

History

Answers and commentaries

GCSE (8145)

1AC Russia, 1995-1945: Tsardom and communism

Marked answers from students for questions from the June 2022 exams. Supporting commentary is provided to help you understand how marks are awarded and how students can improve performance.

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Answers and Commentaries

Please note that these responses have been reproduced exactly as they were written by the student.

This resource is to be used alongside the GCSE History 1AC Russia, 1894 – 1945: Tsardom and communism June 2022 Question paper and inserts.

Question 1

How does **interpretation B** differ from **Interpretation A** about Rasputin?

Explain your answer based on what it says in **Interpretations A** and **B**.

[4 marks]

Mark scheme

Target	Analyse individual interpretations (AO4a) Analyse how interpretations of a key feature of a period differ (AO4b)	
Level 2:	Developed analysis of interpretation to explain differences based on their content	3-4
	Students may progress from a simple analysis of interpretation with extended reasoning to explain the differences.	
	For example, Interpretation A says that Rasputin's advice was trusted so much that he could influence the way the Tsarina governed Russia whereas Interpretation B says that he was only valued for his healing powers, not for his political opinions.	
Level 1:	Simple analysis of interpretations(s) identify differences based on their content	1-2
	Students are likely to identify relevant features in each interpretation(s).	
	For example, Interpretation A says that Rasputin had large influence on the Tsarina whereas Interpretation B says that he was not very important to her.	
	Students either submit no evidence of fail to address the question	0

Student responses

Response A

Interpretation A explores the idea that Rasputin was a significant impact on this Tsarina's life as she did as she "asked him for advice not only on personal matters but also on politics." This shows that Tsarina greatly depended on Rasputin. However, interpretation B suggests that "Rasputin was a small part of her life" and didn't impact her life at all.

This is a Level 1 response

This simple response identifies relevant differences using the content of both interpretations. As there is no direct comparison made between the two interpretations, the response remains at Level 1.

Response B

Interpretation A says Rasputin had quite a lot of influence over the Tsarina and had a hand in political matters, whereas interpretation B counters that stating Rasputin was a small part of her life and had no political power. Interpretation B also has more focus on the Tsarina and Rasputin's relationship other than his influence on the decision for Russia.

This is a Level 2 response

This developed response uses the content of both interpretations to explain a difference between the interpretations about Rasputin. It therefore credited at Level 2, at the higher mark in the level.

Student responses

Response A

The author of interpretation A is Alexander Kerensky, a key figure in the February revolution so would obviously write critically of the tsar and the tsarina as he overthrew them. Interpretation B on the other hand is a close friend of this tsarina and so would be biased towards her. They would also have experienced a lot more interactions between the Tsarina and Rasputin compared to Kerensky who was just a lawyer at the time.

This is a Level 1 response

This simple response identifies relevant reasons for difference based on the provenance of both interpretations. It is credited at Level 1.

Response B

The Tsarina's close friend wouldn't want her to be viewed as a weak leader and had insight to what she had actually been like. As well as this, she had been present at meetings which may've meant she had agreed with the autocratic society and didn't want to make the way they ran it look bad. Because she was the Tsarina's close friend, she wouldn't want her to be remembered as easily influenced and may've tried to play off Rasputin's affect on her.

In interpretation A, it focuses more on criticizing the Tsarina's and Rasputin because Kerensky had helped in the 1917 revolution and didn't agree with the autocratic society. Because of this, Kerensky may have made Rasputin look worse to emphasize how unprofessional the Tsarina's was considering she let herself be influenced by a lower class worker. Kerensky had wanted change and becoming leader of the Provisional Government would have helped him see what ruling Russia was like and how bad the Royals had been at it.

This is a Level 2 response

This developed response uses the provenance of both interpretations to explain why they differ. It shows extended reasoning which is contextually valid to explain the motivations of each author, and is therefore credited at Level 2, at the higher mark in the level.

Question 3

Which interpretation gives the more convincing opinion about Rasputin?

Explain your answer based on your contextual knowledge and what it says in **Interpretations A** and **B**.

[8 marks]

Mark scheme

Target	Analyse individual interpretation (AO4a) Evaluate interpretations and make substantiated judgements in the context of historical events studied (AO4d)	
Level 4:	Complex evaluation of interpretation with sustained judgement based on contextual knowledge/understanding	7-8
	Extends Level 3.	
	Students may progress from a developed evaluation of interpretations by analysis of the relationship between the interpretations supported by factual knowledge and understanding.	
	For example, the interpretations reflect both sides of the debate about Rasputin's influence. No one knows how far his opinions on government were taken seriously by the Romanovs. It is accepted that jealousy of his influence was a motive for his murder. Similarly, the view that the Romanovs were under his influence damaged their reputation even further and so Rasputin can be seen as a factor in the revolution of March 1917.	
Level 3:	Developed evaluation of both interpretations based on contextual Knowledge/understanding	5-6
	Extends Level 2.	
	Answers may assert one interpretation is more/less convincing.	
	Students may progress from a simple evaluation of the interpretations by extended reasoning supported by factual knowledge and understanding.	
	For example, Interpretation A is more convincing because many aristocrats were alarmed by the influence of Rasputin over the Tsarina as she ran the country once the Tsar went to war. It was felt that she followed Rasputin's advice about appointing ministers. A group of nobles assassinated Rasputin in 1916. Interpretation B is convincing because it says he was not a saint. He had a reputation for drinking too much.	

Level 2: Simple evaluation of one interpretation based on contextual knowledge/understanding 3-4

There may be undeveloped comment about the other interpretation.

Students may progress from a basic analysis of interpretations to simple evaluation, supported with factual knowledge and understanding.

For example, Interpretation B is convincing because Rasputin seemed to have healing power. The Romanovs valued him because he seemed to be the only person that could help with their only son's blood disease.

Level 1: Basic analysis of interpretation(s) based on contextual knowledge/understanding 1-2

Answers show understanding/support for one/both interpretation(s), but the case is made by assertion/recognition agreement.

For example, Interpretation A is convincing because there were rumours that Rasputin and the Tsarina were having an affair.

Students either submit no evidence or fail to address the question 0

Student responses

Response A

Interpretation A is somewhat convincing as it says 'in the Tsar's absence, the government was entirely under the control of Tsarina and Rasputin'. This is convincing because the Tsar did leave Russia to fight in the war, leaving Tsarina but only in charge of important places in Russia. It is also convincing as they did have control over the government to during their leading time, the Tsarina and Rasputin made changes to chief ministers many times, showing their power

Interpretation B is somewhat convincing as it says Rasputin that 'made the Romanovs unpopular'. This is convincing as Rasputin had a reputation of being a strange man who was drunk and a womanizer. One aristocracy were outraged to find that the Tsar thought it saw fit for him to leave this man in charge of their country. It is also somewhat convincing due to this statement; Because of all the government official changes, chaos was evoked. Many people began to believe Tsarina was a German spy who was working with Rasputin to undermine the war effort.

Both interpretations are somewhat convincing as 'A' presents Rasputin through the eyes of politics, showing how he took control whereas 'B' presents this too, but possibly how which was taking advantage of the Tsarina.

This is a Level 2 response

This simple response addresses both interpretations. It uses some knowledge to expand upon relevant aspects of each interpretation, with the treatment of B slightly stronger. A summative judgement is present. Evaluation of each interpretation remains implicit and undeveloped, meaning that the response remains in Level 2, at the higher mark in the level.

Response B

Interpretation a is convincing because it betrays Rasputin as a man who influenced the decisions of Tsarina. This is known to be true from the accounts of aristocrats who resented him due to his influence on the way Tsarina ruled the country while the Tsar was away fighting in world war 1. The resentment was so extreme that the aristocrat named Yusupov assassinated Rasputin by shooting him. Additionally, it is also true that this Tsarina was influenced by him because she believed he was a mystic with healing powers who could heal her son, Alexei, from his blood condition, hoemophilia. Since she believed he had healing powers, she also trusted his opinion on political matters like said in the interpretation

Interpretation B is partially convincing as it says Rasputin made the Romanovs unpopular which is true as they were posters and other propaganda portraying him as controlling this and Tsarina. Rasputin was a known womanizer and having someone like that in control of the Romanovs made them seem either oblivious or ignorant both affecting their reputation. There were also rumors of the Tsarina having an affair with him, which damaged her dignity and reputation, as well as the reputation of the family. However, interpretation B must be treated with caution because it suggests that Rasputin had no say in political matters at all, which is false as proven by accounts of the aristocrats as well as the resentment of him.

Overall interpretation A is more convincing because it states that Rasputin was controlling the Tsarina which has been proven to be true, whereas interpretation B states things that are known to be false.

This is a Level 3 response

This developed response addresses both interpretations, showing developed evaluation, supported with a range of contextual knowledge. A judgement is attempted in the final lines, but this is asserted rather than substantiated. As such, the response remains in Level 3, at the higher mark in the level.

Response C

Interpretation A is a convenient is convincing because the Tsarina did work closely with Rasputin after the sale left to Take personal command of the army. She asked his opinion and followed his instructions on who to appoint as ministers, leading to many ministers being appointed and show and sacked in a short period of time. It is also convincing when it says the government was “entirely under” their control. The Tsar had established a Duma but had created a State council and council of Advisors, as well as introduced new electoral laws that severely undermined and maintained the power of the elected Duma. The Interpretation is also convincing as the Tsarina had a lot of faith in Rasputin after he supposedly healed her son Alexei from hoemophilia.

Interpretation B is also convincing as it describes how Rasputin's affiliation with the Tsar and his family made them very “unpopular”. Rasputin was a peasant monk and an alcoholic and womanizer, and his behaviour shocked the aristocracy. In addition, his influence over the government and closeness to the Tsar made them frustrated because it reduced the Tsar’s reliance on the council of Nobility and decreased their role in society. This alienated the aristocracy, and they lost faith in the Tsarina even recommending that the Tsar’s abdication in 1916. The interpretation, like interpretation A, also mentions how the Tsarina believed that Rasputin had healing powers after saving the to the throne, which is accurate.

However, interpretation A is more convincing as it mentions how Rasputin did have an influence over the politics at the time, and the way the Tsarina and Rasputin controlled much of the government. Interpretation B is less convincing as it doesn't mention all the ways the Tsar and the Tsarina made themselves unpopular, pinning all the blame on Rasputin. It doesn't mention how the Tsarina's ruling led to bad rumours about German heritage and suspicious that she was helping the Germans in the war, for example.

This is a Level 4 response

This complex response shows substantiated evaluation of both interpretations using contextual knowledge and understanding. A substantiated judgement in the final lines shows complex thinking, arguing that A is more convincing due to the more comprehensive account it provides. It is credited at Level 4.

Question 4

Describe two problems faced by the people of the USSR during the Terror

[4 marks]

Mark scheme

Target	Demonstrate knowledge of the key features and characteristics of the periods studied (AO1a) Demonstrate understanding of the key features and characteristics of the periods studied (AO1b)	
Level 2:	Answers demonstrated knowledge and understanding	3-4
	Students may progress from a simple demonstration of knowledge about the issue identified with extended reasoning supported by understanding of, for example, the ways in which events were problematic.	
	These might include, one problem was that Stalin used 'Show Trials' to remove his political opponents. The accused person was always found to be guilty. The ranks of officers in the Red Army were purged so extensively that it was weakened in the long term.	
	Another problem was that Stalin extended the purges from senior politicians to affect all levels of society. Every family was affected by the unpredictable arrests and torture. This meant the whole population lived in fear.	
Level 1:	Answers demonstrate knowledge	1-2
	Students demonstrate relevant knowledge about the issue(s) identified which might be related to, for example, people were arrested for being anti Soviet and tortured so that they confessed to fake charges. People were executed or sent to labour camps indefinitely.	
	Students either submit no evidence or fail to address the question	0

Student responses

Response A

During the terror, lots of people were losing family; this is because anyone suspected of being against Stalin has was sent to the gulag and even killed.

Futhermore, there are large food shortages. Stalin had taken are farms in order to grow crops for the trade rather than eating, so many peasants starved.

This is a Level 1 response

This response shows knowledge of a problem faced by the people of the USSR people during the Terror (food shortages). It is credited at Level 1.

Response B

One problem faced by the people of the USSR during the Terror was the constant fear of punishment. This is because over 20 million people were sent to concentration camps/ gulags for menial crimes or potentially due to their ethnicity or education level.

Another problem would be the constant worry of death. This is because Stalin's purges were quite random with different sectors being purged almost randomly. An example is in education, or in the military where 25,000 military leaders were killed in 1937.

This is a Level 2 response

The response identifies two problems, expanding on them with supporting examples. It therefore shows knowledge and understanding, and is credited at Level 2, at the top of the level.

Question 5

In what ways were the lives of people in the USSR affected by Second World War?

Explain your answer.

[8 marks]

Mark scheme

Target Explain and analyse historical events and periods studied using second-order concepts (AO2:4)
Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the key features and characteristics of the period studied (AO1:4)

Level 4: **Complex explanation of changes** **7-8**
Answers demonstrated a range of accurate and detailed knowledge and understanding that is relevant to the question

Extends Level 3.

Students may progress from a developed explanation of changes by explanation of the complexities of change arising from differences such as time, group, social and/or economic impact, supported by knowledge and understanding.

For example, the people of the USSR suffered great losses and hardship during the Second World War but they achieved a decisive victory over the Nazi invasion of their country. Many Soviet people were set free from Nazi rule. This strengthened loyalty to Stalin and the Communist party amongst the Soviet people.

Level 3:	<p>Developed explanation of changes</p> <p>Answers demonstrates a range of accurate knowledge and understanding that is relevant to the question</p>	5-6
	<p>Extends Level 2</p> <p>Students may progress from a simple explanation by developed reasoning considering two or more of the identified changes, supporting them by factual knowledge and understanding.</p> <p>In addition to a Level 2 response, students make additional developed point(s).</p> <p>For example, factory workers were affected when Stalin ordered that factories and animals were to be moved to the East to protect them from the advancing German army. This caused tremendous hardship because people had to work for long hours in poor conditions with little food. However, their efforts meant that Soviet soldiers had the resources they needed to defeat the German army.</p> <p>For example, some nationalities living in within the USSR were affected because Stalin suspected that they may be Nazi sympathisers who hoped to be liberated form Soviet rule. To prevent this, Stalin ordered that they were to be forcibly relocated to remote parts of the USSR, far away from Western Europe.</p>	
Level 2:	<p>Simple explanation of change</p> <p>Answer demonstrated specific knowledge and understanding that is relevant to the question</p>	3-4
	<p>Students may progress from a basic explanation of change by using simple reasoning and supporting it with factual knowledge and understanding which might be related, for example, to one of the identified changes.</p> <p>For example, people living in Stalingrad were affected by the battle in Stalingrad. Stalin did not let civilians evacuate and many died of starvation because food supplies were cut off. Soviet civilians, including women, fought alongside the army to defend the city.</p>	
Level 1:	<p>Basic explanation of changes(s)</p> <p>Answer demonstrated basic knowledge and understanding that is relevant to the question</p>	1-2
	<p>Students identify change(s), which are relevant to the question. Explanation at this level is likely to be implicit or by assertion.</p> <p>For example, millions of Soviet people died because the USSR was invaded by Nazi Germany. Towns, cities and farmland were destroyed by the fighting.</p>	
	<p>Students either submit no evidence of fail to address the question</p>	0

Student responses

Response A

One way was that many people were conscripted for the Great Patriotic War in the 1940s. This war was another time they were fighting against Germany but this time it was the Nazis. As many people who were conscripted were peasants, this meant that there were less people to harvest crops which were essential for exports and to feed the starving population. The Germans also contributed to this starvation as they “scorched the earth” by setting fire to farms or salting soil which made the earth infertile and unable to grow anything.

Another way this affected the people in the USSR was because it was detrimental to the economy. The USSR’s economy was already quite unsuccessful but now they also had to fund a war which was very expensive.

This is a Level 2 response

This simple response provides a simple explanation of one change (conscription), with some further broad references to economic impacts. Further explanation is attempted, though remains implicit. The response is therefore credited at Level 2.

Response B

People in the USSR's lives were greatly affected by the Second World War as many were conscripted to fight in the Great Patriotic War while those who didn't were forced to work in par slavery on a rotation of under a third of what an American worker received.

Beginning in 1941 with the Nazi invasion of the USSR, breaking the truce established by the Molotov Ribbentrop pact in 1939, the lives of people in the USSR were immediately negatively affected by the Nazi occupations of Belarus, Ukraine and West Russia where the SS began to target groups considered genetically inferior. This affected many people's lives or they were killed or joined resistance movements against German supply lines, encouraged by Stalin's propaganda.

People's lives who worked in factories were also affected as industry was relocated behind the Ural mountains to prevent the Germans capturing them, meaning people had to move with them. Those working in factories were also forced to work as slaves for the state with rations being barely enough to survive, again affecting people in the USSR's lives.

Finally many people were conscripted into the Red Army, as many as over 5 million, causing issues with food production and adding to the USSR's estimated death toll of 10 million, greatly negatively affecting people's lives.

This is a Level 3 response

The response addresses more than one change (conscription, targeting of groups, factories), and shows developed explanation supported with contextual knowledge and understanding throughout. It is therefore credited at Level 3, at the higher mark in the level.

Response C

Different people's lives were affected in different ways.

For factory workers in cities, quality of life dropped severely as the huge pressure to deliver the equipment required resulted in horrendous working conditions. The average work week rose to over 70 hours a week and at the same time rations fell dramatically to only 1/5 of the British nation. This led to a dramatic cut in quality of life as accidents and malnourishment became more common due to horrendous conditions. (If you didn't "do your part"; "the great patriotic war" then your rations would even be taken away to encourage more people to help).

For civilians in Stalingrad life got a lot worse during the battle of Stalingrad from 1942 to 1943. In this time, the people of the city were worked hard to defend it, including the brutal introduction of the "not a step back" policy (prevented people from fleeing and retreating) and the encouragement of women and untrained civilians to become snipers and shoot at the enemy. This not only lowered the quality of life for million a of people as they were forced to remain in an active war zone, but also resulted in the loss of over 4 million lives in Stalingrad alone.

Also farmers on kolkhozi were negatively impacted as Stalin's "scorched earth" policy meant that millions were forced to destroy their land and crops and flee to the Urals for safety. This led to poor quality of life and despair from the people as they were forced to abandon their home, communities and livelihoods, leaving them stranded.

This is a Level 4 response

This response addresses more than one change, showing substantiated explanation for throughout. Complex explanation is also shown, as the response differentiates the changes through explanation of how different groups were affected in different ways.

Question 6

Which of the following saw more change as a result of Lenin's policies:

- the way Russia was rule and controlled
- the economy of Russia?

Explain your answer with reference to **both** bullet points.

[12 marks]

Mark scheme

Target **Explain and analyse historical events and periods studied using second-order concepts (AO2:6)**
Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the key features and characteristics of the period studied (AO1:6)

Examiners are reminded that AO1 and AO2 regarded as interdependent and when deciding on a level should be considered together. When establishing a mark within a level, examiners should reward three marks for strong performance in both assessment objectives; two marks at be achieved by strong performance in wither AO1 or AO2 and one mark should be rewarded for weak performance within the level in both assessment objectives.

Level 4: **Complex explanation of both bullets leading to a sustained judgement** **10-12**
Answer demonstrated a range of accurate and detailed knowledge and understanding that is relevant to the question

Extends Level 3

Students may progress form a developed explanation of change by complex explanation of the relationship between causes supports by factual knowledge and understanding and arriving at a sustained judgement.

For example, during Lenin's rule, the economy saw more change because there was a complete change in direction in 1921 when the NEP reintroduced capitalism in some sections of society instead of communism. This was only possible because they way Russia was ruled and controlled remained consistent. To ensure he stayed in control Lenin forcibly closed down the Constituent Assembly and ruled by issuing decrees that were passed by the Congress of Soviets. The decrees banned opposition parties and non-Bolshevik newspapers and this created a political dictatorship controlled by Lenin.

Student responses

Response A

The way that Russia was controlled changed under Lenin. He established a secret police who suppressed opposition and maintained control through executions, mass arrests and forced confessions. This was a big change as, prior to Lenin taking charge after storming the winter palace in November 1918, opposition groups were common. Other parties soon as the social revolutionaries and the Mensheviks were banned. Lenin's policies resulted in an unchallenged single party running the country, a change that the economy of Russia changed due to Lenin's policy of War Communism for 1918-21 the Cheka forcibly requisitioned grain off peasants who protested by burning their supplies. This had a negative effect on the economy as it led to massive food shortages and famine. However, this change was limited by the introduction of the NEP after the Kronstadt mutiny served as a wake-up call for Lenin. The NEP reversed many of war communism's changes.

Overall. The biggest changed that Lenin's policies had was to how Russia was controlled. The economic changes were dramatic at first but quickly lessened by the NEP, where the brutal suppression of opposition was a dramatic changes from earlier years where revolutions were very frequent and the fact that the Bolsheviks remained in charge for many decades shows this damage was much greater and more impactful.

This is a Level 3 response

The response addresses both bullet points, with developed explanation shown for both. A judgement is attempted, though further substantiation is required to progress. The response is therefore credited at Level 3.

Response B

Lenin's policy had an impact on the way Russia was ruled and controlled. This was immediately shown in the constituent Assembly where the Bolsheviks get 170 seats but the socialist revolutionaries get 350 seats. Lenin did not expect this so he ordered the Red Guard to end it and kill anyone who objected the Bolsheviks being in power. This shows how Lenin can be ruthless in order to gain power and he even had the CHEKA made of 200,000 men. They killed any protesters and it is rumoured they killed the Tsar and his family. This shows how Lenin's policy made Russia to be ruled in a harsh way if required. This had a long term impact of removing any opposition and any remain opponents would be scared to speak up.

Lenin's economic policy also created a huge change within Russia. It started with war on communism which included Prodravvyorstka where peasants had to give all of their surplus produce the government to feed the Red Army. However, this made them unhappy and after the Kronstadt mutiny where 2,000 people were executed the New Economic Policy was introduced. This allowed the peasants to keep 50% of their produce, allowed factories with less than 20 workers to be handed back to their owners and nepmen could create small businesses. This gained the peasants and small trades support as they became wealthier, Russian even increased grain production from 37 to 77 million tonnes from 1921 to 1926. This shows how the economic policies helped to hugely increase production and create a better quality of life for Russians. his had a long term impact of the rapidly growing the economy of Russia as even coal increased from 9 to 27 million tonnes from 1921 to 1926.

Overall, I think that economic policies had more change on Russia as it was shown with the Bolshevik party. Many hated the New Economic Policy so in 1921 on third of the party was expelled in a purge. The way Russia was ruled changed less as before Lenin was the Tsar who had the Okhrana and the operated in a similar way to the CHEKA so there was less change.

This is a Level 4 response

This complex response addresses both bullet points, developing explanations for both with reference to impressive supporting contextual knowledge and understanding. A substantiated judgement is arrived at in the final paragraph, which reasons that the system of rule had not changed as much as economy.

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