

HISTORY (US)

Paper 0416/11

Paper 11

General Comments and Key Messages

A significant number of candidates were able to demonstrate sound factual knowledge of both the Core and the Depth Study for which they had been prepared. These candidates were able to use their knowledge to good effect in writing well developed explanations and arguments in answers to their chosen questions. Some candidates, whilst demonstrating sound factual knowledge, found it difficult to use their knowledge effectively to answer the actual question set. Parts **(b)** and **(c)** of the questions require understanding and explanation. Some responses would have been improved by candidates' using factual knowledge to explain events, rather than deploying a purely narrative approach.

A small number of candidates wrote very lengthy responses to part **(a)** questions, which resulted in them having insufficient time to fully develop their responses to part **(c)** questions. More effective time planning would have benefited such responses. There were a small number of rubric errors; some candidates chose parts **(a)**, **(b)** and **(c)** from different questions, whilst some answered more than three questions. Generally, however, candidates used the time allocated effectively, with the majority completing the paper.

Comments on Specific Questions

Section A – Core Content

Question 1

- (a)** Candidates needed to show knowledge of the part played by Guizot in the events leading to the revolution in France in 1848, and some candidates were able to state that Guizot had banned a Reform Banquet. Other answers were more general, simply stating that Guizot was involved in some way.
- (b)** Candidates were able to identify general points relating to people wanting change, being unhappy, and wanting freedom; these points needed to be made relevant specifically to Hungary. There was some awareness of Kossuth's involvement; this identified point was developed into explanation in better responses.
- (c)** Some candidates developed explanations about the success of revolution in France, concentrating primarily upon the reforms introduced by Louis Napoleon. More references could have been made to success or failure of revolution in other European countries, so that more than one side of the argument was considered.

Questions 2 and 3

The limited number of responses to these questions prevents useful comment.

Question 4

- (a)** There were a number of clearly focused responses to this question, detailing economic and religious justifications, with some candidates also detailing justifications based on the South's belief in white superiority. A number of candidates described the life of slaves, rather than detailing the South's justification for using slaves.
- (b)** Some candidates were able to identify that the North had larger armies, more manufacturing industry and the majority of the railways. A number of candidates developed these identified points into explanations, explaining that the North had the advantage industrially, which meant that they

had much greater capacity for producing weapons and supplies needed for war. Some candidates offered generalised answers, stating mainly that the North was more powerful than the South.

- (c) Better responses explained both the success of reconstruction in improving life for black Americans, and the other side of the argument, by looking at the Ku Klux Klan's intimidation of former slaves. Other answers identified these same points without developing them into explanations.

Question 5

- (a) Most candidates were aware that the Rhineland was demilitarised and knew what demilitarisation entailed. Some candidates also made several valid points about Danzig, focusing on its status as a free city under the control of the League of Nations. This question was specific in nature, and asked about statements in the Treaty of Versailles relevant to the Rhineland and Danzig only. Some candidates wrote at length about terms of the Treaty other than the ones requested in the question, resulting in responses which lacked relevance.
- (b) There were some well focused answers to this question. Effective responses made clear comparisons between the victors to illustrate and explain why they were not free to make the peace they wanted. Comparisons focused on the level of Germany's punishment, different experiences of the war and the need to respond to the demands of the people in their individual countries. Less successful answers tended to list the aims of the victors without explaining why this meant they were not free to make the peace they wanted.
- (c) Answers to this question demonstrated that candidates had detailed factual knowledge of the terms of the Treaty of Versailles. A number of candidates used this knowledge effectively to explain justification linked to the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk and to the desire to punish Germany. Arguments explaining the lack of justification focused on the effects of military restrictions on Germany and the role of nations other than Germany in the outbreak of war. The question asked 'at the time' and some candidates appeared to miss this, resulting in answers that struggled to remain relevant throughout.

Question 6

- (a) There were some concise and focused answers to this question, mentioning the role of the Assembly in admitting new members, controlling the League's budget, voting on the election of temporary members of the Council and discussing ideas put forward by the Council. Some answers focused solely on the aims of the League, rather than upon the role of the Assembly within the League. It was also the case that some answers focused on the role of the Council. An awareness of the distinct roles of the Assembly and the Council within the League would have improved some responses.
- (b) Some candidates used their contextual knowledge effectively here, developing focused explanations about the absence of the USA and the League not having its own army which affected the potential success of collective security. Some candidates described the concept of collective security, but then needed to develop this description to explain why collective security was unlikely to be successful. A clear understanding of the concept of collective security, and why it was unlikely to work, would have benefited some responses.
- (c) Candidates demonstrated detailed knowledge of the successes and failures of the League of Nations, both in dealing with disputes between member nations and in their humanitarian work. Explanations of success usually focused on the Aaland Islands dispute, Upper Silesia, Greece and Bulgaria, and humanitarian work. Explanations of failure focused mainly on Corfu, with some explanation of Vilna. Some candidates introduced irrelevant material into their answers by detailing events in Manchuria and Abyssinia, when the question asked about the 1920s.

Question 7

- (a) Many candidates stated that the UN organised a meeting of the Security Council and that troops were deployed. A number of candidates wrote in detail about the UN's involvement throughout the Korean War, rather than the UN's immediate response in June 1950.

- (b) Most candidates were able to identify the policy of containment and/or concerns about American interests in the Far East as reasons why the US provided most of the forces that resisted North Korea's invasion of the South. Identifications about containment needed to be linked to the point that North Korea was communist; this would have enabled some candidates to develop a clearer explanation.
- (c) Effective responses to this question explained the threat to world peace by focusing on the involvement of the US, China and the USSR, and how the situation could easily have escalated into a conflict threatening world peace. MacArthur's desire to use nuclear weapons was also developed as an explanation of the threat to world peace. On the other side of the argument, explanation centred on the UN's prompt response to the aggression of North Korea, and also on the US's dismissal of MacArthur. Some candidates wrote at length about the Cuban Missile Crisis and the Vietnam War, with only a cursory mention of the situation in Korea. Lengthy descriptions of the events of the Cuban Missile Crisis and the Vietnam War were not relevant to this question.

Question 8

- (a) Description here was related mostly to Nagy's announcement that Hungary was going to leave the Warsaw Pact, the arrival of Soviet troops in Hungary and the response to their arrival. Candidates needed to be aware of the chronology of events in Hungary at this time; some responses included description of events before 23 October 1956, and also description of events in Poland related to Solidarity, rather than events in Hungary.
- (b) Most candidates were able to give one explanation focused on the lack of freedom under the Communist regime. Some candidates would have benefited from an awareness of the specific details explaining why Hungarians opposed communist rule in their country, such as the role of the AVO, the persecution of the Catholic Church, and Soviet control of education.
- (c) Responses to this question showed an awareness of a number of differences and similarities between events in Hungary in 1956 and events in Czechoslovakia in 1968. Identifications given included differing views on membership of the Warsaw Pact, different reactions to Soviet invasion, both countries wanting to give their people more rights and both countries witnessing protest from their people. Some responses developed these identifications into explanations; answers needed to demonstrate how events were different and how they were similar by giving specific detail for each country.

Section B – Depth Studies

Question 9

- (a) A number of candidates identified that the British Expeditionary Force was Britain's standing army. More factual details about the British Expeditionary Force would have improved responses.
- (b) There were some detailed descriptions of the Schlieffen Plan and how it was expected to work in practice. The question asked why the Schlieffen Plan failed; better responses identified that the Belgians slowed down the German advance and that the exhaustion of the German soldiers was a factor, although these points needed further development into explanations.
- (c) Some candidates identified the Battle of the Marne as being the main reason for the development of trench warfare on the Western Front, while others identified the failure of the Schlieffen Plan as the main reason. Many candidates wrote lengthy descriptions of life in the trenches; such responses lacked focus on the question set.

Question 10

The limited number of responses to this question prevents useful comment.

Question 11

- (a) Detailed knowledge of Hitler's role in establishing the Nazi Party prior to 1923 was demonstrated by many candidates, with description of Hitler's oratory skills, his role in publicity and propaganda, his promotion to leader, his founding of the SA and the changing of the party name. A number of

candidates wrote about Hitler's role when he became Chancellor of Germany; such responses were not relevant to the actual question.

- (b) Whilst some candidates constructed developed explanations of Kahr going back on his word to support Hitler and Hitler's miscalculation of the German people's discontent with the Weimar Republic, many candidates wrote detailed narratives of the events of the Munich Putsch without explanation of why it failed. This narrative sometimes included some relevant identified reasons for the failure of the Putsch, but explanations needed to be developed.
- (c) Effective responses to this question developed clear explanations of the fear of industrialists and farmers that communism would completely erode their way of life, and explanation of Hitler's promises to combat this threat. On the other side of the argument, explanations of the importance of propaganda and the effects of the Depression as factors in the Nazis coming to power were clearly developed. A number of candidates wrote answers based on the Nazi consolidation of power, rather than on the Nazis coming to power.

Question 12

- (a) Many candidates demonstrated detailed knowledge of Nazi persecution of the Jews in the 1930s, including citing the banning of Jews from certain professions, Kristallnacht, the Nuremberg Laws, Jews being prohibited from owning land and Jews being compelled to wear the Star of David. Some candidates missed the phrase 'in the 1930s', and wrote at length about persecution in the 1940s.
- (b) There were some clearly developed explanations of the role of mass media in the indoctrination of the German people and thus its importance to the Nazis. Candidates were less confident about why culture was important; candidates needed to be aware of the nature of culture in Nazi Germany and why it was important for the Nazis.
- (c) Responses to this question showed a detailed understanding of the nature of Nazi control of the German people. Developed explanations of Nazi control through propaganda, fear, education, the Hitler Youth groups and positive control through rewards, were apparent in many responses. Understanding of lack of control was less developed. Candidates were aware that there was dissent, and identified groups such as the Swing Movement and the Edelweiss Pirates; explanation of how these groups showed the Nazis were not in control of the German people needed to be developed.

Question 13

- (a) Candidates demonstrated detailed knowledge of Lenin's 'Political Will', highlighting Lenin's mistrust of Stalin and the perception that Stalin would misuse power, and Lenin's preference for Trotsky as his successor as he felt Trotsky was the most capable man in the Central Committee. Some candidates also indicated Lenin's misgivings about Trotsky. Some responses stated only that Lenin preferred Trotsky to Stalin.
- (b) There were some very well developed explanations in response to this question. Explanations focused on Stalin tricking Trotsky into missing Lenin's funeral and the repercussions on Trotsky's reputation, Stalin's power as General Secretary of the Communist Party and Stalin's political manoeuvring with Rightist and Leftist opposition. Some answers contained material well beyond the date of 1928 which was stipulated in the question.
- (c) Arguments on both sides were clearly developed in response to this question. Clear understanding of the role of propaganda and fear was evident in answers, with explanation of the 'cult of Stalin', the role of the NKVD and fears centred on the purges and labour camps. A small number of candidates explained that positive control had a part to play, with explanation of people in the Soviet Union gaining employment and benefits for women in the workplace.

Question 14

- (a) Some knowledge of the New Economic Policy was demonstrated, with mention made that peasants could sell food surpluses on the open market and that grain production increased. Candidates needed to know the distinct features of the New Economic Policy and collectivisation; a number of responses focused on collectivisation rather than the New Economic Policy.

- (b) Most candidates demonstrated a clear understanding of Stalin's perception that collectivisation would make farms more efficient and thus combat the food shortages. There was also some explanation of more grain being needed for export to earn foreign currency, and of the need for more food for industrial workers. Some responses featured several identified points, including Stalin's desire to rid the countryside of the kulaks; points sometimes needed more effective development.
- (c) Answers showed a clear understanding of how the Soviet people did not benefit from Stalin's policies, with emphasis on factory discipline, poor living conditions for industrial workers, unrealistic production targets exacerbating the situation, and the adverse effects of collectivisation in the countryside. On the other side of the argument, some candidates mentioned that unemployment was almost non-existent and that workers could gain bonuses for meeting targets; these identified points needed to be developed into explanations.

Question 15

- (a) It was clear that many candidates had a detailed knowledge of popular entertainment in 1920s America. Relevant points made included the advent of new dances, the opening of nightclubs such as the Cotton Club, the release of the first 'talkie' movie, the increase in the number of radio stations and the increasing popularity of jazz. A number of candidates wrote at some length about popular entertainment without focusing on the changes. The question asked for the main changes in popular entertainment, so answers which simply described popular entertainment without focusing on change lacked relevance to the question.
- (b) Responses showed a developed understanding of the fear of a communist threat to the American way of life, and the belief that many immigrants had communist beliefs. The question had a specific time frame 'from 1919 to 1921' but some responses contained narratives of events in the 1950s and 1960s.
- (c) Detailed explanations of the harm prohibition caused to the US were given in response to this question. The increase in organised crime and corruption, the effects of moonshine and the effects on American tax revenue were all explained clearly. Candidates were less secure in their understanding of the other side of the argument. Many gave explanations of why prohibition was introduced, rather than explaining how prohibition could be perceived as not harming the US.

Question 16

- (a) Detailed knowledge was demonstrated of Roosevelt's actions during his first hundred days in office. Answers focused on the New Deal and the Alphabet Agencies, the Emergency Banking Act and the fireside chats.
- (b) Effective answers to this question explained Republican concerns that the New Deal was making people too dependent on the state and that schemes like the TVA and NRA were communist in nature. They also explained the concerns of those such as Huey Long that the New Deal was not helping those in need. A number of responses highlighted that many thought the New Deal was not doing enough to help the poor, or that the New Deal was doing too much; these points needed to be developed into clear explanations.
- (c) There were many clear and developed explanations of the New Deal's success in tackling unemployment, with reference made to the work of a number of different Alphabet Agencies. There was also explanation of the help given to farmers. On the other side of the argument, candidates explained the transient nature of the jobs provided by the New Deal, and how unemployment was not really adequately tackled until war production was introduced. Some answers listed agencies and described their main features without explaining how they solved the problems of the Depression.

Questions 17 to 22

The limited number of responses to these questions prevents useful comment.

HISTORY (US)

Paper 0416/21

Paper 21

General Comments and Key Messages

On this paper, source-handling skills are crucial. These constitute comprehension (what does the source say?), interpretation (what does the source mean?) and evaluation (how can the source be used as evidence?), all of which need to be demonstrated in the historical context established by the question paper. All the questions will test some or all of these skills, but the wording of each question determines which. Candidates need to shape their answers appropriately in relation to the question: for example, a question asking 'How far do these sources agree?' has a primary focus on comprehension and interpretation, but one asking 'How useful is this source?' clearly brings evaluation into the equation. The best answers understood what the questions demanded, and concentrated on that. Less successful answers lacked this relevance, and spent time writing about the sources, but not answering the question set.

There were more answers to the nineteenth century option than is usual. The incidence of incomplete scripts was low. The level of contextual knowledge demonstrated in candidates' answers was good, and the ability of candidates to evaluate sources in context, and in particular their awareness of the need to consider the issues of audience and purpose, continues to improve. There was some evidence of candidates not reading sources carefully enough; for example, despite the given provenance in Source G (20th century option), it was surprising to see how many answers stated that the speaker in the source was Chamberlain.

Comments on Specific Questions

Option A: 19th century topic

Question 1

The question asked for a comparison of two sources. Even though the question asked how far the sources agreed, good responses appreciated that this wording invited the identification of both agreements and disagreements. There were plenty of both in the sources, for example that both sources agreed that there was a stepping-up of military preparations, or disagreed on the relative strength of Germany, seen as strong in Source A, but weaker in Source B. However, it was also possible to discern authors' opinions in the sources, a more sophisticated reading than simply matching or mismatching content details. Both sources discussed the preventative war issue, but Source A was clearly less understanding of Germany's predicament than Source B. The best answers saw this difference. As always with comparison questions, the most effective approach is to concentrate on direct matching/mismatching – Source A says X, but Source B says Y. There are now relatively few answers that first summarise Source A, then Source B, and finally attempt comparison. There are though plenty of answers that start focused on matching/mismatching, but then stray off the point, perhaps into writing about the events, or going back to writing about a single source.

Question 2

The question asked about the utility of a source as evidence about German foreign policy. Some candidates thought this was asking what the source says; in effect, they saw it as a comprehension question, and missed the invitation to evaluate the source. For these candidates, the source was useful because of what it said, or slightly better, for what you could infer from what it said. Although these answers were valid in their own terms, they were missing the judgement required by the wording of the question – *How useful?* Different sources raise different issues of evaluation, often with reliability an important matter. Here, because of the nature of the source, the central issue was not whether the author was telling the truth, but whether the diary extract gave an accurate impression of German foreign policy in 1912. The best answers reached a judgement on this by looking outside the source (i.e. by cross-reference to contextual knowledge or other sources) for corroboration/rebuttal.

Question 3

The focus was on whether or not one source could prove another wrong. It depends on the nature of the sources and the claims made in them. Some candidates approach this kind of question as another matching/mismatching exercise: if the sources contradict, then certainly one will be wrong (but which?); if they agree, then both are right. Most concluded that Source D proved the Kaiser right because it said England, France and Russia will close in, which is what the Kaiser agrees with in Source E. The problem is that this ignores the question of whether or not you can believe what the sources say. The Kaiser's opinion on the causation of the war should certainly not be taken at face value, and House's view on the situation in Europe merely reflects isolationist, anti-British sentiments common in the USA at that time. Better answers noted the content matches/mismatches between the two sources, but rested their judgment of the issue of proof on an evaluation of the reliability of one or both of the sources.

Question 4

The key to answering 'Are you surprised?' questions is first for candidates to say whether or not they are surprised, and to identify what is found surprising/unsurprising. Only once this is done can candidates then proceed to explaining why. Here, whatever use was made of Source F, the question was asking whether candidates were surprised by Source G. On the face of it, Source G was unsurprising – the Kaiser was happy, calling for champagne, because Britain had promised French neutrality. Who wouldn't be happy in these circumstances? Most answers were based on this kind of common sense reasoning. Better candidates added in some historical context. By 1 August Russia had started mobilisation. Source F shows that Germany is committed to Austria. German war plans depend on a pre-emptive strike against France. How can the Kaiser possibly say he will abandon action against France? In context, this is very surprising. The best answers found a way to explain in context why a source was not surprising - there will always be a reason for what it says. Ultimately, the Kaiser's behaviour on 1 August is explicable only in relation to his volatile, unpredictable personality.

Question 5

Interpreting cartoons requires a good grasp of the context, but even with this, making sense of what a cartoon shows is demanding, as cartoonists routinely use humour, sarcasm and imagery to make their point. In short few cartoons can simply be taken at face value. In addition, most cartoons do not make a single point; indeed they will usually have many sub-messages (points that are made by part, but not all of the cartoon). Of course, there is always a 'big message' that sums up all of what the cartoonist wants to say, and detecting this is a better response than seeing only sub-messages. With Source H, sub-messages included the idea that there was no peace in Europe, or that countries blamed each other for breaking the peace, or that Italy wanted to stay aloof from European disputes. Candidates answering on these lines missed the significance of the pointing finger in the corner of the cartoon, accusing all of the European nations of being to blame for the war – which was the cartoonist's 'big message'. The very best answers focused more explicitly on the cartoonist's opinion, and how this was critical of European militarism.

Question 6

This question is about the sources, and the evidence they give in relation to the given hypothesis. If an answer makes no mention of the sources, it can receive only limited credit. Secondly, the question asks 'how far', which is a clear signal that the sources will contain evidence both for and against the hypothesis. Answers on one side only will therefore be limited in the credit they receive. Finally, the source content must be used to show how it either supports or questions the hypothesis, and it is this final requirement that some candidates find hard to satisfy. Ideally, using a source means the identification of an aspect of the source (not necessarily a quote, a précis will do just as well) that is relevant to the argument. However, identification of a relevant aspect may not on its own be sufficient; how it offers support or not may need to be explained. So, the hypothesis was that Germany was planning a preventative war. How about Source A? Candidates using the source produced responses such as: 'Source A supports the hypothesis because it says Germany wanted a war as part of its aim to alter the international political system.' But does this fully explain how the hypothesis is supported? Better responses were able to add some explanation: 'This means that Germany was thinking about war as a way of preventing international developments it did not want.' The best approach on this question is to go through each of the sources in turn, and many candidates die this. Those candidates who grouped the sources often drew conclusions about the group which were not true of all the sources in the group. Generally, most candidates achieved reasonable marks on this question, although this was sometimes a result of successfully using only a small number of the sources they had actually written about.

Option B: 20th century topic

Question 1

The question asked for a comparison of two sources. Even though the question asked how far the sources agreed, good responses appreciated that this wording invited the identification of both agreements and disagreements. There were plenty of both in the sources, for example that both sources agreed that Britain followed a policy of appeasement, or disagreed on whether or not Hitler would share Czechoslovakia (he wouldn't in Source A, he would in Source B). There was, though, an over-arching difference between the two sources in the impression they gave of Hitler. In Source A he is shown to want war and to be angry at losing the chance of it, but in Source B he is happy to avoid war and simply wait for events to deliver what he wants. The best answers saw this difference. With comparison questions, the most effective approach is to concentrate on direct matching/mismatching – Source A says X, but Source B says Y. There were relatively few answers that first summarised Source A, then Source B, and finally attempted comparison. There were though plenty of answers that started focused on matching/mismatching, but then strayed into writing about the events, or went back to writing about a single source.

Question 2

Successful answers needed candidates to be able to interpret the two cartoons. Source was well done, but Source D was misinterpreted by some, which made making valid comparisons harder. There were, nonetheless, some accessible approaches, generally on the idea that Hitler was troublesome/feared/powerful in both, so that Source D could be seen as supporting Source C. A frequent misinterpretation was to think that both sources showed that Hitler wanted to unite Germans (Source D does not show this). Differences were perhaps less obvious, though the idea that Source D shows that Hitler was going to attack the Soviet Union, whilst Source C shows that Hitler would attack wherever there were Germans was commonly used. The best candidates saw that the idea of one cartoon 'supporting' the other was more a matter of comparing the cartoonists' opinions, rather than matching/mismatching details from the cartoons. This could produce comparisons of the cartoonists' attitudes towards appeasement (both against) or on who was to blame for causing trouble (Hitler in Source C, Britain and France in Source D).

Question 3

The question asked about the utility of a source as evidence about Hitler's foreign policy. Some candidates thought that this was asking what the source says; in effect, they saw it as a comprehension question, and missed the invitation to evaluate the source. For these candidates, the source was useful because of what it said, or slightly better, for what could be inferred from what it said. Although these answers were valid in their own terms, they were missing the judgement required by the wording of the question – *How useful?* Different sources raise different issues of evaluation, often with reliability an important matter. Here, many candidates reached the conclusion that the source was not useful because Hitler was lying, and showed this using cross-reference to another source or, more commonly, to their background knowledge. More interesting were answers that used awareness of Hitler's purpose. These saw Source E as a deliberate attempt by Hitler to mislead in an attempt to get his own way over Czechoslovakia. Sometimes the conclusion was that this made the source unreliable, and so not useful, but better was to perceive the source as useful because of what could be learned from Hitler's purpose; for example, that it was useful as an example of the methods Hitler used to achieve his foreign policy aims.

Question 4

The key to answering 'Are you surprised?' questions is first for candidates to say whether or not they are surprised, and to identify what they find surprising or unsurprising. Only once this is done can they then proceed to explaining why. Here, whatever use was made of Source F, the question was asking whether candidates were surprised by Source G. It was unusual for an answer not to recognise the contradiction between the two sources, with most concluding that the difference made Source G surprising. As is usual, with this format of question, though, better answers could conclude that Source G was unsurprising once the context was taken into account. The most obvious way of explaining away the difference between the sources was to look at who produced them and why. Source F was a reflection of the public mood immediately post-Munich and had a clear purpose of supporting the government and reassuring the population, whilst Source G was spoken in parliament by an arch-opponent of appeasement, trying to warn that Munich was a disaster.

Question 5

When asked 'why' a source was produced, it is absolutely essential that the answer should contain a reason. Some candidates interpreted the source, but neglected to give a reason why it was published. Reasons could fall into three categories: context, i.e. because of what was happening at that time; message, i.e. in order to say something to the audience; and purpose, i.e. so as to produce an impact on the feelings or behaviour of the audience. Better answers put categories together to give a more developed response so, for example, whilst it was valid to reply, as many candidates did, that the reason for publication was that the war had just broken out (context), or that the cartoonist wanted to boost the morale of the British people (purpose), better responses were capable of putting the two together and saying that the reason was that Britain had declared war on Germany a couple of days before so the cartoonist wanted to stiffen the resolve of the British people in the fight to come. Interestingly, the interpretation of the cartoon proved challenging for some candidates, who often assumed that it meant Hitler did not want war. Nonetheless, many gave excellent interpretations incorporating contextual knowledge, saying that the message was that whilst Hitler had anticipated a small war over Poland, he had been taken by surprise by the response of Britain and France which meant that he would now be dealing with an unwanted 'big war'.

Question 6

This question is about the sources, and the evidence they give in relation to the given hypothesis. If an answer does not mention of the sources, it can only receive limited credit. Secondly, the question asks 'how far', which is a clear signal that the sources will contain evidence both for and against the hypothesis. Answers on one side only will therefore be limited in the credit they receive. Finally, the source content must be used to show how it either supports or questions the hypothesis, and it is this final requirement that some candidates find hard to satisfy. Ideally, using a source means the identification of an aspect of the source (not necessarily a quote, a précis will do just as well) that is relevant to the argument. However, identification of a relevant aspect may not on its own be sufficient; how it offers support or not may need to be explained. So, the hypothesis was that Hitler had a consistent plan in his foreign policy. How about Source A? Candidates using the source produced responses such as: 'Source A rejects the hypothesis because it says that when Hitler met Chamberlain on 22 September he increased his demands.' But does this fully explain how the hypothesis is rejected? Better responses added some explanation: 'If he had a consistent plan he would not have changed his mind from one meeting to the next.' None of these sources, in themselves, clearly demonstrated consistent planning or the lack of it, so this additional explanation was vital. The best approach is to go through each of the sources in turn. Those candidates who grouped the sources often drew conclusions about the group which were not true of all the sources in the group. In the end, most candidates achieved reasonable marks on this question, but this was often as a result of successfully using only a small number of the sources they had actually written about.

HISTORY (US)

Paper 0416/03
Coursework

General Comments and Key Messages

This year was the first year that coursework based on the new requirements was assessed. In nearly all Centres, candidates produced some excellent assessments of significance, with the focus being kept firmly on assessment of significance in virtually every paragraph, and with candidates developing and supporting their own judgements. A number of valid approaches were used, including assessing significance from different perspectives, using a range of criteria, using ideas such as long and short-term, turning point and false dawn, and considering the iconic importance of individuals, events and developments.

Comments on Specific Questions

The overwhelming majority of Centres set appropriate titles. Titles that guided candidates to assess significance in terms of a single outcome worked least well. Titles such as 'Assess the significance of x as a factor in y's rise to power' or 'How far were x problems the most significant cause of the downfall of y?' pushed candidates into writing causation answers, with the focus on a range of possible causes of the named outcome, rather than on assessing the significance of the chosen person or development. Too much material in these answers was taken up with analysis of the other causal factors. Also, such titles narrowed the scope of answers. Better assessments of significance considered significance from a variety of perspectives, for example, long term, short term, political, economic and so on. When the title names the outcome, as the examples above do, candidates are left with little scope to consider significance in a variety of different ways.

The other type of title which worked less well was that which was phrased, 'Explain the significance of'. The problem with this type of title is that it requires candidates to explain significance instead of assessing it.

The types of title that were offered by many Centres and which were most appropriate included:

- How significant was the Tet Offensive?
- Assess the significance of the Reichstag Fire.
- How far was the New Deal a turning point in American history?
- Assess the significance of the Night of the Long Knives.
- Assess the significance of General Haig in the First World War.
- How significant was Lenin to the Soviet Union between 1917 and 1930?

All of these titles are open and provide candidates with plenty of scope to use a range of criteria, to ask and investigate significance in a variety of ways and to take their answers in different directions. More advice on the setting of coursework questions and on the concept of significance can be found in the Teachers' Coursework Handbook.

Most of the coursework was carefully marked, with the generic mark scheme being used accurately and appropriately. Moderators found the detailed on-going marginal comments and the summative judgements very helpful. These were usually clearly focused on the concept of significance and on the mark scheme. Two points should be remembered when using the markscheme. Firstly, all the statements and criteria it includes need to be used in relation to the concept of significance. For example, criteria such as 'Candidates demonstrate some understanding of interrelationships' need to be achieved by candidates as part of their assessment of significance. Secondly, the markscheme needs to be used holistically. It is for making summative judgements about the overall qualities of a candidate's response. This means that a level cannot be awarded to an answer after the first paragraph or two.

Although there was much accurate use of the mark scheme, it was not uncommon for small adjustments to be made, particularly to marking right at the top of the mark range.

Most candidates kept to the word limit and made a real effort to focus on assessment of significance. The best answers started by summarising their conclusions about significance and then set about justifying them. They also made clear the different criteria or the different perspectives that would be used to assess significance. Less successful answers started by describing some background and sometimes giving mini-biographies of individuals. They then described the event or the actions of an individual without relating them to the issue of significance. Another feature of less successful answers was the tendency to attempt to assess the significance of an individual or event by trying to compare it with other individuals or events. This took the focus of the answer away from what was meant to be the main subject. It is possible to assess the significance of an event or individual without comparing it with others. Other answers explained significance well but did not get as far as assessing it. These answers would have benefited from the use of counter-arguments.

The best answers also explained how judgements about significance are provisional and are dependent on the criteria used to reach these judgements. This extra complexity was achieved in different ways. Some candidates asked different questions about the significance of their event, development or individual, while others considered long and short-term significance. In some answers, use of concepts such as 'turning point' and 'false dawn' proved to be effective; in other answers, examination of iconic significance proved to be effective.

The high quality of much of the work was clear, and this included many sophisticated and mature attempts at dealing with, and assessing, a challenging historical concept.