

Teacher Resource Bank

GCE History

Candidate Exemplar Work (June 2009):

- HIS2J: Britain and Appeasement, 1919–1940



The following responses are not 'model' answers, nor are they indicative of specific overall grades, but are intended to illustrate the application of the mark scheme for this unit. These responses should be read in conjunction with the HIS2J Question Paper, Sources Booklet and Mark Scheme.

Copies of the paper and are available from e-AQA or the AQA History Department.

E-mail: history@aqa.org.uk

AQA GCE History Teacher Resource Bank Commentaries on June 2009 AS answers

General Introduction by the Chief Examiner

The first June examination series for the new AS specification saw some excellent examples of well prepared candidates who were able to demonstrate their breadth of knowledge and depth of understanding by addressing the questions set directly and efficiently. Sadly, it also suggested that, whilst some candidates knew the material quite well, they struggled to apply it successfully to the questions asked. At the lowest end, there were, of course, some candidates whose knowledge let them down, but even these might have been able to achieve more highly had they thought more carefully about each question's demands.

The importance of timing for both Units needs to be stressed. In Unit 1 candidates should allow themselves approximately 12 minutes for the first part question and 25 minutes for the second. In Unit 2, they could spend 15 minutes on the first part question and 30 minutes on the second, but they are likely to need slightly longer for the source question. Good time keeping is essential in any examination. No matter how successful the answer to the first part question, an incomplete second part question will always mean a loss of marks (notes receive limited credit).

These commentaries are intended to help teachers and candidates to understand the demands of each question type and consequently to encourage students to perform at the highest level of which they are capable. Please note that errors relating to Quality of Written Communication (of spelling, syntax, etc.) have been reproduced without correction. Please note that the AQA convention for question numbering will be changing as from the June 2010 examination papers. Examples of the new format for question papers can be found elsewhere in the Teacher Resource Bank.

Unit 1

The first part of each question in Unit 1 (those questions labelled 01, 03 and 05 in the new numbering style from June 2010) asks candidates to 'explain why' an event, issue or development came about. The best candidates answered this question, not only with a selection of reasons (and a minimum of three well-explained reasons was expected for Level 3/4), but also by showing how those reasons linked together. This is essential to meet Level 4 criteria and can be achieved by prioritising, differentiating between the long and short-term factors, or showing how different categories of reasons, such as political, social and religious inter-link. It is not, however, enough to simply assert that the links exist – they also needed explaining.

Candidates who only performed at Level 2 often wrote too descriptively, whilst many achieved a good Level 3 by offering a range of relevant and clearly explained reasons but failing to make any links between them. As the exemplars demonstrate, answers did not need to be long but they had to be effectively focused and directed to achieve good marks.

The second part of each question (those questions labelled 02, 04 and 06 in the new numbering style) asked for a response to a question beginning 'how far, how important or how successful'. Each question stem invited candidates to offer a balanced response and this was the key to an award at high Level 3, 4 or 5. Most answers which achieved only a Level 2 or a low/mid-Level 3 mark contained too much description, were excessively one-sided or lacked depth and precision in their use of examples. Some candidates also failed to address the full question set, often

by ignoring starting or finishing dates. To achieve the higher levels, candidates needed to balance one side against another. For example, a question asking how far 'X' contributed to 'Y' demanded a consideration of the importance of other factors which also contributed to 'Y'. Sometimes questions, particularly 'how important' questions (e.g. how important was 'X' in bringing about 'Y?'), could be balanced by considering the ways in which 'X' was important as opposed to the ways in which it was not, rather than introducing 'other factors'; either approach was equally legitimate. The crucial test of an answer was, therefore, the degree to which the candidate was able to argue the issue and how well that argument was supported by accurate and precise evidence. The best answers at Level 5 managed to sustain a focus and convey convincing individual judgement.

Unit 2

The first part of question 1 (labelled 01 in the new numbering style from June 2010) asks students how far the views in two given sources (A and B) differ, in relation to a given topic. Perhaps the most common error was to waste time writing a paragraph or more about the source content before addressing differences. Levels were awarded according to how well candidates identified and explained differences of **view**. This was not simply an exercise in source comprehension, so such answers received an award of only Level 1/2. Contrasting 'views' required students to go beyond the mere words of the sources or their omissions, and to assess 'how far' the sources differed required some awareness of the degree of **similarity** they contained. To meet the full demands of the question and obtain an award at high level 3/4, candidates also needed to introduce some contextual own knowledge to explain the differences and similarities identified – possibly (but not necessarily) referring to provenance when it helped the explanation, and, more often, explaining references in the sources and drawing on their contextual knowledge to account for differing views.

In the second part of question 1 (labelled 02 in the new numbering) candidates were asked to answer a question beginning 'how far, how important or how successful' with reference to the sources as well as their own knowledge. The best answers to these questions maintained a balanced argument (as explained for Unit 1 above) and the information given in the sources was used in support of that argument. Poorer answers tried to address the sources separately – at the beginning or end of the answer, or sometimes as an asterisked afterthought. Those who omitted them altogether could not obtain more than top Level 2. Whilst the main criteria for the higher levels was the degree of argument, the precision of the evidence and the judgement conveyed, in addition to these, good source use could ensure that students were placed higher in a level than those who used the sources in a perfunctory way. Source use needed to be explicit, and the best candidates appreciated that Source C was provided to give further ideas and/or information that was of direct relevance to this question.

In questions 2 and 3 (03/04 and 05/06 in the new numbering) candidates were asked to respond to an 'explain why' question – on which comments will be found under the Unit 1 commentary above – and a short, provocative quotation about which they were invited to explain why they agreed or disagreed. The demands here were similar to those for the second part of Unit 1 (b) questions. In adopting a view about the quotation, candidates were expected to examine the opposing arguments in order to reach a balanced judgement on the extent of their agreement/disagreement.

Sally Waller Chief Examiner December 2009

GCE History HIS2J: Britain and Appeasement, 1919–1940

Responses to June 2009 Questions

Candidate 1

- 1 (a) Explain how for the views in **Source B** differ from those in **Source A** in relation to Britain's response to Italy's invasion of Abyssinia. (12 marks)

Views in source B differ from views in source A as they are opposing views mostly. Source B states that neither the British Foreign Secretary Hoare or the French Prime Minister had any interest in preserving Abyssinia's independence whereas Source A states that Britain was not prepared to offer Mussolini a free hand to conquer Abyssinia. However source A agrees with source B in the fact that it says the sanctions on Italy were half-hearted this statement backs up the points made in Source B. Britain as source A says didn't want to start a war against Italy after seeing the effects of the First World War but she didn't want to appear weak & she also wanted to show that the League of Nations could handle situations like this, but as Britain nor the League of Nations really took any real action to ensure that Italy didn't invade Abyssinia we could conclude that they never really had any interest in protecting them which follows the idea of source B.

Principal Examiner's Comments

This response was succinct, but very clear, considering differences, similarity and made effective use of own knowledge. It could have looked at more detail in the sources, but had a developed comparison and good contextual understanding. It was well written. It began by demonstrating the clear contrast between Source B, which saw Hoare and the French Prime Minister having no interest in preserving Abyssinia's independence, as opposed to Britain not being prepared to give Mussolini a free hand as stated in Source A. The response then indicated similarity, as Source A stated that sanctions were half-hearted, linking with overall views in Source B. The answer acknowledged the dilemma for Britain about its policy and made a valid conclusion. Level 4 – 10 marks.

Candidate 2

- 1 (a) Explain how for the views in **Source B** differ from those in **Source A** in relation to Britain's response to Italy's invasion of Abyssinia. (12 marks)

The views in Source B differs quite far from those in Source A in relation to Britain's response to Italy's invasion of Abyssinia as Source B presents Britain's response as being that Britain was prepared to just give up Abyssinia and it does not give reasons to why Britain had come to the conclusion of the Hoare-Laval pact so source B is biased whereas Source A presents both sides as it states how Britain did not want Mussolini to have 'a free hand to conquer Abyssinia' but yet they still wanted to remain on good terms with the Italian dictator as he was seen as an ally against Hitler.

Principal Examiner's Comments

This answer began by considering the content of Source B overall and described it as 'biased'. It then saw Source A as presenting both sides of the dilemma of

British policy. At that point the response stopped rather abruptly. It did give an outline answer with a basic overall comparison, which was succinct, but very brief. It failed to develop either the overall argument or on to detail.. Own knowledge was not deployed. QWC is not strong – the response is written as one complete sentence. Level 2 – 4 marks.

Candidate 3

- 1 (b) How important was the Abyssinian Crisis in influencing Britain's policy towards the dictators from 1935 until March 1938? (24 marks)

The Abyssinian Crisis was the second incident which revealed to the dictators the fundamental weakness of the League of Nations. Britain and France were keen to prevent Mussolini from disliking them too much, recognising him as an important ally against Hitler, but at the same time did not want to lose public faith in the League of Nations, which was a major factor in limiting rearmament. From then on, however, Hitler took advantage of their weakness and undermined the League at every opportunity, because the Abyssinian Crisis cemented his belief that his aggressive nationalistic ambitions would go unchallenged, as source C tells us.

Keen to limit German rearmament, however, the British agreed to signing the Anglo-German naval agreement, which ensured that the rise of Germany's navy could only be 35% that of Britain's. This fatally undermined the Stresa Front agreement with France and Italy, but was based on the same line of thinking that British reactions to Abyssinia were. Britain wanted to appease the dictators, limit their strength wherever possible ensuring they could exercise some degree of control over their activities – but fundamentally their aim was to prevent war.

During the 1936 Spanish Civil War, in which both dictators were heavily involved in supporting the fascist general Franco on the national side, Britain remained entirely neutral – despite the fact that this clearly went against the treaty of Versailles and the League of Nations. However, Britain did not want to intervene for fear of further distancing Mussolini, who they considered to be an important ally against Hitler. They were also increasingly wary of the growing friendliness in relations between Mussolini and Hitler, and the Spanish Civil War also increased dramatically British fears to security as they saw the extreme damage caused by German air-force, most notably in the small town of Guernica. As mentioned in source C, Mussolini had been furious at Britain's complete change of policy at Abyssinia with Hitler by going to the Rome-Berlin axis in 1936. The Stresa front also mentioned in source C had destroyed the Hoare-Laval pact, as well as the effectiveness of collective security and the League.

Increasingly fearful of the alliance between Italy and Germany, many at the time, and historians since, believed that a little closer relationship with the USSR would prove to be crucial in the British stance against dictators. However, Chamberlain feared that such encirclement of Germany may increase German aggression, and make the likelihood of war even more certain- something that Chamberlain wished to avoid at all costs. Hitler, of course, recognised this, and saw it as another indication of British reluctance to halt German aggression. Many historians argue that he was an opportunist politician (for example AJ P Taylor) and that he recognised there was little Britain or France would or could do to stop his nationalistic expansionism particularly without the help of the USSR. His invasion of the Rhineland in 1936, and the Anschluss with Austria in [date missing], reaffirmed his belief that the British and French would do little to stop him (other

than expressing disapproval), and this he pursued his ambitions even more enthusiastically and with greater confidence.

However the effect of a single incident (the Abyssinian crisis) can not be seen as the main influence on British foreign policy. The actions taken against Mussolini in Abyssinia took place in the context of wider economic, political and imperial difficulties. As suggested in source A, for example, electoral advantage inevitably had a strong impact on foreign policy. Public opinion mattered more in this period than ever before – the electorate had grown in size dramatically due to equality in women and men's suffrage, and public opinion was strongly in favour of disarmament, peace and collective security through the League of Nations. The results of the 1935 peace ballot conducted by the League of Nations Union demonstrated enormous public support to the League of Nations. This posed a larger problem to politicians at the time, who secretly had little faith in the League. The contradictory nature of public opinion – support for the league, but disarmament (which effectively rendered it useless) – was of little help to politicians, and served only to strengthen the view that appeasement of dictators was the best course of action to Britain.

Public opinion very much preferred public spending to go towards welfare issues, particularly following the increase in welfare problems followed by the Great War (in which 750,000 men had died, many more were wounded, which left countless widows, children dependent on parents with no income, and widespread poverty and unemployment). During the inter-war years, unemployment never went below 1 million. There would have been public outrage if the government and public spending focused on re-armament, with the purpose of fighting another war, and to appeasement of the dictators was needed to prevent Britain going to a war for which it was woefully unprepared militarily, psychologically and politically.

On top of this, Britain had many problems from within its own empire, the unity of which it could no longer depend on for support. Its lack of allies was also a major problem – there was no chance of winning a war without USA + USSR support. France, Britain's ally, was politically very unstable during this period. With all this on their plates, British politicians had to assess how much British interests were at stake in the problems that arose with dictators from 1935 to March 1938. The Abyssinian crisis, therefore, was by no means that influential in British policy – the reluctance of League of Nations intervention had already been demonstrated at Manchuria. Much more important were the factors politicians had to seriously consider at the time.

Principal Examiner's Comments

This was a lengthy but focused answer, which demonstrated explicit understanding, had balanced argument, understood relevant historical interpretations and was well written. It considered a wide range of factors as well as the significance of the Abyssinian Crisis in determining British policy towards the dictators. There was some integration of sources though this could have been developed. It could also have had some closer examination of the specific events of the period. However, overall the quality of the argument took this answer to the top of Level 4. It began by looking at the lessons of failure by the League of Nations and Britain over Abyssinia and how these were noted by Hitler. A link was made with Source C. The second paragraph linked the Anglo-German Naval Agreement with undermining of the Stresa Front, but noted that both were based on the 'same line of thinking' as the Abyssinian policy of appeasing the dictators and avoiding war. The third paragraph looked at the Spanish Civil War (though

not entirely accurately) but linked this with the Abyssinian Crisis and Source C. The fourth paragraph contained a lengthy discussion of Britain's failure to link up with the USSR, and some analysis, with awareness of historical interpretations and controversy, on Britain's appeasement policies. It then concluded briefly Hitler's invasion of the Rhineland and the Anschluss, emphasising his belief that Britain would do little to stop him. The fifth and sixth paragraphs argued that the Abyssinian Crisis was not the main influence on British policy and considered wider factors, linking with electoral issues mentioned in Source A and public opinion, perception of the League, and social and economic problems. All were linked to reasons for the development of appeasement. The seventh paragraph noted that also on the plate of British politicians were imperial problems and the lack of allies. The conclusion reflected entirely the argument in the essay that the Abyssinian Crisis was only one of many other (identified) issues determining British foreign policy in the period. Overall the answer was a sound example of consideration in depth of both the issue named in the question and other highly relevant factors. Level 4 – 21 marks.

Candidate 4

- 1 (b) How important was the Abyssinian Crisis in influencing Britain's policy towards the dictators from 1935 until March 1938? (24 marks)

The Abyssinian Crisis was fairly important in influencing Britain's policy towards the dictators from 1935 until March 1938. It could be argued that this incident set the trend for appeasement. After Mussolini formed an alliance with Hitler in the Rome-Berlin Axis, Britain knew it would have to tread carefully when dealing with the dictators from then onwards to avoid the risk of a full-scale war. As the Abyssinian crisis had highlighted the ineffectiveness of collective security in the League of Nations, Britain could no longer rely on these to pressurise the dictators. This meant that the dictators were now even more free to act as they wished, as they saw no international body or group of nations who would stand up to them. Britain had failed to take action against Italy, leading the dictators to feel more confident of going unpunished in the future. Following the Rome-Berlin Axis, the only action Britain could afford to take was limiting the acceptance of the demands of the dictators and attempting to negotiate. It also led to Britain not defending smaller and weaker nations who were under threat, as was highlighted in the Czech crisis. As with Abyssinia, Britain suggested some areas be handed over to the dictators, namely the Sudetenland to Germany. This was reminiscent of the Hoare-Laval Pact on 1935. There was much anti-war feeling in Britain at the time and with 1935 being an election year, the government wanted to be seen as peaceful and not as warmongers. Although not pacifists, this determination to please the public and not go to war led to any strong action taking place against the dictators.

Britain's economic and military situation also played a role in influencing Britain's policy. Britain had just come through an economic slump after the Great Depression and were still getting their economy back on track. They could not be seen to be throwing money away to prepare for a war. There were also fears that it could not keep up with the dictators weaponry and Britain's was becoming dated. Britain could not afford the rapid rearmament that Germany and Italy could. There was a shortage of skilled labourers to build weapons. The dictators had labour camps and so this was not an issue for them.

The Abyssinian crisis was important to influencing Britain's policy towards

dictators. However it was not the only reason.

Principal Examiner's Comments

The answer considered somewhat briefly and without great depth the importance of other factors as well as the Abyssinian Crisis. There was no explicit use of sources and implicit use was tenuous, e.g. at the end of the first paragraph. This meant that the mark awarded could be no higher than in Level 2. Events from 1936 to March 1938, apart from the Rome-Berlin Axis, were ignored. The case advocated was quite well argued, but had limited depth and support from evidence. There was limited understanding of different historical interpretations. The response began with a very long paragraph containing an introduction and argument about the ineffectiveness of the League of Nations following the Abyssinian Crisis which had led to the dictators having more scope to act without counter-action against them. After the Rome-Berlin Axis Britain had to try to limit the demands of the dictators and negotiate. The Czech Crisis was given as an example, but this was beyond the terminal date of the question. The second paragraph considered briefly other reasons, economic and military, for British policy. There was an odd final sentence. The concluding paragraph consisted of just one sentence. Level 2 – 10 marks.

Candidate 5

- 2 (a) Explain why many Germans regarded the Treaty of Versailles as unfair.
(12 marks)

In relation to the Treaty of Versailles, we can recognise various fundamental reasons to why they regarded it as unfair. Additionally in terms of World War One, we can recognise Germany as a defeated nation, in effect the victorious allies in terms of Britain, France and the USA met in Paris to discuss the actions they would take on the defeated nations. The Treaty of Versailles was formed and consisted of terms in which, posed harsh measures on Germany, in which Germany was outraged by.

In relating to the terms of the Treaty, we can recognise it blamed Germany for the impact of war and had to accept full responsibility through Article 231. Germans additionally lost 13% of their territory eg Danzig to Poland, and robustly harsh reparations were imposed on them of £6600 million, particularly influenced by France, more over the Rhineland of Germany was demilitarised and Germany was in economic crisis. These fundamental reasons emphasised why the Germans felt the Treaty was unfair, and felt they were harshly treated. In relation to J.M. Keynes he accentuated why he felt the peace settlement was unjustified and why Germany felt grievances. He stated the naive Wilson was manipulated by the vindictive Clemenceau and scheming Lloyd George over a harsh peace settlement. More over we can identify Germany were not the only defeated nation after World War One, however the terms of the Treaty were specifically aimed at them, as a result faced consequence which, were overly harsh. This is why the Germans regarded the Treaty of Versailles as unfair.

Principal Examiner's Comments

This response was adjudged to be on the borderline of Levels 2 and 3 and ultimately worthy of a mark just in the higher Level. It considered some of the main terms of the Treaty of Versailles though not in detail. It failed to distinguish

between 'many' Germans but treated the Germans' views as homogenous. There was some knowledge and understanding of the terms of the Treaty and German reaction with just sufficient range of material to push the answer into Level 3. It could have been better expressed. The introductory paragraph gave some background to the Treaty. The second paragraph mentioned the guilt clause, loss of territory with one example (Danzig, but without accuracy) reparations, the Rhineland and pointed out that Germany was in economic crisis. It asserted that these were the reasons that Germany felt the Treaty to be unfair. The response then rather diverted onto the views of Keynes. The penultimate sentence on Germany and other defeated states lacked clarity. Level 3 – 7 marks.

Candidate 6

- 2 (b) 'During the 1920s, British foreign policy failed to maintain the post-war peace settlement of the Treaty of Versailles.'
Explain why you agree or disagree with this view. (24 marks)

I agree with this view. Already, by the end of the 1920's Germany was on the road to recovery. She had been accepted into the League of Nations in 1926 and was already beginning to regain her economic might. Stresemann was pushing for his policy of fulfillment. The Dawes Plan and the Young Plan had ensured that Germany was able to pay the reparations it owed to Britain and France. However, this resulted in a strange triangular flow of money out of and into America. The Americans provided Germany with money in the form of loans which Germany paid to the allies in the form of reparations. Britain then gave this money to America to repay its debts to the country. This resulted in an economy which was far too dependent on US finance. The Kellogg-Briand Pact also saw a large number of countries renounce the use of force.

Stresemann signed the Treaty of Locarno in which he guaranteed Germany's Western borders. However Stresemann failed to agree upon Germany's Eastern borders. He did state that Germany would agree not to change them by force, although he would not even put his name to this. However Locarno was viewed as a triumph by many who believed that it was the beginning of a new era of peace. Although this seemed to suggest that British foreign policy was successful in maintaining the post-war peace settlement this is not actually the case.

Locarno, although it guaranteed France's borders, was not all it seemed to be. It was a much a warning to France as it was to Germany. Following Germany's claim that it was unable to meet its reparation payments French troops had occupied the Ruhr, the industrial heart of Germany. Germany did not have the military strength to resist France. They employed a policy of passive resistance. As a result, Britain attempted to reach a compromise. Germany made a final contribution of £2.6m to a fund. Therefore British foreign policy had failed to maintain the post-war settlement as they had scrapped reparations. The Treaty of Locarno ensured that any further attempts by France to extract reparations from Germany would be a violation of the Treaty of Versailles. As a result of Locarno, French forces also withdrew from the Rhineland five years earlier than they had planned to. Although viewed as a success by many the historian Sally Marks claims that British statesmen were aware of how precarious the peace within Britain really was. She says that the 1920s were years of illusion, claiming that the true spirit of Locarno was a 'fearful France' backed by the 'unhappy East Europeans, who were opposing Germany. Therefore British foreign policy failed to maintain the post-war peace settlement of the Treaty of Versailles as German reparations were stopped,

Germany was already secretly re-arming and appeared to be seeking territorial adjustment to the east, the Rhineland was no longer protected and there was increasing friction between Germany and France. Germany's economic recovery was entirely dependent on Germany and would be damaged by the Wall Street Crash and Germany was trying to seek adjustment of the terms of the Treaty, all of which was hidden behind the facade of Locarno. As Churchill said 'the drumbeat of new Levies was already heard'.

Principal Examiner's Comments

The answer focused on international developments during the period and particularly the Treaty of Locarno, but connected these with British policy, which could have been more central and have distinguished between the approaches of different governments. However, the response was mainly sound on the period overall, though not fully accurate about reparations. It had good appreciation of historical interpretations with explicit understanding and appropriately selected evidence. The line of argument was clear throughout and developed. The answer began by agreeing with the view in the quotation and supported its argument consistently throughout the rest of the response. It argued that by the end of the decade Germany was recovering, was in the League, Stresemann had followed the policy of Fulfilment, and the Dawes and Young Plans had helped with the reparations issue. The initial paragraph ended by mentioning the Kellogg-Briand Pact. The second paragraph considered Stresemann's signing of the Locarno Treaty, which was dealt with in depth. The argument then stated that [all] this suggested that British policy had maintained the post-war peace settlement but that was not the case. The third paragraph developed the argument by looking at the occupation of the Ruhr and Britain's attempt at compromise which undermined the reparations settlement (though to say the reparations were scrapped used inaccurate terminology). The fourth paragraph argued that the Treaty of Locarno undermined the Treaty of Versailles with the French leaving the Rhineland early. The essay then considered the view of Sally Marks that the 1920s were years of illusion. The answer argued that British foreign policy failed to maintain the post-war settlement as German reparations were stopped (though this was an exaggeration), Germany was secretly rearming and seeking territorial adjustment in the east, the Rhineland was no longer 'protected' (sic) and that there was increasing friction between Germany and France and that Germany's economic recovery was damaged by the Wall Street Crash, all of these factors hidden by the façade of Locarno. Level 4 – 20 marks.