



Pearson
Edexcel

Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2022

Pearson Edexcel

In GCE History (8HI0/1G)

Paper 1: Breadth study with interpretations

Option 1G: Germany and West Germany,
1918-89

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8HI01G

Question 1

Question 1 asked candidates to consider whether terror was the main reason for 'effective government' in the years 1933-45. This was, by far, the more popular question in Section A. The majority of candidates interpreted 'effective government' as being largely unopposed. This meant that candidates tended to explore terror in terms of limiting or removing opposition to the Nazis. Other reasons for this form of 'effective government' usually included propaganda, although a good number of responses considered the structure of government, the role of gauleiters, the Enabling Act and the warped system of justice.

Successful candidates considered 'effective government' in depth and were able to show how the racial and war-like nature of the regime found fulfilment through using terror and other methods. Only a few candidates were able to consider intentionalist and structuralist interpretations of the regime, but those who did produced some outstanding answers referencing the concept of Nazis 'working towards the Fuhrer'. The best analytical responses showed that terror and propaganda worked in tandem to quell opposition and promote compliance. A good number of candidates accessed Level 4 on question 1.

Less successful candidates tended to describe aspects of the terror state, with most showing knowledge of the nature and role of the Gestapo. Candidates at this level tended to overstate the role of terror in order to justify an asserted conclusion in agreement with the statement in the question.

Question 2

Question 2 asked candidates to consider whether the concerns of religious groups were the main reason for opposition to the Nazi regime in the years 1933-45. Fewer candidates attempted this question but those that did so were generally successful. At Level 4, candidates clearly understood the stated factor 'concerns of religious groups' and were able to offer evidence on a range of religious groups and their concerns.

Successful candidates were able to talk about religious concerns over Hitler worship, the indoctrination of youth, and the T4 euthanasia programme. A minority of candidates were able to address the issue of religious groups that offered partial support as well as opposition to the Nazis, such as the Catholic Church supporting war with the Soviet Union. The majority of candidates at the top end declined to agree with the statement in the question and tended to argue that opposition was based more on political opposition to Nazism. A number of these knew about the roles of the KPD, SOPADE and important individuals in the resistance.

Less successful candidates generally had an insufficient knowledge of religious groups that opposed the Nazis. A minority included material on the reasons for Jews opposing the Nazis. At Level 2, descriptions of features such as the T4 programme were common.

Question 3

Question 3 asked candidates to consider the extent to which economic challenges faced by the Weimar Republic were similar to those faced by the FRG. This question proved to be popular and accessible. Candidates seemed well prepared for this kind of comparative analysis.

More successful candidates were able to select key challenges of the Weimar and FRG periods and compare them effectively. Most candidates pointed to recovery from defeat in war as a decisive issue, as well as relations with other European countries. At the top end, candidates were able to point to the limitations of a comparative analysis on the grounds that the issues facing Weimar, such as the Wall Street Crash, were far more severe than challenges faced by the FRG. At Level 4, a number of candidates argued effectively that economic challenges had important political outcomes that, in turn, rebounded on the solution of economic problems, such as the demise of the Müller coalition in 1930.

Less successful candidates often found it difficult to find meaningful comparisons and tended to describe the more dramatic features of the period at length. In this regard, the hyperinflation of 1923 often occupied much of the essay, and there was more knowledge shown generally about Weimar than the FRG.

Question 4

Question 4 asked candidates to consider whether the role and status of women in the FRG changed little in the years 1949-89. It was good to see candidates at the top end develop a good discussion and show real commitment to the issues. Candidates seemed well prepared for this question on the whole, with good, detailed evidence used to support an argument.

More successful candidates were able to offer evidence and argument for both sides of the debate, and there were some strong Level 4 answers demonstrating sustained analysis. Candidates at the top end were able to establish criteria by which to judge the question, and discussions ranged from pay to education, and from child rearing to reproductive rights. Many candidates were able to talk about the improved legal status of women enshrined in the Basic Law and the constitution. Many candidates demonstrated the ability to deal with continuity as well as change.

Less successful candidates tended to focus on change and offer little on continuity; here, knowledge of women's role and status was often covered by general statements rather than solid evidence.

Overall, performance in this question demonstrated that it was accessible for candidates and that sound preparation was evident.

Question 5

Question 5 asked candidates to use the extracts and their own knowledge to consider the view that a series of bad decisions by Britain and France led to war in 1939.

Successful candidates were able to counter pose the rival interpretations in the extracts and identify that Extract 1's criticisms of appeasement could be countered by Extract 2's analysis of the various personal and historical factors driving Hitler.

At the top end, candidates demonstrated good knowledge of the missed opportunities to thwart Hitler, which appeasement allowed. Candidates were able to also develop the counter argument that Hitler was going to have the war he had been planning throughout his rise to power no matter what the appeasers did. The extracts seem to have been accessible and acted as a stimulus for developed discussion.

Less successful candidates tended to rely on the extracts for their information, and often only criticised them on the basis of whether what they said happened to be true.

Nevertheless, the majority of candidates were able to deal with Section C questions effectively through analysis and development of the extracts, in addition to arguing from their own analysis towards a justified conclusion. This demonstrates that centres had prepared candidates well on this question.