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# GCSE

# HISTORY

8145/1: Understanding the modern world  
Report on the Examination

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8145  
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**8145/1A****Section A: Period studies****A/A: America, 1840–1895: Expansion and consolidation****General**

In the second year of the GCSE specification, students continued to impress examiners with the general quality of their work. It was clear that they had a sound understanding of the topic. Most students demonstrated knowledge of the period and an understanding of the main concepts through the key assessment objectives. The evidence contained in students' responses suggested they had taken time to plan and structure their answers and that they had considered carefully the interpretations provided for use with Questions 1, 2 and 3. Some appeared more confident than others in constructing answers to these questions.

**Question 1**

In Question 1 the majority of students successfully understood and were able to explain differences about attitudes towards the Plains Indians from the interpretations provided. Most responses that were able to draw out and explain an important valid difference were placed in Level 2, though less effective answers were characterised by an over-reliance on the interpretations, with many students copying indiscriminately. Quotations, when over-used, tended to hinder students' answers rather than support them. The least effective answers were filled with quotations and little development of the key differences between the interpretations. There was a tendency for some students to write unnecessarily long answers, losing sight of the marks available for this question. Answers placed in Level 1 tended to identify the features of each interpretation without making any clear direct comparison and with simple inferences. Some answers or parts thereof were not credited because they considered the provenance of the interpretations.

At Level 2 students were typically able to make comparisons between the interpretations, indicating that Interpretation A was critical of the Indians' character and behaviour and suggesting that brutal treatment of them was to be encouraged, whereas Interpretation B saw that the Indians had several admirable qualities and deserved a more sensitive, respectful treatment. There was some accurate understanding of the language used. The more effective answers were straightforward and cogent; it was clear what each interpretation was suggesting about the Plains Indians and students deployed high level vocabulary to make clear the different opinions provided in the two interpretations.

Following a review of the question papers, teacher feedback and consultation, it is intended to alter the format of this question in 2020 to help students more clearly focus their knowledge and understanding. In 2019 the following was set:

'Read **Interpretations A** and **B** in the Interpretations Booklet. How does **Interpretation B** differ from **Interpretation A** about the Plains Indians? Explain your answer using **Interpretations A** and **B**.'

Using the topic set in 2019, the format of the question in 2020 will read:

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‘Read **Interpretations A** and **B** in the Interpretations Booklet. How does **Interpretation B** differ from **Interpretation A** about the Plains Indians? Explain your answer based on what it says in **Interpretations A** and **B**.’

### Question 2

The less effective responses to this question made simple statements and undeveloped assertions such as ‘the author is biased’ or ‘the author was married to an Indian’. Such comments were often not supported by evidence. Less effective answers stated the differences in the times of writing without extending the answer to suggest why or how that might have an impact on the nature of interpretation. Many students focused on the author of Interpretation A being a soldier who may well have had experience of the Indians in battle, while the author of Interpretation B was married to a Sioux woman. While this was an obvious difference, it may not have been the most profitable to highlight. A few students went so far as to try to develop an argument about how the time period in which both interpretations were written might have influenced the views they contained, but these responses were rare. As with Question 1, some answers were too long considering the marks available for this question. Many less effective answers remained focused on how rather than why the interpretations were different.

The more effective answers to this question were able to relate their contextual knowledge to the authors of the interpretations and use this to explain why they might have had different interpretations about the Plains Indians. Answers which considered the possible role or purpose of the two authors were often successful, pointing out that the author of Interpretation A may well have been consciously or unconsciously supporting or enabling Manifest Destiny and the will of the white American government. Some impressive contextual knowledge was displayed in these answers and those students who suggested that by the time Interpretation B was written, the Indians may have, to some extent, been assimilated into white America were rewarded appropriately.

### Question 3

A range of responses were produced in answer to this question. Some chose to dwell on the provenance of the two interpretations and they were usually placed in Level 1, or in exceptional cases, Level 2. Some examiners pointed out that some responses would have been more appropriate as an answer to Question 2 or even Question 1. In answers of this sort, students frequently relied less on contextual knowledge about the attitudes towards and treatment of the Plains Indians, but looked to the motives of the authors and asserted that the interpretation with the least ‘bias’ was the more convincing.

The most obvious differentiator between answers to this question lay in the ability to identify and address the overall argument raised by each interpretation. Many adopted a line-by-line approach which was unlikely to allow the student to show any overall understanding and often diverted the focus of the answer away from the demands of the question. There were also many references to the provenance of the interpretations intermingled with context used to test for accuracy.

However, there were many answers which displayed sound relevant contextual knowledge and which debated and judged which Interpretation was the more convincing. Some students presented a strong case for just one Interpretation being the more convincing, often with excellent contextual knowledge, but answers that took this approach could only achieve a mark at the top of Level 2 at most. This was because to achieve the higher levels, it was necessary to address both interpretations and demonstrate developed thinking in the response. There were a small number of

very effective answers from students who made links between the two interpretations. Some excellent knowledge was often deployed on this question. Higher-level responses were frequently characterised by reference to the specifics of the interpretations to effectively discuss the government's reservation policy, the Indians' nomadic and sustainable lifestyle and the inevitable clash of cultures as the white government became more determined to achieve a 'Manifest Destiny'. Some students included a substantiated judgement about the more convincing interpretation. Examiners were not looking for a particular Interpretation to be favoured in students' answers, so long as a sensible and substantiated argument was made.

Following a review of the question papers, teacher feedback and consultation, it is intended to alter the format of this question in 2020 to help students more clearly focus their knowledge and understanding. In 2019 the following was set:

'Which interpretation do you find more convincing about the Plains Indians? Explain your answer using **Interpretations A** and **B** and your contextual knowledge.'

Using the topic set in 2019, the format of the question in 2020 will read:

'Which interpretation gives the more convincing opinion about the Plains Indians? Explain your answer based on your contextual knowledge and what it says in **Interpretations A** and **B**.'

#### **Question 4**

While this question was accessible at all ability ranges, it should be stated that a number of students did not address the question. Less effective responses were limited to discussions of the Mormon attitude towards polygamy. It was noted that many students wrote too much in their answers.

Nevertheless, the majority of students appeared to be concise in their answers and related their description to the demands of the question. There were many Level 2 responses. Most cited the Mormons' independent stance towards the American government, their practice of polygamy, their attitudes towards slaves and Native Americans and self-regulation in the development of Utah. The structure of the answers was exemplary in many cases with responses clearly signposted, including such as 'firstly' and 'secondly' and being divided and organised into two clear and distinct paragraphs.

#### **Question 5**

In answering this question, the majority of students drew on the experiences of the African-American population in both the southern and northern states. Less effective responses considered only how their lives were affected by the American Civil War, making simple points that were often accompanied by accurate, if undeveloped, knowledge.

There were many effective answers to this question with several developed aspects. Many identified the effects of the Civil War on distinct groups of American people and, in so doing, they gained a mark within Level 3. There were lots of very effective answers that defined the various groups and were able to differentiate between some positive impacts as well as the obvious negative impacts. More effective answers showed a basic understanding of the wider experiences, for example on, plantation owners, factory owners in the north, women and white American soldiers.

The most successful responses were marked by clear discussions of the impact of the Civil War on different demographic groups with supported references to their changed circumstances and status. It was encouraging to see students working at this level using historical facts and figures, where appropriate, to support their points.

### **Question 6**

The less effective answers to this question were descriptive and often overly narrative. Many Level 1 responses and lower Level 2 responses did not show sufficient knowledge of the reasons for the successful settlement of the Plains by 1895. The less effective answers lacked structure and did not demonstrate a clear line of argument. It is important in this Period study that students deploy second order concepts such as causation and consequence as well as the ability to make substantiated judgements.

On the other hand, many students were able to show off some secure knowledge in formulating responses to this question. Most of these were able to develop a balanced and detailed assessment to show the impact of the homesteaders and the defeat of the Plains Indians. Arguments for both were often well done, though some Level 2 responses were typified by a preoccupation with either the homesteaders or the defeat of the Plains Indians. Some students at this level provided superficial and assertive statements lacking precise historical support.

More effective answers were able to secure a mid or top Level 3 mark with both aspects discussed in detail so that supporting knowledge was clear, accurate and appropriate. The Level 4 responses often maintained relevant reference to both reasons throughout the answer and cogently articulated a well-supported judgement. It was noticeable that the more successful answers were coherent and structured in clearly defined paragraphs. Such answers went much further with a range of knowledge that was particularly impressive. Perceptive judgements made complex links between the reasons for the successful settlement of the Plains. Answers assessed the influence of the white American government through their pursuit of Manifest Destiny on both the Homesteaders and the defeat of the Plains Indians.

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## A/B: Germany, 1890–1945: Democracy and dictatorship

### General

In the second year of the new GCSE specification, the general quality of the work produced by the students was good and it was evident that they had understood the topic well. Most students demonstrated knowledge of the period and an understanding of the main concepts through the key assessment objectives. There was evidence that students had taken time to consider and plan their responses and there was some careful reading of the interpretations in Questions 1, 2 and 3. Some appeared more confident than others in assembling their answers to these questions.

### Question 1

Examiners noted in the less effective answers that students typically neglected to develop their points and merely repeated what the Interpretations said. On the one hand, there were some students who made simple, abbreviated and descriptive observations; on the other, examiners noted that some students who wrote unnecessarily long answers. All students should be mindful of the number of marks available for this question. Some answers failed to gain any credit because they discussed the provenance of the interpretations.

However, in answering Question 1 the majority of students successfully comprehended and explained differences about the Stresemann era from these interpretations. Many responses reached a high Level 2 when they were able to draw out and explain an important valid difference about the era. At Level 2 responses were typically able to make comparisons between the interpretations and in particular to recognise that whereas Interpretation A focused on the positive aspects of the era, Interpretation B was critical of the extent of improvement. There was some sensible understanding of specific words and phrases.

Following a review of the question papers, teacher feedback and consultation, it is intended to alter the format of this question in 2020 to help students more clearly focus their knowledge and understanding. In 2019 the following was set:

‘Read **Interpretations A** and **B** in the Interpretations Booklet. How does **Interpretation B** differ from **Interpretation A** about the Stresemann era (1924–1929)? Explain your answer using **Interpretations A** and **B**.’

Using the topic set in 2019, the format of the question in 2020 will read:

‘Read **Interpretations A** and **B** in the Interpretations Booklet. How does **Interpretation B** differ from **Interpretation A** about the Stresemann era (1924–1929)? Explain your answer based on what it says in **Interpretations A** and **B**.’

### Question 2

Many less effective answers remained focused on how rather than why the interpretations were different. Examiners reported that there were some answers which showed that students seemed to have confused Questions 1 and 2; as a result of which they wrote a considerable amount about the content of the interpretations, rather than the reasons why they differed. As in question 1, considering the marks available, the answers were sometimes too lengthy.

The more effective answers were able to relate their contextual knowledge to the authors of the interpretations and use this to explain why they might have differed about their views of the Stresemann era. A few students went so far as to try to develop an argument about how the time period in which both memoirs were written might have influenced the views they contained, but these responses were rare. The more effective answers on provenance were usually focused on the role or location of the authors. These were successful in relating Interpretation B to Schacht's influence as an economist and his role within the Nazi Party. Responses tended to be less successful in developing a motive or purpose for Interpretation A with many failing to get beyond 'he was from America so not biased', although some students connected the positivity of the interpretation with the American loans. Students who made simple assertions usually did not go on to develop their answer to explain why the authors might then possess different interpretations regarding the Stresemann era. Overall, this question was answered well by most students who understood what was expected of them and discussed the provenance of the sources in enough detail to be rewarded with a Level 2 mark.

### **Question 3**

This question produced a wide range of responses. Weaker responses provided brief comments about the American loans. Other answers focused generally on the provenance, which impaired their ability to gain credit usually beyond Level 1, as it did last year. Examiners noted that some responses were more appropriate as an answer to Question 2 or even Question 1. Answers at this level frequently relied upon contextual knowledge but looked to the motives of the authors and stated that the interpretation with the less 'bias' was the more convincing.

The most obvious differentiator between answers to this question lay in the ability to identify and address the overall argument raised by each interpretation. Many adopted a line-by-line approach. This was unlikely to allow the student to show any overall understanding and often diverted the focus of the answer away from the demands of the question. There were many references to the provenance of the interpretations intermingled with context used to test for accuracy. A notable shortfall of some answers was an inability to offer appropriate contextual knowledge to evaluate Interpretation B. Most answers which offered contextual knowledge to evaluate Interpretation A focused on the benefits which the loans provided and chose to reference the entertainment including films and cabaret.

However, there were many answers with relevant contextual knowledge which debated and judged which was the more convincing. Some responses which presented a strong case for just one Interpretation being the more convincing and supported this with good contextual knowledge were limited to a mark at the top of Level 2 at most. This was because to achieve the higher levels, it was necessary to address both interpretations and demonstrate developed thinking in the response..

There were a small number of successful answers from students who made links between the two interpretations, for example discussing the extent at which Germany had recovered under Stresemann. There was some good knowledge used on this question. Higher-level responses often were achieved by reference to the specifics of the interpretations to discuss effectively the social and economic impacts of the era, looking at positives and negatives. Some students included substantiated judgements about the more convincing interpretation, noting that the interpretations shared a focus more on employment and businesses. Examiners were not looking for a particular Interpretation to be favoured in answers so long as a sensible and supported argument was made.

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Following a review of the question papers, teacher feedback and consultation, it is intended to alter the format of this question in 2020 to help students more clearly focus their knowledge and understanding. In 2019 the following was set:

‘Which interpretation do you find more convincing about the Stresemann era (1924–1929)? Explain your answer using **Interpretations A** and **B** and your contextual knowledge.’

Using the topic set in 2019, the format of the question in 2020 will read:

‘Which interpretation gives the more convincing opinion about the Stresemann era (1924–1929)? Explain your answer based on your contextual knowledge and what it says in **Interpretations A** and **B**.’

#### Question 4

This question was accessible at all ability ranges, but it was noted that many students wrote too much. Many answers partly or wholly referred to hyperinflation and other aspects of the early 1920s such as the Munich Putsch and were confused by the term ‘Depression’ specified in the question. In terms of answers that did adhere to the Depression, a significant proportion of answers did not demonstrate knowledge of specific problems affecting the German government. Typically, though, such answers offered generalised references to the Wall Street Crash.

Most answers that referred to specific events had secure but limited contextual knowledge. There were many Level 2 responses. Most cited unemployment and support for extremist parties as the main problems. Answers of this sort offered a simple and limited understanding of the impact of the Depression, typically referring to the rate of unemployment or the ways Hitler used the Depression in order to gain support. Answers tended to offer a simple understanding of the need to pay back the loans. Only rarely did answers show an understanding of the failures of the Weimar government to deal with the Depression, such as Brüning’s efforts to raise taxes.

Nevertheless, many students who were concise in their answers and related their description to the demands of the question achieved level 2 marks. The structure of the answers was exemplary in many cases as well. They were clearly signposted, such as, ‘firstly’ and ‘secondly’.

#### Question 5

In answering the question at Levels 1 and 2 a significant number of students tried to consider the lives of young people with reference to education and Hitler Youth activities, but they were not always secure on other aspects of young people’s lives or the policies involved. There were a few answers that wanted to discuss the lives of women and general statements about the treatment of Jews, but these references were usually outside the scope of the question. Most students were able to provide an answer which simply identified and explained the effects of policies on young people and gain a mark at Level 2. Answers that successfully identified educational policies almost always described types of lessons the young people studied. Several responses did, however, make some reference to specific effects, such as the opposition to the policies from groups like the Edelweiss Pirates. Many answers mentioned young people’s lives, regarding the Hitler Youth and education, but mostly described the experiences without explaining how they were linked to Nazi policies.

There were many excellent answers to this question with several developed aspects. The answers which secured Levels 3 and 4 made specific reference to identified groups and how policies

affected them and gave specific details. There were lots of very effective answers that defined the various effects and some were able to differentiate between some positive impacts as well as the clearly negative ones.

### **Question 6**

The less effective answers to this question were descriptive and often overly narrative. Many Level 1 responses and lower Level 2 responses did not show sufficient knowledge of the ways in which Hitler was able to keep control. Some students tried to use propaganda from before 1933, although this was not relevant to the question. Answers at Level 1 and 2 often made simple or generalised comments about Hitler's speeches or the use of fear, which lacked links to the question or specific examples. The less effective answers did not show a clear structure or a clear line of argument. It is important in this Period study that students deploy second order concepts such as causation and consequence as well as the ability to make substantiated judgements.

Generally, weaker answers lacked an understanding of how actions would lead to Hitler securing control. Many of the answers dealt in an often rambling fashion with the actions of the SS and Gestapo. Some also wrote about Hitler's actions in the 1920s, for which no credit could be awarded as the question focused on keeping control after 1933. Many answers offered a description and a narrative or a combined description/narrative of Nazi history between 1933 and 1939 rather than a focused response to the question.

Many answers addressed the question and the bullet points with the argument that propaganda was the main factor to Hitler keeping control. Such answers demonstrated an awareness that propaganda came in many forms – in newspapers, radio, marches and display, as well as more subtly through economic and social policy. Most answers at Level 2 could explain how fear and violence would lead to certain behaviours on the part of German citizens. However, relevant specific knowledge about the use of fear was lacking by some students. Fewer answers mentioned the Night of the Long Knives and Kristallnacht as examples of the use of fear and violence.

However, at Levels 3 and 4 most students were able to show off good knowledge in answering this question. They were able to develop a balanced assessment to show Hitler's strategies for keeping control. Answers explained how different aspects of violence and propaganda would work to secure control. Thus it was observed how the absence of any alternative opinion made it harder to resist Nazi ideas; violence was used to remove and silence opposition, and these actions complemented each other to ensure control. Although less common, several answers rightly dealt with keeping control through to 1945. More effective answers were able to secure a mid or top Level 3 mark with both bullet points discussed in detail. The Level 4 responses often maintained relevant reference to both points throughout the answer and clearly made a well-supported judgement often, though not solely, based on how the features of Nazi control operated together. It was noticeable that the more effective answers were well structured.

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## A/C: Russia, 1894–1945: Tsardom and communism

### General

In the second year of the new GCSE specification, the general quality of the work produced by the students was good and it was evident that they had understood the topic well. Most students demonstrated knowledge of the period and an understanding of the main concepts through the key assessment objectives. There was evidence that students had taken time to plan and structure their answers and there was some careful reading of the interpretations in Questions 1, 2 and 3. Some appeared more confident than others in assembling their answers to these questions..

### Question 1

The majority of students successfully comprehended and explained differences about Lenin's government from these interpretations. The majority of responses reached a high Level 1, or low Level 2 by being able to draw out and explain an important valid difference. At Level 2, responses were able to make comparisons between the interpretations, particularly to recognise that Interpretation A was different because in A the Government's role was vital as it was protecting the workers and war industries, whereas in Interpretation B the focus was on the impact of policies on the peasants and villages which led to famine and hardship. There was some good understanding shown of specific words and phrases. However, there were relatively few answers which gained top Level 2, due in part to the fact that there was a tendency to quote directly from the interpretations. There was a tendency for some students to write unnecessarily long answers, particularly losing sight of the marks available for this question.

Following a review of the question papers, teacher feedback and consultation, it is intended to alter the format of this question in 2020 to help students more clearly focus their knowledge and understanding. In 2019 the following was set:

'Read **Interpretations A** and **B** in the Interpretations Booklet. How does **Interpretation B** differ from **Interpretation A** about Lenin's Government? Explain your answer using **Interpretations A** and **B**.'

Using the topic set in 2019, the format of the question in 2020 will read:

'Read **Interpretations A** and **B** in the Interpretations Booklet. How does **Interpretation B** differ from **Interpretation A** about Lenin's Government? Explain your answer based on what it says in **Interpretations A** and **B**.'

### Question 2

As in Question 1, at times, the answers were too lengthy for the marks available. There were too many answers that were placed in Level 1 as they merely acknowledged the potential for bias. It was suggested as it was written by a supporter or opponent; therefore, this must explain why it was positive or negative. However, the information provided about both authors afforded the opportunity to explore their purpose. There were still some less effective answers that remained focused on how, rather than why, the interpretations were different. A few answers tried to develop an argument about how the time period or the country in which their work was published might influence the views they contained. This was particularly evident for interpretation B, with answers exploring how democratic America would have viewed Russia at that time.

The more effective answers were able to relate their contextual knowledge to the authors of the interpretations to explain why they had different interpretations about Lenin's Government. The more effective answers using the provenance were usually focused on the role of the authors. More students' answers stressed Serge's role in the Communist Party rather than exploring how Goldman's decision to leave Russia might inform her opinion. There were a number of excellent answers that considered the purpose of the authors which, in the case of Serge, was to justify the actions of Lenin's Government.

### Question 3

This question produced a wide range of responses. Weaker responses provided narrative answers and sometimes dwelled on the provenance, which impaired their ability to gain credit usually beyond Level 1, as it did last year. Examiners noted that some responses were more appropriate as an answer to Question 2 or even Question 1. Frequently, students relied upon contextual knowledge but looked to the motives of the authors and stated that the interpretation with the less 'bias' was the more convincing.

The most obvious differentiator between answers to this question lay in the ability to identify and address the overall argument raised by each interpretation. Many students adopted a line-by-line approach. This was unlikely to allow them to show any overall understanding and often diverted the focus of the answer away from the demands of the question. There were also many references to the provenance of the interpretations intermingled with context used to test for accuracy.

There were, however, some answers with sound contextual knowledge which debated and judged which was the more convincing. Some responses which presented a strong case for just one Interpretation being the more convincing and supported this with good contextual knowledge were limited to a mark at the top of Level 2 at most. This was because to achieve the higher levels, it was necessary to address both interpretations and demonstrate developed thinking in the response. There were a small number of very effective answers from students who made links between the two interpretations.

There was some good knowledge used by students in response to this question. There were a number of answers that referenced the various decrees issued by Lenin's new Government following the closing of the Constituent assembly, the Kronstadt uprising and the role of the Cheka. Examiners also saw reference to details of both the challenges wrought by the Civil War that ensued, following the signing of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk as well as the 1921 famine and the reasons for the introduction of the NEP. Some students included substantiated judgements about the more convincing interpretation. Examiners were not looking for a particular Interpretation to be favoured in answers, so long as a sensible and supported argument was made.

Following a review of the question papers, teacher feedback and consultation, it is intended to alter the format of this question in 2020 to help students more clearly focus their knowledge and understanding. In 2019 the following was set:

'Which interpretation do you find more convincing about Lenin's Government? Explain your answer using **Interpretations A** and **B** and your contextual knowledge.'

Using the topic set in 2019, the format of the question in 2020 will read:

'Which interpretation gives the more convincing opinion about Lenin's Government? Explain your answer based on your contextual knowledge and what it says in **Interpretations A** and **B**.'

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#### Question 4

This question was accessible at all ability ranges. The majority of students were concise in their answers and related their description to the demands of the question. There were many Level 2 responses. The structure of the answers was exemplary in many cases as well. They were clearly signposted by using terms such as ‘firstly’ and ‘secondly’. Most cited the failure of Trotsky to attend Lenin’s funeral as well as the decision not to publish Lenin’s Testament as being key factors. There were some strong knowledgeable answers which referenced Stalin’s role as General Secretary as being instrumental in gaining support, as well as impressive knowledge regarding the political wrangling between the left and right wings of the party with clear awareness of the debates surrounding the continuation of the policy of NEP, as well as permanent revolution. There were some answers which incorrectly focused upon the Purges or explored collectivisation and industrialisation.

#### Question 5

This question saw a significant number of students trying to consider both the positive and negative impact of Stalin’s policies, but there tended to be a focus on the latter. Those that balanced their answers with a good range of examples of positive impacts were able to access the higher levels.

Answers described the impact of collectivisation as primarily negative, with many focusing on the Kulaks as a class in particular. The impact of the famine was well supported with statistics and plenty of regional examples cited. More effective answers acknowledged the positive benefits of the Kolkhozes, opportunities for women and the introduction of tractors, although they were few and far between. Some answers explored the impact of industrialisation and cited Stalin’s speech of 1931 when he declared a determination to catch up with the west within ten years. Gosplan and the five year plans with examples of which industries were the focus were understood, although sometimes students did not directly link these to their impact on the people of Russia. Many answers were able to offer good examples of positive effects as well as negative ones.

Big projects such as the Moscow Metro, Dnieper Dam and showpiece cities such as Magnitogorsk were featured in many answers. The Stakhanov movement was used to illustrate the incentives offered and the sacrifice required. Libraries, education and crèches to allow women to work were also mentioned in more effective answers. A few answers drifted onto describing the cult of personality and the use of propaganda that did not always relate back to the effect on Russian people. A few answers incorrectly believed that the Trans-Siberian railway was built in the 1930s and there were a small number of generalised answers that could have been plausible responses to describing the impact of changes under the Tsar at the start of the century. These were rewarded at Level 1. There were some answers which focused wholly upon the impact of the purges and could gain little credit. Examiners were pleased to see many very effective answers that defined the various groups and were able to differentiate between some positives as well as the obvious negatives.

#### Question 6

The less effective answers to this question were descriptive and often overly narrative. Some answers began in 1894 and presented a chronological narrative. Even with the extra time available in the examination, this approach was not always successful. Many Level 1 responses and lower Level 2 responses did not show sufficient understanding of the terms ‘economic’ and ‘political’, sometimes muddling the two. Less effective answers lacked structure and did not display a clear

line of argument. Some students tried to link economic and political factors, although not always convincingly. Answers at Level 1 and 2 often made only basic and generalised comments about the economic impact of World War One; these lacked links to the question and lacked specific examples. It is important in this Period study that students deploy second order concepts such as causation and consequence as well as the ability to make substantiated judgements.

However, many students were able to show off some pleasing knowledge in answering this question. Most were able to develop a balanced assessment to show how both economic and political reasons were important in explaining the fall of the Tsar. The argument and knowledge used in support of the aspect of political reasons was better done than that which examiners saw to support the economic reasons. However, when students answers relevantly considered economic reasons, they were often excellent. The way in which economic problems developed throughout Tsar Nicholas's reign was well understood in more effective answers; there was some excellent detail outlining the work of Witte and Stolypin in trying, with varying levels of success, to modernise both industry and agriculture. The challenges faced by both ministers in undertaking this work were well evidenced. A strong feature of answers was the impact that the war had in exposing the lack of economic progress that had occurred. At the top level, answers were able to reconcile how this was exacerbated by the Tsar's absence at the front and the growth of political opposition to his autocratic style of governing.

More effective answers were able to secure a mid or top Level 3 mark with both economic and political reasons discussed in detail. The Level 4 responses often maintained relevant reference to both reasons throughout the answer and clearly made a well-supported judgement. It was noticeable that the more effective answers were well structured. These answers went much further with a range of knowledge that was impressive. The answers which considered political reasons in detail were able to discuss the role of the 1905 revolution and the developing role of the Duma as well as the various political parties that emerged in this period. Most answers claimed that the Tsar's decision to go to the Front was instrumental as he left his German wife in charge, heavily influenced by Rasputin. More effective answers were able to explain, in addition, the economic impact of that decision. Some answers were muddled and assumed that the Tsar resigned in October as a result of the actions of the Bolsheviks. These answers focused upon the return of Lenin, April Theses, July days and Kornilov affair.

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## A/D: America, 1920–1973: Opportunity and inequality

### General

In the second year of the new GCSE specification, the general quality of the work produced by the students was good and it was evident that they had understood the topic well. Most students demonstrated knowledge of the period and an understanding of the main concepts through the key assessment objectives. There was evidence that students had taken time to plan and structure their answers and there was some careful reading of the interpretations in Questions 1, 2 and 3. Some appeared more confident than others in assembling their answers to the differing demands of these questions.

### Question 1

In Question 1, the majority of students successfully comprehended and explained differences in the success or failure of Prohibition from these interpretations. The majority of responses reached a high Level 2, if they were able to draw out and explain an important valid difference. At Level 2, responses were typically able to make comparisons between the interpretations, particularly to recognise that Interpretation A stressed the positive impact on society of Prohibition whereas Interpretation B emphasised its failure. There was some good understanding demonstrated of specific words and phrases. There was a tendency for some students to write unnecessarily long answers, losing sight of the marks available for this question.

There were some answers which gained Level 1 and these tended to identify the features of each interpretation without any clear direct comparison and with over-reliance on the wording of the interpretations. Some responses failed to gain any credit by looking at the provenance of the interpretations.

Following a review of the question papers, teacher feedback and consultation, it is intended to alter the format of this question in 2020 to help students more clearly focus their knowledge and understanding. In 2019 the following was set:

‘Read **Interpretations A** and **B** in the Interpretations Booklet. How does **Interpretation B** differ from **Interpretation A** about Prohibition? Explain your answer using **Interpretations A** and **B**.’  
Using the topic set in 2019, the format of the question in 2020 will read:

‘Read **Interpretations A** and **B** in the Interpretations Booklet. How does Interpretation B differ from Interpretation A about Prohibition? Explain your answer based on what it says in **Interpretations A** and **B**.’

### Question 2

Answers which achieved Level 1 referred solely to the time period in which both Interpretations were written. As in Question 1, at times, the answers were too lengthy considering the marks available for this question. Many less effective answers did seem to remain focused on how, rather than why, the interpretations were different.

The more effective answers were able to relate their contextual knowledge to the authors of the interpretations and use this to explain why they had different views about Prohibition. The more

effective answers on provenance were usually focused on the role of the authors. There were some successful answers relating to Interpretation A which argued that the author would want to maintain his popularity in America and would not criticise its laws. The majority of Level 2 answers on Interpretation B focused on the author's perceived need to support her husband and, as First Lady, would not want laws to be ignored. Some also referred to her wide knowledge of society through her role as a high-profile campaigner.

### Question 3

This question produced a wide range of responses. Weaker responses described in very brief and simple terms 'Bootleggers', 'Speakeasies', and 'Moonshine'. These answers were worthy of credit at Level 2. However, they sometimes focused on the provenance which impaired their ability to gain credit. Examiners noted that some responses were more appropriate as answers to Question 2 or even Question 1. They looked to the motives of the authors and stated that the Interpretation with the less 'bias' was the more convincing.

The most obvious differentiator between answers to this question lay in the ability to identify and address the overall argument raised by each interpretation. Many adopted a line-by-line approach. This was unlikely to allow the student to show any overall understanding and often diverted the focus of the answer away from the demands of the question.

There were, however, many answers with sound contextual knowledge which debated and judged which was the more convincing. Some responses which presented a strong case for just one Interpretation being the more convincing and supported this with good contextual knowledge were limited to a mark at the top of Level 2 at most. This was because it was necessary to address both interpretations and demonstrate developed thinking in the response. There were a small number of very effective answers from students who made links between the two interpretations. There was some good knowledge used by students in response to this Question. Higher-level responses were often achieved by reference to the specifics of the interpretations. For example, in relation to Interpretation B, students wrote about the rise of organised crime and corruption within the police and government leading to the negative impact of Prohibition. For Interpretation A, there was sensible detail on the scale of bootlegging, speakeasies and the making and sale of moonshine, about which the author would not have been aware. Some students included substantiated judgements about which they considered to be the more convincing interpretation. Examiners were not looking for a particular Interpretation to be favoured in answers so long as a sensible and supported argument was made.

Following a review of the question papers, teacher feedback and consultation, it is intended to alter the format of this question in 2020 to help students more clearly focus their knowledge and understanding. In 2019 the following was set:

'Which interpretation do you find more convincing about Prohibition? Explain your answer using **Interpretations A and B** and your contextual knowledge.'

Using the topic set in 2019, the format of the question in 2020 will read:

'Which interpretation gives the more convincing opinion about Prohibition? Explain your answer based on your contextual knowledge and what it says in **Interpretations A and B.**'

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#### Question 4

Less effective answers failed to address specifically the decades in the question. They meandered through general references to the KKK, poverty, poor housing and a lack of jobs. Credit, where possible for these answers, remained in Level 1. Answers which described in much detail the bus boycott and its result usually remained in Level 1 because this question was about problems rather than their solutions.

Encouragingly, there were many Level 2 marks awarded for this question. These were often clearly signposted 'firstly' and 'secondly.' The most effective answers focused on the ways that events were problematic rather than specific events themselves. For example, there were some references to segregation on buses, moving on, crucially, to explain how the bus boycott did not entirely solve the problem and were followed by the Freedom Rides. Similarly, some admirable responses referred to segregation in education and the Brown v Topeka case explaining that the problem was not entirely solved because some states refused to enforce the law, for example, Arkansas, in the case of Little Rock. The success of these answers was based on always keeping the question in mind.

#### Question 5

In answering this question a number of students failed to pay attention to the phrase 'after the Second World War'. They wrote about popular culture in the 1920s with details on jazz, Flappers and the introduction of the radio. A few wrote about the economic boom in this decade. No credit could be given for this knowledge. Less effective answers also sometimes showed a lack of understanding of the term 'popular culture'. They focused instead on campaigns for women's rights, Civil Rights or, occasionally, on McCarthyism.

Relevant answers could obtain marks within Level 2 for mentioning 'Rock and Roll' and the birth of the 'Teenager'. These answers included brief reference to independence and rebellion along with the unpopularity of the new music with some older Americans.

There were some excellent answers with developed explanations. At Levels 3 and 4, these went beyond description of features and towards an evaluation of the impact of the changes on peoples' lives. For example, some answers showed how the growth of television enabled businesses to target advertising directly at specific groups of Americans, reigniting the American dream and economic opportunity. Some stronger responses explained how different groups were affected by the changes in popular culture; for example, how teenagers had a greater influence on society and culture, sometimes at the expense of older citizens.

#### Question 6

Answers at Levels 1 and 2 discussed, in simple and general terms, comments about jobs which involved making weapons in World War 2 and about jobs provided by agencies in the New Deal. In the less effective answers one or two of the Alphabet Agencies were mentioned but with erroneous or confused information. Answers needed some specific knowledge to reach Level 2, such as the selling of warships, weapons and planes to Britain and France during the War and the building of schools, roads and dams during the New Deal. Less effective answers were descriptive, especially with regard to the New Deal and did not relate information to the American economy. It is important in this Period study that students deploy second order concepts such as causation and consequence as well as the ability to make substantiated judgements.

However, many students did show good knowledge in answering this question. Some wrote in impressive detail about the work of Agencies and Government in the New Deal in the matter of job creation. They considered the impact of this on the economy. Such a consideration was necessary for Level 3, though a long list of Agencies was not. Similarly, the most effective answers also explained how, in the War, the development of new industries to meet war contracts, created a lasting economic foundation for the future. The prosperity of farmers was mentioned relevantly by some students.

More effective answers were able to secure a mid or top Level 3 mark with both aspects of the question discussed in detail. Level 4 responses often maintained relevant references to both aspects throughout the answer, making clear and well-supported judgements. Thus, substantiated judgements made at the end of the answer or in the main body of the response often resulted in an answer reaching Level 4. Responses could achieve a level 4 mark even if the preference for one bullet point over the other was only slightly indicated as substantiated judgements for or against either could reach this level.

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**8145/1B****Section B: Wider world depth studies****B/A: Conflict and tension - First World War, 1894–1918****Question 1**

In this question, students were able to deploy some good knowledge about the consequences of the Bolsheviks taking power and it allowed them to demonstrate a good understanding. Valid inferences from the material in the source allowed students to construct good arguments which explained the source's critical nature.

In addition to making use of the source's title many students used the symbolism within the source to demonstrate criticism of the Bolsheviks. This was principally through a focus on either the apparent violence shown against the defenceless Russia figure or the idea of the Bolsheviks taking a German 'bribe' of gold. Such answers which relied on a simple analysis of the source were rewarded at Level 1. Many answers made use of specific contextual knowledge about events in 1917 and were rewarded at Level 2. While some students tried to apply a knowledge of Brest-Litovsk to do this, most appreciated why Britain would be concerned about or critical of the Bolsheviks taking Russia out of the war.

**Question 2**

This question saw the majority of students applying appropriate skills to two sources, although of the two sources, Source B tended to be favoured in terms of the weight of analysis which was supplied. Most students analysed the sources using a combination of content and provenance but the former was more prevalent in higher level answers. Although unusual as a total answer, some students' answers contained comment about the features of military technology and tactics which were not contained in the source; this was often done in a way that was not relevant to the question. Students would thus make better use of their time in explaining the positive contribution that the sources could make in relation to the focus of the question.

Answers which contained a generalised evaluation of provenance and/or a basic understanding of either source were rewarded at Level 1. Some students suggested a basic explanation of the newspaper's motives in relation to source B and commented on the war experience status of the author in C. Many responses, often rewarded at Level 2, went beyond identification of features by simply explaining, for example, the type of barrage, the obvious use of aircraft or the implied improved technology represented by Whippets. Students extended this type of general contextual knowledge with more specific information to earn at least Level 3 marks. For source B, this might have been via detailed explanations of how a creeping barrage worked with comparisons to other types of barrage, the coordinated use of different technologies or the development and changed scope for the use of aircraft in battle. With regard to source C, this mainly tended to take the form of more detailed expositions of how tanks had actually developed with regard to speed or reliability. However, some students erroneously challenged the validity of the source since the description of Whippets did not tally with their knowledge of tanks in the First World War.

To evaluate the provenance of Source B, students frequently developed potential motives for publishing the article. With regard to Source C, students alighted on the 'expert' nature of the author. There were some excellent Level 4 answers which combined a high level of historical

context, content and provenance analysis, referred to both sources and came to a substantiated judgement.

### **Question 3**

In general, it was clear that students had a good understanding of the nature of the Schlieffen Plan. Most answers revealed an understanding of the Plan by reference to its rationale, objectives, implementation or weaknesses. Some responses covered many of these aspects; however, this was sometimes at the expense of development towards the focus of the question, which concerned subsequent ‘problems’. This resulted in some very comprehensive explanations of the Plan that were anchored in Level 2 because the consequences of the Plan were not directly considered.

Level 1 answers tended to display basic knowledge of the Schlieffen Plan. This frequently involved stating it was designed to avoid Germany fighting a war on two fronts, or that it was the Kaiser’s war plan. Many students went beyond this to reach Level 2 by explaining its timescale and geography, the issues arising from the Treaty of London or the quick Russian mobilisation. Many students tended to finish their answer by saying the result was that the Plan failed. Some students did state some potential consequences of the Plan’s use but didn’t link them to their previous points; for example, trench warfare was mentioned often as an almost stand-alone point.

Students who were able to address the question’s focus of the ‘problems’ caused by the Schlieffen Plan successfully advanced to at least Level 3. This was frequently done by considering the consequences of the split in German forces across two fronts, the entry of Britain into the war, the failure to secure a quick victory or the fact that the Allies prevented a war of movement. Several students enthusiastically presented a number of consequences which went beyond the two aspects with developed reasoning required for a Level 4 mark.

### **Question 4**

Many students were able to deploy some very extensive knowledge relating to both the Alliance System and other potential causes of the First World War. In marking this question, examiners worked with a very broad definition of the Alliance system. Answers at Level 2 were characterised by an explanation of how potential causes actually led to war. In other words, it was a common shortcoming of answers that many tended to settle for claiming that the potential cause created tension or humiliation without going on to say how it caused war, even though this would have required little extra development on their part.

Level 1 responses tended to give a generalised explanation of how the alliances might work, the alliances in existence at the time and their membership, or they identified other potential causes of war such as Imperialism. Level 2 answers simply explained why the alliances were formed and how their secrecy and the division of Europe created tension. Other answers commonly seen at this level explained the potential causes, such as Imperialism, Nationalism, the arms races, the Kaiser’s policies and aims, the Balkans and the Sarajevo assassination. Many students structured their answers so that they demonstrated a good knowledge of at least one of these potential causes, if not more. However, it was often the case that students seemed to sacrifice the opportunity for developing a reason for the war by trying to cover too many other potential causes superficially.

Level 3 responses explained with evidence and understanding how possible causes might lead to war. It was common to see this done in relation the Alliance System through explaining how

Austria felt confident in being aggressive towards Serbia. Other points which were developed included the arms race, which created stockpiles of weapons that populations were keen to use. Students working at Level 3 ably explained the contribution to the outbreak of war of the Kaiser, who sought military solutions after being rebuffed at conferences, and Russia which was ready for war following her Bosnia back down. Other valid points that were frequently seen in students' answers were that Britain and France felt that Germany had to be stopped sooner rather than later, Austria was looking for an excuse to remove Serbia or that the Schlieffen Plan gave Germany the confidence to wage war.

There were some impressive Level 4 answers in which judgements were made using the overlapping nature of many of the potential causes to show how they contributed to and reinforced each other. For example, the Triple Alliance gave Austria confidence to declare war on Serbia, Balkan tensions gave her a reason to want Serbia destroyed but also fostered the Sarajevo assassination. Other students made use of long and short term comparisons to demonstrate complex thinking.

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**B/B: Conflict and tension - the inter-war years, 1918–1939****Question 1**

This question proved straightforward and accessible. Practically all students were able to make a basic inference from the characterisation of the figures about why the source supported the return of the Saar to Germany. Answers that were based solely on the family relationship between the figures, the symbolism of the broken chain and the strapline were rewarded at Level 1. There was widespread evidence of accurate contextual knowledge about the industrial value of the Saar, the League of Nations mandate and the plebiscite in 1935 and these responses were rewarded at Level 2. Many students were also able to give an evaluation of the provenance as a route to Level 2. They correctly used the date to argue that the poster was a form of propaganda designed to celebrate the restoration of German pride after the harsh terms of the Treaty of Versailles.

**Question 2**

This question saw the majority of students coping well with the demands of two sources and it allowed them to demonstrate sound and appropriate source evaluation skills. Most students attempted analysis of the sources using both content and provenance. Many students argued at length that Source B was limited and not useful because it only focused on the successes of the League of Nations and did not mention its failures in the 1930s. Such analysis was not creditworthy because the source was dated 1925 and therefore could not be expected to have any knowledge of the 1930s. Students who have considerable knowledge about the focus of the question – the League of Nations – all too often took the opportunity to dismiss sources which do not mention something they know about. Students would be better advised in their answers to explore the positive contribution that a source could make to an understanding of the specific focus of the question.

At Level 1, credit was given for a basic understanding of either source. Students writing at this level found both sources accessible and were able to achieve marks by basic references to the work of the League Nations or failure of the League to censure Japan in 1932. Less effective answers were characterised by a description of the content of both sources and basic inferences about utility. Students' answers at Level 2 included simple, relevant contextual knowledge of the achievements of the League, such as the resolution of the Aaland Islands issue and a general outline of a particular aspect of the Manchurian Crisis. There was widespread understanding that since the provenance of Source B was a recruitment pamphlet to gain more supporters, the content was inevitably positive. Such analysis was rewarded at Level 2.

When answers reached Level 3, it was usually because they included an evaluation of both sources and made explicit reference to utility. Answers which used developed knowledge of the political, social and economic achievements of the League of Nations to assess the utility of Source B also secured a mark at Level 3. Another route to Level 3 was the use of knowledge about the powers and structure of the League to contextualise Source C and explain how the cartoon was a judgment on the League's ineffectiveness as a peacekeeping force. The most effective answers referred to the invasion of Manchuria, the findings of the Lytton report and the implications of Japan's defiance, given that they were a permanent member of the Council.

Students who reached Level 3 using provenance often did so by recognising that the date of Source B or its purpose, which accounted for its positive appraisal of the League of Nations. With regard to Source C, the most effective answers correctly perceived that its British provenance made the cartoon especially damning because Britain was a leading power in the League and a

permanent member of the Council. Level 3 answers explicitly stated that this was useful to an historian because it illustrated how public opinion in Britain was not supportive of the League's conduct or confident in its ability to control aggressors.

A number of Level 4 responses provided evidence of complex level thinking by, for example, considering the sources as a pair, and some concluded that they provided an historian with a long-term perspective of the change that took place over time with regard to the reputation and credibility of the League of Nations from the British public's point of view.

### **Question 3**

This question was done well by the majority of students. There was widespread evidence of general knowledge and understanding about the aims of the peacemakers. Most students could identify some simple reasons for the disagreements in 1919. Level 1 answers focused mainly on identifying who the peacemakers were. At Level 2, there was specific reference to the individual aims of France, Britain or the USA and mention of at least one cause of the disagreements that arose between them. There was some misunderstanding of the focus of the question by students who wrote an account of why the terms of the Treaty of Versailles caused disagreements. These answers tended to explain Germany's objections in 1919 and beyond.

Responses which proceeded to Level 4 did so by giving more than one developed explanation of the context for the conflicting aims of the peacemakers. The most effective responses showed understanding of the conflict of interest between Wilson's aim of self-determination and the desire to 'cherry pick' German colonies by the imperial powers, France and Britain. Furthermore, some students were able to explain Lloyd George's dual agenda of assuaging the British public's desire for revenge and the economic imperative of restoring Germany's potential to act as a trading partner.

Some more effective responses demonstrated complex thinking by considering the broader context of international tension in 1919. The most effective responses argued that because the peace making powers did not have an identical experience during the First World War, neither did they share the same sense of urgency about ensuring that Germany was weakened in the future.

### **Question 4**

Some excellent knowledge was displayed in answers to this question and most students could offer some supporting detail in relation to the stated factor. The extent to which students developed their answers in relation to the alternative factors determined whether or not their answer was rewarded beyond Level 2. When students had insecure knowledge about the main causes of Second World War, a common weakness was to try to make a counter argument based solely on the very long term factors such as the Treaty of Versailles and the Depression.

Level 1 responses tended to be limited to a general identification of the nature of appeasement and its effects on Hitler's actions. This level of answer was characterised by a broad understanding that in trying to prevent conflict, the policy of appeasement ultimately seemed to make it more likely. Level 2 answers included more specific relevant knowledge of the policy of appeasement in 1938 and the negotiations which took place at the Munich Conference regarding the Sudetenland. Most students could explain Chamberlain's motives for appeasement and they argued that by accommodating Hitler's territorial demands, he became more confident and this led him to invade the rest of Czechoslovakia, thereby breaking the promises he made in the Munich Agreement.

There was widespread knowledge that Hitler's subsequent invasion of Poland in 1939 was the final trigger for the declaration of war by Britain.

Answers that tried to make a counter argument based on the failure of the League of Nations were not generally rewarded highly for this, because they tended to narrate the political crises surrounding Manchuria and Abyssinia without making any direct connection to the outbreak of war in 1939. Similarly, many Level 2 answers argued simply that the Treaty of Versailles or the Depression caused the Second World War because they accounted for Hitler's rise to power in 1933.

At Level 3, answers were characterised by a clear structure and they included a developed and relevant argument involving another factor. These explanations usually concentrated on the significance of the Nazi-Soviet Pact. Students supported their argument with factual knowledge about the terms of the pact and an explanation of Hitler's and Stalin's motives. The most effective answers at this level were successful because they made a causal link between appeasement and the Nazi Soviet Pact. These arguments were based on the understanding that Stalin was obliged to seek some protection because the appeasement process had made Hitler more powerful and therefore a greater threat to the USSR. Some students argued successfully about the longer term causes of the Second World War and they showed a detailed knowledge of Hitler's foreign policy aims. Examiners noted that the rearmament and expansion of Germany at the expense of other nation states was often included as third discrete factor in strong arguments about the causes of the Second World War.

Students reached Level 4 by demonstrating complex thinking. In this question there were many examples of this, as students were able to explain the overlapping and linked nature of several causes. For example, students argued that the policy of appeasement prompted Stalin to agree to the creation of the Nazi Soviet pact.

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**B/C: Conflict and tension between East and West, 1945–1972****Question 1**

This question proved straightforward and accessible. The source allowed students to show their understanding. Students were able to use their knowledge of Sino-Soviet relations and made sensible inferences from the content to show why the source was supportive of the friendship. Many answers that relied on description of the source and simple analysis were rewarded at Level 1. Answers that drew on specific contextual knowledge about the key figures, the purpose or terms of the Treaty of Friendship in 1950, or China becoming Communist in 1949 to explain the image were able to access Level 2. Few students made use of the provenance to infer this was Chinese propaganda but more used the date to explain the purpose of the source and account for the timing of its publication.

**Question 2**

This question saw the majority of students coping well with the demands of two sources and demonstrating sound and appropriate source evaluation skills. Most students attempted analysis of the sources using content; far fewer used the provenance. There were many effective responses showing detailed knowledge of the Hungarian Uprising and its wider Cold War context, and addressing how each Source fitted in chronologically. However, examiners saw many answers being limited to an upper Level 3 mark because the answer lacked any discussion of provenance or only discussed it generically. An important part of the historian's work in the assessment of the utility of sources is to evaluate provenance. On the evidence of this year's answers, it is advised that provenance may benefit from more prominence in the teaching of the source work to students.

At Level 1, credit was awarded for abasic understanding of either source. Students writing at this level appeared to find Source C more accessible and were able to achieve marks by basic references to USSR's overwhelming aggression and/or the UN's lack of response. Less effective answers were characterised by a description of the content of both sources and general factual knowledge which was not specifically relevant to the question. Answers at Level 2 included more contextual knowledge of the Hungarian Uprising. However, it was common at Level 2 to see students paraphrasing parts of Source B and saying that was what the people wanted. Students appeared to find Source C more accessible than source B; this may have been primarily because it was visual. Source C required inference and students were able to achieve marks by simple references to USSR's use of military force and by commenting on the UN's limited response. Some common errors included mention of Stalin and confusing Hungary with Prague. At Level 2, provenance was rewarded when students went beyond the basic allegation that the source was biased, substantiated by simply copying parts of the attribution and without offering any further argument for such a claim. Some simple points at Level 2 which were frequently seen were that Nagy was there at the time and that the cartoonist had been a prisoner who had suffered under the Soviets and therefore was biased.

When answers reached Level 3, it was usually because they included an evaluation of the content and context of both sources and made explicit reference to utility. The contextual analysis of Source B included some sensible knowledge of the causes of the events in 1956, with students referring to the reasons for change, de-Stalinisation as a cause of optimism, previous concessions in Poland and the potential reaction of leaving the Warsaw Pact (which was often explained as a valid limitation of the source). In Source C, contextual knowledge focused on the disproportionate response of the USSR, linked to the threat to its sphere of influence and a gap in the Soviet Union's buffer zone with reference to the Warsaw Pact. Focus on the consequences for Hungary was also a feature of answers, with wildly variable figures quoted for deaths of both Hungarians

and Soviets, though the references to the 200,000 refugees fleeing to Austria and of course the death of Nagy were more consistent. Further or alternative reward was gained by recognition of the role of the UN with reference to Suez, the Soviet sphere of Influence, the veto and a desire not to escalate tension further.

Similarly, developed evaluations of the motives for the publication of the sources were less regularly seen and often, when combined with a developed point about the content of Source B or C, led to a mark at Level 4. The more effective answers in relation to Source B referred to Nagy as significant individual, the fact that it was a reasonable speech aimed at reassurance, its timing prior to the Soviet Invasion and its presumed audience. Provenance was more usually evaluated in relation to Source C where students focused on the author as victim of the USSR, his nationality and the country of publication, yet they noted that it was still mocking or critical of the UN's failure to act.

A number of Level 4 responses provided evidence of complex level thinking by, for example, considering the sources as a pair and some concluded that they provided an historian with a perspective of the aims of the rebels and the reactions of the USSR and the West to the Uprising. Some responses showed perception in recognising that these sources did not provide a Soviet viewpoint. However, they did contribute a partial, albeit critical, Hungarian perspective from inside and outside Hungary, which was from, during and after the events.

### **Question 3**

This question was done well by the majority of students. There was widespread evidence of general knowledge and understanding of the Yalta and Potsdam Conferences. Most students could identify some simple consequences for the levels of international tension.

Level 1 answers focused mainly on a description of what was decided in one or both of the conferences often in general terms. Answers which moved from a description to a narrative of the changing outcomes of the conferences and why this happened usually moved the responses into the Level 2 mark range, depending on the detail or explanation. The majority of answers at Level 2 had specific, relevant knowledge, but this tended to be general with regard to what was agreed or not at Yalta and Potsdam. Some answers at Level 2 focused on the changes that occurred between the conferences, rather than the wider implications of the decisions.

Students who proceeded to the higher levels did so by addressing the specific requirements of the question. They tended to focus on an understanding of the second order concepts (AO2) to explain the consequences with specific regard to international tension. The most successful responses were able to identify distinct issues that caused tension during and/or after the conferences. Popular aspects which featured in answers at Levels 3 and 4 included the division of Germany, the development of the Arms Race after Potsdam, disagreements over Eastern Europe and how the changing of representatives at the conferences specifically affected the outcomes.

Some stronger responses demonstrated complex thinking by being expanded to consider the Berlin Blockade, the Truman Doctrine and Containment and the early development of the Arms Race in relation to the wider context of tension between the superpowers.

### **Question 4**

Some excellent knowledge was displayed in answers to this question and students were quick to offer alternatives to the stated factor. The extent to which students developed their answers in

relation to the stated factor determined whether or not their answer was rewarded beyond Level 2. Many students had secure knowledge about the Cuban Missile Crisis, although many detailed the events in and around Cuba rather than the Crisis specifically. There were few arguments based on events outside the dates of the question.

Level 1 responses tended to be limited to a general identification of a reason for the tension. These frequently referred to the threat of nuclear war in non-specific terms. Level 2 answers included some specific relevant knowledge of the causes or outcome of the Cuban Missile Crisis. Most students could give a simple explanation of how this crisis threatened to bring about World War Three and affected international relations. Other examples of Level 2 answers were simple outlines of the U2 Crisis, the building of the Berlin Wall and the developing Space/Arms Race. Most references to the Vietnam War, whilst valid and often detailed, could only be rewarded at Level 2 as this knowledge was not relevantly related to the specific focus of the question.

It was clear to examiners that for an answer to be secure in Level 3, it must be supported with specific factual detail. Level 3 developed answers were characterised by a clear paragraphed structure which directly addressed the stated factor amongst others, with a developed explanation of at least one of them. These explanations usually concentrated on the background, events and consequences of the Cuban Missile Crisis. The most effective answers at this level were effective because there was a clear line of argument that included other factors, such as the Nuclear Arms race, the Space race, the U2 crisis, the Berlin Wall, 1961 and less frequently the Prague Spring. Whilst students seemed to find it straightforward to make an argument about how the U2 Crisis caused tension between the superpowers, there was a lot of information about the arms and the space races that was not made relevant. Students wrote in terms of the competition to possess more powerful weapons or more advanced space technology, but they did not explain how this amounted to a growing threat to world peace and often dwelled on events in the 1940s and 1950s. Furthermore, many knowledgeable and well-understood relevant answers remained in Level 3 because they failed to make any judgement or simply gave a summary conclusion.

Students reached Level 4 by demonstrating complex thinking. In this question, there were many examples of this as students were able to explain the relative significance of the different factors. For example, students argued that the Cuban Missile Crisis was not the most significant factor because it led to the Hot Line and Partial Test Ban Treaty, whereas the U2 crisis got in the way of peaceful coexistence and escalated tension. Many Level 4 answers were able to link several episodes together such as the outcomes of the U2 crisis, the Paris Summit, and the Berlin Crisis as leading to the Cuban Missile Crisis. There was clear evidence of complex thinking regarding the extent of tension viewed over the whole of the decade of the 1960s in relation to specific events and hotspots.

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**B/D: Conflict and tension in Asia, 1950–1975****Question 1**

This question proved straightforward and accessible. The source allowed students to show their understanding. Students were able to use their knowledge of American government and made sensible inferences from the content to show why the source was critical of American involvement in Vietnam. Answers that relied on simple analysis of the source were rewarded at Level 1. The features of the cartoon which elicited comments were often the Vietnamese refugees, the two Americans, the open suitcase and the smoke in the background. There were frequent references to the expressions on the faces of President Gerald Ford and Henry Kissinger. Answers that drew on specific contextual knowledge about American policy to explain the image or the caption were able to access Level 2. The broad nature of the question about American involvement allowed students to refer to many different aspects of American action in Vietnam. Answers saw specific reference to bombing campaigns, the use of defoliants, 'Strategic Hamlets' and Vietnamisation. Several students made use of the date to explain the precise criticism of the American government and its policy in Vietnam. Examiners saw a few answers which identified Kissinger's role in the Paris Peace Conference. Perceptive answers at Level 2 recognised and connected the cartoon to the fall of Saigon to the North Vietnamese in April 1975.

**Question 2**

This question saw the majority of students coping well with the demands of two sources and demonstrating sound and appropriate source evaluation skills. Most students attempted analysis of the sources with a focus on their content rather than the provenance. It was noticeable last year that students who have some knowledge about the focus of a question often take the opportunity to dismiss sources which do not mention something they knew about, and therefore this year, it was good to see considerably fewer students writing about what the sources omitted. Whilst the question permits students to discuss the limitations of the sources, those limitations have to be relevant to the question. In this case, the question was about how the Vietcong fought the Americans. It is always better to advise students to explore the positive contribution that a source could make to an understanding of the specific focus of the question.

At Level 1, credit was awarded for basic understanding of the sources. This was usually done with regard to the content of the source rather than its provenance. Answers recognised basic features of the sources which resonated with the students' knowledge about the topic. With regard to the provenance, students frequently merely accepted that an expert would know what they were talking about. Students' answers at Level 2 included more contextual knowledge of the nature of Vietcong fighting techniques with reference to booby-traps, ambushes, sniper fire, camouflage and the involvement of all genders and generations. Responses at this level began to show some understanding of how the expert might have acquired his or her expertise either through combat or discussion with American soldiers. Examiners noted that there were fewer answers with simple accusations of 'bias' or assertions about 'reliability'.

When answers reached Level 3, it was usually because they included an evaluation of the provenance of both sources and made explicit reference to utility. Understanding of the content of Source B involved explaining how the Vietcong strategy enabled them to engage a technologically more advanced opponent. There were many very effective answers that used both sources to explain the psychological impact of specific Vietcong tactics on inexperienced American soldiers thrust into an alien environment in which they could not identify the enemy with any certainty. There were some answers which substantiated the impact of Vietcong tactics on American soldiers

by reference to incidents of fragging and the prevalence of drug usage amongst American GIs. Many students correctly identified Source C as propaganda but, at Level 3, they needed to suggest some purpose for it such as showing their confidence to the world, promoting their struggle or celebrating their success. With regard to Source B, perceptive answers recognised that in the report, the Americans themselves were acknowledging the effectiveness of the way in which the Vietcong fought them. There was ample detailed knowledge shown about the circumstances surrounding the Peace talks. When answers reached Level 3, it was often because they maintained an explicit focus on utility of the sources and linked all their observations to the question.

A number of Level 4 responses provided evidence of complex level thinking by, for example considering the sources as a pair and some concluded that they provided an historian with a dual perspective of Vietcong military thinking from both the North Vietnamese and the American viewpoints. Another strong point was that Source B appreciated Vietcong fighting from a strategic point of view and Source C showed it from the tactical point of view.

### **Question 3**

This question was done very well by many students, although there were some instances where it was not attempted. There was clear evidence of good knowledge and understanding in the vast majority of answers about what happened at My Lai. Most students could identify some simple consequences.

Level 1 answers focused mainly on a basic narrative of events surrounding the attack. Answers which focused exclusively on the incident remained at Level 1 because the focus of the question was on the problems caused in America. Some answers at this level suggested almost incidentally that in America the incident provoked horror or outrage. The majority of answers at Level 2 had some simple but relevant knowledge, usually in relation to the public's support for the war.

Students who proceeded to the higher levels did so by addressing the specific requirements of the question. They tended to focus on an understanding of the second order concepts (AO2) to explain the consequences with specific regard to problems it caused. The problems were most frequently related to the public, the government or the military. In relation to the public, answers explained how popular support for the war decreased, or changed to opposition. In support of this argument, students used the evidence of the protest movement, draft dodgers, high-profile rejections of the war by prominent American citizens such as Mohammed Ali or Martin Luther King, or protests at Kent State University. In relation to the government, answers explained how the American people began to doubt what they were being told by the government, supported by the media's coverage of My Lai and the cover-up of the massacre. In terms of the military, answers explained how the media doubted what they were being officially told and the American public in turn questioned the role of the army and the justification for its presence and actions in Vietnam.

Stronger responses demonstrated complex thinking by considering how the problems were interrelated, with particular reference to the media presentation of the incident and cover-up and the way in which this affected public perception of America's actions in Vietnam. Examiners noticed some very perceptive observations about the longer term impact that My Lai and other events had on American domestic politics.

**Question 4**

Some very effective knowledge was displayed in the answers to this question and students were quick to offer alternatives to the stated factor. The extent to which students developed their answers in relation to the stated factor determined whether or not their answer was rewarded beyond Level 2. A common weakness when students had insecure knowledge about the reasons for the conflict was that they wrote in more general terms about the Cold War.

Level 1 responses tended to be limited to a general identification of the division between North Korea and South Korea, stating simply that one is Communist and the other Capitalist. It was a weakness of understanding that did not chronologically separate the division of Korea after the Second World War from the invasion by the North of South Korea. Examiners also noted a minority of answers that confused elements of the war in Vietnam with the war in Korea. Level 2 answers usually included more specific relevant knowledge about the different governments in North and South Korea and their ambitions for Korean unification, as well as the Cold War attitudes of America and the USSR. Most students could give a simple explanation of how this affected the unfolding of events that led to conflict.

It was clear to examiners that for an answer to be secure in Level 3, it must be supported with specific factual detail. Level 3 developed answers were characterised by a clear structure which directly addressed the stated factor amongst others, with a developed explanation of at least one of them. These explanations usually concentrated on the desire for Korean unification and the impact of Soviet and Chinese encouragement upon Kim Il Sung's decision to invade South Korea. In contrast, the more successful answers at Level 3 were able to explain in detail how America would view the threat that North Korea posed in the context of the American worldview.

The most effective answers at this level were successful because there was a clear line of argument that explained in depth how other factors escalated the conflict, bringing in China, threatening nuclear retaliation and by mid-1951, stalemate. Crucially, high level answers also showed knowledge of Korean nationalism in the context of conflicting ideologies. However, many good two-sided answers remained in Level 3 because they failed to make any judgement or simply gave a summary conclusion. Some answers were less effective as they attempted a conclusion by stating, without any substantiation or further reasoning, that if a particular factor had not been present, when it plainly had been, then war would not have occurred.

Students reached Level 4 by demonstrating complex thinking. In this question there were many examples of this as students were able to explain the relative significance of the different factors and identify an inter-relationship. For example, students often concluded in their judgements that the role of Stalin and the USSR was crucial in bringing about the war. Furthermore, answers commonly judged the role of newly Communist China as influential in the development of the nature of the conflict.

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**B/E: Conflict and tension in the Gulf and Afghanistan, 1990–2009****Question 1**

This question proved straightforward and accessible to most students, who were able to show their understanding and the full range of marks was awarded. Students were able to use their knowledge of Bush's insistence that Iraq had Weapons of Mass Destruction to consider how he used this as justification for going to war. Students were able to make sensible inferences from the content to show why the source was critical of the American government.

Answers that relied on simple analysis and description of the source were rewarded at Level 1. Answers that explained the source by drawing on specific contextual knowledge about the belief in the existence of Weapons of Mass Destruction, the issues concerning the search by weapons inspectors and the resulting war were able to access Level 2. Some students were able to use the provenance and date of the source to explain its purpose and account for the timing of its publication.

**Question 2**

This question allowed many students to show an ability to cope with the demands of evaluating two sources and to demonstrate sound and appropriate skills in doing so. Most students attempted to analyse the sources using content and provenance, but responses sometimes lacked sustained focus on the question. The analysis was often presented in isolation and not always linked to either utility or the focus of the question. Some students discussed the reliability of the sources rather than their utility and some students evaluated their utility by what the sources omitted. It was noted that many students seemed to follow a pattern in their answers, writing a paragraph on what each source could be used for by an historian, followed by a second paragraph saying what each source did not tell you and therefore why they were not useful. This question does allow students to discuss any limitations of the sources, but those limitations have to be relevant to, and address, the focus of the question, which in this case was the impact of the Iraq War. Some students introduced knowledge which may have been sound and accurate but was not always relevant to the question.

At Level 1, credit was rewarded for basic understanding of either source. Descriptive responses were very common as were basic inferences, particularly from Source B where many students used some of Bush's statements. One observation that was most frequently seen was the reference to building schools and hospitals, which showed Bush's wish to make life better for Iraqi people. Answers that included more contextual knowledge on the reasons for the invasion of Iraq and the impact it had were rewarded at Level 2. Many answers focused on the belief in the existence of Weapons of Mass Destruction and the use of this belief as a justification for going to war. Many students attempted to use the provenance of the sources to help answer the question, but often only at a simple level. For example, some answers stated that Source B was useful because it was a speech by George Bush, who was President, and therefore would have knowledge of events. Moreover, some stated that Source C was useful because although published in an American newspaper, it still criticises US actions in Iraq. At Level 2 it was quite common to discuss the reliability of the sources rather than their utility. It was still common to see sources being dismissed as being biased with no explanation or substantiation for this claim.

When answers reached Level 3, it was often because they included an evaluation of the provenance of both sources and made explicit reference to how this affected their utility. For example, students recognised and understood that George Bush's motives in making the speech in Source B demonstrated his aim of persuading both the American people and, more particularly,

the American forces who would carry out this war, that the invasion of Iraq was entirely justified. More effective responses also saw students use their own knowledge to assess the content of the sources. A number of Level 4 responses provided evidence of more complex thinking by, for example, considering both sources together rather than separately and in isolation, and some concluded that their inter-relationship and the different perspectives they offered would give an historian a much deeper and more balanced understanding of the impacts of the Iraq War.

### Question 3

There was some evidence of general knowledge and understanding about the effects on the West of the actions of the Taliban, but there was also evidence of a lack of knowledge and some misunderstanding of those actions. Some students could identify simple consequences, such as the invasion of Afghanistan and Bush's declaration of the 'War on Terror'. Some more common misunderstandings were the result of confusing Iraq and Afghanistan; this was seen in answers that suggested that the Taliban were rulers of Iraq, or that Osama Bin Laden or Saddam Hussein was the Taliban leader.

Level 1 answers tended to focus on basic narrative descriptions of the Taliban's actions. This was frequently sound and accurate but often these answers failed to focus on the consequences of those actions. Knowledge of Sharia Law was widespread and students offered detailed descriptions of its various features, particularly the treatment of girls and women. However, such responses remained at Level 1 because they did not describe and explain the effects it had on the West. The majority of answers which reached Level 2 made this simple link between actions and effects, such as in the West's condemnation of the Taliban's treatment of its people because of their views on human rights.

Students who reached the higher levels did so because of a more developed response to the requirements of the question. They were able to focus on an understanding of the second order concepts (AO2) to explain the consequences with specific regard to the effects on the wider Western World, rather than the narrower focus on the effects on just the USA. The most frequent response was to explain how the Taliban's support and sheltering of Bin Laden and Al Qaeda following 9/11, and their refusal to hand him over, led to the formation of an international coalition to find Bin Laden and remove the Taliban from power.

### Question 4

Some effective and accurate knowledge of the causes of the Gulf War was shown in answers to this question. Many students were able to discuss the stated factor in detail and many were able to offer at least one, but often more, alternatives to the stated factor. The extent to which students developed their answers in relation to the stated factor determined whether or not their answer was rewarded beyond Level 2. Answers which remained at Level 1 or 2 did so because, although the knowledge presented was often detailed and accurate, it was not used to explain why it contributed to the outbreak of the Gulf War.

Level 1 responses tended to be limited to a description of events or a simple list of possible causes of the war or more commonly, they offered an acceptance of the stated factor being the main cause, with little or no reference to alternative reasons. More effective answers rewarded at Level 2 dealt with at least one alternative reason, with some understanding of the contribution made to the Gulf War by both this reason and that of the stated factor. Alternative reasons included Hussein's humiliation in the Iran-Iraq War and his desire to re-establish his public image, and Kuwait's refusal to cancel Iraq's huge debt following that war. Another valid reason which students

often explained was that Saddam Hussein believed that his invasion of Kuwait would meet with no opposition from the West. Although infrequent, one of the more common misunderstandings in this question was to confuse the Gulf War of 1990-91 with the Iraq War of 2003 with a discussion of the role of Weapons of Mass Destruction in the outbreak of war.

The answers which reached Level 3 did so by using specific factual detail to support their argument. They had a clear structure to them and directly addressed the stated factor amongst others, with a developed explanation of how at least one of them contributed to the outbreak of war. These explanations tended to focus on reasons why Saddam Hussein made the decision to invade Kuwait in 1990, with many students then explaining how this led to international condemnation, the involvement of the UN and the implementation of Desert Shield and Desert Storm. Some good answers remained at Level 3 as they did not make any judgement or simply gave a summary conclusion, usually agreeing with the question statement whilst recognising and acknowledging the existence of other factors.

Level 4 was reached where responses extended Level 3 explanations of the stated and alternative factors by assessing and explaining the relative significance of the different factors before making an informed judgement. One way some students were able to reach Level 4 was by demonstrating an understanding of how the different factors interacted and how they were interrelated.

### **Use of statistics**

Statistics used in this report may be taken from incomplete processing data. However, this data still gives a true account on how students have performed for each question.

### **Mark Ranges and Award of Grades**

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.