

# THE GENERAL STRIKE 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 The historical content listed below should be familiar to candidates before they attempt to answer the questions.

# The General Strike

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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:

- Industrial unrest 1906-1914
- War Socialism
- Events in the coal industry 1919-1925

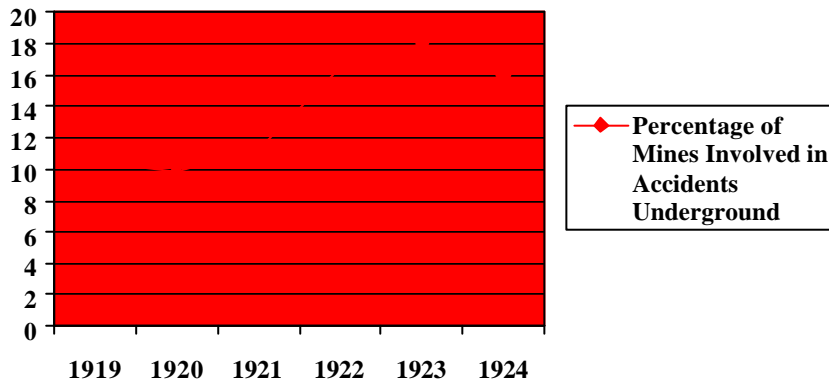
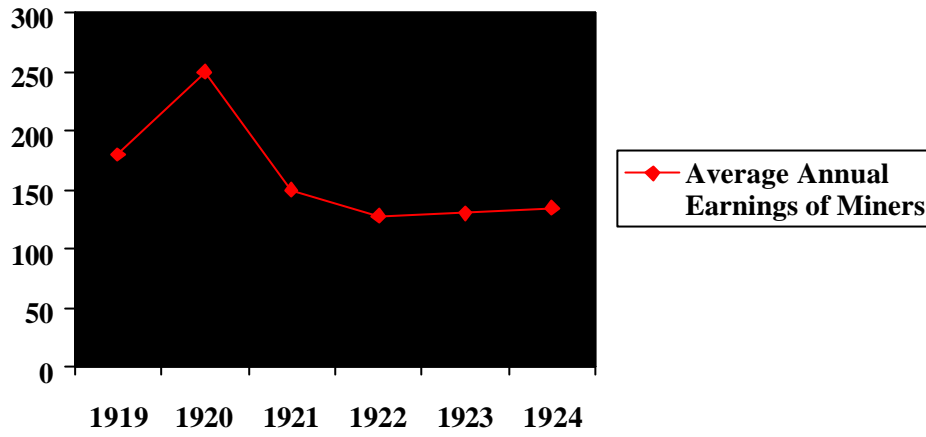
## Introduction

In the years before the First World War there was widespread industrial unrest in Britain. It was caused by the arrival of Syndicalism from France and the USA, as well as by rising prices and the effects of foreign competition. Unrest came to an end in August 1914 when the First World War broke out, but restarted in 1919 when the government began to return the industries that had been taken over during the war to private ownership.

Attention soon focused upon the plight of the miners and from 1919 to 1926 they fought a battle to preserve wages and conditions. Finally, in May 1926, they went on strike and were supported by about 4,000,000 other workers.

Why were the miners treated so badly and why did a general strike take place in 1926? These are some of the questions that you will be answering when you tackle this assignment.

**SOURCE A: Two graphs produced in the 1970s**



**SOURCE B: A photograph taken in the early 1920s of miners and their families gathering coal**



**SOURCE C: Part of a history book written in the 1960s**

By 1925 the British coal industry was in a serious depression. It was still the country's largest industry with a labour force of 1,000,000 men, but from a prosperous period in the early 1920s it had declined so that 79% of pits were producing at a loss. There were some 2,500 pits operated by 1,400 different owners. The industry lacked investment, the machinery was old-fashioned and the management was incompetent. When cheap Polish and German coal flooded the market after 1923, forcing world prices down, the industry sank into crisis and the miners were forced into poverty.

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**SOURCE D: Part of an article published in the *Brighton Herald*, 17 April 1926**

O.M.S., as some of our readers will remember, stands for Organisation for the Maintenance of Supplies, which came into being some months ago. At present unofficial, but well prepared, the organisation is intended to be the official means of resisting any Labour attempt to paralyse the essential industries of the country. It is now appealing to all who believe in the maintenance of public order in England to enrol themselves as volunteers for whatever service they may be called upon to do, or may be able to perform.

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**SOURCE E: A cartoon published in a daily newspaper in April 1926**



**SOURCE F: The results of the TUC ballot on strike action to support the miners**

For	3,653,527
Against	49,911

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**SOURCE G: A poster that was published during the General Strike**

**MESSAGE FROM THE  
PRIME MINISTER:  
Constitutional Government  
is being attacked.**

Let all good citizens whose livelihood  
and labour have thus been put in peril  
bear with fortitude and patience the  
hardships with which they have been  
so suddenly confronted.

**Stand behind the Government who  
are doing their part**

Confident that you will co-operate in  
the measures they have undertaken to  
preserve the liberties and privileges of  
the people of these islands.

**The Laws of England are the  
People's birthright.**

**The laws are in your keeping.  
You have made Parliament their  
guardian**

**The General Strike is a challenge to  
Parliament and is the road to  
anarchy and ruin.**

**SOURCE H: Part of an article published in the *Daily Mail* on 3 May 1926**

The general strike is not an industrial dispute; it is a revolutionary movement, intended to inflict suffering upon the great mass of innocent persons in the community and thereby force the government to give way.

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**SOURCE I: Part of an article published in the *British Worker* during the general strike**

The General Council of the TUC does not challenge the Constitution. It is not seeking to substitute unconstitutional government. Nor is it trying to undermine our Parliamentary institutions. The sole aim of the Council is to secure for the miners a decent standard of life. The Council is engaged in an industrial dispute. There is no Constitutional crisis

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**SOURCE J: A cartoon published in a daily newspaper during the general strike**





### **Assignment One: Objective 1**

1. Describe events in the coal industry from 1919 to 1925. **(15)**
  
2. Why did a general strike take place in 1926? **(15)**
  
3. How important was the government's use of propaganda in bringing the strike to an early end? **(20)**

**(Total: 50 Marks)**

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## Assignment Two: Objectives 2 and 3

### 1. Study Source A

What can you learn from Source A about the working conditions of miners in the early 1920s?

**(6)**

### 2. Study Sources A, B and C

Does the evidence of Source C support the evidence of Sources A and B about the working conditions of miners? Explain your answer.

**(8)**

### 3. Study Sources D, E and F

How useful are Sources D, E and F in helping you to understand why the general strike began in May 1926?

**(10)**

### 4. Study Sources G and H

Use Sources G and H, and your own knowledge, to explain how the government tried to defeat the general strike.

**(12)**

### 5. Study all of the sources

‘The main reason for the collapse of the general strike was the governments use of propaganda against the TUC.’

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

**(14)**

**(Total: 50 marks)**

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## Coursework Assignments Mark Scheme

### The Strike

#### Assignment One: Objective 1

1. Describe events in the coal industry from 1919 to 1925. (1-15)
- Target: Key features/recall of knowledge A01**
- Level 1:** Simple statements supported by some knowledge, e.g. Sankey Commission, Black Friday, Red Friday etc. (1-5)
- Level 2:** Developed statements supported by relevant knowledge, e.g. details of events, from 1919-1925, reasons for Sankey, report, general strike 1921, Black Friday etc. (6-10)
- Level 3:** Developed exposition supported by selected knowledge, e.g. shows understanding that the industry deteriorated overall and that the lives of miners suffered very badly etc. (11-15)
2. Why did a general strike take place in 1926? (1-15)
- Target: Causation/recall of knowledge AO1**
- Level 1:** Simple statements supported by some knowledge, e.g. no general strikes in 1914 or 1921, attitude of the employers, government policy etc (1-5)
- Level 2:** Developed statements supported by relevant knowledge, e.g. details of factors, failure of Triple alliance in 1914 and 1921, reductions in wages, foreign competition, Red Friday, end of subsidy, Daily Mail etc. (6-10)

- Level 3:** Developed explanation supported by selected knowledge, e.g. making links between factors, failure of support in 1921 led to determination in 1925-6, state of the industry and policy of owners, intervention of Baldwin and determination to bring the matter to a head in 1926 etc. **(11-15)**
3. How important was the government's use of propaganda in bringing the strike to an early end? **(20)**
- Target: Key features/recall of knowledge AO1**
- Level 1:** Simple statements supported by some knowledge, e.g. lists examples of propaganda, newspapers, posters, broadcasts, British Gazette etc. **(1-5)**
- Level 2:** Developed statements supported by relevant knowledge, e.g. details of propaganda, content of Gazette, describes posters and cartoons etc. **(6-10)**
- Level 3:** Developed explanation supported by selected knowledge, e.g. considers tone of government propaganda and contrasts with propaganda of the TUC, mostly defensive, newspapers on the side of the government, Churchill etc. **(11-15)**
- Level 4:** Sustained argument supported by precisely selected knowledge, e.g. assesses role of government propaganda against other factors, difficulty of organising a long term sympathy strike, reluctance of workers to stay out for long, timidity of TUC, understand that there were two strikes going on, miners and general strike etc. **(16-20)**

## Coursework Assignments Mark Scheme

### The Strike

#### Assignment Two: Objectives 2 and 3

1. *Study Source A. What can you learn from Source A about the working conditions of miners in the early 1920s?* (6)

**Target:** Comprehension of a source AO2

**Level 1:** Simple statements supported by some knowledge taking the source at face value, e.g. miners wages were falling and the number of accidents was going up etc. (1-3)

**Level 2:** Developed statements supported by relevant knowledge making inferences from the source, pointing out the weaknesses of the source or setting the source in context, e.g. rises and falls were very steep, as one fell the other rose, when wages fell miners worked longer hours and there were more accidents etc. (4-6)

2. *Study Sources A, B and C. Does the evidence of Source C support the evidence of Sources A and B? Explain your answer.* (8)

**Target:** Cross referencing and evaluation of sources AO2

**Level 1:** Simple statements supported by some knowledge taking the sources at face value, e.g. yes they all say that the industry was doing badly etc. (1-3)

**Level 2:** Developed statements supported by relevant knowledge making links between the sources, e.g. Source C gives reasons for the decline that is shown in Source A, Source B shows how destitute miners were and this is referred to in Source C etc. (4-6)

**Level 3:** Developed explanation supported by selected

knowledge and making comparisons between sources.  
e.g. Source C was written in the 1960s when the full picture was clear, it supports the statistical evidence of Source A and the contemporary evidence of Source B etc. (7-8)

3. *Study Sources D, E and F. How useful are Sources D, E and F in helping you to understand why the general strike began in May 1926?* (10)

**Target:** Analysis and evaluation of sources to assess utility AO2

**Level 1:** Simple statements supported by some knowledge taking the sources at face value, e.g. Source D is not useful, Source E gives the reason for the strike, Source F shows that the TUC members were in favour etc. (1-3)

**Level 2:** Developed statements supported by relevant knowledge, evaluating strengths and weaknesses of the sources or setting the sources in context, e.g. Source D shows how the strike was being portrayed, which made it more likely, Source E shows the demands of the miners and the fact that no one was listening, Source F shows that there was overwhelming support for the miners etc. (4-6)

**Level 3:** Developed explanation supported by selected knowledge and making positive use of the Nature, Origin and Purpose of the sources, e.g. D and E both show that there was going to be confrontation and that the government was not going to back down, F shows total commitment on the part of the TUC, it was the refusal to compromise that brought about the strike etc. (7-10)

4. *Study Sources G and H. Use Sources G and H, and your own knowledge, to explain how the government tried to defeat the general strike.* (12)

- Target: Analysis and interpretation of sources/recall of knowledge AO1/AO2**
- Level 1:** Simple statements supported by some knowledge taking the sources at face value, e.g. the poster is against the strike and the newspaper article is as well etc. **(1-3)**
- Level 2:** Developed statements supported by relevant knowledge making inferences from the sources, or setting the sources in context, e.g. both sources show the way that the government was trying to portray the strike, OMS, use of army, volunteers etc. **(4-6)**
- Level 3:** Developed explanation supported by selected knowledge and making positive use of the sources, e.g. H and I both show that the press was being mobilised to fight the strike, the government also set up its own paper, edited by Winston Churchill, the OMS kept supplies moving and provided a transport system, army kept roads open etc. **(7-10)**
- Level: 4** Sustained argument supported by precisely selected knowledge and using the sources as evidence, e.g. Baldwin had deliberately set out to provoke a showdown on his terms and was using every tactic that he could to get the public on his side and break the will of the TUC, by accusing them of treason, he managed to undermine their position, he used the period of the subsidy to stockpile coal, organise the OMS and position the army etc. **(11-12)**

5. *Study all the sources. 'The main reason for the collapse of the general strike was the government's use of propaganda against the TUC.'*

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

**Target:** Analysis and interpretation of events/recall of knowledge AO1/AO3

**Level 1:** Simple statements supported by some knowledge taking the sources at face value supporting or opposing the view, e.g. lists methods used to fight the strike, OMS, army, newspapers etc. (1-3)

**Level 2:** Developed statements supported by relevant knowledge making inferences from the sources, supporting or opposing the view, e.g. details of methods, OMS 70,000 people, army used for convoys, armoured cars not tanks, police, escorts for buses, navy off major ports, coal stockpiled etc. (4-6)

**Level 3:** Developed explanation supported by selected knowledge and making positive use of the sources to support or oppose the view, e.g. propaganda clearly important, decision to go for the TUC on legal grounds very significant as shown by G, H and IJ, I rather weak in comparison, TUC on the defensive etc. (7-11)

**Level 4:** Sustained argument supported by precisely selected knowledge and using the sources as evidence to assess the view and compare it with alternative views, e.g. propaganda very important, but also the governments other preparations, which meant that a long strike could have been withstood etc. (12-14)