

Examiners' Report
June 2012

GCSE History 5HA02 2A

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Introduction

This year's paper seemed to hold few surprises for the candidates and there was no evidence of any specific question proving beyond the comprehension of a large number of candidates. Consequently the quality of performance revolved around candidates' knowledge and their examination technique. As is to be expected, there was considerable variation in that knowledge and technique, but as a whole, performance was encouraging.

A pleasing development is that Question 3 no longer seems to create the difficulties it once did for some candidates. It seems that candidates have a good grasp of the technique involved in an essay-based answer asking them to make a judgement on the comparative impact or significance of various factors. This is a challenging task and the success with which many candidates carry it out bears testament to good practice within the classroom.

One area which schools might like to continue to address is the use of dates in a question. Sometimes they are there as reminders of the period we are studying (as in 'Nazi rule in the years 1933-39') but on other occasions they prevent overlap between questions. So Question 2(a) was on attacks in the years 1919-22 because Question 1(c) had already asked about the Munich Putsch in 1923 and avoiding overlap was required. On other occasions the date is added to reinforce which material the examiners require. Many candidates have written essays on Hitler establishing Nazi rule by the end of 1934, but Question 1(d) was about his coming to power in January 1933; the Reichstag Fire, Night of the Long Knives and Enabling Act were not relevant.

Whilst some candidates still write 'the story' in Questions 1(c) and 1(d), instead of concentrating on effects and causes, it is clear that centres have worked hard on exam technique and candidates are responding well to such teaching.

Question 1 (a)

This question was well answered and most candidates were able to reach Level 3 by providing a supported inference. Most common was the suggestion that the Republic was unpopular, but there were many convincing answers showing how it was weak or inexperienced.

Weaker candidates tended to provide information from the source which read like an inference, but was really just a paraphrase. An example of this was 'it was democratic'

It is good to see that the candidate has gone straight in to the question with no time wasted in describing the source or considering its provenance.

Germany, 1918–39

Answer Questions 1(a) to (d), then Question 2(a) OR 2(b) and then Question 3(a) OR 3(b).

Question 1 – you must answer all parts of this question.

Study Source A.

Source A: From a history of Germany, published in 2009.

The Weimar Republic was set up as a democracy. This was completely different from Germany's tradition of having one strong ruler. The Weimar Republic was seen by many Germans as being set up by the 'November Criminals' who had stabbed Germany in the back. So they thought the Weimar Republic needed to be destroyed and replaced by a one-party state.

(a) What can you learn from Source A about the Weimar Republic? (4)

From source A I can learn that the weimar & Republic was very unpopular. This is because the source states that 'the weimar Republic needed to be destroyed.'



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This answer shows how a direct response can lead to full marks being achieved in a short answer by avoiding irrelevance. The inference is made and supported in just 3 lines.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

There is no need to describe the source or its provenance and certainly no need to discuss reliability. Equally, using a large amount of contextual information is unnecessary and won't be rewarded as support must come from the source.

There should be no need to use an extension sheet to answer this question.

Question 1 (b)

There were many disappointing responses to this question. Some candidates did not understand the term 'territorial' and so answered by reciting all they knew about the Treaty of Versailles. Consequently examiners saw much irrelevant material on military restrictions, the War Guilt Clause and the decision to make the Germans pay reparations. Whilst such answers generally also included rewardable material on territorial losses, some candidates used up precious writing time by giving information that could receive no reward.

Part (b) questions require candidates to give precise information on an element of the specification. It would appear that the territorial terms of the Treaty of Versailles are not well-known and there was much confusion between individual land losses. Some candidates wrote of the Ruhr being lost, or the Saar being demilitarised, whilst others showed how Belgium had been given access to the sea. Successful responses to this question tended to be those which could divide the losses into categories and give support in describing losses in, perhaps, the west, the east and overseas.

This answer contains some rewardable information, but it has inaccuracies and is also not well organised. There is no suggestion of different features.

(b) Describe Germany's territorial losses in the Treaty of Versailles.

(6)

The Treaty of Versailles resulted in the loss of parts of Germany, the creation of the 'Polish Corridor' and a ban from uniting with Austria. It was also forbidden from ~~the~~ having military troops in the Ruhr, Germany's main production area for coal and other goods.

Alsace-Lorraine was given to France and sections of Germany were removed and called the Sudetenland.

It also lost land to both Hungary and Austria.

One third of Germany's land was ~~red~~ distributed as a form of war punishment to other countries.

Some territories had a plebescite, and some voted to stay with Germany, others voted to leave.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

There are rewardable points here (e.g. Alsace-Lorraine, Polish Corridor), but it is difficult to see how this answer can be rewarded at Level 2 for providing supported statements. The comments on plebiscites, for example need relating to territories.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

Candidates need to support two statements to reach a high mark in Level 2. They should, therefore, aim to write two separate paragraphs showing how they have organised their answer into separate features.

Question 1 (c)

Candidates were very much at home with this topic and there were many detailed answers on the Munich Putsch. Where there were problems, it was generally as a result of candidates telling the story of what happened, rather than giving consideration to the impact of the Putsch. However, most candidates were able to identify and support the immediate effect of Hitler's arrest, trial and imprisonment and the consequent publicity given to the Nazis. Better answers saw the longer term effect and explained how the failure of the Putsch may well have brought about Nazi success in the long-term because it led to Hitler changing his strategy and looking to gain power through legitimate means, rather than through armed uprising.

The candidate has, perhaps, wasted a little time in 'setting the scene', but the answer generally concentrates on the effects of the Putsch

Q Hitler? during Hitler's time in prison he wrote a book called "Mein Kampf" (my struggle) which ~~is~~ entailed new ideas for the Nazis rise to power. He realised

to overthrow the new democratic system he must do ~~it~~ it within the system and not by force, once he has done that he can go on to rule Germany and become Führer. The effects of Munich Putsch, pushed Hitler and the Nazis out there, more and more people now hear of them and were aware of them. Hitler's time in prison allowed him to re-organise his plans for the future, and fulfil his Twenty-five point programme.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

There is clearly material in this answer which is rewardable at Level 2 (i.e. the publicity gained by the Nazis). The candidate also shows an understanding of the longer term impact by explaining the need to 'work within the system and not by force'. The takes the answer into Level 3 although, as the explanation is not substantial, it is rewarded at the lower end of the level.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Candidates need to avoid wasting time on describing the event itself, rather than its *impact*. A good way to start an answer to this type of question is to say 'One effect of was'

Question 1 (d)

This question offered the candidates a number of different routes towards the highest marks. Some candidates took the question to mean 'Why did Hitler become Chancellor', others concentrated on 'Why in January 1933?'. The very best were able to combine both these elements in their answer. Candidates generally explained the impact of the Great Depression, the use of propaganda and the intimidation of voters which led to electoral success. There was some very good explanation of the political crisis which led to Hitler being appointed 'because Hindenburg thought he could control him'.

Candidates sometimes failed to pick up marks where they 'told the story of the political crisis of late 1932 or explained how Hitler used propaganda, or had a popular message - without explaining why these events/actions actually led to Hitler being offered the Chancellorship. Such explanation was necessary to reach Level 3.

It was a pity that some candidates obviously had in mind previous questions or work done in lessons and wrote on the consolidation of Nazi power through reactions to the Reichstag Fire, the Night of the Long Knives and the passing of the Enabling Law.

A focused answer, which avoids irrelevance and shows good technique with the opening part of each paragraph clearly relating to the question.

(d) Explain why Hitler became Chancellor of Germany in January 1933.

(8)

The first reason why he became chancellor was thanks to the wall street crash in 1929. This period of depression was used by Hitler to promise prosperity and wealth to the Germany. This meant that people began to turn away from the Weimar Republic government at that time and look for new leadership.

In conclusion Hitler was made chancellor out of desperation in a time of great promises where Hitler seemed to have all the answers.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

The essay develops reasons and tries to explain why those reasons led to Hitler becoming Chancellor. The last paragraph is not strong, but it does try to draw an overarching conclusion. So Level 3 was awarded.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

It is a good idea, on questions about causation, to try to prioritise between them. A consideration of whether one cause was more important than others will help you to analyse why a particular cause was important and you will be more likely to score high marks for in-depth explanation.

Question 2 (a)

Although some candidates wrote outside the time frame of the question and included a discussion on how the Munich Putsch was countered, there was evidence of some very solid understanding of the events and outcomes of the Spartacist and Kapp uprisings. Most candidates were able to explain what happened and how the Freikorps and General Strike defeated the uprisings. The best answers (rewarded at Level 3) were those which showed that the uprisings were put down in a similar way (by appealing to the opposite political persuasion), or by expediency and desperation.

This example represents a common approach to the question. The answer gives details of how each uprising was defeated, followed by an attempt to summarise.

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

One example of how the Weimar Republic dealt with attacks from right-wing and left-wing groups in the years 1919-22 is the Spartacist Uprising.

The Spartacists were an extreme communist (left-wing) group, who were fiercely opposed to the Weimar Government.

Their leaders, Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, attempted to protest in Berlin and the Baltic ports in 1918.

However, in January 1919 just two weeks after protesting, the Spartacists were rounded up by the Reichswehr (national army) and the Freikorps (private army) and shot by order of Ebert and his defence minister Noske.

This shows how quick and efficient the governments were at destroying any attacks on the constitution.

Another example is the Kapp Putsch in ~~1920~~ 1922.

An extreme nationalist, Wolfgang Kapp, wanted to seize power in Berlin and overthrow the Weimar government. He was furious for the government for signing the Treaty of Versailles and wanted a ruler like the Kaiser to take over and make Germany strong again.

When Kapp and his nationalist supporters attempted to seize power in Berlin, they were not supported and the factory workers in the city went on strike in favour of the government. After only four days Kapp and his supporters fled.

These examples not only show that the Weimar Republic were quick, efficient and brutal at dealing with attacks on the government, but were also liked (at this stage) by the workers and people of Germany and this helped them to deal with attackers, as in the case of the Kapp Putsch.

(Total for Question 2 = 8 marks)



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

The defeat of each of the uprisings is described well. The final paragraph attempts to draw general conclusions, but the comments are not valid; the government was not 'quick, efficient and brutal' and the events did not show that in both cases the Weimar Republic was liked by workers and people. The answer is awarded Level 2.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Candidates should watch out for dates. The period in this question ends in 1922; the Munich Putsch is not relevant.

Question 2 (b)

This question was less popular than 2(a), but candidates seem to have a good knowledge of Nazi economic policies, although some confused their historical periods and wrote about hyperinflation and steps taken to deal with it.

Most candidates wrote about the RAD, rearmament and the idea of some workers (women and Jews in particular) being made unemployed at the expense of male workers - although the latter was more a social policy than economic. Many candidates accepted that the "promise" of work was a way of "dealing with" the economic effects, without considering what was actually done.

Strongest answers were those which could see a deliberate policy or strategy, perhaps talking about dealing with the economic effects 'by government spending' or restricting unemployment 'by a policy of disadvantaging women and the Jews'.

Question 3 (a)

A very popular question with some excellent answers showing a good understanding of Stresemann's work. It was particularly pleasing to see candidates making a determined effort to explain why Stresemann's policies could be seen as successful (or not), rather than just asserting. Where candidates were able to consider the relative success of the policies they were highly rewarded. Candidates selected a variety of factors as 'the most successful', though the most successful answers explained how better relations with other countries actually underpinned the work to end hyperinflation, the end of the occupation of the Ruhr and the introduction of the Young Plan.

The extract from the answer shown is the concluding paragraph of an essay that has explained why each of the bullet points given was successful.

Overall I think the main success was the hyperinflation because # Stresemann enabled Germany to get back on track and carry on their industry. Second main feature was the Young Plan because it ~~to~~ reduced reparations which was good for Germany. I ~~if~~ didn't find relations with other countries important because I think France was still angry with Germany so if there were a tension they would've been in opposite sides.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

Before the last paragraph the answer has clearly explained why Stresemann was successful in more than one area and so was marked at Level 3, 10 marks.

This final paragraph is an attempt to prioritise, saying the measures against hyperinflation were the most important, then the Young Plan, but relations with other countries were not important. The answer merely asserts the prioritisation and does not compare importance, just puts it in order. So only one additional mark was gained (Level 3, 11marks) as there is no direct comparison.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Candidates must *compare* factors in order to prioritise, not just say 'this is the most important because it was very important'.

Question 3 (b)

This question was also well done, with many candidates reaching Level 3 by being able to explain rather than simply just describe the bullet points. Persecution of the Church was rarely explained however, and the impression was gained that most candidates knew only what had happened rather than that they understood the importance of religion to people of that time, and the power that it could have.

As in Question 3(a), there was little material brought in from beyond the bullet points.

Paper Summary

The following observations are offered to centres to support exam preparation in future series:

- It is pleasing to note that there is continued improvement on Question 3; centres should always take note of the advice given in these reports
- Candidates need to pay particular attention to the dates given in the question
- There is still some 'story-telling' instead of consideration of **effect** (Question 1(c)) and **cause** (Question 1(d))
- Candidates should be encouraged to be succinct on Question 1(a)

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