the development of Chartism. Very few candidates highlighted the gradual erosion of the aristocracy's political dominance in France and Germany as well as Britain.

**(b) To what extent did governments help or hinder industrialisation? Refer to any two countries in your answer.**

As in **Part (a)**, less successful responses were heavily reliant on broad generalisations with limited focus on the specific requirements of the question. A large number of candidates identified Britain's relatively stable political structure as a significant factor in the country's early industrialisation, but many were then side-tracked into a largely irrelevant account of other advantages which Britain had over its continental rivals. More explicitly relevant responses made reference to the British government's 'laissez-faire' attitude towards private enterprise and its encouragement of investment, and the best answers went on to support these points with sufficient factual evidence or compare the British experience with that of France or Germany. Most candidates were able to identify and exemplify ways in which governments in at least two countries helped the process of industrialisation and the best included consideration of a valid counter-argument.

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

**(a) Why was Russia involved in the Balkans before the First World War?**

Most candidates were able to identify at least some of Russia's motives, even if these were not always explicitly highlighted. The most successful responses were fully-focused on the reasons for Russia's involvement throughout, factual content being deployed effectively and relevantly as supporting evidence. Some less successful responses, the result of limited understanding of the question's requirements, consisted entirely of narrative accounts of Russia's response to Austria-Hungary's declaration of war against Serbia in 1914.

**(b) How important was the role of militarism in causing the First World War?**

Candidates generally were able to demonstrate sound knowledge regarding the causes of the First World War, and better answers deployed this knowledge in a manner that was explicitly focused on

the precise requirements of the question. A narrow interpretation of the term 'militarism' tended to be adopted by candidates, many citing the naval race between Britain and Germany as their only example. Moderately successful responses followed a similar pattern, a paragraph devoted to each of a number of factors (such as the Alliance System, militarism, imperialism, nationalism etc.) perceived as responsible for causing pre-war tension, followed by a largely assertive conclusion regarding the significance of militarism in particular. The best responses were more analytical in approach, demonstrating how these various factors were inter-connected and sustaining explicit focus on the relative importance of militarism in its widest sense.

**4 The Russian Revolution, 1894–1917**

**(a) Why did the Provisional Government continue fighting the First World War?**

The best responses were characterised by the identification, explanation and analysis of a number of valid factors, supported by detailed and accurate factual evidence. Less successful responses tended to lack such range and depth, many of them confined to largely undeveloped suggestions that the Provisional Government could not afford to upset its First World War allies or assertions regarding Kerensky's desire to gain kudos by defeating the Germans.

**(b) 'There was limited opposition to the Tsarist regime between 1906 and 1914.' How far do you agree?**

The most successful responses demonstrated good knowledge and understanding of the opposition which faced the Tsarist regime throughout the given timeframe, together with detailed analysis of the extent to which this opposition should be seen as 'limited'. This involved focused consideration of issues such as army loyalty, Stolypin's reforms and methods, divisions within the various political groups etc. More moderately successful responses were commonly restricted to narrative accounts of the events of 1905 and the period after Russia's entry into the First World War. Some responses drifted into irrelevance by describing the impact of the Tsar's decision to take personal control of the army during the First World War, in particular the problems created by the Tsarina and Rasputin.

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

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

**(a) Explain why, in 1898, the USA went to war with Spain.**

Responses tended to be limited in range. It was widely understood that the destruction of the USS Maine, together with the subsequent outcry from sectors of the American press, was the catalyst for the USA's declaration of war against Spain. Successful candidates were able to identify and explain more underlying causal factors, such as the need to protect American business interests in Cuba and the increasingly powerful movement towards imperialism and overseas expansion following the realisation that the American economy could no longer remain solely reliant on its domestic market.

**(b) How far did the purchase of Alaska by the USA deserve to be called 'Seward's Folly'?**

Many candidates were able to identify ways in which the purchase of Alaska proved to be of great value to the USA in the long term. Good answers demonstrated understanding of either Seward's initial motives for purchasing Alaska or the reasons why the purchase led to widespread opposition and derision at the time, and showed the factual range and analytical depth required for the development of fully-focused and balanced arguments.

**6 Civil War and Reconstruction, 1861–1877**

**(a) Why, in 1876–77, did the North abandon the policy of Reconstruction?**

The most effective responses were fully-focused on the precise requirements of the question, demonstrating detailed understanding of issues such as the significance of economic depression, the Republican Party's loss of popularity/power and the implications of the Compromise of 1877. Less successful responses were characterised by unfocused narrative accounts of Reconstruction,

outlining its aims and methods with little or no reference to the reasons for its eventual abandonment.

**(b) How great was the damage to life in the South during the Civil War?**

Most candidates were able to demonstrate some understanding of the ways in which various factors had a negative impact on life in the South. Reference was commonly made, for example, to the adverse economic effects of the naval blockade and the undermining of slavery. Similarly, the fact that most of the actual fighting took place in the South was widely seen as inevitably causing significant damage to property, together with heavy military and civilian casualties. Good answers possessed the analytical depth required to make a reasoned assessment regarding 'how great' the damage to the South actually was. Less successful responses were narrative/descriptive, rather than evaluative, in approach, so that the demands of the question were only implicitly addressed.

**7 The Gilded Age and the Progressive Era from the 1870s to the 1920s**

**(a) Why was Woodrow Wilson elected president in 1912?**

Many candidates were able to demonstrate some knowledge and understanding of the split in the Republican Party, although, often, more attention was devoted to the causes of it than to its significance in terms of Wilson's victory in the 1912 Presidential election. Good answers went on to explain how Wilson had gained the nomination of the Democratic Party. Less successful responses were restricted to the identification and explanation of only one causal factor; they were over-reliant on vague and unsupported assertions regarding Wilson's popularity with the American people.

**(b) How bad were conditions in the industrial cities from the 1870s?**

The best responses were characterised by factually-supported accounts of the conditions which prevailed in industrial cities, balanced against evaluation of the effectiveness of attempts to improve them, primarily during the Progressive era. This approach enabled the development of focused and balanced arguments, leading to well-reasoned conclusions. More moderately successful responses consisted largely of descriptive accounts of issues such as overcrowding and lack of sanitation. As a result, they tended to lack balance and analytical focus on the key issue of 'how bad' conditions actually were.

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

**(a) Why have Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal policies remained controversial?**

The most successful responses demonstrated clear understanding both of the contemporary left-right debate regarding the appropriateness of Roosevelt's New Deal policies and of the subsequent disagreements about how effective these policies actually were in addressing the USA's economic problems. This approach facilitated the identification and explanation of a range of valid factors. Less successful responses tended to describe some of the New Deal policies, with explicit reference to the demands of the question being confined to the ways in which the policies appeared to challenge the American traditional values of 'rugged individualism' and limited interference by federal government.

**(b) How successful were Franklin Roosevelt's '100 Days of Action'?**

Candidates generally were able to display sound knowledge of the strategies which Roosevelt implemented during the '100 Days of Action'. The most successful responses contained the analytical depth required to develop balanced arguments which explicitly addressed the demands of the question. More middling responses tended to make the assumption that all of Roosevelt's policies achieved their objectives, and that, unlike Hoover's more 'laissez-faire' approach, the '100 Days of Action' were successful in dealing with the problems created by the Great Depression. Weak responses were essentially narrative in approach and did not contain evidence of balanced assessment.

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

**9 International Relations, 1871–1918**

**(a) Why did the USA adopt an increasingly imperialistic foreign policy in the period from 1895 to 1914?**

Most candidates were able to provide some evidence to demonstrate *how* the USA adopted a more imperialistic attitude during the period, reference being made to issues such as territorial gains following the war against Spain, the USA's involvement in the Panama Canal and Roosevelt's policies regarding Cuba. The most successful responses were more fully focused on the demands of the question, analysing a range of reasons *why* the USA was departing from its traditional isolationist policy.

**(b) To what extent did victory in the war against Russia (1904–05) confirm Japan's emergence as a world power?**

The most effective responses were those which remained fully focused on the requirements of the question throughout, based on clear explanation of the criteria which might be used to define world power status. This approach facilitated the development of balanced arguments, leading to logical and well-supported conclusions. The most common judgement was that Japan's victory in the war was as much a reflection of Russian weakness as Japanese strength, and that it was not until the First World War that Japan could truly claim to have become a major world power. Less successful responses tended to be essentially narrative in approach, describing the Russo–Japanese War and focusing mainly on the reasons for Japan's victory. There was a common, yet undeveloped, assumption that defeating a major European power in war inevitably meant that Japan had achieved world power status.

**10 International Relations, 1919–1933**

**(a) Why did the USSR's relations with Britain and France remain tense throughout the period from 1919 to 1933?**

There was considerable variation in the quality of responses to this question in terms of both range and depth. Most candidates displayed some understanding of British and French resentment regarding Russia's withdrawal from the First World War and its new government's attempts to encourage widespread revolution. The most successful responses were able to go beyond these general points to analyse specific issues which adversely affected relationships throughout the period, such as the significance of the Rapallo Treaty and the reasons for the on-off trade agreements between Russia and Britain.

**(b) To what extent was the Paris peace settlement based on President Wilson's Fourteen Points?**

There were a number of high-quality responses to this question. These were characterised by clear understanding of what Wilson was aiming to achieve and the factors which inhibited his somewhat idealistic ambitions. This approach enabled the development of fully-focused arguments, supported by detailed and appropriate factual evidence, leading to reasoned conclusions. Less successful responses tended to drift into lengthy sections of narrative, describing the outcomes of the Paris peace settlement with limited, and often assertive, reference to the specific demands of the question. Lack of balance was a very common feature, many candidates concluding, inaccurately, that the settlement bore no resemblance to Wilson's Fourteen Points.

**11 International Relations, c.1933–1939**

**(a) Why did Britain follow a policy of appeasement during the 1930s?**

Most candidates were able to identify a number of valid factors, although responses varied in terms of explanatory and analytical depth. There was a tendency to list reasons with limited factual support and without consideration of their relative importance. Better responses were characterised by an appreciation that the British policy of appeasement had far wider significance than simply the failure to confront Hitler's aggressive foreign policies. This enabled the development of more wide-ranging and detailed assessment.

**(b) 'Essentially a struggle between fascism and communism.' How accurate is this assessment of the Spanish Civil War?**

Successful responses were characterised by the development of balanced and well-supported arguments, leading to convincing judgements which were fully-focused on the requirements of the question. Less successful answers, while containing some explicitly relevant comments, had a tendency to drift into lengthy sections of unfocused narrative. For example, many candidates explained, often in considerable detail, the reasons why Germany and Italy became directly involved in the Spanish Civil while Britain and France did not; the relevance of this to the actual question was invariably implicit at best.

**12 China and Japan, 1919–1945**

**(a) Why did Japanese expansion during the 1930s cause concern to the USA?**

This question was addressed by a relatively small number of candidates. Most were able to explain the threat which Japanese expansion posed to American economic interests, in particular the USA's 'open door' policy regarding trade with China. Some candidates also considered reasons for the USA's concerns regarding Japan's flouting of the Washington Naval Conference agreements. In successful responses, arguments were supported by detailed, accurate and appropriate factual evidence.

**(b) To what extent was the unpopularity of the Kuomintang during the 1930s due to its failure to carry out social reforms?**

This question was addressed by a relatively small number of candidates. Most were able to develop effective, and largely well-evidenced, arguments in support of the view that the decline in the Kuomintang's popularity during the 1930s was due to its failure to carry out social reforms. The absence of a convincing counter-argument, however, meant that some responses lacked balance.

# HISTORY

---

**Paper 9389/22**  
**Outline Study**

## Key Messages

- In **Part (a) questions**, candidates should focus on the key issue of causation, analysing a wide range of factors to show how they inter-reacted and reaching a judgement regarding their relative significance.
- In **Part (b) questions**, candidates should address the specific wording of the question rather than the topic, maintain a balanced approach and ensure that arguments are appropriately supported.

## General Comments

In line with the requirements of the examination, most candidates attempted two complete questions from one Section of the paper. There were a small number of rubric errors, some candidates attempting too many questions or addressing questions from different sections of the paper. Generally, candidates deployed their time effectively, devoting an appropriate amount to each question. Most candidates were able to demonstrate sound factual knowledge in at least some of their answers, and some were able to sustain consistent quality across all four of their responses. There is a fundamental difference in focus between **Part (a)** and **Part (b)** questions. Many candidates clearly appreciated this and attempted the two **Part (a)** questions consecutively, followed by the two **Part (b)** questions (or vice-versa).

**Part (a) Questions** – These questions are about causation. Effective answers showed detailed knowledge and understanding of the reasons why a specific event occurred or why someone adopted a particular course of action. Invariably, causation can only be adequately explained by an appreciation of the combined effect of a number of factors, both long and short-term. The most effective responses were clearly focused on the key issue of causation and contained analysis of a wide range of factors, demonstrating how they inter-acted and developing judgements regarding their relative significance. Most candidates were able to identify and explain some relevant causal factors, but tended to drift into narrative/descriptive accounts of *how* something occurred rather than *why*. Less successful responses were characterised by mono-causal explanations, a tendency to drift into irrelevancy and factual inaccuracy and/or confused chronology; they were over-reliant on vague and generalised assertions lacking appropriate factual support.

**Part (b) Questions** – Good answers showed an awareness that historical issues can be interpreted in many different, and, often, contradictory ways. For an interpretation to be valid, it must be based on a thorough analysis of appropriate and accurate factual material, and must show due consideration of alternative viewpoints. These questions require candidates to develop such interpretations, to make reasoned judgements and to justify their arguments in a clear, consistent and sustained manner. The most successful responses were based on the development of consistent and balanced arguments, explicitly focused on the requirements of the specific question, leading to reasoned and fully-supported conclusions. Where responses were less successful they fell into one of three categories – narrative/descriptive accounts of the topic with only implicit reference to the actual question; unbalanced arguments based on consideration of only one interpretation of the issue; relevant arguments based on factual support which was limited in range and depth. The weakest responses were often the result of confusion over the requirements of the question; they were characterised by factual inaccuracy and/or chronological confusion, assertions based on inadequate factual support or a tendency to drift into irrelevance (often by ignoring timeframes given in the question).

## Comments on specific questions

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

#### **1 France, 1789–1814**



**(a) Explain why there were many coups in France between 1795 and 1799.**

Successful responses focused on the requirements of the question, demonstrating detailed understanding of the instability confronting the Directory as a result of both internal and external factors. Some less successful answers tended to describe some of the coups which occurred, with limited explicit focus on their underlying causes. As a result, they tended to be narrative rather than analytical in approach. A significantly large number of responses were adversely affected by chronological confusion. For example, some candidates wrote exclusively about the development of the French Revolution up to the execution of the King, while others described the actions taken by Napoleon once he had become Emperor.

**(b) 'Hunger was the main cause of political instability between 1789 and 1795.' How far do you agree?**

As in Part (a), less successful responses tended to describe events rather than analysing their relative significance with explicit reference to the requirements of the question. As a result, these responses were restricted to narrative accounts of the causes and development of the French Revolution within the period, reference to the importance of hunger being largely confined to generalised and undeveloped assertions. The most successful responses, while deploying much the same factual content as their evidence, were more explicitly focused and analytical in approach, enabling the development of balanced and well-reasoned arguments.

**2 The Industrial Revolution, c.1800–c.1890**

**(a) Why were the upper classes affected by the Industrial Revolution?**

Good responses to this question were characterised by clear and well-supported understanding of the social, economic and political impact which the Industrial Revolution had on the upper classes, together with analysis of how and why this varied in different countries. Less successful responses were over-reliant on vague, generalised and largely unsupported assertions. Some responses overlooked the crucial term 'upper classes' and focused entirely on descriptions of working and living conditions in factories and towns during the first half of the nineteenth century. It is important that candidates understand the class structure in the European context.

**(b) 'Investors were more important than inventors in bringing about the Industrial Revolution.' How far do you agree?**

As in Part (a), less successful responses were frequently characterised by vague, generalised and unsupported assertions. Good answers developed fully-focused and balanced arguments supported by appropriate evidence in sufficient depth. Many candidates were able to describe some inventions (most commonly the steam engine), but did not explain either their significance in bringing about the Industrial Revolution or the importance of investors in popularising their deployment.

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

**(a) Explain why Italy was a member of the Triple Alliance.**

While candidates generally were able to demonstrate good understanding of Germany's motives for adding Italy to its existing alliance with Austria–Hungary, they appeared to be less confident in explaining Italy's reasons for joining the Triple Alliance. Less successful answers made vague and generalised assertions regarding Italy's need for security. There was a tendency in many weaker responses to drift into irrelevant narrative about how rivalry between the Triple Alliance and the Triple Entente was to play a significant role in causing the First World War, or about how Italy eventually joined the war against its Triple Alliance partners. Better responses were fully-focused on Italy's motives, providing detailed explanation and analysis of a range of relevant factors.

**(b) 'Balkan nationalism was the principal cause of Balkan problems in the years before the First World War.' How far do you agree?**

Good responses were characterised by clear understanding of Balkan nationalism and its significance in creating instability within the region, contrasted against other causal factors.

Balanced and analytical assessment of a wide range of factual evidence facilitated the development of fully-focused arguments and sound judgements. Less successful responses tended to be largely narrative in approach, describing various events with little (or assertive only) reference to the requirements of the question. A sizeable number of candidates appeared to be addressing the rather different issue of the extent to which Balkan instability was responsible for causing the outbreak of the First World War.

**4 The Russian Revolution, c.1894–1917**

**(a) Why was the Duma important in the period from 1906 to 1914?**

Most candidates were able to display evidence of good knowledge and understanding of how and why the Duma was established with the issue of the October Manifesto, while also demonstrating how the Duma's actual power was subsequently curtailed by the passing of the Fundamental Laws. Candidates generally appeared to be less assured when considering the role played by the Duma throughout the period from 1906 to 1914. Less successful responses tended to lack the range required to develop arguments which fully addressed the requirements of the question.

**(b) 'The 1905 revolution posed no threat to the survival of the Tsarist regime.' How far do you agree?**

There was wide variation in the quality of responses to this question. Many candidates were able to develop fully-focused and balanced arguments, making judgements supported by appropriately selected evidence. Less successful responses were essentially narrative in approach, outlining the events of Bloody Sunday, with explicit reference to the question being confined to undeveloped assertions. A significantly large number of candidates seemed to misinterpret the requirements of the question, arguing that the 1905 revolution clearly posed no threat to the Tsar because he remained in power after it and then explaining, often in considerable detail, how it was Russia's involvement in the First World War which led to the end of Tsarism.

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

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

**(a) Why did the USA annex the Republic of Hawaii in 1898?**

The most successful responses were characterised by the identification and detailed explanation of a range of economic, political and strategic reasons for the USA's annexation of Hawaii in 1898. Successful candidates were able to explain the annexation by considering the wider context of the USA's move away from isolationism as a result of economic downturns and the overseas possessions gained following the war against Spain. Middling responses, while making some relevant points, tended to lack factual and analytical depth. Less successful responses were adversely affected by over-reliance on generalised, unsupported or undeveloped assertions. For example, many candidates argued that annexing Hawaii would bring economic advantages to the USA, but did not explain what these advantages might be. Similarly, some candidates asserted that the annexation was an inevitable outcome of the USA's belief in the concept of 'Manifest Destiny'.

**(b) How far did the USA benefit from winning the war against Mexico in 1846–48?**

While there was a tendency for responses to be a little lacking in factual and analytical depth, most candidates were able to identify at least some appropriate evidence to show both the benefits and the problems which the USA encountered following its victory in the war against Mexico. The most impressive responses made effective and fully-focused use of this evidence to develop sustained and balanced arguments, reaching judgements based on detailed analysis. Less successful responses were characterised by basic narrative accounts of the war and its outcomes, with no explicit reference to the requirements of the question.

**6 Civil War and Reconstruction, 1861–1877**

**(a) Account for the rise and fall of the Freedmen's Bureau during the Reconstruction era.**

The majority of candidates displayed good knowledge and understanding of why the Bureau was established and what it was intended to achieve. Good responses were able to provide similar depth to analysis of the factors which impaired the Bureau's effectiveness and the reasons for its eventual demise. There was a general tendency for more middling responses to be narrative rather than analytical in approach. For example, many candidates described the actions of the Ku Klux Klan and/or the passing of the Black Codes without demonstrating their significance with reference to the Freedman's Bureau.

**(b) How great was the impact of the Emancipation Proclamation?**

Lack of balance was a common feature of less successful responses to this question. Although in varying degrees of factual depth, most candidates were able to demonstrate how the Proclamation added renewed impetus to the Northern war effort, arguing that it was an extremely significant factor in the North's eventual victory. Good answers were able to identify factors which might challenge this view. Less successful answers relied on generalisations regarding the lack of impact which the Proclamation had on the lives of the slaves themselves.

**7 The Gilded Age and the Progressive Era from the 1870s to the 1920s**

**(a) Explain why US agriculture experienced a serious crisis in the later nineteenth century.**

Most candidates were able to identify at least some relevant factors, although these were often listed without further development or analysis. For example, it was widely noted that farmers suffered as a result of falling prices, but the reasons for, and the impact of, this seemed less well understood. The most effective responses were characterised by clear understanding of a wide range of problems which faced US agriculture in the later nineteenth century, together with explanatory and analytical depth, fully-supported by appropriate factual evidence.

**(b) How far does Theodore Roosevelt deserve to be described as a Progressive?**

The best answers were able to demonstrate good contextual understanding of the term 'Progressive'. This enabled them to analyse Roosevelt's actions in a manner which was fully focused on the requirements of the question, facilitating the development of balanced arguments and convincing judgements. Less successful responses followed a similar pattern – a narrative account of Roosevelt's legislative achievements, followed by an assertive conclusion which lacked sufficient factual and analytical support.

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

**(a) Why did the US Supreme Court declare many New Deal reforms to be unconstitutional?**

There was a tendency in less successful responses not to focus on the question, and to describe *how* the Supreme Court challenged many of the New Deal reforms, explanations regarding why it did so being confined to the fact that most of the Judges were conservative. Many responses drifted into largely irrelevant narrative about how Roosevelt attempted to deal with Supreme Court opposition through his Court Packing plan. The most successful responses remained focused on the key issue throughout, based on a clear understanding of the term 'unconstitutional'.

**(b) How consistent and coherent were Franklin Roosevelt's domestic policies?**

Most candidates were able to display sound factual knowledge of Roosevelt's domestic policies, but did not deploy this in a manner which explicitly addressed the requirements of the actual question. A significantly large number of responses appeared to be addressing the rather different issue of how effective Roosevelt's policies were in dealing with the problems caused by the Great Depression. The most successful candidates appreciated that it was necessary to compare and contrast the aims and policies associated with the First and Second New Deals.

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

**9 International Relations, 1871–1918**

**(a) Why did Bismarck sign the Reinsurance Treaty with Russia in 1887?**

Although there was considerable variation in terms of explanatory depth, most candidates were able to identify at least some valid factors to explain Bismarck's desire to maintain good relations with Russia following the collapse of the Dreikaiserbund. In particular, Bismarck's concerns about facing possible war on two fronts and his desire to isolate France were widely acknowledged. Some responses were adversely affected by chronological confusion and/or a tendency to drift into irrelevant narrative. For example, a number of candidates argued that the Reinsurance Treaty was signed in response to German concerns regarding the formation of the Triple Entente. Several candidates wrote, often at great length, about Kaiser Wilhelm's decision to allow the Reinsurance Treaty to lapse and the subsequent implications of this decision.

**(b) 'Victory in the war against Spain (1898) was the main reason for the USA's emergence as an imperial power.' How far do you agree?**

Good answers were characterised by the development of fully-focused, balanced and well-supported arguments, leading to reasoned judgements. Less successful responses tended to be essentially narrative in approach, many candidates, for example, outlining the reasons for the USA's declaration of war against Spain, listing its outcomes and then describing various actions taken by Roosevelt. While these points were of implicit relevance, they were not used as evidence to address the question directly.

**10 International Relations, 1919–1933**

**(a) Why did the world economic crisis after 1929 lead to an increase in international tension?**

Successful responses were explicitly focused on the requirements of the question, providing a wide range of detailed factual evidence to demonstrate how, and explain why, the world-wide impact of the Great Depression led to increased international tension. Less successful responses were often restricted to descriptive accounts of how the withdrawal of American loans caused economic problems in European countries, and lacked range and depth. The weakest responses were adversely affected by chronological confusion, some candidates, for example, arguing that the French invasion of the Ruhr in 1923 was a direct result of the world economic crisis after 1929.

**(b) 'Harsh and vindictive.' How far do you agree with this assessment of the Treaty of Versailles?**

Candidates generally were able to demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of the terms of the Treaty of Versailles and their impact on Germany. Most were able to create a sense of balance by finding evidence to both support and challenge the view that the Treaty was '*harsh and vindictive*'. The most effective responses were characterised by detailed analysis of this evidence, facilitating the development of fully-focused, balanced arguments, leading to well-reasoned and supported judgements.

**11 International Relations, c.1933–1939**

**(a) Why, in 1934, was Mussolini concerned about Hitler's intentions towards Austria?**

There were a number of extremely good responses to this question, characterised by detailed explanation and analysis of a wide range of relevant factors. Many candidates, for example, were able to explain Mussolini's concerns in the context of the foreign policies he was pursuing at the time, such as his support for the Locarno Treaties, his involvement in the Stresa Front and his desire to maintain good relations with Britain and France. Less successful responses lacked range and depth, many simply stating that Mussolini was concerned about Italian security. A number of responses lacked focus on causation, describing the actions taken by Mussolini to prevent Anschluss in 1934 rather than analysing his motives.

**(b) 'The main reason for Franco's victory in the Spanish Civil War was his ability to maintain the unity of right-wing groups.' How far do you agree?**

Less successful responses tended to lack explicit focus on the precise requirements of the question. Most candidates provided narrative accounts (often in considerable detail) of the reasons for Franco's victory in the Spanish Civil War, with little or no reference to the significance of maintaining unity amongst the various right-wing factions within Spain. As a result, their responses addressed the question at best implicitly and without balance. The most effective responses

demonstrated good understanding of who the various right-wing groups were and evaluated the relative significance of Franco's ability to keep them unified.

**12 China and Japan, 1919–1945**

**(a) Why did the USA increase its economic sanctions against Japan in the period from 1939 to 1941?**

The majority of responses to this question, which was addressed by a relatively small number of candidates, tended to lack range and depth. There was a tendency to describe the sanctions and their impact rather than focusing on the USA's motives for increasing them during the period. That the USA believed its interests in the Far East were being threatened was widely understood. Better responses provided evidence of Japanese actions to explain why these American concerns were increasing in the period from 1939 to 1941.

**(b) To what extent did Chiang Kai-shek, as leader of the Kuomintang, follow the Three Principles established by Sun Yat-sen?**

This question was attempted by a relatively small number of candidates, many of whom were able to develop fully-focused and balanced arguments, leading to reasoned and supported judgements. Some less successful responses, while able to create a sense of balance based on good understanding of what the Three Principles actually were, lacked the analytical depth required to reach convincing conclusions.

# HISTORY

---

Paper 9389/23  
Outline Study

## Key Messages

- In **Part (a) questions**, candidates should focus on the key issue of causation, analysing a wide range of factors to show how they inter-reacted and reaching a judgement regarding their relative significance.
- In **Part (b) questions**, candidates should address the specific wording of the question rather than the topic, maintain a balanced approach and ensure that arguments are appropriately supported.

## General Comments

In line with the requirements of the examination, most candidates attempted two complete questions from one Section of the paper. There were a small number of rubric errors, some candidates attempting too many questions or addressing questions from different sections of the paper. Generally, candidates deployed their time effectively, devoting an appropriate amount to each question. Most candidates were able to demonstrate sound factual knowledge in at least some of their answers, and some were able to sustain consistent quality across all four of their responses. There is a fundamental difference in focus between **Part (a)** and **Part (b)** questions. Many candidates clearly appreciated this and attempted the two **Part (a)** questions consecutively, followed by the two **Part (b)** questions (or vice-versa).

**Part (a) Questions** – These questions are about causation. Effective answers showed detailed knowledge and understanding of the reasons why a specific event occurred or why someone adopted a particular course of action. Invariably, causation can only be adequately explained by an appreciation of the combined effect of a number of factors, both long and short-term. The most effective responses were clearly focused on the key issue of causation and contained analysis of a wide range of factors, demonstrating how they interacted and developing judgements regarding their relative significance. Most candidates were able to identify and explain some relevant causal factors, but tended to drift into narrative/descriptive accounts of *how* something occurred rather than *why*. Less successful responses were characterised by mono-causal explanations, a tendency to drift into irrelevancy and factual inaccuracy and/or confused chronology; they were over-reliant on vague and generalised assertions lacking appropriate factual support.

**Part (b) Questions** – Good answers showed an awareness that historical issues can be interpreted in many different, and, often, contradictory ways. For an interpretation to be valid, it must be based on a thorough analysis of appropriate and accurate factual material, and must show due consideration of alternative viewpoints. These questions require candidates to develop such interpretations, to make reasoned judgements and to justify their arguments in a clear, consistent and sustained manner. The most successful responses were based on the development of consistent and balanced arguments, explicitly focused on the requirements of the specific question, leading to reasoned and fully-supported conclusions. Where responses were less successful they fell into one of three categories – narrative/descriptive accounts of the topic with only implicit reference to the actual question; unbalanced arguments based on consideration of only one interpretation of the issue; relevant arguments based on factual support which was limited in range and depth. The weakest responses were often the result of confusion over the requirements of the question; they were characterised by factual inaccuracy and/or chronological confusion, assertions based on inadequate factual support or a tendency to drift into irrelevance (often by ignoring timeframes given in the question).

## Comments on specific questions

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

#### **1 France, 1789–1804**

**(a) Why did the flight to Varennes provoke such a strong reaction?**

The most successful responses were characterised by clearly expressed understanding of the highly significant constitutional implications of the King's attempted flight, the threat which it posed to revolutionary achievements and the reasons why it fostered greater radicalism within France. Less successful responses tended to lack such focused analytical depth, consisting largely of descriptive accounts of the flight itself and the subsequent capture and execution of the King. This narrative approach meant that reference to the requirements of the question tended to be implicit only.

**(b) 'Bringing stability to France was Napoleon's greatest domestic achievement.' How far do you agree?**

Candidates generally were able to display sound knowledge of Napoleon's rise to power and the policies/reforms which he implemented in his capacity as First Consul and, subsequently, Emperor. Most argued (or at least implied) that Napoleon did indeed bring stability to a France which had suffered due to the excesses of autocracy and radicalism. Less successful responses did not consider whether this was his '*greatest domestic achievement*', however, and therefore tended to be unbalanced. The most effective responses were characterised by a genuine attempt to develop a viable counter-argument. A significantly large number of candidates changed the focus of the question by debating whether Napoleon's motives were designed for the benefit of France or to further his own dictatorial ambitions. Some candidates, misinterpreting the demands of the question, compared the effectiveness of Napoleon's domestic and foreign policies.

**2 The Industrial Revolution, c.1800–c.1890**

**(a) Explain why some people opposed industrialisation.**

While many candidates were able to describe and explain the actions taken by Luddites, relatively few identified other groups who opposed industrialisation and the reasons for their opposition. As a result, the responses lacked both range and depth.

**(b) 'It had a huge political impact.' How far do you agree with this view of the Industrial Revolution?**

In general, this question was not well answered. Many candidates did not meet the question requirement to focus on the '*political impact*', the majority of responses were confined to generalisations about the effects of industrialisation on factors such as urbanisation and working/living conditions. Some candidates were able to demonstrate how, why and with what results the franchise was gradually extended in Britain, although these points were not always adequately evidenced. Many did not meet the requirement of the question to refer to two countries.

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

**(a) Why did Germany issue the 'blank cheque' to Austria?**

The vast majority of candidates clearly appreciated the long-standing importance of the alliance with Austria-Hungary to a Germany deeply concerned about its security and, in particular, the threat of war on two fronts against both France and Russia. The desire to demonstrate support for such an important ally in its conflict with Serbia was commonly perceived as the most significant reason for the 'blank cheque'. In less successful responses, this was the only reason identified, much of the content being unfocused narrative regarding the assassination in Sarajevo and the impact of Austria-Hungary's subsequent attack on Serbia. The most effective responses were characterised by in-depth analysis of a wider range of relevant factors.

**(b) How far was the Alliance System responsible for the increasing tension in Europe in the period before the outbreak of the First World War?**

Candidates generally were able to demonstrate sound knowledge regarding the causes of the First World War. Less successful responses found it difficult to deploy this knowledge in a manner that was fully-focused on the precise requirements of the question. These followed a similar pattern, with a paragraph devoted to each of a number of factors (such as the Alliance System, militarism, imperialism, nationalism etc.) perceived as responsible for causing pre-war tension, followed by a largely assertive conclusion regarding the significance of the Alliance System itself. Better responses were more analytical in approach, demonstrating how these various factors were interconnected and sustaining explicit focus on the relative importance of the Alliance System. A small number of very weak responses were the result of inadequate understanding of the term '*Alliance System*'.

**4 The Russian Revolution, 1894–1917**

**(a) Why did Bloody Sunday occur?**

Competent responses focused on the reasons, outlined in varying degrees of depth and accuracy, why marchers, under the leadership of Father Gapon, were intending to deliver a petition to the Winter Palace. While clearly relevant, this approach did not cover all aspects required by the question. More effective responses also considered the reasons for the heavy-handed response by Cossack soldiers and evaluated the extent to which the Tsar himself should be deemed responsible for it. Weak responses described the events of Bloody Sunday with only implicit reference to the question.

**(b) 'The decision to enter the First World War was the main reason for the downfall of Tsarism.' How far do you agree with this view?**

There were a number of high-quality responses to this question. These were characterised by in-depth analysis of a wide range of factual evidence, contrasting the significance of Russia's entry into the First World War with other, longer-term factors which had an impact on the survival of Tsarism. This approach facilitated the development of fully focused and balanced arguments. Lack of balance was a common feature of less successful responses, many of which outlined the adverse ways in which the Russian people were affected by their country's involvement in the war and asserted, without consideration of alternative viewpoints, that the hypothesis was, therefore, accurate. Although it did not always seriously hinder the quality of their responses, a sizeable number of candidates changed the focus of the question from '*the decision to enter the First World War*' to the Tsar's decision to take personal control of the army during the war.

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

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

**(a) Explain why the USA intervened in the Mexican Revolution of 1910–20.**

This question was attempted by a relatively small number of candidates. The majority of responses tended to be over-reliant on undeveloped (and largely unsupported) generalisations regarding American economic interests in Mexico and the need to ensure stability in the border regions. It was evident that the majority of candidates lacked the detailed factual knowledge and understanding required to address this question effectively.

**(b) How close did the European great powers come to intervening in the American Civil War?**

This question was attempted by a relatively small number of candidates. Most were able to demonstrate how the loss of raw cotton supplies, particularly after the imposition of the Northern naval blockade, meant that the sympathies of European nations, especially Britain, lay initially with the South. That this changed, especially after the publication of the Emancipation Proclamation, was also widely understood. Better responses contained the focused analytical depth required to address the key issue of '*how close*' European nations came to intervening in the Civil War.



**6 Civil War and Reconstruction, 1861–1877**

**(a) Why did Lincoln win the 1864 presidential election?**

The majority of candidates identified recent Northern military successes as a vital factor in Lincoln's election victory, convincing voters that the Civil War, which had become increasingly unpopular, was nearing a successful conclusion. The most effective responses were characterised by consideration of a range of other significant factors, such as the split in the Democratic Party which seriously undermined the campaign of Lincoln's opponent, McLellan. Chronological confusion led some candidates to describe the Lincoln-Douglas debates and explain why Lincoln gained the presidency following the election of 1860.

**(b) How radical was Radical Reconstruction?**

There were a number of high quality responses to this question, characterised by detailed and fully focused analysis of appropriate factual evidence. Most concluded that there was a significant difference between the aims of Radical Reconstruction and the realities of its implementation; while the intentions were perceived as radical, the outcomes were not. Less successful responses lacked such analytical depth. Most were essentially narrative in approach, defining Radical Reconstruction and outlining its progress, with limited reference to the requirements of the question.

**7 The Gilded Age and the Progressive Era from the 1870s to the 1920s**

**(a) Why were the railroads so important to the industrialisation of the USA?**

Less successful responses tended to be over-reliant on vague and undeveloped generalisations regarding the more efficient transportation of goods and people which the railroads provided. Better responses were characterised by in-depth analysis of a far wider range of factors, supported by appropriate and accurate factual content.

**(b) 'Extremely ambitious.' How far do the aims of the Progressive Movement of the 1890s merit this description?**

Candidates generally were able to demonstrate sound knowledge and understanding of what the Progressive Movement of the 1890s was seeking to achieve. Less successful responses tended to be largely narrative in approach, with limited consideration of the precise demands of the question. A common feature of many more explicitly focused responses was lack of balance, analytical points being made in support of the hypothesis but with little to challenge it. Better responses were characterised by balanced arguments, leading to well-supported conclusions.

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

**(a) Explain why critics of Franklin Roosevelt argue that the New Deal was a serious threat to the traditional values of the USA.**

The most successful candidates appreciated that it was necessary to define what critics of the New Deal perceive '*the traditional values of the USA*' to be. This ensured that responses provided the criteria necessary to remain fully focused on the precise requirements of the question. Less successful responses tended to be essentially narrative in approach, describing opposition to the New Deal with little or no reference to the key issue. As a result, many candidates found that much of the factual content they provided in their responses to this question had to be repeated when addressing Part (b).

**(b) How far do you agree that Supreme Court judges were more effective than elected politicians in opposing the New Deal?**

As in Part (a), candidates generally displayed sound knowledge of the opposition which faced the New Deal. Again, however, there was a common tendency to describe this opposition (and sometimes its motives) rather than explicitly addressing the requirements of the question. The most successful responses, while containing much the same factual information, were characterised by more focused analytical depth, facilitating the development of balanced arguments and convincing judgements.

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

**9 International Relations, 1871–1918**

**(a) Why did the Boers declare war against Britain in 1899?**

There was a common tendency for candidates to write generally, and descriptively, about the Boer Wars rather than identifying and explaining the reasons why the Boers declared war against Britain in 1899, which was the specific requirement of the question. The most successful responses were more fully-focused, deploying detailed background knowledge in a relevant and analytical manner.

**(b) To what extent was Kaiser Wilhelm II responsible for creating the tension in Europe which led to the First World War?**

The vast majority of candidates displayed sound knowledge and understanding of the causes of the First World War. In less successful responses, there was a tendency to write generally about these, with limited (and, often, implicit only) reference to the extent to which the Kaiser should be held culpable. Many responses followed a similar pattern – a narrative account of the tensions which led to the outbreak of the First World War, followed by a relevant but assertive conclusion. The most successful responses were explicitly focused on the requirements of the question throughout, detailed analysis of a wide range of factual evidence enabling the development of balanced arguments.

**10 International Relations, 1919–1933**

**(a) Why was Italy dissatisfied with the terms of the Paris peace settlement?**

Most candidates were aware that the settlement denied Italy the territorial acquisitions which it had expected and that Italian representatives were largely excluded from the major decisions taken at the Paris Peace Conference. The most effective responses were able to support such generalisations with detailed factual evidence, and were characterised by in-depth analysis. For example, a number of candidates argued convincingly that Italian humiliation and frustration were greatly increased by the fact that territories which Italy had been promised when entering the First World War on the side of the Allies went instead to potentially rival countries such as Yugoslavia.

**(b) How significant were the Locarno Treaties of 1925?**

There were a number of excellent responses to this question. These were characterised by fully-focused analysis of detailed knowledge and understanding of the agreements which emerged from the Locarno meetings, leading to the development of balanced arguments and convincing judgements. Less successful responses, while containing much the same factual information, tended to be essentially narrative in approach, with only limited (and often assertive) explicit reference to the requirements of the actual question. The weakest responses were the result of inadequate knowledge of the Locarno Treaties.

**11 International Relations, c 1933–1939**

**(a) Why was the right-wing government elected in November 1933 unable to maintain stability in Spain?**

The most successful responses were characterised by detailed knowledge and understanding of the problems which faced the CEDA-dominated right-wing government led by José Maria Gil-Robles, and how its actions served to unify left-wing opposition. The majority of responses lacked such specific depth, relying too heavily on generalisations regarding the reasons for social, political, regional and economic instability in Spain. Chronological confusion led a significant number of candidates to write about the problems which confronted Franco in his attempts to win the Spanish Civil War, and how this encouraged him to seek military assistance from Italy and Germany.

- (b) **'Hitler's main foreign policy aim was to overturn the Treaty of Versailles.' How far do you agree?**

The most effective responses came from candidates who were able to remain fully focused on the requirements of the question, providing detailed analysis of a wide range of factual evidence to develop balanced arguments and reach reasoned conclusions. Less successful responses tended to lack balance, candidates providing perfectly valid arguments in support of the hypothesis, but finding little to challenge it by identifying other motives which Hitler may have had. Many adopted a purely narrative approach, describing Hitler's actions, to varying degrees of depth of accuracy, with little or no obvious reference to the needs of the actual question.

## 12 China and Japan, 1919–1945

- (a) **Why, in 1937, did Chiang Kai-shek restore the Kuomintang's alliance with the Chinese Communist Party?**

This question was attempted by a relatively small number of candidates, most of whom were able to demonstrate sound (and often very detailed) knowledge and understanding of relationships between the KMT and the CCP following Chiang's initiation of the Purification Movement. It was widely appreciated that the unpopularity of Chiang's policy of non-resistance towards invading Japanese forces, even amongst members of the KMT itself, essentially forced him to restore the former alliance with the CCP. The most effective responses were fully focused on the demands of the question throughout, while others tended to drift into lengthy passages of narrative whose relevance was often implicit only.

- (b) **'The collapse of democracy in Japan was caused by the world economic crisis after 1929.' How far do you agree?**

This question was attempted by a relatively small number of candidates, most of whom were able to provide detailed and accurate evidence of the ways in which the Japanese economy was severely affected by the world economic crisis, and the significance of this in undermining the democratically elected government. The most successful responses were characterised by analytical consideration of other factors which led to the collapse of democracy and the onset of military dictatorship. This facilitated the development of balanced arguments, leading to well-reasoned conclusions.

# HISTORY

---

<p><b>Paper 9389/31</b> <b>Interpretations Question</b></p>
---

## Key messages

### Candidates did well when they:

- read the whole extract carefully and based their conclusions on the whole extract rather than a small part of it
- kept their answer firmly focused on the extract and did not become distracted by contextual matters
- focused entirely on explaining the historian's interpretation in the extract
- did not become distracted by discussing whether the interpretation was reliable

## General Comments

The historian's interpretation contained within an extract will always be consistent with all that is within the extract. It follows, then, that if a candidate reaches a conclusion that is true only in relation to part of the extract that this cannot be the 'Big Message' of the extract overall. Many less successful candidates write about parts of the extract, and reach separate conclusions for separate parts, conclusions that are often contradictory. They should be aware that if this happens they have missed something, or misunderstood something, and they should think again.

The question asks what you can learn from the extract about the historian's interpretation. The main focus of the answer should therefore be on what the extract says. Some candidates lose sight of this, and write instead about the context, or in general, speculative terms about the historian's approach or access to sources. Similarly, candidates often mention what the extract does not include. This can be an effective way of putting what it does actually say into a particular interpretative light. An extract on the causation of the Holocaust that made no mention of Hitler might well be placing greater stress on contingent factors, with all that would imply. However, less successful candidates simply view such an omission as a shortcoming on the historian's part, as something 'overlooked' or 'forgotten'. Such attempts at evaluating the reliability of the extract are not required. In short, nothing is worth doing unless it casts light on the interpretation.

There is little correlation between the length of an answer and its quality. What counts is its relevance in explaining the interpretation, which needs first to be identified, and then to be illustrated using the content of the extract. Answers that are too brief may identify important aspects of the interpretation but fail to offer adequate support. Answers that are too lengthy will almost certainly be padded out with unnecessary contextual description. Although only an hour is permitted for this paper, this still allows plenty of time to read the extract carefully and to think about it before writing – time that will have been well spent if it produces a more considered and focused response.

Though candidates' answers display a very wide range of levels of understanding, there is a growing awareness of the requirements of the question. Each examination has brought a greater focus on the extract and a diminishing reliance on contextual knowledge, and this session continued that trend. The biggest discriminator between candidates is the ability to understand what the extract says. Although serious miscomprehension is rare, partial misunderstanding (i.e. of a word, phrase or sentence) is common, and can have a significant effect on an answer. Otherwise sound responses can be weakened by using such invalid material. Successful candidates, on the other hand, do not simply avoid misunderstanding, but bring to their answers an impressive ability to tease out the real meaning of what the historian writes, and a real sensitivity to nuance.

Although writing about context with no reference to the extract has become rarer, how to use contextual knowledge in an answer is still a problem for some candidates. The best way is not to regard it as something separate from the extract, and to include it only as something which makes sense of what the historian is arguing. This applies equally to knowledge of the historiography. Many less successful candidates include

lengthy contextual development of what the source says. This produces passages of narrative or description, which are not required by the task. The use of 'labels' to identify an interpretation or approach ('intentionalist', 'revisionist' etc.) remains a double-edged sword, useful as shorthand, but dangerous if applied incorrectly. If a candidate concludes that an interpretation is, say, post-revisionist in nature, and it manifestly is not, then it indicates flawed understanding. A greater problem arises where the label is simply inappropriate. This can certainly occur on the Holocaust topic, where not all extracts relate to Holocaust causation. Those that deal with bystanders, victims and sometimes even perpetrators, may well not lend themselves to the use of the usual 'intentionalist', 'structuralist', 'synthesis' labels, and attempts to argue that they do will definitely not work.

### **Comments on specific questions**

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

The central argument of the historian who wrote the extract is that developments within the Empire were determined at two different but inter-related levels. At the metropole, high-level political decisions were taken while at the periphery individuals pursued their own interests. The best answers noted both these aspects and used material from the extract to illustrate how the relationship between them worked. The first of these elements was handled less effectively, with some responses showing confusion over references to 'Whitehall' (some mistaking this for a person). Developments at the periphery were generally addressed more successfully and most candidates demonstrated understanding of the significance of the 'man on the spot' mentioned towards the end of the extract. Some less successful candidates sought to impose their own expectations on the extract, having determined that it was about causation. Although it was possible to identify sub-messages about the causes of imperialism, this was not the focus of the argument. The extract downplayed the importance of economic motives, arguing that these were not a principal concern for the decision makers in Whitehall. Some candidates saw the reference to economic interests as an opportunity for a detailed discussion of the Hobson – Lenin Thesis. By doing this they allowed contextual knowledge, unrelated to the extract, to dominate their response and demonstrated an insufficiently close reading of the text. The weakest answers fell into two broad categories. First, those that repeated or paraphrased points in the extract without engaging with the historian's interpretation, and second, those that wrote about the Empire with no reference to the extract, but answers falling into the latter of these two categories were very rare.

#### ***Section B: The Holocaust***

The central argument of the historian who wrote the extract is that the function of the Judenräte, and the behaviour of its leaders, changed over time. The best answers recognised these aspects, and illustrated them using material from the extract. The most perceptive also considered the change in tone of the author towards the Jewish leaders, moving from sympathy in the early part to a much more critical stance by the end. For a significant proportion of candidates, the extract posed a problem since it did not address Holocaust causation. Many attempted to argue that it did, indicating a serious lack of understanding. Such responses were characterised by confused attempts to argue that the extract was intentionalist or functionalist, neither of which could be supported. The extract was about the way the Judenräte began with a welfare function but evolved into a structure for carrying out Nazi decrees. Alongside the change in function, the attitude of the leadership also changed from fear to complicity. The reference to Adam Czerniakow keeping cyanide pills in his desk was widely misinterpreted. The best responses understood that this was a reference to the fear felt by the Jewish leaders and an acceptance that their only escape from their fate might be suicide, though others suggested that Czerniakow would murder his colleagues if they failed to comply, or even use the twenty-four pills to carry out the Holocaust. Misreading this element of the extract meant that responses missed the changing tone of the author and showed weak contextual understanding. This illustrates how important it is for candidates not merely to understand what an extract says, but also to make appropriate and supportable inferences from it. Most responses identified acceptable sub-messages around the idea that the Jewish leadership were manipulated by the Nazis or were partly complicit in their own fate. Weaker answers tended to be assertive in this respect, mistakenly stating that the Jews were to blame for initiating the Holocaust or responsible for running the concentration camps. Such claims suggested lack of attention to the extract and poor contextual knowledge. The weakest answers fell into two broad categories. First those that repeated or paraphrased points in the extract without engaging with the historian's interpretation, and second those that wrote about the Holocaust with no reference to the extract.

**Section C: The Origins and Development of the Cold War, 1941–50**

The central argument of the historian who wrote the extract is that the real cause of the division of Europe was Stalin's own errors and incompetence. Most candidates recognised this, and illustrated their answer using material from the extract. Although this superficially looked like a traditional or orthodox interpretation, candidates had to address the fact that the extract did not entirely exonerate the US. How they dealt with this determined whether they really grasped the overall argument advanced by the historian. For some, the first paragraph appeared to be blaming the USA and so they decided the extract was post-revisionist. While it is true that the author addresses the idea of US responsibility for Stalin's retreat into 'rigidity', this argument is also dismissed with the phrase 'But this was not so.' Missing that short phrase meant that a candidate could not achieve a sound understanding of the overall argument. Many concluded that the extract exonerated the US and was therefore a traditional interpretation. The most effective responses perceived the interpretation as post-post-revisionist (or post-'91), understanding that the author's consideration of the revisionist argument meant it could not be a traditional interpretation. Such responses recognised that the main argument was that Stalin was fundamentally to blame, but also acknowledged that the US, while not guilty, was not blameless either. Key phrases in the extract were 'Truman's grandstanding' and Acheson's comment that 'We were fortunate in our opponents.' Both comments suggest that the US was actively pursuing a determined policy against the USSR even though, according to the author, it had little effect on the way Stalin behaved. To show complete understanding, an answer had to illustrate how the historian, despite arguing that US policy made no difference, did not exonerate the USA. The weakest answers fell into two broad categories. First those that repeated or paraphrased points in the extract without engaging with the historian's interpretation, and second those that wrote about the Cold War with no reference to the extract.

# HISTORY

---

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

## **Key messages**

### **Candidates did well when they:**

- read the whole extract carefully and based their conclusions on the whole extract rather than a small part of it
- kept their answer firmly focused on the extract and did not become distracted by contextual matters
- focused entirely on explaining the historian's interpretation in the extract
- did not become distracted by discussing whether the interpretation was reliable

## **General Comments**

The historian's interpretation contained within an extract will always be consistent with all that is within the extract. It follows, then, that if a candidate reaches a conclusion that is true only in relation to part of the extract that this cannot be the 'Big Message' of the extract overall. Many less successful candidates write about parts of the extract, and reach separate conclusions for separate parts, conclusions that are often contradictory. They should be aware that if this happens they have missed something, or misunderstood something, and they should think again.

The question asks what you can learn from the extract about the historian's interpretation. The main focus of the answer should therefore be on what the extract says. Some candidates lose sight of this, and write instead about the context, or in general, speculative terms about the historian's approach or access to sources. Similarly, candidates often mention what the extract does not include. This can be an effective way of putting what it does actually say into a particular interpretative light. An extract on the causation of the Holocaust that made no mention of Hitler might well be placing greater stress on contingent factors, with all that would imply. However, less successful candidates simply view such an omission as a shortcoming on the historian's part, as something 'overlooked' or 'forgotten'. Such attempts at evaluating the reliability of the extract are not required. In short, nothing is worth doing unless it casts light on the interpretation.

There is little correlation between the length of an answer and its quality. What counts is its relevance in explaining the interpretation, which needs first to be identified, and then to be illustrated using the content of the extract. Answers that are too brief may identify important aspects of the interpretation but fail to offer adequate support. Answers that are too lengthy will almost certainly be padded out with unnecessary contextual description. Although only an hour is permitted for this paper, this still allows plenty of time to read the extract carefully and to think about it before writing – time that will have been well spent if it produces a more considered and focused response.

Though candidates' answers display a very wide range of levels of understanding, there is a growing awareness of the requirements of the question. Each examination has brought a greater focus on the extract and a diminishing reliance on contextual knowledge, and this session continued that trend. The biggest discriminator between candidates is the ability to understand what the extract says. Although serious miscomprehension is rare, partial misunderstanding (i.e. of a word, phrase or sentence) is common, and can have a significant effect on an answer. Otherwise sound responses can be weakened by using such invalid material. Successful candidates, on the other hand, do not simply avoid misunderstanding, but bring to their answers an impressive ability to tease out the real meaning of what the historian writes, and a real sensitivity to nuance.

Although writing about context with no reference to the extract has become rarer, how to use contextual knowledge in an answer is still a problem for some candidates. The best way is not to regard it as something separate from the extract, and to include it only as something which makes sense of what the historian is arguing. This applies equally to knowledge of the historiography. Many less successful candidates include

lengthy contextual development of what the source says. This produces passages of narrative or description, which are not required by the task. The use of 'labels' to identify an interpretation or approach ('intentionalist', 'revisionist' etc.) remains a double-edged sword, useful as shorthand, but dangerous if applied incorrectly. If a candidate concludes that an interpretation is, say, post-revisionist in nature, and it manifestly is not, then it indicates flawed understanding. A greater problem arises where the label is simply inappropriate. This can certainly occur on the Holocaust topic, where not all extracts relate to Holocaust causation. Those that deal with bystanders, victims and sometimes even perpetrators, may well not lend themselves to the use of the usual 'intentionalist', 'structuralist', 'synthesis' labels, and attempts to argue that they do will definitely not work.

### **Comments on specific questions**

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

The central argument of the historian who wrote the extract is that, in India, Muslims suffered more than other groups under British rule and that this situation deteriorated with time. Most responses demonstrated a sound understanding of the first of these elements and developed their answers with effective support from the extract. Most answers identified relevant sub-messages and understood aspects of the argument. To achieve a complete understanding meant addressing both aspects equally, and the most perceptive responses saw how others in Indian society, particularly the Hindus, adapted better to British rule, further isolating the Muslim community. Weaker responses sought to impose their own expectations of what the extract ought to be saying, for example by seeing it as an explanation of the causes of imperialism. Taking this approach made it impossible to demonstrate a sound understanding. The weakest answers fell into two broad categories. First those that repeated or paraphrased points in the extract without engaging with the historian's interpretation, and second those that wrote about the Empire with no reference to the extract, but answers falling into the latter of these two categories were very rare.

#### ***Section B: The Holocaust***

The central argument of the historian who wrote the extract is that the Final Solution was driven by Nazi racialism, rather than anti-Semitism, and that there were structural elements in German society which facilitated its implementation. The most successful candidates recognised these aspects and illustrated them using material from the extract. It was possible to argue that pre-existing racism or the willingness of professionals to be involved made up the societal element of the argument, and often the best responses recognised the significance of both. Although the extract puts Hitler's views on race at the centre of the interpretation it was not possible to argue that this was an intentionalist extract. Those who followed this line in their responses tended to over-emphasise individual elements of the extract, such as the discussion of Hitler's views in the second paragraph, and didn't develop a sense of the extract as a whole. While it was perfectly possible to achieve a complete understanding without attaching a label, those who did so most effectively generally agreed that the extract was a synthesis. It was also possible to argue that it was broadly structuralist. The best responses used labels cautiously, whilst weaker answers often attempted to attach a label to each paragraph, or even different labels to different sentences. Most responses identified valid sub-messages from the extract, for instance that the Nazis persecuted groups other than the Jews, that racism was deep-rooted or that the Nazis centralised persecution through changes to the law in Germany. The key to developing a sound understanding was to recognise that broad-based racialism was the driving force. The weakest answers fell into two broad categories. First those that repeated or paraphrased points in the extract without engaging with the historian's interpretation, and second those that wrote about the Holocaust with no reference to the extract.

#### ***Section C: The Origins and Development of the Cold War, 1941–50***

The central argument of the historian who wrote the extract is that both the USA and USSR were to blame for the Cold War. The best answers recognised this, and illustrated the responsibility of both with detailed references to the extract. Most argued that the extract was post-revisionist and those who achieved a complete understanding did so by showing how the author laid blame on both sides separately and individually. Some less successful answers attempted to make the extract fit a predetermined definition of post-revisionism whereby neither side was to blame, or misunderstandings were the root cause of the Cold War. Taking this approach generally meant that elements of the extract were either misinterpreted or ignored. Such answers often focused on the notion of 'inevitability' which appears in the first two paragraphs, without considering the context in which it was used. Others pounced on the reference to ideology in the first paragraph and made claims about mistrust, based on the differences between Communism and Capitalism, which could not be supported from the extract. Although most candidates identified relevant sub-messages,



some demonstrated little sense of the extract as a whole. For instance, it was quite common to see responses which argued that the first paragraph was post-revisionist, the second was revisionist and the third traditional. While sub-messages about how the USA and USSR were to blame were identified and supported in such answers, there was little attempt to develop an overview of the argument. Although most answers contained at least some relevant discussion of the extract, some repeated or paraphrased points in the extract without engaging with the historian's interpretation, and a few wrote about the Cold War with no reference to the extract.

# HISTORY

---

**Paper 9389/33**  
**Interpretations Question**

## **Key messages**

### **Candidates did well when they:**

- read the whole extract carefully and based their conclusions on the whole extract rather than a small part of it
- kept their answer firmly focused on the extract and did not become distracted by contextual matters
- focused entirely on explaining the historian's interpretation in the extract
- did not become distracted by discussing whether the interpretation was reliable

## **General Comments**

The historian's interpretation contained within an extract will always be consistent with all that is within the extract. It follows, then, that if a candidate reaches a conclusion that is true only in relation to part of the extract that this cannot be the 'Big Message' of the extract overall. Many less successful candidates write about parts of the extract, and reach separate conclusions for separate parts, conclusions that are often contradictory. They should be aware that if this happens they have missed something, or misunderstood something, and they should think again.

The question asks what you can learn from the extract about the historian's interpretation. The main focus of the answer should therefore be on what the extract says. Some candidates lose sight of this, and write instead about the context, or in general, speculative terms about the historian's approach or access to sources. Similarly, candidates often mention what the extract does not include. This can be an effective way of putting what it does actually say into a particular interpretative light. An extract on the causation of the Holocaust that made no mention of Hitler might well be placing greater stress on contingent factors, with all that would imply. However, less successful candidates simply view such an omission as a shortcoming on the historian's part, as something 'overlooked' or 'forgotten'. Such attempts at evaluating the reliability of the extract are not required. In short, nothing is worth doing unless it casts light on the interpretation.

There is little correlation between the length of an answer and its quality. What counts is its relevance in explaining the interpretation, which needs first to be identified, and then to be illustrated using the content of the extract. Answers that are too brief may identify important aspects of the interpretation but fail to offer adequate support. Answers that are too lengthy will almost certainly be padded out with unnecessary contextual description. Although only an hour is permitted for this paper, this still allows plenty of time to read the extract carefully and to think about it before writing – time that will have been well spent if it produces a more considered and focused response.

Though candidates' answers display a very wide range of levels of understanding, there is a growing awareness of the requirements of the question. Each examination has brought a greater focus on the extract and a diminishing reliance on contextual knowledge, and this session continued that trend. The biggest discriminator between candidates is the ability to understand what the extract says. Although serious miscomprehension is rare, partial misunderstanding (i.e. of a word, phrase or sentence) is common, and can have a significant effect on an answer. Otherwise sound responses can be weakened by using such invalid material. Successful candidates, on the other hand, do not simply avoid misunderstanding, but bring to their answers an impressive ability to tease out the real meaning of what the historian writes, and a real sensitivity to nuance.

Although writing about context with no reference to the extract has become rarer, how to use contextual knowledge in an answer is still a problem for some candidates. The best way is not to regard it as something separate from the extract, and to include it only as something which makes sense of what the historian is arguing. This applies equally to knowledge of the historiography. Many less successful candidates include

lengthy contextual development of what the source says. This produces passages of narrative or description, which are not required by the task. The use of 'labels' to identify an interpretation or approach ('intentionalist', 'revisionist' etc.) remains a double-edged sword, useful as shorthand, but dangerous if applied incorrectly. If a candidate concludes that an interpretation is, say, post-revisionist in nature, and it manifestly is not, then it indicates flawed understanding. A greater problem arises where the label is simply inappropriate. This can certainly occur on the Holocaust topic, where not all extracts relate to Holocaust causation. Those that deal with bystanders, victims and sometimes even perpetrators, may well not lend themselves to the use of the usual 'intentionalist', 'structuralist', 'synthesis' labels, and attempts to argue that they do will definitely not work.

### **Comments on specific questions**

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

The central argument of the historian who wrote the extract is that the Empire was both improvised and provisional in nature. The best answers noted both these aspects and used material from the extract to illustrate them. The former aspect was the more effectively argued, with candidates perhaps being taken by surprise by the extract's insistence that 'it was...an unfinished empire', so that the idea of an empire constantly changing to adapt to circumstances was often missed. Less successful candidates sought to impose their own expectations of what the extract ought to be saying, for example by seeing it as an economic explanation of empire, despite the fact that it argued a multitude of motives. They recognised that there was an interpretation, even though they missed most aspects of it. The weakest answers fell into two broad categories. First those that repeated or paraphrased points in the extract without engaging with the historian's interpretation, and second those that wrote about the Empire with no reference to the extract, but answers falling into the latter of these two categories were very rare.

#### ***Section B: The Holocaust***

The central argument of the historian who wrote the extract was that the United States could have done more to assist the victims of the Holocaust, but did not want to. It was clear from the extract that the historian understood why the USA behaved this way, yet disapproved. The most successful candidates recognised these aspects, and illustrated both of them using material from the extract. For many candidates, however, the extract posed a problem since it did not address Holocaust causation. Some less successful answers made attempts to argue that it did, which indicated serious lack of understanding. The extract was actually about 'bystanders', which has been an important area of study within Holocaust historiography. The idea that the USA was reluctant to take action to rescue the Jews was very easy to reach, but some candidates pushed their arguments too far, for example, by asserting that the USA was to blame for the Holocaust (based on what the extract says about Goebbels believing that the Allies approved of what was happening to the Jews). This illustrated how important it is for candidates not merely to understand what an extract says, but also to be able to make appropriate and supportable inferences from it. Most answers took McCloy's justification for why the USA could not bomb the crematoria at face value, merely as further evidence of inability to act, whilst the historian's real point was that this was just an excuse, and was therefore evidence of why the USA was culpable. The weakest answers fell into two broad categories. First those that repeated or paraphrased points in the extract without engaging with the historian's interpretation, and second those that wrote about the Holocaust with no reference to the extract, but answers falling into the latter of these two categories were very rare.

#### ***Section C: The Origins and Development of the Cold War, 1941–50***

The central argument of the historian who wrote the extract is that Molotov's hostile diplomacy was responsible for post-war tensions, despite the genuine attempts of the USA to bring about a peaceful settlement. The most successful candidates recognised these aspects, and illustrated both of them using material from the extract. Despite the fact that this superficially looked like a traditional or orthodox interpretation, candidates had to cope with the fact that the extract was also, to a degree, critical of US Secretary of State Byrnes. How they dealt with this determined whether or not they really grasped the overall argument advanced by the historian. For some, there was evidence of both sides being blamed, so the interpretation therefore had to be post-revisionist. This was to ignore the inescapable fact that greater blame was placed on the USSR. For others, despite the criticism of Byrnes, there was plenty of stronger criticism of Molotov, so the overall argument remained orthodox. For the most effective argument, though, one would probably perceive the interpretation as post-post-revisionist, seeing the USSR as fundamentally at fault, but not blind to the failings of the West. Additionally, to show complete understanding, an answer had to illustrate how the historian, despite criticising Byrnes, was still exonerating the West. The weakest answers fell into

two broad categories. First those that repeated or paraphrased points in the extract without engaging with the historian's interpretation, and second those that wrote about the Cold War with no reference to the extract, but answers falling into the latter of these two categories were very rare.

# HISTORY

---

Paper 9389/41  
Depth Study

## Key messages

### Candidates did well when they:

- Read the question very carefully
- Focused closely on the specific nature of the question set in their answer
- Showed evidence of depth of knowledge of the topic

## General Comments

Successful candidates not only had a firm grasp of the topic, but also gave a clear answer to the question set. When asked 'how far do you agree that...?' or 'to what extent...?' they avoided a vague response and argued that they agreed very strongly with the suggestion or that 'it was only to a very limited extent that...'

Spending time working out exactly what the question was asking, and then giving a carefully considered judgement based on an in-depth knowledge of the topic was the key to success. Answers which showed relevant knowledge and understanding together with a willingness to analyse and reflect gained high marks. Some candidates demonstrated high quality analytical skills, but did not have the requisite detail to substantiate the valid points they made. Others clearly had an impressive grasp of the topic, but omitted to really give an answer to the question. For example, in some responses to the question 'How far do you agree that Lenin did little to improve the Russian economy?', there was a comprehensive list of the policies he undertook which damaged the economy, followed then by a list of ways in which he could be seen to have improved it. This was then followed by a brief paragraph which started by saying 'In conclusion he did little to improve the economy...' without giving any reasons why this conclusion had been reached, or apparently considering the substantial evidence which had been included of the case 'for'. In these cases, lack of sustained judgment was the problem. The best responses to this type of question started with a firm answer, such as 'Overall Lenin's policies proved disastrous for the Russian economy as...', or 'By the time of his death there were many positive signs of real improvement in the economy as...'. This was then followed by a firm and detailed case, but also demonstrating some balance.

Lack of depth was often a feature of less successful responses. The mark scheme rewards answers that are supported by appropriate factual material and analysis of the argument. In order to achieve this, candidates should read a range of materials on their chosen topic. Another feature of less successful answers was a tendency to stray away from the specific focus of the question set. Successful candidates managed their time well by staying focused, whilst some did less well by writing too much irrelevant context. For example, if asked about events in the 1960s, candidates who spent a couple of pages writing about the 1970s ran out of time on the second essay.

## **Depth Study 1: Europe of the Dictators, 1918-1941**

- 1 The best responses began with a picture of the economic situation which Lenin inherited and then contrasted it with the situation Russia was in at the time of his death. It could then be argued that the situation in 1924 was not as bad as it had been in 1918. Some argued that in trying to impose a command economy on Russia there was no chance of any long-term improvement, however positive the situation might look once the NEP had begun to make some impact. Less successful responses showed a lack of depth by only looking at War Communism and the NEP and little else. Good responses had a much wider range of knowledge, looking at issues ranging from the implications of Brest Litovsk, the beginnings of central planning, to quite detailed comments on what was happening to land ownership and use all over Russia.

- 2 This was a popular question and often competently done. Some reflection on what 'effective government' might entail helped candidates to focus their answers. The best responses identified what they felt was the 'principal' reason and gave a convincing argument why it was, and why other factors were not, making sure all points were backed up with accurate and relevant knowledge. Less successful responses first listed very carefully the various failings of the political elite (not always making it clear that they were quite sure who they were) and then listed the various 'other factors' such as Mussolini's political skills, often followed by a very brief final paragraph which stated that it was/was not this failure that was the principal reason, but without actually explaining why. The most successful essays had a firm argument and a sense of direction from the beginning.
- 3 The key to success here was to think carefully first about what needed to be covered while dealing with Stalin's 'social' impact, avoiding lists, and ensuring that there was continuous 'assessment'. Less successful responses just described the Purges or wrote narratives of the collectivisation and industrialisation policies. While these had social implications, they were often not commented on. Quite a lot of candidates were very unsure what needed to be covered in a question about social policy. There were some very good commentaries on the implications of Stalin's various policies on class in Russia, and also their impact on the family and the role of women. Both collectivisation and industrialisation had a huge social impact, as did the developments in education. Some looked closely at the changing attitude towards the various religious faiths in the USSR, as well as the wider implications of the purges and the famines. It was those who reflected for a while before they wrote, kept their focus very firmly on the 'social' impact and also remembered to 'assess' and not just describe, that did best.
- 4 The better responses tended to keep their focus firmly on what might be the 'heart' or driving force of Nazi domestic policy rather than writing at great length about foreign policy. Some made good cases for the hypothesis, showing how other policies, such as education and culture, were dominated by racial motives, and even the desire for autarky was subordinated to driving out Jews from business and industry. Some argued that it was just one amongst several policies which were important to the Nazis, such as the overthrow of Versailles, autarky and establishing a totalitarian regime. Weaker answers tended to just list domestic policies, or in some cases write at considerable length about the Holocaust, which was not really relevant to the period under discussion.

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

Too few responses to these Questions were seen to make general comment appropriate.

### Depth Study 3: International History, 1945-1991

- 9 Better responses kept their focus very firmly on the 1960s and also reflected on both the 'development' and 'proliferation' parts of the question. Simply dealing with the two aspects together did not work well. Some spent too long on the success/failure aspects of just one and did not really think about whether 'effective' was quite the same as 'successful'. As always those who paused and thought about exactly what the question was looking for did best. Some wrote at length on the 1970s which was not relevant, while some wrote well on the Test Ban, but ignored the Non-Proliferation Treaty.
- 10 This was a very popular question which produced a huge variety of very different responses. Some of the best ones really had a 'big picture' approach and argued that there were a variety of causative factors, ranging from the long term economic weaknesses, the work of Reagan to the growth of nationalism within the USSR and the policies of Gorbachev. Some argued successfully that it was primarily the work of Gorbachev, with others placing more focus on the failings of the gerontocracy. Less successful responses tended to describe on why the Cold War was 'won' by America or just list factors and leave it to the reader to decide which was the most important. There were a very large number of lists of possible factors, with little or no comment on their relative importance to the final collapse, invariably ending with a three or four-line paragraph which started 'In conclusion it was ... which caused the collapse...' and giving no reason why they had come to this conclusion. These answers tended to lack depth of knowledge, in particular a lack of awareness of what the 'long term economic weaknesses' might be.
- 11 The better responses with a firm answer, in most cases arguing that while his opponents made many fundamental mistakes, victory was finally due to Mao's role and decisions. Candidates

usually had a very good grasp of the necessary details on Mao but were weaker on Chiang. Less successful responses presented long lists of facts without any comment or any indication of to 'what extent' the victory was down to Mao's leadership.

- 12 There were some very good responses to this question. Successful candidates looked at, and reflected on, the huge variety of factors which led to the 'chaos' with command of detail and discrimination. They commented effectively on the 'how far...' aspect of the question as well as showing a very sound grasp of factors such as the pre-existing splits between Muslim and Christian, as well as the roles of Syria and Israel. There was good depth and a willingness to comment and argue. Perhaps the only weakness was a lack of knowledge of the Palestinians themselves.

**Depth Study 4: African History, 1945-1991**

Too few responses to these Questions were seen to make general comment appropriate.

**Depth Study 5: Southeast Asian History, 1945-1990s**

Too few responses to these Questions were seen to make general comment appropriate.

# HISTORY

---

Paper 9389/42  
Depth Study

## Key messages

### Candidates did well when they:

- Read the question very carefully
- Focused closely on the specific nature of the question set in their answer
- Showed evidence of depth of knowledge of the topic

## General Comments

Successful candidates not only had a firm grasp of the topic, but also gave a clear answer to the question set. When asked 'how far do you agree that...?' or 'to what extent...?' they avoided a vague response and argued that they agreed very strongly with the suggestion or that 'it was only to a very limited extent that...'

Spending time working out exactly what the question was asking, and then giving a carefully considered judgement based on an in-depth knowledge of the topic was the key to success. Answers which showed relevant knowledge and understanding together with a willingness to analyse and reflect gained high marks. Some candidates demonstrated high quality analytical skills, but did not have the requisite detail to substantiate the valid points they made. Others clearly had an impressive grasp of the topic, but omitted to really give an answer to the question. For example, in some responses to the question 'How far do you agree that Lenin did little to improve the Russian economy?', there was a comprehensive list of the policies he undertook which damaged the economy, followed then by a list of ways in which he could be seen to have improved it. This was then followed by a brief paragraph which started by saying 'In conclusion he did little to improve the economy...' without giving any reasons why this conclusion had been reached, or apparently considering the substantial evidence which had been included of the case 'for'. In these cases, lack of sustained judgment was the problem. The best responses to this type of question started with a firm answer, such as 'Overall Lenin's policies proved disastrous for the Russian economy as...', or 'By the time of his death there were many positive signs of real improvement in the economy as...'. This was then followed by a firm and detailed case, but also demonstrating some balance.

Lack of depth was often a feature of less successful responses. The mark scheme rewards answers that are supported by appropriate factual material and analysis of the argument. In order to achieve this, candidates should read a range of materials on their chosen topic. Another feature of less successful answers was a tendency to stray away from the specific focus of the question set. Successful candidates managed their time well by staying focused, whilst some did less well by writing too much irrelevant context. For example, if asked about events in the 1960s, candidates who spent a couple of pages writing about the 1970s ran out of time on the second essay.

## **Depth Study 1: Europe of the Dictators, 1918-1941**

- 1 Successful answers considered what 'effectiveness' meant, and realised that some weighing up was required rather than a straightforward decision between success and failure. Less successful responses ignored the word altogether and simply wrote about 'success'. If the focus was kept on the extent to which his various policies achieved his objectives, then responses worked well. Basic answers mentioned War Communism and the NEP, while the better answers drew on a much wider range of factual information, and looked at the peace treaty, the attempts at centralised planning, repudiation of debts, later trade treaties and the various land policies as well. Few mentioned the economic conditions which Lenin inherited, although some argued strongly that



given those conditions and the fact that the regime not only won the Civil War but survived until his death in 1924, then there must have been something effective about them. ’

- 2 Better answers reflected on what a ‘totalitarian’ state might look like, and once there was a clear definition, set out to not only answer the question of ‘extent’ but develop a case in detail. Some less successful answers focussed at length on Mussolini’s rise to power, which had little relevance, while others spent too long suggesting that he was not so totalitarian as either Hitler or Stalin. Some discussed his domestic policies and the various ‘Battles’, but without really linking these factors to totalitarianism, beyond a hint that as they were not very successful, then he could not be seen as very ‘totalitarian’. Good answers showed evidence of ‘depth’, wider reading and a considered grasp of the topic. Less successful responses confined their supporting detail to rather vague comments about the OVRA and the degree of autonomy left to the Roman Catholic Church.
- 3 There were some outstanding responses to this question. These carefully separated the ‘opportunism’ from the ‘careful planning’ aspects of the question, dealt with them separately, grasped the complexities of the various ideological debates within the party in the later 1920s, gave a firm answer to the question of ‘extent’ and kept the focus very firmly on the 1920s. There were some good debates and some sophisticated analysis of this complex issue, though some answers showed a lack of the ‘depth’ of knowledge required for the higher marks. Some less successful responses saw the question as asking about Stalin’s rise ‘in’ power and not ‘to’ power. This led to detailed descriptions of the purges and policies such as collectivisation and industrialisation.
- 4 There were some very good responses which reflected carefully about the popularity, or otherwise, of the various domestic policies in Germany in the 1930s. Some suggested that if they were all so popular, then why was it so necessary to have not only a huge propaganda and indoctrination process, but also censorship and a system of terror to back it all up? Good responses looked at a range of policies which could be seen as gaining wide support, such as the lowering of unemployment and the restoration of Germany’s status in Europe. They did not assume, for example, that his anti-Semitism and his use of terror were necessarily popular. Less successful responses did not address the ‘popular’ part of the question and just listed various domestic policies, concluding that as they were ‘successful’ they were also ‘popular’.

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

There were too few answers to these Questions to make general comment appropriate.

### Depth Study 3: International History, 1945-1991

- 9 Better responses kept the focus very much on the globalisation of the Cold War and avoided too much emphasis on the causes of the Cold War. Some weak answers provided a lot of information which was relevant to Paper Three and had little relevance to this question. There were some very good commentaries on why the Cold War spread, allocating responsibility between the USA and the USSR, but also considering a range of other factors. Invariably it was those who really set out to deal with the question of ‘extent’ from the start, and avoided a vague comment like ‘to some extent’ that did best. Many descriptive accounts of the Cold War from 1950 onwards showed a real command of the relevant detail, but reluctance to come to any judgement about whether the spread was down to the Soviet Union’s wish to expand its territory and influence.
- 10 The best responses had a good working knowledge of both the political as well as the economic structure of the USSR, and the flaws in both. Some saw ‘external’ to mean just the other COMECON countries and did not look at issues such as Afghanistan and the military rivalry with the USA and NATO. Some showed awareness of the tensions building up in the USSR’s Asian ‘possessions’ as well as those to the South East and South West of Moscow. Some answers fell short of achieving their potential because, although they showed a real depth of knowledge of the case ‘for’ both internal and external factors, they did not come to a judgement. Some had a brief conclusion which suggested ‘it was a mixture of both’, but without clear analysis or judgement.
- 11 There were few responses to this question and, while they demonstrated competent knowledge of Mao’s policies, they did not discuss in any depth whether they actually benefitted China or not. Some argued quite strongly that the main aim of his policies was whether to bring communism to China, or to increase his own power. The best reflected on what might – or might not – benefit

China, and then considered the various policies in that context. There was usually the requisite depth of knowledge shown, but a reluctance to think very much about the 'extent' part of the question.

- 12 There were few responses to this question, but they tended to be very good, with a mix of both detailed knowledge and a willingness to deal with the 'extent' part of the question. Some placed the focus very much on how the war itself proved to be a destabilising factor, splitting opinion amongst Arab states and also wrote about the wider economic implications. Others had more of a focus on how it was 'other factors' which tended to destabilise and it was the war which merely accelerated them. Given the complexity of the topic and also the considerable controversy it invariably creates, there were some very mature and considered responses to the question.

**Depth Study 4: African History, 1945-1991**

There were too few answers to these Questions to make general comment appropriate.

**Depth Study 5: Southeast Asian History, 1945-1990s**

There were too few answers to these Questions to make general comment appropriate.

# HISTORY

---

**Paper 9389/43**  
**Depth Study**

## **Key messages**

### **Candidates did well when they:**

- Read the question very carefully
- Focused closely on the specific nature of the question set in their answer
- Showed evidence of depth of knowledge of the topic

## **General Comments**

Successful candidates not only had a firm grasp of the topic, but also gave a clear answer to the question set. When asked 'how far do you agree that...?' or 'to what extent...?' they avoided a vague response and argued that they agreed very strongly with the suggestion or that 'it was only to a very limited extent that...'

Spending time working out exactly what the question was asking, and then giving a carefully considered judgement based on an in-depth knowledge of the topic was the key to success. Answers which showed relevant knowledge and understanding together with a willingness to analyse and reflect gained high marks. Some candidates demonstrated high quality analytical skills, but did not have the requisite detail to substantiate the valid points they made. Others clearly had an impressive grasp of the topic, but omitted to really give an answer to the question. For example, in some responses to the question 'How far do you agree that Lenin did little to improve the Russian economy?', there was a comprehensive list of the policies he undertook which damaged the economy, followed then by a list of ways in which he could be seen to have improved it. This was then followed by a brief paragraph which started by saying 'In conclusion he did little to improve the economy...' without giving any reasons why this conclusion had been reached, or apparently considering the substantial evidence which had been included of the case 'for'. In these cases, lack of sustained judgment was the problem. The best responses to this type of question started with a firm answer, such as 'Overall Lenin's policies proved disastrous for the Russian economy as...', or 'By the time of his death there were many positive signs of real improvement in the economy as...'. This was then followed by a firm and detailed case, but also demonstrating some balance.

Lack of depth was often a feature of less successful responses. The mark scheme rewards answers that are supported by appropriate factual material and analysis of the argument. In order to achieve this, candidates should read a range of materials on their chosen topic. Another feature of less successful answers was a tendency to stray away from the specific focus of the question set. Successful candidates managed their time well by staying focused, whilst some did less well by writing too much irrelevant context. For example, if asked about events in the 1960s, candidates who spent a couple of pages writing about the 1970s ran out of time on the second essay.

## **Depth Study 1: Europe of the Dictators, 1918-1941**

- 1 Good answers reflected carefully on what the criteria for 'success' might be in this context. Some suggested that given the state of Russia in 1917 and the overall legacy of Tsarism, then just getting out of a disastrous war and establishing some form of coherent government by his death in 1924 was a massive achievement. Some also suggested that, in addition, managing to keep, in the end, most of 'old' Russia as part of the USSR was also a major achievement. Some felt that the mix of Civil War and famine and a background of terror were hardly 'successes', with events at Kronstadt confirming this. Less successful answers tended to look at a limited range of factors, War Communism and the NEP often featuring prominently, without really explaining whether they should be seen as a success or failure on Lenin's part. Limited depth of knowledge was evident in

these responses, with very few looking in detail at the structure of government he created or his treatment of nationalities.

- 2** There were some very competent responses which often argued very effective cases. Most suggested that it was both the economic consequences, coupled with military disasters and the perceived failings of Versailles that created a very fertile field for Mussolini to harvest. Other factors were considered, such as the frequency of government changes, the calibre of leaders, the attitudes of the various elites and Mussolini's own skills. Less successful answers showed a lack of depth of knowledge, with key details like the level of inflation or unemployment not mentioned. There were vague mentions of Mussolini's use of violence, but details of the work of the Squadristi and the role they played were not given. Some suggested that it was all the fault of the electoral system, but did not explain why.
- 3** This was the most popular question in this option. The best responses reflected on the word 'limits' before writing their responses. The sheer size of the USSR was obviously a limiting factor and there was a limit to what any one individual could do. Collectivisation was usually quoted as an example of a clear limit in that while he could destroy an existing system, Stalin did not have the power to create one which was more productive. Some candidates looked at the role of Kirov and the Party in the years before his death and also at Stalin's need to work within a 'communist' framework. As with Hitler, he had to take care with religion, especially in Muslim areas, and he was cautious about offending against the deeply conservative morality in many areas. Some focussed primarily on the lack of any limits by the middle of the 1930s and also on the absences of any tradition of legitimate opposition to authority. Stalin's use of the Ban on Factions was always cleverly managed. Some less successful responses treated the question as if it was about the Purges and gave long descriptions of the show trials and the gulags which had few links to the question set.
- 4** Good responses thought about the criteria for 'success' in this context before embarking on the answer. They looked at what he was trying to achieve with both groups and then commented on how far he had attained his objectives. With women, while many suggested that he did not have very clear objectives, it was felt that he was successful in pushing them out of the jobs market to reduce unemployment and persuading them to adopt a 'traditional' role. However, when he was to need their labour to sustain a wartime economy, it was seen as less successful. There tended to be a more descriptive approach to the policies towards young people, with a lot of information about the Pirates and the White Rose group, but no suggestion as to whether this was a sign of failure or not. There were very few comments about the work of the Hitler Youth and the whole indoctrination programme, which, a few suggested, ensured that the vast majority of young Germans stayed loyal to the Nazi regime to the bitter end. The most successful candidates thought very carefully about just what the question was looking for, and then applied their knowledge to it, that did well.

### **Depth Study 2: The History of the USA, 1945-1990**

There were too few responses to these questions to make general comment appropriate.

### **Depth Study 3: International History, 1945-1991**

- 9** The better responses invariably considered what a 'loss' or a 'gain' might mean in this context, looking not only at factors such as the human and material cost of the war to the US, but also the longer-term implications in relation to the Cold War. There were some very good debates on both aspects, particularly from those who managed to keep the focus on the US and not spend too much time on the UN element. There were some competent arguments let down by a lack of detailed substantiation appropriate to this 'depth' paper. Another feature in some more modest responses was a tendency to start with quite a limited narrative of the war, often with a lot of focus on the causes, and then conclude that 'there were both gains and losses for the US...' without any prior analysis of factors. The high-quality answers tended to start with some definitions of gain and loss, and then develop a well-reasoned answer to the question. Less successful answers consisted of a narrative of events without a clear argument.
- 10** This produced some very good responses as candidates had to think about the Cold War and Détente in possibly a different way than they had been accustomed to. There tended to be quite a good grasp of the various aspects of Détente such as SALT, Helsinki, Ostpolitik etc. and if the various elements of Détente were considered in the light of whether they extended or shortened

the Cold War, this could produce some very interesting responses. Those who started with a clear case one way or the other and then developed it throughout the essay did much better than narrative responses of the Détente process followed by a brief and limited conclusion which did not fit in with the facts that had preceded it. There were some less successful responses on the causes of the Cold War, while others strayed well beyond the 1970s, with essays on Reagan's role in ending the Cold War. The degree of 'depth' was better here than in some other responses, but the key to success lay in utilising that information and understanding relevantly.

- 11** There was obvious uncertainty as to what 'compare and contrast' required and evidence of a limited depth of knowledge. Some had a reasonable grasp of Mao's policies (but struggled to keep the focus on just 'economic' policies) but knew little about Deng. There were also some quite superficial narratives of the whole period ending with comments such as 'there were some differences, but not very big ones.' The better responses kept the focus firmly on economic factors, and usually argued that there were in fact major differences between the two, with Deng being 'much more right-wing' in his approach to capitalism. They tended to argue from the very beginning that, while there were similarities, they were often superficial, and there were fundamental differences in the strategies pursued by the two.
- 12** There was a good awareness of the many factors which influenced US policy in the period, ranging from oil supplies, its relationships with Iran and Saudi Arabia, to the rise of Islamic fundamentalism. The willingness to argue a case in a mature way on a recent and also controversial topic was a positive feature of many answers. One or two responses got a little carried away dealing with Carter and the hostages, but overall the quality of responses was good, with a focus on analysis rather than just narrative.

#### **Depth Study 4: African History, 1945-1991**

There were too few responses to these Questions to make general comment appropriate.

#### **Depth Study 5: Southeast Asian History, 1945-1990s**

There were too few responses to these Questions to make general comment appropriate.