

AS

# History

7041/2N The Russian Revolution and the Rise of Stalin, 1917- 1929  
Report on the Examination

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7041  
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**Question 01**

Most students were able to recognise the context of Source A and apply some of their own knowledge in explanation. There was more variation in the quality of comments on the provenance and tone of Source A. In Level 3, these comments tended to be restricted to rather superficial observations that Lenin was the leader of the Bolsheviks therefore he would know why they were introducing the NEP. Better responses were able to balance this against the suggestion that Lenin may have been downplaying the role of the Bolsheviks' policy of war communism in creating the 'devastation' and 'ruin'. Alternatively, some students effectively argued that his aim was to be persuasive in order to get the party to accept the NEP and, therefore, this would influence the content and therefore value of the speech.

Source B proved to be far more challenging for most students. There were quite a few responses which assumed that Source B was about the NEP and, as a result, struggled to get out of Level 2 because they did not demonstrate any effective understanding of one of the sources. Level 3 responses often used the Tambov and Kronstadt risings as contextual evidence to support Source B, but comments on provenance were often limited to fairly superficial observations that the SRs and Kronstadters were opponents of the Bolsheviks in 1921 and, therefore, the source might exaggerate or be 'biased'. Stronger responses dealt with Source B well, often arguing that the provenance and tone are valuable as they show the strength of feeling of the workers and Kronstadters against the regime, which caused the NEP to be introduced.

**Question 02**

This was the more popular of the two essay questions, and it produced a wide range of quality of responses. At the weaker end, students struggled to identify material precisely relevant to the question. There was quite a lot of content about events from February to October 1917, which had little relevance to the question. There were a number of generalised comments about repression of other political parties/opposition, which lacked any specific context to the period between October and December 1917.

Level 3 responses tended to show an understanding of the question but provided a limited range and depth of supporting information, perhaps providing just one or two points on either side of the argument. There were a significant number of responses in this level which lacked precision over dates. For example, the closing down of the Constituent Assembly (January 1918) was frequently used as evidence to support the statement. Better responses recognised that this event is more relevant to the opposite argument that the Bolsheviks had not secured their control firmly by the end of December 1917.

However, there were a number of strong responses to this question which provided a good range of points on each side of the argument. Most often these included the establishment of Sovnarkom, the 'Decrees', and the creation of the Cheka and of Vesenkha in favour of the argument. Points against the argument often included the election for the Constituent Assembly, the continuation of the First World War until Brest-Litovsk, and the outbreak of the Civil War. Able students used this evidence to reach effective judgements in direct response to the question.

**Question 03**

There were fewer Level 2 answers to this question than in response to 02. Most students were able to explain, to some degree, how collectivisation could have improved Soviet agriculture and were able to balance this against at least one or two other factors explaining why Stalin introduced the policy. The main differential in quality of response was the range and depth of explanation and of supporting information offered.

Level 3 answers tended to provide a rather generalised explanation of how collectivisation may have improved agriculture. These often involved references to the Civil War and war communism alongside mention of famine and grain shortages. Stronger responses were more specific about the context of 1927-29 often providing references to the 'Procurement Crisis'.

In dealing with 'other factors', Level 3 answers tended to lack a range of points and provided limited depth of detail and explanation in support. A common feature of such responses was to treat industrialisation and the increased efficiency of agriculture as separate factors without recognising the strong links between them. Answers placed in Level 4, and above, often showed a good awareness of the links between greater agricultural efficiency and the Five Year Plan. These stronger responses also demonstrated an awareness that Stalin's decision to introduce collectivisation was multi-faceted, combining the points mentioned above along with Stalin's personal political motives and the wider ideological desire to create a more socialist economy, as well as his desire to eliminate 'class enemies'.

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

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