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GCSE

# History

8145/1 Understanding the modern world  
Report on the Examination

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## **General**

### **Section A: Period Studies**

#### **AA America, 1840-1895: Expansion and Democracy**

##### **Question 1**

In the first 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 a 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. Not surprisingly, some were more confident than others in assembling their answers to these questions.

In Question 1 the majority of students successfully comprehended and explained differences about Custer's defeat from these interpretations. The majority of responses reached a high Level 2, being able to draw out and explain an important valid difference. Weaker answers tended to rely heavily on the interpretations with many students copying indiscriminately. Furthermore, quotations generally tended to hinder students' answers rather than support them. The weakest answers were filled with quotations, with very little development of the key differences between the interpretations. There was a tendency for some students to write unnecessarily long answers, particularly losing sight of the marks available for this question. Answers which gained Level 1 tended to identify the features of each interpretation without any direct comparison and with simple inferences. Some answers or parts thereof failed to gain any credit because they considered the provenance of the interpretations.

At Level 2 responses were typically able to make comparisons between the interpretations, particularly to work out that Interpretation A was different as the focus was on Custer's actions as opposed to other factors in Interpretation B. There was some sensible understanding of specific words and phrases. The stronger answers were simple and cogent; it was clear what each interpretation was suggesting about Custer's defeat. They deployed high level vocabulary to make clear the different opinions provided in the Interpretations.

##### **Question 2**

The weaker responses to this question made blunt assertions and simple points such as "the author is biased" or "the author was Custer's friend". These simple comments went often unsubstantiated or under-developed. Weaker 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 focussed on whether the authors were directly involved in the battle or not; this may not have been the most helpful difference 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 in Question 1, at times, the answers were too lengthy considering the marks available for this question. Many weaker answers did seem to remain focused on how rather than why the interpretations were different.

The stronger 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 cause of Custer's defeat. Answers based on interpretations' provenance were usually focused on the role of the authors. There were some successful answers relating to Interpretation B which considered Godfrey's personal relationship with Custer and the motives he possessed for writing. These answers went further than merely stating, 'he was Custer's friend'. Many discussed the Indian Scouts in some depth with the focus being on their possible motives for slandering Custer; this in turn was based on their heritage and knowledge of white persecution. Some impressive contextual knowledge was displayed in these answers.

### **Question 3**

This question produced a wide range of responses. Sometimes weaker students told a story of the Battle, others dwelt on the provenance of the interpretations which impaired their ability to gain credit. Many examiners noted that some responses were more appropriate as an answer to Question 2 or even Question 1. Frequently students relied less on contextual knowledge of the battle 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 student 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 also many references to the provenance of the interpretations intermingled with context used to test for accuracy.

There were, however, many answers with sound contextual knowledge which debated and judged which was the more convincing. Some students presented a strong case for just one Interpretation being the more convincing, sometimes with excellent contextual knowledge but there was a limit to the credit that could be earned by this approach. This was because it was necessary to provide a developed explanation in support of the validity of the arguments provided in each interpretation.

There were a small number of very good answers from students who made links between the two interpretations. There was some very good knowledge used on this question. Higher-level responses often were achieved by reference to the specifics of the interpretations to discuss effectively the numbers of Indians at the battle, Custer's military background, the logistics and responsibilities of Reno, Benten and Custer, as well as Terry's overarching strategy and Custer's disregard for orders. Some students went on to, or included on the way, sustained judgement 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.

### **Question 4**

This question was accessible at all ability ranges. However it is worth remarking that a number of students did not address the question. They chose to discuss the homesteader's problems of settlement on the Plains, with a surprisingly large number focusing on the Mormon settlement at the Great Salt Lake, Utah. Weaker answers that did discuss the journey west tended to lack specific and relevant knowledge to support more general points. For example, it seemed many discussed navigational problems on the pioneers' journey west, without any knowledge of the physical geography of North America. It was noticeable 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 geographical, distance and climate issues. 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 this question the weaker responses did not have a clear understanding of Manifest Destiny and therefore did not articulate the effects of the concept on any groups of Americans. Some simple points were often accompanied by accurate, if undeveloped, knowledge. Answers that were better showed a basic understanding of the concept, but did not articulate how it affected white or black Americans or Native Americans. Some answers did not link Manifest Destiny to relevant historical knowledge. For example, students knew how the mid-west and west had developed, but did not link it to the question. A common example of this occurred when students discussed Manifest Destiny in relation to the transcontinental railroad or the problems of farming on the Plains.

There were many good answers to this question with several developed aspects. Many students were able to identify the effects on the American people and gain a mark within Level 2. The impact of Manifest Destiny was particularly well explained in considering the social effects on people, with clear links made to the impact on the lives of different groups of American citizens. There were lots of strong answers that defined the various groups and were able to differentiate between some positive as well as the obvious negative impacts.

Stronger answers took advantage of the question which asked for the effects of Manifest Destiny on all Americans. Many accessed Level 3 by discussing both different groups of non-native Americans and Native Americans. Many students were able to link white American laws (according to many students which were inspired by Manifest Destiny) to the plight of the Native Americans. It was pleasing at this level to see students using historical facts and figures to substantiate their points.

### **Question 6**

It was understandable that the weaker 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 American Civil War. The weaker answers lacked structure and did not display 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.

However many students were able to show off good knowledge in answering this question. Most were able to develop a balanced assessment to show the social and economic reasons in detail. The argument for social reasons was better supported than for political reasons. However when students did address the political reasons, examiners noted these were often excellent answers. Slavery, the industrial north versus the agricultural south, and the future expansion of the US in terms of states' rights, were well understood. Some answers which were less common, rightly addressed the political issues of Lincoln's election and the secession of the slave states to confederacy under President Jefferson Davis.

Stronger answers were able to secure Level 3 marks with both of these aspects 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 stronger answers were well structured. These answers went much further with a depth of knowledge that was impressive. High quality knowledge of abolitionists like John Brown and Bleeding Kansas was common, as was good understanding of secession including the complexities of the Missouri Compromise. Perceptive judgements made complex links between the reasons for the Civil War, such as between Lincoln, slavery and secession.

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**AB Germany, 1890 – 1945: Democracy and dictatorship****Question 1**

In the first 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 a 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. Not surprisingly, some were more confident than others in assembling their answers to these questions.

Examiners noted in the weaker 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 noticed 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 opposition to Hitler from these interpretations. The majority of responses reached a high Level 2, being able to draw out and explain an important valid difference about the opposition to Hitler. At Level 2 responses were typically able to make comparisons between the interpretations and in particular to recognise that whereas Interpretation A focussed on the reason for opposition to Hitler, Interpretation B was critical of that opposition. There was some sensible understanding of specific words and phrases.

**Question 2**

Many weaker answers did seem to remain focused on how rather than why the interpretations were different. Some students produced answers that seemed to have confused Questions 2 and 3; as a result of which they wrote a considerable amount about the opposition to the Nazis and did not apply that knowledge to the question. As in question 1, at times, the answers were too lengthy, considering the marks available.

The stronger 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 opposition to Hitler. 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 stronger answers on provenance were usually focused on the role of the authors. The more successful answers relating to Interpretation B were about Maschmann being a member of BDM and head of publicity so would have been indoctrinated into the Nazi regime. Students tended to be less successful in developing a motive or purpose for Interpretation A with many failing to get beyond, 'he would be negative because he wanted to kill Hitler' or 'he was important because he worked as a judge'. Students who made simple assertions of this nature usually did not go on to develop their answer to explain why the authors might then possess different interpretations regarding opposition to Hitler. Overall this question was answered well by most students who understood what was expected of them and discussed the provenance of the sources in sufficient detail to be rewarded with a level 2 mark.

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### Question 3

This question produced a wide range of responses. Weaker students told the story of opposition groups. Other answers focussed generally on the provenance which impaired their ability to gain credit. 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 student 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 again many references to the provenance of the interpretations intermingled with context used to test for accuracy. A very notable weakness of answers was an inability to offer appropriate contextual knowledge to evaluate Interpretation B. Most answers which offered contextual knowledge to evaluate Interpretation B focused on other, very different, youth groups like the Edelweiss Pirates or Swing Kids rather than the White Rose Group.

There were, however, many answers with relevant contextual knowledge which debated and judged which was the more convincing. Some students who presented a strong case for just one Interpretation and with good contextual knowledge were limited in the credit that could be earned. This was because it was necessary to provide a developed explanation in support of the validity of the arguments provided in each interpretation.

There were a small number of very good answers from students who made links between the two interpretations, for example noting that many young people were also Christians and the Nazis were keen to shut down Roman Catholic youth clubs. There was some very good knowledge used on this question. Higher-level responses often were achieved by reference to the specifics of the interpretations to discuss effectively the more widespread prevalence of Christianity which would form a basis for dislike of, and perhaps opposition to Nazism. Other answers argued that young people, who had no great prior experience before the Nazis came to power would be less able to resist their propaganda and control of education. Some students went on to, or included on the way, sustained judgement about the more convincing interpretation, noting that the interpretations shared a university student context as Christians, and in the White Rose group. Examiners were not looking for a particular Interpretation to be favoured in answers so long as a sensible and supported argument was made

### Question 4

This question was accessible at all ability ranges but it was noticeable that many students wrote too much. Many answers partly or wholly referred to the extermination of Jewish people during the Second War, an event outside the dates specified by the question. In terms of answers that did adhere to the specified dates, a significant proportion of answers did not demonstrate knowledge of specific events affecting the lives of Jewish people in Nazi Germany between 1933 and 1939. Typically though, such answers offered generalised reference to Jewish people facing discrimination or hatred.

Most answers that made reference to specific events offered secure but limited contextual knowledge. There were many Level 2 responses. Most cited the Nuremberg Laws or Kristallnacht as the main problems. Answers of this sort offered a simple, limited understanding of the



Nuremberg Laws, typically referring to the fact that Jewish and non-Jewish Germans were forbidden to marry or have children together. Most students failed to make reference to the impact of other aspects of the Laws on the lives of Jewish people in Germany, for example in acknowledging that the Laws effectively removed full German citizenship from Jewish people in Germany. Answers often offered a simple understanding of Kristallnacht, typically referring to the fact that the windows of Jewish shops were broken. Only rarely did answers show an understanding that such attacks impacted on the livelihoods of Jewish people since their families depended on such businesses. It was surprising that more students did not mention knowledge of the Nazis attack on synagogues, places that were central to the religious and cultural identity of Jewish people in Germany. Few responses demonstrated an awareness of the scale of Jewish communities in Germany, most suggested Jewish people made up a very large part of German society.

Nevertheless the many students who were concise in their answers and related their description to the demands of the question achieved level 3 and 4 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 level 1 and 2, a significant number of students tried to consider the economic and political impacts, but were not always secure on the political impact and what this meant. There were a few answers that wanted to discuss the impact of the Dawes Plan and the 'Golden Era' but these factors were outside the scope of the question. Many answers confused hyperinflation in 1923 with the Great Depression and therefore did not demonstrate a secure understanding. Answers that did successfully identify hyperinflation almost always described how it affected Germans as a homogeneous group. A number of responses did however, make some reference to specific consequences, notably on the poor, though mainly only in terms of scarcity of food. A minority were able to identify different effects on different types of citizens. The greatest confusion concerned the impact of hyperinflation on savings. Most students failed to indicate that most of those affected by loss of savings were middle class. Most working class people had not accumulated savings and wealthy upper class Germans tended to own property (which they could even add to with cheap credit) as well as have savings. Many answers mentioned the Treaty of Versailles but mostly described the terms without explaining how they impacted on Germany over the period specified by the question. Very few answers linked the Treaty of Versailles with other events such as the Spartacist uprising, Kapp Putsch and Munich Putsch, especially in the context of specific themes (such as political and economic) or factors (such as short term and long term).

There were many excellent answers to this question with several developed aspects. The answers, which secured Level 3 and 4, made specific reference to identified groups affected by events, and gave specific details. Even weaker answers were able to identify the effects of events on the German people and gain a mark within Level 2. The impact of hyperinflation was particularly well explained under the 'economic' effects on the people, with clear links made to the impact on the lives of different groups of German citizens. There were lots of strong answers that defined the various groups and were able to differentiate between some positive impacts as well as the clearly negative ones.

### **Question 6**

The weaker 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 Germany became a dictatorship. Some students tried to link Germany's problems and Hitler's actions,

although not convincingly. Answers at Level 1 and 2 often made simple or generalised comments about Hitler's speeches or the Treaty of Versailles which lacked links to the question or specific examples. The weaker 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 the answers of weaker students lacked an understanding of Germany's problems. Many of the answers dealt in an often rambling fashion, with the aftermath of the First World War. Many also wrote about the positives in the 1920s, but no credit could be awarded unless they were made relevant to the question. Many answers offered a description, narrative or combined description and narrative of Nazi history between 1919 and 1934 rather than a focused response to the question.

Many answers addressed the question and bullet points with the argument that Hitler saw the Depression as an opportunity to gain power. Such answers demonstrated an awareness that elections were an important part in the process of Hitler gaining power during the Depression. Some even linked success in elections to Hitler's deliberations on Nazi tactics following the failed Munich Putsch. However, a relevant knowledge of the German political system and elections was often thin and sometimes went no further than to acknowledge that the Nazis did well in 'elections'. Most answers offered a sound knowledge concerning the link between electoral success by 1932 and Hitler's appointment as chancellor in 1933. Fewer answers mentioned the intriguing of Von Papen, how Hitler was able to move from being Chancellor to President, the Night of the Long Knives, and the death of Hindenburg.

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 actions in detail. The argument in favour of Hitler's actions tended to be better supported with knowledge than Germany's problems. However when answers addressed Germany's problems, in many cases examiners noted some excellent answers. Propaganda, and the impact of the Depression were well understood and explained. Although less common, a number of answers rightly dealt with Hitler's consolidation of power. Stronger answers were able to secure Level 3 with both of the 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. It was noticeable that the better answers were well structured. These answers went much further with a depth of knowledge that was impressive.

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## **AC Russia, 1894 – 1945: Tzardom and communism**

### **Question 1**

In the first 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 a 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.

Not surprisingly, some were more confident than others in assembling their answers to these questions. There was a tendency for some students to write unnecessarily long answers, particularly losing sight of the marks available for this question. Although there were few answers which gained Level 1, those that did tended to identify the features of each interpretation without any comparison or support.

The majority of students successfully comprehended and explained differences about the unpopularity of the Tsar from these interpretations. The majority of responses reached a high Level 2, 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 the focus was on the Tsar being unpopular due to military ‘fatal mistakes’, whereas in Interpretation B it was Rasputin’s fault because he distracted the Tsarina and influenced decisions. There was some good understanding shown of specific words and phrases.

### **Question 2**

There were many good answers to this question. As in question 1, at times, the answers were too lengthy for the marks available. Many weaker answers did seem to remain focused on how rather than why the interpretations were different. A few answers tried to develop an argument about how the time period in which both interpretations were written might influence the views they contained.

The stronger answers were able to relate their contextual knowledge to the authors of the interpretations to explain why they had different interpretations about the unpopularity of the Tsar. The stronger answers using the provenance were usually focused on the role of the authors. More students’ answers stressed that Wrangel was an Army General rather than explored how Gilliard, as tutor for Alexei, might form an interpretation from his significant position in the court.

### **Question 3**

This question produced a wide range of responses. Weaker students provided narrative answers, sometimes dwelling on the provenance which impaired their ability to gain credit. 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 student 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 also many references to the provenance of the interpretations intermingled with context used to test for accuracy.

There were, however, many answers with sound contextual knowledge which debated and judged which was the more convincing. Some students who presented a strong case for just one interpretation being the more convincing with good contextual knowledge were limited in the credit that they could earn. This was because it was necessary to provide a developed explanation in support of the validity of the arguments provided in each interpretation. There were a small number of very good answers from students who made links between the two interpretations, for example suggesting that because the Tsar went to the Front this meant he left his German wife in charge and she was unduly influenced by Rasputin. There was some very good knowledge used on this question. There were a number of answers that tried to claim the Tsar was to blame for Tannenburg – this battle obviously pre dated his arrival at the front but the general idea that he became associated with lost battles was still given due credit. Some students went onto, or included on the way, sustained judgement 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.

#### **Question 4**

This question was to be accessible at all ability ranges. It was noticeable that many students wrote too much. 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. The structure of the answers was exemplary in many cases as well. They were clearly signposted, such as, 'firstly' and 'secondly'. Most cited the continuation of the war, the nature of the government being temporary and the land issues as problems. There were some strong knowledgeable answers, which linked many of the wider challenges such as small parties, the influence of the Bolsheviks and Lenin's April Thesis.

#### **Question 5**

This question saw a significant number of students trying to consider the economic and social impacts, but they were not always secure in their knowledge of the social impact and what this meant. There were a few answers that wanted to chart the course of the civil war, but these were few in number and many still managed subsequently to consider the impact. Most answers mentioned the famine of 1921 and were able to highlight that there was a change in economic policy to the NEP by the end of the civil war. There were a few muddled comments about Stalin's time, especially when referring to the work of the Cheka, but overall a good range of knowledge was shown.

There were many fine answers to this question with several developed aspects. Many students were able to identify the effects on the Russian people and gain a mark within Level 2. War Communism was particularly well explained under the 'economic' effects on the people, with clear links made to the impact on the lives of both industrial workers and the peasants. There were lots of strong answers that defined the various groups and were able to differentiate between some positives as well as the obvious negatives.

#### **Question 6**

The weaker 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 strengthening of Stalin's dictatorship. Predictably the weaker answers lacked structure and did not display a clear line of argument. Some students tried to link propaganda and fear, although not

always convincingly. Answers at Level 1 and 2 often made only basic and generalised comments about the purges; these lacked links to the question or some 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 demonstrate good knowledge in answering this question. Most were able to develop a balanced assessment to show how Stalin was able to strengthen his dictatorship. The argument and knowledge used in support of the aspect of fear was better done than propaganda. However when students answers properly considered propaganda, they were often excellent. Kirov, the Purges and Show Trials were well understood and explained, and some responses rightly explained that the army purges effectively weakened rather than strengthened Stalin's position.

Stronger answers were able to secure Level 3 with both of these aspects 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 better answers were well structured. These answers went much further with a depth of knowledge that was impressive. The answers, which considered propaganda in detail, were able to discuss the Cult of Personality, education, youth groups and street names.

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## **AD America, 1920 – 1973: Opportunity and inequality**

### **Question 1**

In the first 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 a 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. Not surprisingly, some were more confident than others in assembling their answers to these questions.

In Question 1 the majority of students successfully comprehended and explained differences about Martin Luther King and the Civil Rights campaigns from these interpretations. The majority of responses reached a high Level 2, being 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 successes of Martin Luther King and the Civil Rights campaigns whereas Interpretation B emphasised other aspects. There was some sensible understanding of specific words and phrases. There was a tendency for some students to write unnecessarily long answers, particularly losing sight of the marks available for this question. There were some answers which gained Level 1 and those that did tended to identify the features of each interpretation without any direct comparison and with simplified inferences. Some responses failed to gain any credit by looking at the provenance of the interpretations.

The better answers did point to the difference between the importance of his leadership and the indispensable nature of mass support from ordinary people. Terms such as ‘vital catalyst for change’ and ‘heroic and charismatic figurehead’ were used in dealing with Interpretation A and ‘Martin Luther King’s role would not have been possible without the passion, strength and commitment of people like Rosa Parks’ in Interpretation B.

### **Question 2**

A few answers to this question tried 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 in Question 1, at times, the answers were too lengthy considering the marks available for this question. Many weaker answers did seem to remain focused on how rather than why the interpretations were different.

The stronger answers were able to relate their contextual knowledge to the authors of the interpretations and use this to explain why they had different interpretations about Martin Luther King and the Civil Rights campaigns. The stronger answers on provenance were usually focused on the role of the authors. There were some successful answers relating to Interpretation A were about Reagan being bound to focus on the achievements of King as an individual since his speech was to commemorate Martin Luther King day. Students tended to be less successful in developing a motive or purpose for Interpretation B with many failing to get beyond ‘he was at King’s speech’ or ‘he was an activist himself’. Answers of this type frequently did not then go on to develop the point and to explain why this made the interpretations different.

### **Question 3**

This question produced a wide range of responses. Weaker students told the story of the Bus Boycott, though often failing to mention its consequences. They then mentioned the numbers attending the Washington March (given in the Interpretation) and the 'I have a dream' speech. These answers were worthy of credit at Level 2. However they sometimes dwelled on the provenance which impaired their ability to gain credit. 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 student 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 also many references to the provenance of the interpretations intermingled with context used to test for accuracy.

There were, however, many answers with sound contextual knowledge which debated and judged which was the more convincing. Some students presented a strong case for just one Interpretation with good contextual knowledge but this limited the credit that could be earned. This was because it was necessary to provide a developed explanation in support of the validity of the arguments provided in each interpretation. There were a small number of good answers from students who made links between the two interpretations. There was some good knowledge used on this question with a few exceptions relating to confusion over the KKK activities of the 1920s. Higher-level responses were often achieved by reference to the specifics of the interpretations for example in relation to Interpretation B and grassroots involvement, especially the sit-ins, Freedom Rides and crucially, in securing the legislative outcome of the Bus Boycotts. For Interpretation A, much was made of the achievements of Washington and Selma in securing the Civil Rights Act, plus the media attention after Birmingham. Some students went on to, or included on the way, sustained judgement 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.

#### **Question 4**

This question was accessible to students of all abilities. It was noticeable that many students wrote too much. Most answers cited the aftermath of the Wall Street Crash or Hoover's attitudes as problems. Weaker answers following this line of approach meandered through the aftermath of the Wall Street Crash with general reference to unemployment, homelessness and starvation. Hoovervilles received many mentions.

The majority of students appeared to be more concise in their answers and related their description to the demands of the question. There were many Level 2 marks awarded for responses to this question. The structure of these answers was exemplary in many cases. They were clearly signposted, such as, 'firstly' and 'secondly'. The stronger answers dealt with the aftermath of the Wall Street Crash, using specifics about businesses, banks and the consequences of the Hawley-Smoot tariff. Some, when dealing with the Bonus Marchers, always had the question in mind and pointed out how Hoover's reaction caused him the problem of increasing unpopularity and made his re-election unlikely, especially when compared to Roosevelt's impact in campaigning. Admirably, a few students stated that some of Hoover's positive messages such as the RFC and Farm Board exacerbated his problems.

#### **Question 5**

In answering this question a number of students tried to approach it by considering the economic and social impacts, but their understanding was not always secure on the social impact and what this meant. There were a few answers that wanted to discuss the impact of the Second World War but these still managed subsequently to consider the impact of the New Deal. The better answers mentioned several Agencies with accurate detail about their effects on people's lives. The more frequently mentioned were the CCC, the TVA and the AAA. Weaker answers mixed up the Agencies or were confined to one sentence on each of two agencies. The weaker answers also showed poor chronology, concentrating, for example, on Lend-Lease or Fireside Chats.

There were many excellent answers to this question with several developed aspects. Even weaker students were able to identify the effects on the American people and gain a mark within Level 2. The impact of the agencies was particularly well explained under 'economic' effects on the people, with clear links made to the impact on the lives of different groups of American citizens. There were lots of strong answers that defined the various groups and were able to differentiate between some positive impacts as well as the negative ones. Some students achieved Level 4 by pointing out the limitations of the Agencies or by referring to those left out, to a degree, from 'benefits', such as women or African-Americans. Some students, explicitly or implicitly, pointed out that criticisms of the New Deal by Republicans, the Supreme Court or Huey Long reduced the impact of the New Deal. This could contribute to a Level 4 mark whereas simply telling a story about the criticisms did not.

### **Question 6**

Some students tried to link social and economic reasons when answering this question, although not always convincingly. Answers at Level 1 and 2 discussed in simple terms generalised comments about the flappers which lacked relevance to the question or specific examples. The weaker students often did not understand clearly the meanings of 'social' and 'economic'. Many of the answers dealt in a rambling fashion, with the aftermath of the Wall Street Crash in the 1930s. Many also wrote about positive aspects of the 1920s, sometimes at length, rather than the problems. The weaker answers 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 problems in 1920s America. The weaker answers lacked structure and did not display 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.

However many students did show good knowledge in answering this question. Most were able to develop balanced assessment to show the social reasons in detail. The argument for social reasons was better supported than using economic reasons. However when students did address the economic reasons, examiners noted these were often very good answers. Prohibition, immigration and the Red Scare were well understood and explained. Some answers which were less common, rightly addressed farming problems and the impact on older industries.

Stronger answers were able to secure Level 3 with both of these aspects 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 better answers were well structured. These answers went much further with a pleasing depth of knowledge.



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**Section B: Wider world depth studies****BA Conflict and tension: The First World War, 1894 – 1918****Question 1**

This question revealed some good general knowledge about the Gallipoli campaign and the source allowed students to show their understanding. Students were able to use their knowledge of the campaign and made sensible inferences from the content, particularly the scared looking figures, to show why the source was supportive.

Answers that relied on simple analysis of the source were rewarded at Level 1. Answers that drew on specific contextual knowledge about the aims of Gallipoli to explain the image or the caption were able to access Level 2. However, some students mistakenly used their contextual knowledge to question the source and explain the failure of the campaign. These answers seemed to have misunderstood the initial statement of the question in their analysis of the source. However another valid route to Level 2 was to make use of the provenance and 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 demonstrated sound and appropriate source evaluation skills. Most students attempted analysis of the sources using a combination of content and provenance but some students wrote 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. Students who have considerable knowledge about the focus of a question often take the opportunity, in the examination, to dismiss out of hand, sources which do not mention something they know about. In this case, the sources related to the effects on the German war effort of the blockade and the Allies' unified command. Therefore unrelated contextual knowledge about the course of the war as a whole, such as the outcome of the Battle of the Somme, did not add value to the answer. 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 awarded for basic understanding of either source or generic evaluation of the provenance. Students generally handled Source B well with Level 2 answers including contextual knowledge of the blockade. However, less widespread was a good level of knowledge displayed about the role of Foch in relation Source C. Students writing at this level were able to achieve marks by showing good understanding of Source B's utility by explaining that Blucher had first-hand experience of life in Germany. Comments on the provenance of Source C were often generic and remained at Level 2; many students assumed it was a cartoon about American involvement and wrote about why the US got involved. It was also common at Level 2 to see students copying out parts of Source B and there was frequent use of the term 'reliable' or 'convincing' in answers which was a misreading of the question and restricted the value of the response. There is still a tendency to allege that a source is biased without offering any substantiation for such a claim.

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. Students at this level gave a more developed evaluation of the provenance of Source B and considered Blucher's purpose and audience to aid their judgement. Many students could also develop the content of Source B by outlining the effects of the Blockade. Similarly, developed evaluations of the motives for the

publication of Source C, secured a Level 3 mark. Many students correctly identified that the cartoon was intended to boost morale and inspire confidence in the latter stages of the war. All students could explain the imagery of this source and many used relevant factual knowledge about the allies' success under Foch's leadership at countering the Ludendorff offensive with the '100 days'. When answers reached Level 3 it was often because they maintained an explicit focus on the utility of the sources and linked all comments to the question.

The main way students demonstrated evidence of complex level thinking was in answers that considered the sources as a pair and concluded, for example, that they provided an historian with a dual perspective on the reasons for defeat of Germany.

### **Question 3**

Some students failed to provide a full answer to this question, despite the topic being clearly identified in the Specification.

There was widespread evidence of general knowledge and understanding about the events in the Balkans in 1908 but it was not always related to part of the question that referred to an 'international crisis'. Furthermore, there was a lot of confusion with the Moroccan crises and the assassination in Sarajevo.

Level 1 answers displayed some basic knowledge of events in Bosnia in 1908. Examiners saw that most answers might be appropriately rewarded at Level 2 for their narrative of the Balkans crisis which included reference to the annexation of Bosnia and the involvement of different countries in the region and beyond.

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 a subsequent international crisis. The most frequently seen examples of Level 3 responses were those that could identify the international dimension of the consequences and explained the power play between Russia, Austria Hungary and Germany.

Students at the top level demonstrated complex thinking by recognising the effect of the events in real time but also the effect on the wider context of the alliance system between the European powers.

### **Question 4**

Very good 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. A common weakness was that students had insecure knowledge about the concept of 'stalemate' and often assumed it was the same as trench warfare.

Level 1 responses tended to be limited to a general outline of the Schlieffen Plan. Level 2 answers included more specific relevant knowledge about the Schlieffen Plan and the reasons for its failure. However, if this knowledge was not explicitly linked to the question of stalemate, the answer was confined to Level 2. Other examples of Level 2 answers were simple outlines of new technology or trench warfare.

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 and others with a detailed explanation. These explanations usually referred to the Battle of the Marne or the race to the sea. However, many good two-sided answers remained in Level 3 because they failed to make any judgement or simply gave a summary conclusion.

Answers reached Level 4 by demonstrating complex thinking. This could be shown for example by giving a relational judgement on the factors discussed in the answer. With regard to Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar the vast majority of students were awarded 3 marks for the standard of their historical communication.

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**BB Conflict and tension: The inter-war years, 1918 – 1939****Question 1**

This question proved straightforward and accessible. The source allowed students to show their understanding. Students were able to use their knowledge of the protagonists and made sensible inferences from the content to show why the source was critical of the Treaty of Versailles.

Answers that relied on simple analysis of the source were rewarded at Level 1. Answers that drew on contextual knowledge of the figures or gave examples of the harsh terms of the Treaty were able to access Level 2. Few students made use of the provenance which was another route to Level 2. Students used the cartoon effectively to infer that the cartoon reflected the views of those in Britain who felt the Treaty was too harsh and that it would have been better to have helped Germany recover after the war for the purposes of mutually beneficial trade and future peace.

**Question 2**

This question saw the majority of students coping well with the demands of two sources and demonstrated sound and appropriate source evaluation skills. Most students attempted analysis of the sources using content and provenance. Many students wrote extensively about what the sources omitted about the outbreak of the Second World War. Whilst the question permits students to discuss the limitations of the sources, those limitations have to be relevant and realistic for the source. For example it would be wrong to criticise source B – a speech by Churchill in the House of Commons in October 1938 – for not mentioning the invasion of Poland. Students who have considerable knowledge about the focus of the question – the outbreak of the Second World War – all too often take the opportunity, in the examination, to dismiss out of hand, 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 awarded for basic understanding of either source. Students writing at this level found Source C far more accessible than B and were able to achieve marks by simple references to the damage done to the prone figure of Poland. There were some weaker answers which were characterised by a description of the content of both sources and confused factual knowledge about the Anschluss and the remilitarisation of the Rhineland. Students' answers at Level 2 included more contextual knowledge of the false friendship between Hitler and Stalin. However, it was common at Level 2 to see students copying out parts of Source B and they frequently used the term 'reliable' in their answers which was a misreading of the question and restricted the value of the response. There is still a tendency to allege that a source is biased without offering any substantiation for such a claim.

When answers reached Level 3 it was usually because they included an evaluation of both sources and made explicit reference to utility. Knowledge of appeasement was used to contextualise Source C and draw a conclusion about its utility as contributing to the emboldening of Hitler. The best answers identified Churchill's view as one opposed to appeasement and concluded that he must be a credible critic because he was a senior politician. Even without recognising Churchill's position, at Level 3 students were able to conclude that a British politician criticising British foreign policy would indicate that appeasement was not a popular or successful policy. Developed knowledge about the outcome of the Munich conference, when made relevant to the question about the causes of the Second World War, secured Level 3.

Students at this level found Source C more accessible and there was some thoughtful evaluation of the provenance and content of the cartoon. Many students correctly identified that the purpose of the cartoon was to criticise the pact as a cause of the Second World War. There was ample detailed knowledge shown about the terms and motives of the Nazi Soviet Pact. When answers reached Level 3 it was often because they maintained an explicit focus on utility of the sources.

The main way students demonstrated evidence of complex level thinking was in answers that considered the sources as a pair and concluded for example that they provided an historian with a dual perspective on contemporary British opinions about the causes of the war. Some students showed perception in suggesting that Source B came from the highest level of politics whereas Source C was more reflective of public opinion.

### **Question 3**

This question was done well by the majority of students. There was widespread evidence of general knowledge and understanding about the demilitarisation terms of the Treaty of Versailles and most students could identify some simple consequences of these terms being broken. Level 1 answers focused mainly on a narrative of events with detail of troops being moved and how this created danger for France. At Level 2 there was specific reference to the Treaty of Versailles and the threat of invasion for France.

Students who proceeded to the higher levels usually did so by addressing the specific requirements of the question. They tended to focus on an understanding of second order concepts (AO2) to explain the consequences with specific regard to international tension. The most frequent response was to argue that as Hitler's actions went unchallenged by Britain or France, he became more confident and ambitious for further acts of aggressive foreign policy. This was related explicitly to international tension as Hitler was clearly looking to strengthen Germany's strategic position in Europe and believed he could do so with scant regard for the restrictions of the Treaty of Versailles.

Students at the top level demonstrated complex thinking by considering international tension not only in relation to Germany but also between Britain and France, as the policy of appeasement was significantly tested by events in 1936.

### **Question 4**

Very good 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. A common weakness when students had insecure knowledge about the League of Nations was to try to make an argument based on Hitler's aggression in the 1930s.

Level 1 responses tended to be limited to a general identification of the reasons for the League's weakness. These frequently referred to the absence of a League of Nations' army or simply the authority that the USA might have conferred upon the League, had it been a member. Level 2 answers included more specific relevant knowledge to account for the weakness of the League such as the ineffectiveness of economic sanctions. Most students could explain that these sanctions were ineffective because aggressors such as Japan and Mussolini could still trade with USA.

At Level 3 developed answers were characterised by a clearer structure and they directly addressed the stated factor supported by good explanation. These explanations usually concentrated on the absence of USA from the League and the resulting lack of military or economic power. Students supported their argument with factual knowledge about the crises of the 1930s. The strongest answers at this level were effective because there was a clear line of argument that introduced other distinct factors such as the League's inability to deal with aggressors resulting from its cumbersome structure or prevailing national self-interest. It was clear to examiners that for an answer to be secure in Level 3 it must be supported with specific factual detail.

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 the weaknesses of the League in the context of the 1930s. For example, students argued that had aggressive nations not challenged the League as they did, the absence of the USA may not have been a limiting factor. With regard to Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar the vast majority of students were awarded 3 marks for the standard of their historical communication.

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## **BC 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 NATO and made sensible inferences from the content to show why the source was supportive of NATO. 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 purpose or terms of the NATO alliance to explain the image or the caption were able to access Level 2. Some students made use of the provenance or 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 demonstrated sound and appropriate source evaluation skills. Most students attempted analysis of the sources using a combination of content and provenance. Some students wrote about what the sources omitted particularly with regard to the expansion of Communism in China. Whilst the question permits students to discuss the limitations of the sources, those limitations have to be relevant to the question. Students who have considerable knowledge about the focus of a question often take the opportunity, in the examination, to dismiss out of hand, sources which do not mention something they know about. In this case, the question was about Soviet expansion in rather than the worldwide spread of Communism. 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 awarded for basic understanding of either source. Students writing at this level found Source B more accessible than C and were able to achieve marks by simple references to Stalin's aggressive attacks on the named countries. Weaker answers were characterised by a description of the content of both sources and unfocused factual knowledge. Answers at Level 2 included more contextual knowledge of the establishment of communist governments in Eastern Europe. However, it was common at Level 2 to see students copying out parts of Source C and they frequently used the term 'reliable' in their answers which was a misreading of the question and restricted the value of the response. There is still a tendency to allege that a source is biased without offering any substantiation for such a claim.

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 significance of American finance was used to identify the anti-communist motives of the poster and draw a conclusion about its utility. This was often linked to knowledge about the Marshall Plan and US fears of Soviet expansion. Similarly, developed evaluations of the motives for the publication of Source C were awarded Level 3. Many students correctly identified that the booklet was an example of indoctrination and that its purpose was to promulgate communist propaganda. There was ample detailed knowledge shown about the circumstances in which the USSR liberated Poland from the Nazis and established a new form of dictatorship. The better answers used this to challenge the message of the content and offer their own version of what 'transformation' meant in practice. 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.

The main way students demonstrated evidence of complex level thinking was in answers that considered the sources as a pair and concluded for example, that they provided an historian with a

dual perspective on Soviet expansion. Some students showed perception in recognising that these sources encapsulate the essence of the Cold War because they showed the historian that whilst the West viewed Soviet expansion as a threat, the communists in the East presented their ideology as liberating.

### **Question 3**

This question was done well by the majority of students. There was widespread evidence of general knowledge and understanding about the effect of building the Berlin Wall and most students could identify some simple consequences on the levels of tension in the Cold War. Level 1 answers focused mainly on a narrative of events surrounding the wall's construction or the effect of families being split apart on either side of the wall. Answers which focused exclusively on the causes of the wall being built remained at Level 1 because the focus of the question was on consequences. The majority of answers at Level 2 had specific relevant knowledge – usually in relation to the incident at Checkpoint Charlie.

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 Cold War tension. The most frequent response was to explain how the wall was a tangible sign of the tension between East and West or that the Check point Charlie incident might have escalated into open conflict.

Students at the top level demonstrated complex thinking by considering the incident not only in relation to the local tension in Berlin but also the wider context of tension between the superpowers as seen in propaganda generated by President Kennedy's visit.

### **Question 4**

Some very good 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. A common weakness when students had insecure knowledge about the Korean War or the 1950s, was to try to make an argument 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 arms race in non-specific terms. Level 2 answers included some specific relevant knowledge of the causes or outcome of the Korean War. Most students could give a simple explanation of how this conflict challenged US supremacy and left a question mark over the policy of containment. Other examples of Level 2 answers were simple outlines of the concept of proxy war, the development of Sputnik satellites or the signing of the Warsaw Pact.

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 and others with a detailed explanation. These explanations usually concentrated on the background, events and consequences of the Korean War. The strongest answers at this level were effective because there was a clear line of argument that included other factors in depth such as the Nuclear Arms, and Space race, the Warsaw Pact and Hungary. Whilst students seemed to find it easy to make an argument about how the Soviet reaction to the Hungarian Uprising caused tension between the superpowers, there was a lot of information about the arms race 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 or explained the resulting tension. Furthermore, many good two-sided 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 direct confrontation in Korea of Communist and UN troops was the most significant factor because it involved both superpowers. Many Level 4 answers were able to link several episodes together such as the USSR boycott of UN in 1950 indirectly causing an escalation of the conflict in Korea. With regard to Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar the vast majority of students were awarded 3 marks for the standard of their historical communication.

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## **BD 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 guerrilla warfare and made sensible inferences from the content to show why the source was supportive of the Vietcong. Answers that relied on simple analysis of the source were rewarded at Level 1. Answers that drew on specific contextual knowledge about the Vietcong to explain the image or the caption were able to access Level 2. Several students made use of the provenance and 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 demonstrated sound and appropriate source evaluation skills. Most students attempted analysis of the sources using a combination of content and provenance. Some students wrote 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. Students who have considerable knowledge about the focus of a question often take the opportunity, in the examination, to dismiss out of hand, sources which do not mention something they know about. In this case, the question was about the Korean War rather than the Cold War as a whole. 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 awarded for basic understanding of either source or generic evaluation of the provenance. Students' answers at Level 2 included more contextual knowledge of the reasons for America's involvement in the Korean War with references to 'Domino Theory' and containment. Writing at this level showed a good understanding of Source B's utility by explaining that the USA was in danger of over-committing itself in Europe and an evaluation of Source C with references to the war's death toll. Weaker answers were characterised by a broad description of the content of both sources and unfocused factual knowledge. However, it was also common at Level 2 to see students copying out parts of Source B and frequent use of the term 'reliable' in their answers which was a misreading of the question and restricted the value of the response. There is still a tendency to allege that a source is biased without offering any substantiation for such a claim.

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 significance of Source B being a secret report was used to argue that it showed an historian there were differing attitudes within the American government. Many students correctly identified that the Source C showed negative public opinion in America towards the government's policy. 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.

The main way students demonstrated evidence of complex level thinking was in answers that considered the sources as a pair and concluded, for example, that they provided an historian with a dual perspective on America's involvement in the Korean War. In combination they explained the rationale behind the policy of containment and also the limitations of this policy, and illustrated the public's objections to it.

**Question 3**

This question was done well by many students, although several examiners reported instances where it was not attempted. There was widespread evidence of general knowledge and understanding about the Gulf of Tonkin incident and most students could identify some simple consequences.

Level 1 answers focused mainly on a 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 consequences and the escalation of the Vietnam conflict. The majority of answers at Level 2 had some simple but relevant knowledge – usually in relation to the enhancement of President Johnson’s power to engage in wider military action.

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 escalation. The most frequent response was to explain how the incident led to a new strategy in the form of Operation Rolling Thunder.

Students at the top level demonstrated complex thinking by considering the incident not only in relation to the local tension in Vietnam but also in a wider global context of relations between the superpowers as the USSR provided support to North Vietnam.

**Question 4**

Some very good 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 end of the conflict was that they wrote in more general terms about the reasons why America failed to win.

Level 1 responses tended to be limited to a general identification of an example of Anti War protest such as at Kent State University. Level 2 answers included more specific relevant knowledge about the Anti-War movement such as Veterans’ protests. Most students could give a simple explanation of how this affected the President in terms of lack of popular support in turn creating pressure to end the war. Other examples of Level 2 answers were simple outlines of America’s inability to defeat Vietcong guerrilla tactics or the impact on public opinion of media coverage of the 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 and others with a detailed explanation. These explanations usually concentrated on the Nixon’s campaign commitment to ending the war. The strongest answers at this level were effective because there was a clear line of argument that included other factors in depth such as the cost, death toll, draft dodging and unsuitability of the US military hardware or personnel for jungle warfare. Crucially, high level answers also showed knowledge of the process by which the Paris Peace Accord was achieved and they related this directly to the question. However, many good two-sided 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 examples of this as students were able to explain the relative significance of the different factors and identify an inter-relationship. For example, students concluded that that the Anti-war

movement influenced public opinion to such an extent that ending the war became a political imperative. With regard to Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar the vast majority of students were awarded 3 marks for the standard of their historical communication.

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**BE Conflict and tension in the Gulf and Afghanistan, 1990 – 2009****Question 1**

This question proved straightforward and accessible. The source allowed students to show their understanding and the full range of marks was awarded. Students were able to use their knowledge of Karzai's dependence on the USA and made sensible inferences from the content to show why the source was critical of him. Answers that relied on simple analysis of the source were rewarded at Level 1. Answers that drew on specific contextual knowledge about his corruption or inaction to explain the image were able to access Level 2. Several students made use of the provenance and the date to explain the purpose of the source and account for the timing of its publication.

**Question 2**

This question saw 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 and provenance but nevertheless the responses lacked sustained focus on the question. The analysis was presented in isolation and not always linked to utility or the focus of the question. Some students wrote about what the sources omitted. It was noticed that many students seemed to follow a taught routine of writing first what each source could be used for and what it told you, followed by a second paragraph saying what the sources did not tell you and why they were not useful. Whilst the question permits students to discuss the limitations of the sources, those limitations have to be relevant to the question. Students who have considerable knowledge about the stated factor, often take the opportunity, in the examination, to dismiss out of hand, 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 awarded for basic understanding of either source. There were many descriptive responses with simple inferences, the most common being how Saddam was being compared to Hitler as an equally evil dictator, with some evidence in support (e.g. Saddam invaded neighbouring countries like Hitler, and both persecuted other ethnic groups). However, there was often too much irrelevant factual knowledge of Hitler's foreign policy. Answers that included more contextual knowledge on the events of the invasion of Kuwait and the Gulf War were placed in Level 2. Some students made use of the provenance of B by referring to its Australian origin and explaining how this made it useful for understanding how the international coalition viewed Saddam. However, it was also common at Level 2 to see discuss the reliability of the sources, rather than their utility. There is still a tendency to allege that a source is biased without offering any substantiation for such a claim.

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. For example, understanding of the significance of Saddam Hussein's motives in making the speech in Source C was used to identify the purpose of persuading people to support the war. Strong responses also saw students use their own knowledge to challenge the content of the source.

The main way students demonstrated evidence of complex level thinking was in answers that considered the sources as a pair and concluded for example that they provided an historian with a dual perspective on the Gulf War.

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**Question 3**

There was widespread evidence of general knowledge and understanding about the effect of attacks on 11th September in response to this question. Most students could identify some simple consequences such as the 'War of Terror'.

Level 1 answers focused mainly on a descriptive narrative of events. Answers which focused exclusively on the events remained at Level 1 because the focus of the question was on consequences. The majority of answers at Level 2 had specific relevant knowledge – usually in relation to the invasion of Afghanistan.

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 escalation of the conflict on an international level. The most frequent response was to explain how the incident led to a wider coalition forming as 'Operation Enduring Freedom'.

Students at the top level demonstrated complex thinking by considering the incident not only in relation to the local escalation of the conflict but also the wider context of tension between the coalition powers who disagreed over how best to respond to the crisis.

**Question 4**

Some very good 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. A common weakness when students had insecure knowledge was to try to make an argument based on events that went far beyond the dates of the question; some students discussed consequences up to 2010.

Level 1 responses tended to be limited to a general description of al-Qaeda. There were some better responses at Level 2 that dealt briefly with al-Qaeda and other alternative reasons, particularly WMDs and Saddam's treatment of Kurds and Shias. A smaller number also included a wider range of alternative reasons such as oil and Iraq's threat to Israel. Some confused important issues; some believed that Al Qaeda was a person, and that Iraq was sheltering him. Other common errors included the belief that Saddam Hussein was the ruler of Afghanistan and it was he who refused to hand over Al Qaeda/Bin Laden. Students also confused the 2003 invasion of Iraq with the 1991 Gulf War, or with the 2001 invasion of Afghanistan.

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 and they directly addressed the stated factor and other factors with a detailed explanation. These explanations usually concentrated on the causes and events of the invasion of Iraq. The strongest answers at this level were effective because there was a clear line of argument that introduced other distinct causal factors of the invasion such as the US wanting to protect oil supplies and bring about a regime change. However, many good two-sided 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 usually by explaining the relative significance of the different factors. For example, the coalition remained in Iraq even though Bin Laden had been captured which suggests that they were wider motives than defeating al-Qaeda. With regard to Spelling,

Punctuation and Grammar the vast majority of students were awarded 3 marks for the standard of their historical communication.

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

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