



Examiners' Report June 2011

GCSE History 5HA02 2B

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Introduction

This summer's paper seems to have caused few problems for candidates, with some impressive knowledge shown in response to Question 3, in particular. Whilst some candidates lacked detail to support their answer on Question 1(b) and others confused the Kronstadt Mutiny with the Kornilov Revolt in Question 1(c), the questions seemed accessible to all candidates.

Improvement was seen, in particular, on Questions 3(a) and 3(b), where the majority of candidates were able to show how the various factors either played in causing problems for the Bolsheviks or in helping Stalin's support. For some candidates, however, comparative importance continues to be something they find very difficult.

It might perhaps be of benefit to quote from the January 2011 examiners' report on this issue. In that report centres were advised that:

To score highest marks, the answer must compare the relative importance of a number of factors. In trying to do this many candidates asserted that one factor was the most important because it was very important. Such an approach is flawed. Comparison must involve an analysis of at least two factors.

An example of how this might be done is given in the comments on Question 3(b) at the end of this report.

Question 1 (a)

This first question caused little difficulties for most candidates. Candidates generally used the wording of the source to establish that the Tsar was, for example, 'unpopular', 'vain', 'autocratic', 'incompetent' or just 'out of touch'. All these inferences could be supported from the source – and generally were. There were very few examples of candidates copying or paraphrasing the source, and it was pleasing to note that candidates have now got the message that an evaluation of the nature, origin and purpose of the source is not required.

The example shown scored full marks by providing two supported inferences.

Source A also suggests that the Tsar was unpopular. It states "Nicholas was blamed for the continued poor performance of the Russian army." Source A further suggests that the Tsar had little control over his country. It states "he was out of Petrograd and unable to respond quickly".



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Examiner Comments

The answer begins with the inference ('was unpopular') and then supports it. The second inference 'had little control' is also supported.



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Examiner Tip

To be successful in the examination you have to move crisply through the questions. This 'starter' is one where you can gain time for other questions. Find your inference, make it, support it with a quote and move on! So if you are confident about your inference, don't waste time providing a second.

Question 1 (b)

Candidates did not seem to know the events of the Bolshevik revolution as well as was expected. Since candidates had known about Trotsky's plan for the take over of Petrograd by seizing key buildings in the January exam, it was surprising that more of them did not write about it here.

The example shown is a Level 2 answer, as it develops the point that the revolution was successful as a result of Trotsky's organisation. The development is not strong, however, and so only 4 marks are awarded.

The Bolshevik Revolution was started
smoothly, the ~~success~~ success was greatly
helped by the organization of
Trotsky. He arranged the storming
of Winter Palace on time.
He even convinced several of the
soldiers to help the cause and many
others to do nothing to stop it.
With this it was easy to take
the palace and ~~stop~~ ^{end} the provisional
government. He had the communication
lines cut, so once aware the
government could not call for
help.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

A good technique in this answer is to say 'one feature of the Bolshevik revolution was...' and 'another key feature was...'. This clearly shows that separate points are being made.

Question 1 (c)

It was unfortunate that a number of candidates confused the Kornilov Revolt with the Kronstadt Mutiny. The significance of the Kornilov Revolt is mentioned in the specification, so its inclusion on the exam paper should not have caught out so many candidates.

Fortunately, most candidates were able to provide details of how Kerensky was forced to arm the Bolsheviks and thus weaken the standing of the Provisional Government and improve that of the Bolsheviks.

Where candidates were able to explain that the effects on the Provisional Government were that it was doomed to failure (as opposed to being made more unpopular or just weakened), then Level 3 was reached.

The extract shown is a Level 2 answer. It establishes that the Kornilov Revolt weakened the Provisional Government, but does not develop the point of how the Bolsheviks were strengthened, nor see the overall impact of the Revolt in condemning the Provisional Government to failure.

(c) Explain the effects of the Kornilov Revolt on the Provisional Government in September 1917.

(8)

The Kornilov Revolt had a negative impact on the Provisional Government as it showed how weak and powerless they were. The provisional government was powerless to do anything about Kornilov, so instead Alexander Kerensky armed the Red Guards to fight against Kornilov. Kerensky succeeded, but this left the Red Guards armed and showed how powerless the Provisional Government was, as well as how weak Kerensky was as he had to turn to the Bolsheviks for help.

Once the Red Guards were armed it allowed the Bolsheviks to attempt another ~~big~~ strike to get power.



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Examiner Tip

On this type of question, you should be able to find a number of effects. You ought also to try to see the 'big picture'. What was the real impact of the Revolt? Perhaps it was the end of the Provisional Government and the rise of the Bolsheviks?

Question 1 (d)

Some candidates found this question challenging. Many ignored the date used in the question. By 1929 Stalin had clearly become established as leader of the Soviet Union and had the authority to take steps against Trotsky and his other rivals to consolidate his control of the party. Most answers centred on the supposed funeral trick carried out by Stalin, but did not always bridge the gap between Lenin's death and 1929 with an understanding of the manoeuvrings that took place in those years.

Where this was done, there were some good answers linking Lenin's death and Testament, Trotsky's criticism of the NEP and Stalin's gradual expulsion of Trotsky from key positions in the party and government. Some candidates were able to prioritise reasons, with the most common answer being that the expulsion from the Soviet Union could be explained by Stalin's desire to have complete authority.

The answer shown is a typical Level 2 response, with the reasons given being more of the 'story' than a focused explanation of how Trotsky's weaknesses and/or Stalin's strengths contributed to the expulsion.

(d) Explain why Trotsky was exiled from the Soviet Union in 1929.

(8)

After Stalin's death in 1924 a leadership contest began - mainly between Trotsky and Stalin. Eventually Stalin emerged as leader for a ~~what~~ large number of reasons. Firstly Trotsky did not attend Lenin's funeral, instead Stalin was the chief mourner and led the procession - Lenin was seen by many as a God-like figure and believed that Stalin was a great ally of Lenin to take on his role. But in actual fact Lenin's last testament said that Trotsky would be the best person to succeed Lenin as the next leader of the Bolsheviks; however this testament was never read out because it criticised many of the Politburo and in particular Stalin. The testament said that Stalin should be expelled from the Party as he was ambitious and arrogant.

Not only had Stalin managed to gain support but Trotsky was unpopular within the Bolshevik party. He had previously been part of the Menshevik party and thus a relatively new member of the party - for this reason he ~~he~~ was distrusted by most of the

Potthaus made up of 'old Bolsheviks'. Not only this but Trotsky worked away from Moscow which meant that not many members of the Party knew Trotsky well, again causing a lot of members to dislike and

distrust Trotsky further. This was one of the reasons that Stalin was able to emerge as leader and definitely a contributing factor to Trotsky being exiled. After Stalin emerged as leader he began to build up his dictatorship. He played off anyone who would appear to present any kind of challenge to his leadership. Stalin managed to make Trotsky look worse and with the help of Trotsky's other rivals Zinoviev and Kamenev Stalin managed to expel Trotsky from the party and send him into exile. Zinoviev & Kamenev would be Stalin's next victims!

Question 2 (a)

Candidates seemed to have few difficulties with this question and there were many detailed responses explaining how collectivisation worked and how the Kulaks were dealt with. What some of the answers failed to explain was the way in which these policies brought about change. Better answers were able to explain that the policies either harmed the Soviet Union, or benefited it in the long run by making agriculture more able to supply the food for the industrial workers. An equally valid response was to argue that the most significant change was to turn agriculture into a state-controlled, mechanised industry with decreasing individual freedom

The answer shown explains what Stalin did and makes several comments which, if developed, would have taken the answer into Level 3. However, the lack of development restricted the answer to Level 2.

Chosen Question Number: **Question 2(a)** ☒ **Question 2(b)** ☒

Stalin ~~was able to modernise~~ the wanted to modernize agriculture so that the USSR could catch up to the Western world. he was able to achieve this because of many factors ~~such as~~

Stalin introduced the idea of collectivisation, and these collective farms were called kolkhoz which would contain 80 percent families, kolkhoz was able to pool many people's farms together to collect more food, however this was an effective method of developing agriculture as it was a communist ideal and it gave Stalin more control of the countryside.

In addition, Stalin also introduced MTS stations which housed tractors, ~~people were~~ each kolkhoz could borrow tractors from the MTS and by 1933 there were 2900 MTS. the introduction of tractors meant that there were more ~~jobs~~ educated workers as they would have to be trained to use the machines, ~~and~~ the MTS helped change agriculture by making it less labour intensive and more modern.

Moreover, ~~Stalin~~ during 1928-34 Stalin was able to rid agriculture of 'kulaks' which were richer peasants ~~and~~ so that he could firmly establish a communist state. Stalin gave the NKVD more power so they could execute 'kulaks' on the spot, this helped

develop agriculture as workers were fairly ~~per~~ rewarded and agriculture followed communist principles.



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Examiner Comments

The candidate understands what is happening in Stalin's agricultural policy, but does not fully develop the answer. Further explanation of 'it gave Stalin more control of the countryside', 'helped change agriculture by making it less labour intensive and more modern' or 'agriculture followed communist principles' would have resulted in full marks.



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Examiner Tip

Remember that to answer a question on 'changes', you must explain how things are different – not just what was done.

Question 2 (b)

A less popular question and, generally, less well-answered. Most candidates talked of Stalin's policy of Russification and others noted that the minorities were the major victims in the purges and enforcement of collectivisation. Despite the recent exam question showing Stalin's move from supporting ethnic individualism to clamping down on it as anti-Communist, few candidates brought this into their answers.

Chosen Question Number: **Question 2(a)** ☒ **Question 2(b)** ☒

One way Stalin dealt with ethnic minorities in the 1930s was that he developed 'Russification'. Ethnic individuality could not be shown and everyone had to speak Russian. This was a drastic change from before when Stalin had shown himself to embrace other cultures.

A second way Stalin dealt with ethnic minorities was that the ethnic minorities in the army were split up and scattered throughout the army to erase their different cultures. This shows that

Stalin wanted to stamp out cultural individuality.

A final way Stalin dealt with ethnic minorities was the Purges. These affected all of Russia and focused also on other groups such as kulaks but the purges were stronger in the ethnic minorities. Especially those who wanted to leave the Soviet Union. Millions were killed, the purges showed the violent side of Stalin.

Overall these are all linked by the fact that Stalin tried to erase the ethnic minority and used harsh methods to do so. I think that the most important way Stalin dealt with ethnic minorities was the purges as it was the most violent of all the methods.



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Examiner Comments

The candidate sets out three methods, Russification, diversification and using the purges, but does not fully develop any of them and, therefore, the answer was marked in Level 2.



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Examiner Tip

Remember that what the examiners are looking for in this question is not just detail, but a general overview as well. So you might consider introducing your answer with a comment which shows you understand the policy e.g. 'Stalin dealt with the minorities by trying to destroy their cultural diversity'.

Question 3(a)

Although this question proved less popular than Question 3(b), there were some very good responses. Candidates were able to explain how each factor contributed to Bolshevik difficulties, with the majority of candidates arguing that the Kronstadt Mutiny was the most serious reason as it was a rebellion amongst previously loyal sailors.

As explained in the Introduction, candidates have improved significantly in their understanding of how to answer this final question. The extract below is a good example of how a candidate took one factor in Question 3(a) and explained how it impacted upon the Bolsheviks.

The first world war was a disaster for Russia. They had bad tactics and not enough equipment or food. Russian leaders treated the war as a race so food supplies could not keep up. They did not even have enough rifles for each man. This led to many people deserting and a serious lack of morale amongst soldiers and their families and friends back home. Food had to be sent to the front line for the soldiers but bad railway links often left it wasting meaning there was famine across Russia. Lenin accepted the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk with the Germans which meant Russia lost a lot of land, about a quarter of its people and half its coalmines. Many within the Bolshevik party thought these conditions were terrible. Many generals and admirals who had fought in the first world war were now free to fight against the Bolsheviks. The first world war made it very hard for the Bolsheviks as they could not afford to make the same mistakes as the Tsar and provisional government, they had to leave the war but in doing so they created more enemies for themselves.



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Examiner Comments

This is a very good paragraph with supporting detail and the interesting argument that the consequences of the war, i.e. Brest-Litovsk, also produced problems.

Question 3(b)

This question was considerably more popular than Question 3(a) and candidates showed a high level of knowledge of the factors listed. There was considerable variety in the factor chosen as the most important. Some candidates believed that '*without the secret police none of this would have been possible*'; others that '*the purges removed opposition and frightened people*'; the cult of Stalin was considered important '*because it hid the real Stalin behind a mask of friendliness*' and the industrial policies '*improved the living standards of people and made them more content with the government*'. All these arguments were valid.

Whilst candidates sometimes resorted to a 'this was the most important factor, because it was important' approach in attempting to prioritise, the answer below was not untypical in showing how factors can be compared.

In my opinion, the most main reasons why the people of the Soviet Union supported Stalin's rule ^{were} ~~was~~ the use of his secret Police and the ~~the~~ use of propaganda to create the 'cult of Stalin'. These two things together scared people into submission and 'brainwashed' them into believing that they were in danger from within the Soviet Union as well as from the West so that they would support Stalin's rule. ^{The use of} Propaganda is linked to the use of secret police as the propaganda was used to justify the workings of the OGPU.

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