Specimen answer plus commentary

The following student response is intended to illustrate approaches to assessment. This response has not been completed under timed examination conditions. It is not intended to be viewed as a ‘model’ answer and the marking has not been subject to the usual standardisation process.

Paper 1B Section A (Germany): Specimen Questions 01–06

01 How does Interpretation B differ from Interpretation A about Hitler’s appeal to the people of Germany? Explain your answer using Interpretations A and B. [4 marks]

Student response

Interpretation B focuses on Hitler’s appeal to the world economic crisis and unemployed workers. This was after the Wall Street crash and depression in which 6 million people were affected for unemployment which may have been why people were looking for a solution. This is different from interpretation A as it is focused more on Hitler’s looks and how he appeals to the public through propaganda. It is based on the image he gives off and how people create an opinion of him from his propaganda such as radio, posters and newspapers. Also, the creation of the Swastika and the SS parades would give off Hitler’s image as appealing to the public making him seem more powerful.

Commentary – Level 2

Developed inferences but unbalanced, and more developed is evident on Interpretation B. It is worth noting that knowledge is not credited in this question. Answer achieves bottom of a Level 2.

02 Why might the authors of Interpretations A and B have a different interpretation about Hitler’s appeal to the people of Germany? Explain your answer using interpretations A and B and your contextual knowledge. [4 marks]

Student response

Albert Speer (the author of interpretation A) was one of Hitler’s chief architects and one of his greatest allies. At the time this was written, Albert Speer was in prison after the war. He talks of Hitler being “hypnotic and persuasive” leading us to think that his interpretation of Hitler’s appeal is that he takes control of people’s actions through the use of his persuasive speeches. The reason his interpretation may be this way, is to suggest how Hitler was the cause of his actions, in order to take some of the blame off of himself being put in prison.

However, Victor Schiff (author of interpretation B) was a German journalist and socialist who worked as the Paris correspondent for an American paper. Therefore his opinion of Hitler’s appeal would be more widespread as, being a journalist, he gets he German publics opinion as well as Hitler’s supporters. As he was left wing, Schiff would be more interested in the workers opinion of Hitler and therefore highly dislike the Nazis, meaning his interpretation of Hitler’s appeal to the public is much more negative due to being left wing.

Commentary – Level 2

Developed analysis of the provenance of Interpretations A and B and therefore reaches the top of Level 2.
03 Which interpretation do you find more convincing about Hitler’s appeal to the people of Germany? Explain your answer using Interpretations A and B and your contextual knowledge.

[8 marks]

Student response

Firstly, Interpretation B is convincing because it is written by a journalist in a newspaper meaning they can exaggerate the facts but not manipulate them completely. It tells you why the country was appealed, after the economic crisis where 6 million people where unemployed and looking for a leader.

Interpretation A is quite convincing because it talks about him causing enthusiasm in the crowd and being “hypnotic” we know this is true because this is one of the many reasons that he became so popular. But the fact that it was written in prison makes it less convincing because he was there due to Hitler’s actions so it suggests it’s not all completely truthful.

I personally think that interpretation B is more convincing because it shows what events Hitler exploited and how his support changed, whereas interpretation A shows that Hitler was only popular when he had something to talk about which is usually when something bad happened.

Commentary – Level 2

Knowledge is only applied with reference to Interpretation B. The response about Interpretation A is based on provenance which is not credited in this question. Therefore a comparison of A and B is not achieved. Answer reaches the bottom of Level 2.

04 Describe two problems faced by Kaiser Wilhelm II’s governments in ruling Germany up to 1914.

[4 marks]

Student response

One of the problems The Reichstag (Kaiser Wilhelm II’s Government) faced was the fact that they were left wing. This was a problem as the Kaiser and Chancellor were both right wing meaning they wanted capitalism and the Reichstag wanted equality. Kaiser Wilhelm’s desire was “Weltpolitik” meaning he wanted to be a major player in World affairs; this would be a problem for the left wing Reichstag as they would be against this. Having conflict inside a monarchy would highly affect the country as they may become weak and vulnerable.

Another problem faced by the Kaiser and his Government was Trade unions. These were a problem as by 1914 membership had reached 3.3 million. Trade unions were workers who went on strike/ raised the Governments awareness of their upset about wages, working conditions or working hours. This would have caused a problem for the Kaiser as at the time he was aiming for rearmament, meaning without enough workers he could not build enough battle ships/ weaponry to remain a strong monarchy.

Commentary – Level 2

Knowledge and understanding of two problems are exemplified and therefore reaches the top of a Level 2.
05 In what ways were the lives of women in Germany affected by Nazi social policies? Explain your answer. [8 marks]

Student response

Lives of women were affected highly by Nazi policies. Firstly, women's life were affected by having to look like a typical "Aryan" woman. This meant that women were not expected to wear make-up or trousers, the dying of hair was forbidden along with perms. Only flat shoes were expected to be worn and they were discouraged from slimming as it was considered bad for childbirth. This may have affected women negatively as they would not be able to have much freedom in what they look like, however many women wore clothes inside these boundaries anyway so it would not have been a huge change.

Another change to women's life that affected them was the Honour cross. This was rewarded to women for having children which may have encouraged people to have more children to be respected by the community. A bronze medal was awarded for having 4 children, a silver medal for having 6 and a gold medal was awarded for having 8 children. This was a large propaganda campaign by the Nazis to bribe women into having children in order to achieve a bigger population for Germany. This may have also pressured the women into having babies so much that "one woman who could not have a child kidnapped a baby". This shows how the propaganda encouraged them so much that women would take extreme measures to be praised by the Nazis.

Additionally, another thing that affected women's lives was the Lebensborn programme which allowed specially chosen unmarried children to donate a baby to the Fuhrer by becoming pregnant by racially pure men. Usually becoming pregnant by SS officers, women were sent to camps in order to have babies for the Fuhrer. This highly affected woman's lives as their rights were taken off of them and their actions would have become highly restricted. Overall, women's lives were highly affected by Nazi policies in a way that changed the way they looked and their enthusiasm to have children.

Commentary – Level 4

Developed explanations of more than one change and therefore reaches the top of a Level 3.

06 Which of the following was the more important reason why the Weimar Republic was in danger in the years 1919–1923:

- economic problems
- political unrest?

Explain your answer with reference to both reasons. [12 marks]

Student response

Economic problems haunted Germany as it came through WW1, the major powers agreed, without consulting them that Germany had to pay reparations to the allies for the damage caused by the war. They owed £6.6 billion to the allies. This would have put Weimar in danger because Germany already had to repair all of their land and buildings that were destroyed in the war. The treaty of Versailles basically ruined the country. When the treaty was enforced was not allowed army vehicles, submarines, aircraft with the navy law only allowing to own 6 battle ships. This left Weimar very restricted in their defence, they were an easy target and very vulnerable. Another economic failure was hyperinflation,
When Germany could no longer pay for reparations, France sent troops to an area called the Ruhr in Germany which was very industrial and produced iron. Germans in the area went on strike to stop the French getting these resources, which meant that Germany had even less money as they were no longer making money from that areas supplies. To sort this out Germany and to print more and more money but the more German money that was printed the more worthless it became. People couldn’t afford to buy necessities and became angry with the Government. This would of put Weimar in danger because not only are other countries uprising and angry at them but the German citizens were as well. People took desperate measures, for example burning money instead of wood and using money it as wallpaper because it was cheaper than buying the real thing. This is why people starting looking towards the Nazis because the government weren’t solving any of their problems.

On the other hand political unrest also caused Weimar to be in danger. A journalist named Dr Wolfgang Putsch started a rebellion called The Kapp Putsch. He was an odd man who had beliefs about how Ebert was in the wrong and he had caused the humiliation from the Treaty of Versailles. General Luttwitz led 5,000 Freikorps into Berlin and tried to take it over with Kapp as the chancellor. Ebert called for a general strike with Kapps military army failing to follow the officers lead because they refused to fire at their own. The rebellion ended and Kapp fled Berlin. This was a dangerous time for Weimar as it showed how easy it was to stage a riot or rebellion, with no proper defence or alliance with each other. The Spartacists league was formed in 1915 by Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht. They had a lot of political beliefs against the right-wing including the Freikorps and believed that the social democrats would not serve the best interests of the German working people. They decided to rise up and attempted to organise a general strike but it completely failed. Ebert and the government left Berlin for the safety of Weimar. Luxemburg and Liebknecht were arrested during the riot but sadly shot on the way to prison. This event was bad for Weimar because it made German citizens question the ways the government was handling the war.

In conclusion I think that the most important reason why Weimar was in danger was because of the country’s economic issues. Germany was in a massive amount of debt which they only fully paid back to the UK in 2010, so Weimar did not have enough money to go around. This would have led to riots with people never being pleased with their decisions. It also left a bad image on Germany as the association stayed with them, with them only paying the full amount of money not that long ago the actions taken 90 years before stuck with them. In political unrest, although German citizens were affected it was always sorted out quite quickly. Overall during the time 1919-1923 times for Germany would have been bad no matter what, even if they had an amazing leader. There would never be any real alliance between all Germans because of the difference between two sides of the country. Left-wing and Right-wing, with everyone having different beliefs it would of been hard to ever make a joint decision on what would be affective. The threat to Germany wasn’t just the fight on the outside with the other countries it was the constant battle on the inside with itself too.

Commentary – Level 4

The answer contains developed explanations of both bullets. The judgement shows some complex understanding but is unbalanced, so answer achieves the middle of a Level 4. It is worth noting that this was not completed in timed conditions, so the answer is longer than could reasonably be expected in examination conditions.