

CHINA: THE
GREAT LEAP
FORWARD
COURSEWORK
ASSIGNMENTS

GCSE HISTORY COURSEWORK ASSIGNMENTS

Teacher Information

Introduction:

These assignments comprise sources, questions and mark schemes which will enable your pupils to fulfil the coursework requirements in history for Edexcel Foundation specifications for first examination in summer 2003. You may use these assignments as they stand. They have been designed to assess the full range of grades targeted by the syllabus (Grades G-A*). Assistance may be given in class to aid the comprehension of the sources.

You may also adapt these assignments if wished by:

- providing additional or replacement sources
- providing additional or replacement questions.

However, if you wish to make changes you should submit these to the Edexcel Foundation for approval to ensure that revised sources or questions give candidates appropriate opportunity to meet the targets specified at the appropriate level.

Management of the assignment:

The assignment has been designed to accommodate some flexibility of classroom practice. The following points should be borne in mind:

- Although all the questions *may* be tackled as part of a single task, this is not necessary. The timing of individual questions within an assignment may be staggered over a period of time and integrated into the programme of study.
- Candidates may use the sources provided in the pack as part of their preparation for Assignment 1 but this is not a requirement.
- Your candidates should draw upon their contextual knowledge when using the sources for Assignment 2. The historical content listed below should be familiar to candidates before they attempt to answer the questions.

China: The Great Leap Forward

This assignment should arise from a teaching programme designed to occupy approximately half a term. Before candidates begin this assignment they should have knowledge of:

- Aims and changing policies of Mao after 1949
- Economic, social and political changes under Mao
- Economic, social and political changes since the death of Mao.

Introduction

In 1958 Mao Zedong announced the Great Leap Forward. This was to be the Second Five Year Plan and it was intended to continue the modernisation of Chinese industry which had begun during the First Five Year Plan. Mao wanted to mobilise the whole Chinese population in an attempt to catch up the economies of the West.

How did he plan to do this? What effects did the Great Leap Forward have upon the Chinese people and the industry of China? Was it a success? These are some of the questions which you will be required to consider as you tackle this assignment.

SOURCE A: From a speech by Mao at the Supreme State Conference in January 1958.

Now our enthusiasm has been aroused. Our nation will be able to do things which we could not do before. Now that we have this great energy we shall catch up with Britain in fifteen years; we shall produce 40,000,000 tons of steel annually - now we produce just over 5,000,000 - we must summon up our strength and swim vigorously upstream.

SOURCE B: Production figures under the First Five Year Plan and the Great Leap Forward; these figures were published by the Chinese Government.

	1952	1957 (planned)	1957 (achieved)	1960
Coal (million tons)	63.5	113	124	390
Iron (million tons)	1.9	4.7	5.86	27.5

SOURCE C: A Soviet scientist, who was working in China during the Great Leap Forward, describes what he saw; this book was published in 1964.

The peasants were not in the fields during the spring planting season. They were carrying out the orders of the Party, working day and night at the mines and home-made blast furnaces to fulfil the “Drive to Produce Metals Locally”. And we all know the results: they did not obtain any more iron than before, and there was much less bread and rice to go round.

According to the official figure, 4,000,000 tons of iron were processed in 1957, but of this amount hardly more than 1% was usable, the remaining 99% being slag, unwashed ore, or, even more often, a pure invention of the government.

SOURCE D: A factory worker describes events in China in 1958.

We were told that China would get rich quick if everyone concentrated on iron and steel. So we dropped everything else and built brick chimneys in the factory yards. Radiators, pots and pans went into ovens and peasants poured in from the countryside to help.

SOURCE E: from an article written by a foreign journalist in China in 1958: it describes an attempt to build a dam near Beijing.

There were not enough machines, there was no cement, no mortar and other building materials. Beijingers were summoned to build this dam with their bare hands and feet by voluntary shift work. In eight hour shifts they scratched away the earth often with no more than their fingernails, they carried earth and stone in baskets on poles to the river bed, where thousands stood and stamped on the stones and earth with their feet. They were urged on by party officials with megaphones. Mao Zedong himself and all the members of the Politburo and the government came and joined in.

SOURCE F: A photograph showing peasants building a canal near Peking during the Great Leap Forward.



SOURCE G: From a letter sent by a peasant in China to relatives living abroad in 1958/9; this was published in the west in 1983.

People fight each other to get to the rice barrels first, but there is never enough. Nor are vegetables available, not to mention fish and meat. Only sick people with certificates are permitted to buy.

SOURCE H: A table showing figures for agricultural production, 1957 to 1965; these figures were published by the Chinese Government.

	1957	1960	1965
Grain (millions of tons)	185.0	150.0	200.0
Cattle (thousands)	50,485	42,180	48,660
Sheep (thousands)	53,435	50,305	59,000
Pigs (thousands)	145,895	81,533	126,680

Assignment One: Objective 1

1. Describe China's economy and society in the late 1940s and early 1950s. **(15)**
2. Why did Mao begin the Great Leap Forward in 1958? **(15)**
3. How successful was the Great Leap Forward in achieving Mao's aims? **(20)**

(Total: 50 marks)

Assignment Two: Objectives 2 and 3

1. Study Source A

What can you learn from Source A about the reasons why Mao introduced the Great Leap Forward? (6)

2. Study Sources B, C and D

Does the evidence of Sources B and D support the view of the Great Leap Forward given in Source C? Explain your answer by reference to all the sources. (8)

3. Study Sources E and F

How useful are these sources in helping you to understand how the Great Leap Forward worked? (10)

4. Study Sources G and H

These sources suggest that the Great Leap Forward had disastrous consequences for Chinese agriculture by 1960. Use the sources, and your own knowledge, to explain why this happened. (12)

5. Study all the sources

‘The Great Leap forward was a mistake.’

Use the sources, and your own knowledge, to explain whether you agree with this view. (14)

(Total: 50 marks)

Coursework Assignments Markscheme

China: The Great Leap Forward

Assignment One: Objective 1

1. *Describe China's economy and society in the late 1940s and early 1950s.* (15)
- Target:** Key features / recall of knowledge
- Level 1:** Simple statements supported by some knowledge, e.g. industry undeveloped, farming primitive, big differences between countryside and town etc. (1-5)
- Level 2:** Developed statements supported by some relevant knowledge, e.g. Chinese industry was very weak, very little in the way of large scale production of metals, farming relied on manual labour/communes, society traditional – references to differences between KMD and Communism. (6-10)
- Level 3:** Developed exposition supported by appropriately selected knowledge, e.g. Chinese society and economy had developed very little since the nineteenth and had been very badly hit by the warfare of the twentieth century etc. (11-15)
2. *Why did Mao begin the Great Leap Forward in 1958?* (15)
- Target:** Causation / Explanation of a key feature
- Level 1:** Simple statements supported by some knowledge, e.g. he wanted to improve industry/catch up with the west etc. (1-5)
- Level 2:** Developed statements supported by relevant knowledge, e.g. Chinese industry was still backward, Mao wanted to increase production even more quickly, he wanted to make use of China's reserves of manpower to make up for her lack of technology, he wanted to extend the communes etc. (6-10)
- Level 3:** Developed explanation supported by appropriately selected knowledge, e.g. the aim of the GLF was to create self-sufficient communes and stop the migration of peasant labour to the cities, hence the emphasis on backyard industry; the communes would mobilise the vast resources to man power that China possessed etc. (11-15)

3. *How successful was the Great Leap Forward in achieving Mao's aims?* (20)

Target: **Recall of knowledge/analysis**

- Level 1:** Simple statements supported by some knowledge, e.g. yes production did increase dramatically, no it did not reach Mao's aims etc. (1-5)
- Level 2:** Developed statements supported by relevant knowledge, e.g. much of the steel produced was poor quality, the backyard furnaces were a waste of time, there was little real progress and the government figures were published to hide what really happened etc. (6-10)
- Level 3:** Developed explanation supported by appropriately selected knowledge, e.g. the strategy of the GLF was wrong, Soviet advisors returned home, the communes lacked the technical expertise to tackle the problems they faced, Mao went too far too quickly, there were a series of natural disasters in the late 1950s which upset his predictions etc. (11-15)
- Level 4:** Sustained argument supported by precisely selected knowledge, e.g. although the GLF was unsuccessful in achieving Mao's industrial aims and he resigned as head of state in December 1958, they may have achieved his wider political aims in preventing his political opponents from achieving real power; his statements about Britain may have been no more than an attempt to galvanise support for his campaign etc. (16-20)

Coursework Assignments Markscheme

China: The Great Leap Forward

Assignment Two: Objectives 2 and 3

1. *What can you learn from Source A about the reasons why Mao introduced the Great Leap Forward?* (6)

Target: Comprehension of source (AO2)

Level 1: Simple statements using the source as information, e.g. to increase production to catch up Britain etc. (1-3)

Level 2: Developed statements making inferences from the source, e.g. referring to the scale of increases, or the tone of the speech, or referring to other likely motives of Mao etc. (4-6)

2. *Does the evidence of Sources B and D support the view of the Great Leap Forward given in Source C? Explain your answer by reference to all the sources.* (8)

Target: Comprehension and cross-referencing of sources (AO2)

Level 1: Simple statements using the sources as information, e.g. they are all about iron and steel; they all say that production of metals was very important etc. (1-3)

Level 2: Developed statements making inferences from the sources e.g. C states that there was a great deal of iron produced, but it was mostly useless B does not support this view, D states that the peasants concentrated on iron, and that there was not enough food produced, clearly workers were encouraged to produce iron and forgot about food etc. (4-6)

Level 3: Developed explanation using the sources as evidence, e.g. C was written by a Soviet scientist who witnessed the effects of the GLF, B was published by the Chinese government and therefore gives the official version of events, however D gives a very similar picture to C and this was written by a Chinese eye-witness etc. (7-8)

3. *How useful are these sources in helping you to understand how the Great Leap Forward worked?*

(10)

(10)

Target: Evaluation of sources / assessment of utility (AO2)

Level 1: Simple statements using the sources as information, e.g. they show us how people had to work the methods of production used, how peasants reacted, etc.

(1-3)

Level 2: Developed statements making inferences from the sources or referring to the nature of the sources, e.g. F, an eyewitness, tells us what the people did at the time and allows us to understand the scale of the effort involved, G supports the account given in F about the methods used and the number of people involved etc.

(4-6)

Level 3: Developed explanation using nature, origin and purpose of sources to analyse the evidence, e.g. F is a foreign journalist and his comments are supported by G, they show how important the use of manual labour was, but both of these could have been propaganda as G would have been published in a Chinese newspaper; clearly propaganda was very important to persuade the people of China that they should be prepared to support the GLF etc.

(7-10)

4. *These sources suggest that the Great Leap Forward had disastrous consequences for Chinese agriculture by 1960. Use the sources, and your own knowledge, to explain why this happened.*

(12)

Target: Recall of knowledge/comprehension & cross-referencing of sources (AO1 & AO2)

Level 1: Level 1: Simple statements using the sources at face value OR some own knowledge e.g. production went down there were shortages etc.

(1-3)

Level 2: Level 2: Developed statements making inferences from the sources supported by relevant knowledge, e.g. peasants were diverted away from agriculture so production went down, they spent their time making steel from backyard furnaces etc.

(4-6)

Level 3: Developed explanation using the sources as evidence supported by selected knowledge, e.g. the peasant's letter reveals how bad things were at first hand, even the Chinese government's own statistics show a major fall in production etc.

(7-10)

- Level 4:** Sustained argument using the sources as evidence supported by precisely selected knowledge, e.g. sets in the context of improvements before and after the HLF and pinpoints reasons for failures etc. (11–12)
5. *Use the sources, and your own knowledge, to explain whether you agree with this view.* (14)

Target: Analysis of interpretations (AO3)

Level 1: Simple statements using the sources at face value OR some own knowledge e.g. it was a disaster, points taken from the sources at random etc. (1-3)

Level 2: Developed statements making inferences from the sources supported by relevant knowledge, e.g. the majority of the sources describe falls in production, peasants did give up working in the fields etc. (4–6)

Level 3: Developed explanation using the sources as evidence supported by selected knowledge, e.g. even the Chinese government accepted that production had fallen, there are also first hand accounts of the effects of the GLF etc. (7–11)

Level 4: Sustained argument using the sources as evidence supported by precisely selected knowledge, e.g. assesses other views, statistics were prepared after Mao had fallen from power, Deng may have wanted to prove that Mao's influence was at fault, some aspects of the GLF did work, uranium production etc. (12-14)