AQA

AS
History

Democracy and Nazism: Germany, 1918–1945
Component 20 The Weimar Republic, 1918–1933
Mark scheme

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June 2017

Democracy and Nazism: Germany, 1918–1945

AS History Component 2O The Weimar Republic, 1918–1933

Section A

01 With reference to these sources and your understanding of the historical context, which of these two sources is more valuable in explaining the extent of support for the new Republic of 1918? **[25 marks]**

Target: AO2

Analyse and evaluate appropriate source material, primary and/or contemporary to the period, within the historical context.

Generic Mark Scheme

L5: Answers will display a very good understanding of the value of the sources in relation to the issue identified in the question. They will evaluate the sources thoroughly in order to provide a well-substantiated conclusion. The response demonstrates a very good understanding of context. **21-25**

L4: Answers will provide a range of relevant well-supported comments on the value of the sources for the issue identified in the question. There will be sufficient comment to provide a supported conclusion but not all comments will be well-substantiated, and judgements will be limited. The response demonstrates a good understanding of context. **16-20**

L3: The answer will provide some relevant comments on the value of the sources and there will be some explicit reference to the issue identified in the question. Judgements will however, be partial and/or thinly supported. The response demonstrates an understanding of context. **11-15**

L2: The answer will be partial. There may be either some relevant comments on the value of one source in relation to the issue identified in the question or some comment on both, but lacking depth and have little, if any, explicit link to the issue identified in the question. The response demonstrates some understanding of context. **6-10**

L1: The answer will either describe source content or offer stock phrases about the value of the source. There may be some comment on the issue identified in the question but it is likely to be limited, unsubstantiated and unconvincing. The response demonstrates limited understanding of context. **1-5**

Nothing worthy of credit. **0**

Indicative content

Note: This content is not prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels scheme.

Students must deploy knowledge of the historical context to show an understanding of the relationship between the sources and the issues raised in the question. When assessing the significance of provenance, the arguments deployed in the sources and the tone and emphasis of the sources should be used. Descriptive answers which fail to do this should be awarded no more than Level 2 at best. Answers should address both the value and the limitations of the sources for the particular question and purpose given.

In responding to this question, students may choose to address each source in turn or to adopt a more comparative approach in order to arrive at a judgement. Either approach is equally valid and what follows is indicative of the evaluation which may be relevant.

Source A: **in assessing the value of this source as an explanation, students may refer to the following**:

Provenance and tone

- this is an announcement directed to the people of Germany about the setting up of the Republic with the purpose of getting the support of the people; as a proclamation it is of value for presenting an immediate response to the setting up of the Republic and capturing the enthusiasm that some felt for this new government
- it is printed in the SDP's newspaper, so this is a limitation in that we can expect it to portray a one-sided picture regarding public support for the new government as Ebert was President of the SDP. The date of the publication means the extent of public support would be unclear at so early a stage in the formation of the Weimar Republic
- as might be expected of a proclamation from the SDP, the tone is very upbeat and positive stressing the democratic nature of the new government in very broad terms and presenting it as victory for the people.

Content and argument

- it claims that the Kaiser and Crown Prince have abdicated. In actual fact, the Kaiser did not abdicate until after it had been announced. However, the Kaiser had no choice in abdicating as he was told that the army would no longer support him
- it stresses that the new government consists of men who have the trust of the workers and soldiers. In fact the new government lacked legitimacy at this point and street demonstrations and strikes continued
- it promises that there will be discussions to create a new constitution; Ebert's priority after 11 November was to organise elections for a Constituent Assembly.

Source B: **in assessing the value of this source as an explanation, students may refer to the following**:

Provenance and tone

- this is a speech designed to inspire action against the government so it can be expected to be forceful and to use exaggerated style language to get its message over which could limit its value
- it is by Rosa Luxembourg who was one of the leaders of the Spartacist League and thus is of value for showing the aims and views of the left-wing opposition. The date is relevant as it is 6 days before the Spartacist uprising
- the tone is aggressive and angry towards the new government and militant in its demand for action against the government.

Content and argument

- Rosa talks of the events of the last few days as being a 'bitter awakening from our dreams' and the social revolution being 'strangled'. This is a reference to the government's use of the army to put down a sailors' revolt that had taken place 23/24 December
- Rosa emphasises that the government represents bourgeois counter-revolution. This ties in with the belief of the Spartacists who wanted the government to be controlled by the workers and soldiers' councils and industry nationalised etc; Ebert was not a revolutionary and had promised the army to resist the demands of the soldiers' councils and prevent a Bolshevik style revolution taking place. The Ebert-Groener Pact linked the new government with the army
- Rosa argues that the existing state of affairs cannot be tolerated. Thus, on 6 January there was an uprising by the Spartacists which was eventually crushed.

In arriving at a judgement as to which source might be of greater value, students may conclude that (e.g.) Source B is more useful for showing the extent of public support, given that Source A is from the government itself. However, Source B only represents the views of the extreme left-wing which is planning a rebellion against the government, and so does not give a clear idea of the extent of public support overall.

Section B

02 'The Weimar Republic failed to achieve political stability in the years 1924 to 1928.'

Explain why you agree or disagree with this view. **[25 marks]**

Target: AO1

Demonstrate, organise and communicate knowledge and understanding to analyse and evaluate the key features related to the periods studied, making substantiated judgements and exploring concepts, as relevant, of cause, consequence, change, continuity, similarity, difference and significance.

Generic Mark Scheme

L5: Answers will display a good understanding of the demands of the question. They will be well-organised and effectively communicated. There will be a range of clear and specific supporting information showing a good understanding of key features and issues, together with some conceptual awareness. The answer will be analytical in style with a range of direct comment leading to substantiated judgement. **21-25**

L4: Answers will show an understanding of the question and will supply a range of largely accurate information which will show an awareness of some of the key issues and features. The answer will be effectively organised and show adequate communication skills. There will be analytical comment in relation to the question and the answer will display some balance. However, there may be some generalisation and judgements will be limited and only partially substantiated. **16-20**

L3: The answer will show some understanding of the full demands of the question and the answer will be adequately organised. There will be appropriate information showing an understanding of some key features and/or issues but the answer may be limited in scope and/or contain inaccuracy and irrelevance. There will be some comment in relation to the question. **11-15**

L2: The answer will be descriptive or partial, showing some awareness of the question but a failure to grasp its full demands. There will be some attempt to convey material in an organised way although communication skills may be limited. There will be some appropriate information showing understanding of some key features and/or issues, but the answer may be very limited in scope and/or contain inaccuracy and irrelevance. There will be some, but limited, comment in relation to the question and statements will, for the most part, be unsupported and generalist. **6-10**

L1: The question has not been properly understood and the response shows limited organisational and communication skills. The information conveyed is irrelevant or extremely limited. There may be some unsupported, vague or generalist comment. **1-5**

Nothing worthy of credit. **0**

Indicative content

Note: This content is not prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels scheme.

Arguments suggesting that the Weimar Republic failed to achieve political stability in the years 1924 to 1928 might include:

- the fundamental weaknesses of the Weimar Republic remained re the electoral system; there were six coalition governments during this period indicating that governments still lacked stability
- the circumstances in which the Weimar Republic had been created still undermined stability; the legacy of the Treaty of Versailles continued to create political division
- there was still a lack of support for the Republic from the right and the left wing which reduced the chances of stability
- due to the weakness of the governments, there was an absence of long-term planning and thus no national programme emerged. Much time was spent on narrow party politics and unimportant issues, e.g. the dispute over the German flags.

Arguments challenging the view that the Weimar Republic failed to achieve political stability in the years 1924 to 1928 might include:

- there was a decrease in violence in these years and no direct military attack on the government which was in contrast to the years preceding 1924
- extreme left wing and right parties lost support during these years which indicates that more people were accepting the Weimar Republic
- when Hindenburg was appointed President he appeared to support the Weimar constitution and this seemed to indicate that traditional conservatives now accepted the new government.

Good answers are likely to show an awareness that although the years 1924 to 1928 were relatively stable in comparison to the preceding years, in fact there had been no fundamental change in how elections were run and thus the coalition governments that emerged remained weak and unstable. There was also no fundamental change in attitudes towards the Republic; indeed the behaviour of the successive Weimar governments only deepened distrust against its democratic institutions thus preventing long-term stability.

N.B. It is valid to link political stability to the issues of the economy and foreign policy but only if that link is explicit and developed. Answers which simply cover these areas descriptively should not be rewarded above level 2.

03 'Support for the Nazi Party increased in the years 1930 to 1932 mainly because of the fear of communism.'

Explain why you agree or disagree with this view. **[25 marks]**

Target: AO1

Demonstrate, organise and communicate knowledge and understanding to analyse and evaluate the key features related to the periods studied, making substantiated judgements and exploring concepts, as relevant, of cause, consequence, change, continuity, similarity, difference and significance.

Generic Mark Scheme

L5: Answers will display a good understanding of the demands of the question. They will be well-organised and effectively communicated. There will be a range of clear and specific supporting information showing a good understanding of key features and issues, together with some conceptual awareness. The answer will be analytical in style with a range of direct comment leading to substantiated judgement. **21-25**

L4: Answers will show an understanding of the question and will supply a range of largely accurate information which will show an awareness of some of the key issues and features. The answer will be effectively organised and show adequate communication skills. There will be analytical comment in relation to the question and the answer will display some balance. However, there may be some generalisation and judgements will be limited and only partially substantiated. **16-20**

L3: The answer will show some understanding of the full demands of the question and the answer will be adequately organised. There will be appropriate information showing an understanding of some key features and/or issues but the answer may be limited in scope and/or contain inaccuracy and irrelevance. There will be some comment in relation to the question. **11-15**

L2: The answer will be descriptive or partial, showing some awareness of the question but a failure to grasp its full demands. There will be some attempt to convey material in an organised way although communication skills may be limited. There will be some appropriate information showing understanding of some key features and/or issues, but the answer may be very limited in scope and/or contain inaccuracy and irrelevance. There will be some, but limited, comment in relation to the question and statements will, for the most part, be unsupported and generalist. **6-10**

L1: The question has not been properly understood and the response shows limited organisational and communication skills. The information conveyed is irrelevant or extremely limited. There may be some unsupported, vague or generalist comment. **1-5**

Nothing worthy of credit. **0**

Indicative content

Note: This content is not prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels scheme.

Arguments suggesting that support for the Nazi Party increased in the years 1930 to 1932 mainly because of the fear of communism might include:

- the years 1930–1932 saw a growth in support for the KPD and this frightened German middle classes and business people who feared a revolution similar to that which had happened in Russia
- the actions of the SA, in attacking Communists in the streets and creating the impression that they were maintaining order, further helped to convince the middle classes that only the Nazis could contain the spread of Communism
- the Weimar Republic seemed unable to deal with the Communists so middle class people had no alternative but to vote for a party that appeared to be dealing with them.

Arguments challenging the view that support for the Nazi Party increased in the years 1930 to 1932 mainly because of the fear of communism might include:

- Nazi views which focused on the overthrow of the Treaty of Versailles, blaming the Jews for German misfortunes and returning to 'German values' all had appeal to much of the population
- Hitler's charisma and skill of oratory won over many voters
- Goebbels' skill in managing the propaganda of the Party via posters, leaflets, rallies and marches
- the worsening economic situation and the failure of Brüning's deflationary policies.

Good students may argue it was a combination of several factors that led to increased electoral success. Hitler seemed to many to be the strong leader who could revive Germany, and the powerful propaganda machine meant that Germans were fully aware of a range of Nazi views which were all appealing in the economic depression years. However, the fear of Communism and the threat of revolution was probably a key factor for explaining the electoral support for the Nazi Party from the middle classes and the business community.