

# Examiners' Report

## June 2016

### GCSE History 5HA02 2B

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## **Introduction**

This year's paper appears to have been accessible to the vast majority of candidates, although some candidates wrote more about purges than the Show Trials (Question 1b), including irrelevant material on the Tsar's downfall (Question 1d) and Stalin's rise to power (Question 2a). It was pleasing to note that all questions seemed accessible and candidates were able to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding. Questions 1c (on the New Economic Policy) and 3a (on the fall of the Provisional Government) were both particularly well-answered.

It was pleasing to see an increased focus on change in responses to Questions 2a and 2b and to note that the requirement to provide a third factor to access higher marks in Question 3 did not appear to be a problem for most candidates.

## Question 1 (a)

A straightforward starter question causing few difficulties for the candidates. Most answers were rewarded at Level 3 for making inferences about Bolshevik harshness or brutality and supporting them from the source. Some candidates limited their answer to lifting or paraphrasing from the source and were, therefore, marked at Level 1

**Source A:** From a history of the modern world, published in 2001.

Following an attempt to assassinate Lenin, the 'Red Terror' was introduced. The Cheka arrested anyone suspected of being an opponent of the Communist Party, especially members of the middle and upper classes. The Cheka may have murdered as many as 750,000 people during the Russian Civil War. The Tsar, his wife, children and servants were also shot by the Red Army soldiers.

(a) What can you learn from Source A about the Bolshevik rule in Russia?

(4)

From Source A I can infer that harsh methods were adopted when encountering opposition. This is supported by, "Cheka arrested anyone suspected of being an opponent of the communist Party."

I can also infer that the Bolsheviks even went to the extents of killing people who were high in authority and had a title. This is also supported by, "The Tsar, his wife, children and servants were also shot." This further highlights the ruthless killings people encountered because of the Bolshevik rule.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

The candidate makes the inference at the beginning of the answer and immediately supports it. Full marks are earned by the end of line four. Perhaps as an insurance policy, a second inference is made and supported in the second paragraph (although 'ruthless' is perhaps the word the candidate meant to use).



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

Remember that candidates do not have to write at length on this question. They need to make an inference, support it with a quote from the source, and then move on.

## Question 1 (b)

It was interesting to note that some candidates were not able to offer any response at all to this question. Examiners were surprised by this as the vast majority of candidates demonstrated a good level of understanding of the Trials. The features addressed were generally those which explained the reasons for the Trials, the mechanics of them and the impact. Some good, detailed factual support was provided, although sometimes candidates wandered into the purges in general, rather than the Trials. It did not strike them as unlikely that more than 7 million Soviet citizens were involved in the Trials.

(b) Describe the key features of Stalin's show trials.

(6)

The first key feature of Stalin's Show trials was that they made people believe that there was no hope ~~left~~ in the justice system left. Stalin initiated the Show trials so that people felt intimidated and <sup>so</sup> could not oppose him.

The second key feature of the Show trials was that it created an atmosphere of fear in which Stalin managed to scare his opposition into obedience. An example of this would be the trial of Kirov, 16 Bolshevik seniors were made to confess and were shot dead. Additionally, the ~~OK~~ <sup>OPGU</sup> ~~Cherka~~ arrested 40,000 people including Eugenii Ginzberg (who wasn't even in the city Kirov was murdered in) who ~~was~~ <sup>were</sup> sent to Gulags or shot.

The third key feature of Stalin's Show trials was that it made people think that the government was really fragile so they were encouraged to

unite behind Stalin for a stable government.  
This ~~AA~~ created a party and people loyal to  
Stalin only, which helped him maintain his  
power.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This is a good answer, comfortably reaching Level 2. The candidate has successfully identified two features (the Show Trials as a means of instilling fear and also as a means of gaining support) and some detail is provided on the trial of Old Bolsheviks.

It was presumed that the candidate did not mean the trial 'of Kirov', but the trial 'concerning the death of Kirov'.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

In this question, the examiners are looking for precise detail. So candidates should organise their response into two paragraphs and then provide as much detail as they can to support those points.

### Question 1 (c)

Although some candidates confused the New Economic Policy with War Communism, this question was generally answered very well. The vast majority of answers were able to explain how Lenin's reform brought about increased industrial and agricultural production. Better answers were rewarded at Level 3 for explaining how the policy was criticised as being a step towards capitalism, or was praised as increasing support for the Bolsheviks and perhaps saving the revolution.

(c) Explain the effects of Lenin's New Economic Policy in the years 1921–24.

(8)

Lenin's new economic policy introduced in 1921 was effectively the reverse of war communism as Lenin was now allowing people to make profit which is a capitalist idea. Allowing people to keep and sell any surplus they made gave the workers an incentive to work harder. This effectively increased agricultural production along with industrial production as people now had a reason to work harder because they were being rewarded for it.

Another effect of NEP was that it improved the living standards of the peasants and the workers as they were able to enjoy themselves more. This meant that the lives of peasants got better and they were able to do more things.

Another effect of NEP was that there was less food shortages and people were not suffering from cannibalism and they now had more food as they were now producing more food for them to eat. The people were slightly happier that they were able to keep any surplus for themselves.

Many people criticised Lenin as a result of introducing NEP because they did not understand why they had fought a revolution just for capitalism to be introduced back into the country. People did not understand why Lenin did that although Lenin had done it to improve the economy.



## ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

A good answer. The candidate has not become bogged down in providing the detail of the New Economic Policy, but has instead concentrated on explaining the impact of the Policy. In this case, the candidate concentrates on increased agricultural production and less famine, but also sees the wider picture in terms of criticisms made of Lenin for reintroducing capitalism. A mark at Level 3 was awarded.



## ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

To score at the highest level candidates need to explain the effects of the action or event given. The question requires more than listing detail. The impact must be explained, and to reach the highest level, it is necessary to look at the wider effects.



## Question 1 (d)

It was unsurprising to see that so many candidates knew why the Tsar was overthrown in 1917, though not all of the candidates went as far as linking the reasons with the actual outcome. To score top level marks it is not enough to explain that the Tsar was an autocrat, or that he directed the war badly or relied on his wife and Rasputin. What is needed is an explanation of why those reasons led to increased opposition and an inability of the Tsar to overcome such opposition.

It is perhaps worth repeating comments from previous reports that candidates are not expected to know events before 1914 so detail of the Russo-Japanese War or Bloody Sunday will not earn rewards in themselves. As examples of policy or character weaknesses which continued until 1917, they do add value. Candidates should also note that Nicholas did not take personal control of the army until September 1915, so was not responsible for defeat at either Tannenberg or Masurian Lakes.

<sup>→ Food</sup> <sup>→ War</sup> <sup>→ Tsar</sup>  
(d) Explain why Tsar Nicholas II was overthrown in February 1917.

(8)

The first reason as to why the Tsar was overthrown was due to the problems ~~at~~ that occurred as a result of the war <sup>whilst he was general</sup>. On September 5th 1915, the Tsar decided to become the general. This led to him being blamed for the failures at war. The war was negatively impacting Russia as it led to inflation, high crime rates <sup>(the crime rates in 1917 were 30 times that of 1914)</sup> and a decrease in <sup>industrial</sup> production; ~~because~~ as the Tsar was the general, he ~~became the~~ was blamed for all the problems to the extent that the Okhrana could not stifle opposition.

The second reason as to why the Tsar was overthrown was due to his inability to remove Russia from the war. The ~~war~~ war was damaging Russia ~~and~~ as they suffered heavy losses. Most of 4 provinces

Such as coal mining were lost to the Germans and by August <sup>1915</sup> 1915, 2 million soldiers had been wounded or captured. The Tsar's lack of ability to remove Russia from the First World War created an atmosphere of resentment in which failures at war increased the opposition towards him.

Russia experienced heavy losses at the <sup>Tannenberg</sup> Battle of Tannenberg and Masurian lakes which further crippled the reserves and made people more concerned with leaving the war.

The third reason as to why the Tsar was overthrown in the February revolution was due to his decision to leave the Tsarina Alexandra in charge. Not only was she under suspicion for being German, but she relied heavily on Rasputin who was hated. <sup>and murdered in December 1916</sup> The Tsarina sacked nobles who further increased the hostility that people felt towards the royal family, particularly the Tsar. The Tsar's decision to leave the Tsarina in charge led to a series of tensions in Russia whereby the Okhrana were not able to control the situation and opposition was clear.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

A good answer. Several factors are chosen and there is an attempt to explain why these might have contributed to the Tsar's downfall, rather than just providing them as examples of how things 'went wrong'. Level 3 was awarded, though at the bottom end of the range.

The paragraph on the war has some factual confusions, but the point is still made.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

To achieve the top level, candidates need to make sure that they link their reasons to the outcome. It is not enough to set out the things that the Tsar did which made him unpopular: the question needs to be asked – why did they lead to his downfall?

## Question 2 (a)

Most candidates were able to relate the steps by which Stalin increased his power in the 1920s. There were some excellent accounts of Stalin's exploitation of his position as secretary, of his informing Trotsky over the funeral arrangements and his playing off Old Bolsheviks against each other. Such answers were generally rewarded at Level 2. Where candidates went on to explain that this moved Stalin from the position of contender to almost undisputed leader then Level 3 was awarded.

It was disappointing to see a significant minority of candidates confuse the time period being discussed and the use of Stalin's purges as an example of how he gained control in this period.

The first way in which Stalin's position as the leader of the Soviet Union was that in 1924, Stalin was general secretary of the Politburo/Communist Party. This meant that Stalin chose who got what jobs in the government and so people were loyal to Stalin.

~~Another~~ Another way in which Stalin's position changed was that he aimed to become the leader of the Soviet Union after the death of Lenin so that he did all he could to portray himself as Lenin's favourite. He made sure his work kept himself in Moscow close to Lenin so that when Lenin died, people assumed that only Stalin should be his rightful successor.

By

The last way in which his position changed is that by 1928, he was no longer the general secretary of the Communist Party. Instead, he was

the leader of the party and the leader of the USSR. ~~Stalin~~ The way in which Stalin did this was cunning. He became leader by discrediting and harming the reputation of other potential leaders such as Trotsky. He also made alliances with Kamenov and Zinoviev to prevent Lenin's testament from being read out as Lenin didn't want Stalin to be leader. He then used Bukharin and Rykov to get rid of Kamenov and Zinoviev before also discrediting them.

In my opinion I believe that the main way in which Stalin's position as leader of the Soviet Union changed was that he upgraded from Lenin's general secretary to the leader of the whole country.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

The candidate provides an explanation of some of the steps in Stalin's rise to power. The opening paragraphs are rather general, but better detail is given on the steps against Trotsky. The final paragraph is a good explanation of the overall change and took the answer to a borderline Level 3.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

This question is about change, so it is not enough to explain just what happened in this period. Candidates have to explain how change occurred and what difference it made.

## Question 2 (b)

The wording of this question was deliberately wide to allow candidates to introduce any aspect of conditions for workers in the given period. Candidates responded to this in a variety of ways. For some, this period was a time when the pressures of the Five Year Plans and the example set by the Stakhanovites drove workers into an increasingly difficult and dangerous position. Other candidates saw it as a time when workers benefitted from planning, rewards, improved living conditions and (for women especially) much greater opportunity in Soviet industry.

Such was the nature of Stalin's industrialisation that either approach (or indeed a combination of the two) was acceptable. Where the changed position was well-explained (or where the bigger picture of increased state control was explained) Level 3 was awarded.

One way in which conditions for industrial workers changed in the years 1928-39 was by <sup>an</sup> improved ~~living~~ <sup>lifestyle</sup> ~~conditions~~. This was achieved through the rewards that workers would get for exceeding their targets in the 5 year plans. For example, ~~for~~ workers could gain rewards such as cinema tickets ~~or~~ as a reward for exceeding targets. Therefore, the conditions for industrial workers improved due to higher privillages.

A second way that conditions changed for industrial workers was that they had worse health and they had more problems. This was due to industrialisation throughout 1928-39 which led to more fumes coming from the factories and more injuries occurring due to the mass production. People were so ~~focused~~ on speeding up the production of goods that it caused ~~the~~ negative effects on the health of the industrial workers.

A third way conditions changed for ~~factory~~ industrial workers ~~was~~ <sup>between</sup> 1928-39 was by improved living conditions. For example, in 1929, 1157 people were living in temporary huts in a place called Magnitogorsk, where there ~~was~~ were unpaved roads, no electricity and no drains. However, by 1939, 100000 people were living there ~~with~~ in brick build houses with paved roads, electricity and drains.

In my opinion, I believe that the main way conditions changed for industrial workers was by the worsened health. I believe this is the main way things changed because it effected most of the industrial workers. However, the improved living conditions wouldn't have been the case for all industrial workers and neither would the ~~z~~ privillages. The privillages would have only been given to people who exceeded their targets which wasn't all of the industrial workers.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

The candidate has looked at both living and working conditions and has explained how there were both positive and negative aspects to the impact of Stalin's policies. It was, therefore, rewarded at Level 3.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

This question is about change, so it is not enough to explain just what happened in this period. Candidates have to explain how change occurred and what difference it made.

### Question 3 (a)

There was good knowledge of the reasons for the fall of the Provisional Government. In addition to the listed factors, candidates generally concentrated on the failure to introduce reform and the growing power of the Bolsheviks. Level 3 was reached where candidates were able to explain why these (and/or the given) factors brought about the downfall of the Provisional Government (as opposed to merely explaining why they were a problem for the government). Prioritisation was less common, with candidates often merely asserting that one factor was the most important, or listing factors as 'the most important', 'the second most important', without attempting to justify this ranking.

Some of the main reasons why the Provisional Government were overthrown <sup>in October 1917</sup> was because of their decision to carry on with the war. It was also because of the Kornilov Revolt and the strength of the Bolsheviks.

Another reason why the Provisional Government were overthrown was due to their decision to ~~remain~~ continue with World War I. This impacted ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> Provisional Government negatively as the Russian people wanted to end the war which they were losing. The Provisional Government's decision to carry on with the war made them unpopular ~~and~~ <sup>as well</sup> ~~seen~~ <sup>as</sup> them not making many reforms. This unpopularity was seen by women lying on railway tracks to stop their husbands going to war. This unpopularity also meant that the Bolsheviks would

find it easier to overthrow them as there wouldn't be a lot of resistance\*  
Therefore, due to the Provisional Government's decision to carry on the war, the Bolsheviks found it easier to overthrow them due to their unpopularity.

In conclusion, the main reason why the Provisional Government were overthrown was because of the Kornilov Revolt which showed how weak ~~they~~<sup>the</sup> Provisional Government were. The second biggest reason why the Provisional Government were overthrown was because of the Bolshevik's attractive policies of peace, land and bread which had exceptional timing as the Russian people weren't happy with the Provisional Government's decision to continue in WWI. This decision which caused unpopularity was the third biggest reason for the Provisional Government being overthrown as it let the Bolsheviks take over without much resistance. Even though the Kornilov Revolt of 1917 was the main reason for the Provisional Government being overthrown, the Provisional Government wouldn't have been overthrown without



much resistance. Even though the Kornilov Revolt of 1917 was the main reason for the Provisional Government being overthrown, the Provisional Government wouldn't have been overthrown without the increased support of Bolshevik policies and the Provisional Government's unpopular decision to remain in World War I.

Therefore, even though the Kornilov Revolt was the main reason ~~for~~ for the Provisional Government being overthrown, <sup>without</sup> the other reasons all together, <sup>they</sup> ~~enabled~~ ~~the~~ wouldn't have been overthrown.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This is a Level 4 answer. During the course of the answer, the candidate has explained why a number of factors contributed to the fall of the Provisional Government. At the end of the essay there is an attempt to show interdependence and prioritisation, taking the answer into the top level.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

It is important not just to provide extensive narrative without explaining why the factors being discussed contributed to the outcome in the question.

Remember also, that to prioritise reasons there must be a direct comparison between factors. Why was one reason more important than another, for example?

### **Question 3 (b)**

This was very much the second favourite of the choices for Question 3 and was generally answered less well than the other questions. In addition to the listed factors, candidates generally tended to concentrate on the policy of collectivisation and on state control and planning. Candidates did not always explain why the factors they were describing were important, but where they did, it was usually to emphasise how the kulaks were a hurdle to Stalin's successful implementation of his policies. Consequently, for him their removal was extremely important. As on Question 3a, prioritisation was less common, with candidates often merely asserting that one factor was the most important or listing factors as 'the most important', 'the second most important', without attempting to justify this ranking.

## Paper Summary

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates are offered the following advice:

- Make sure you are aware of the different skills tested in each question (e.g. Question 1(d) is always about causation).
- Make sure when explaining reasons in question 1d and Question 3, you always explain why the factor you are addressing brought about the stated outcome.
- Remember that the top levels are for explanation. That involves using factual knowledge to make your points, not just asserting that something is the case.
- In Question 3, you cannot reach the top of Level 2 or Level 3 (and cannot reach Level 4 at all) without bringing a factor additional to those in the stimuli into your answer.
- In Question 3 prioritisation involves direct comparison between at least two factors. It is not sufficient to explain why one factor was the most important without reference to other factors.

## **Grade Boundaries**

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