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HISTORY

Paper 9489/12
Document Question

Key messages

- This assessment focusses on source comprehension, analysis, and evaluation.
- When reading sources candidates should ensure that they take notice of the overall message of the source to understand the argument or point of view of the author. This means that the source should be viewed holistically rather than divided into individual sentences or part sentences which, taken alone, can convey different ideas to that of the whole source.
- Candidates should ensure that they look closely at the provenance of each source as they read and consider how far this is useful when analysing the statement given. Candidates should consider the nature (what type of source it is), the origin (who wrote or produced the source), and purpose of sources before commenting on generic reliability or placing it in a particular context. However, comments about source evaluation should always be related to answering the question posed.
- Effective timekeeping is important. Candidates need to make sure they leave enough time to complete answers to both questions.

In summary, the key message is for candidates to read the sources very carefully, making sure that they understand both the details of the source and its overall argument. This will mean candidates are better prepared to tackle both questions.

General comments

Most candidates know that the **part (a)** question requires an identification of similarities **and** differences, and that answers to **part (b)** questions require an explanation of how each source either supports or challenges the prompt in the question.

Stronger responses support the points they make with precise quotations or direct paraphrases from the relevant sources. In some weaker responses candidates attempted to include long sections of quotation by starting a sentence and then using ellipses to join with a later section. This was rarely a successful way of showing support from the source and often led to confusion or lack of clarity. Support should take the form of a brief, precise quotation or paraphrase.

Weaker responses to **part (a)** were often rushed and in a significant minority of cases this was a result of the **part (a)** question being completed last. Although there is no required order for the question to be answered it should be noted that the **part (a)** question is designed to prepare candidates for the longer essay style question by concentrating on two sources and a particular issue. Candidates who completed **part (b)** first often found it difficult to refocus on **part (a)**.

Candidates sometimes made incorrect points of comparison. They claimed similarities for points which were not actually similar and differences for points which were not different. If the comparisons cannot be properly validated, they cannot be credited. The focus of the **part (a)** question is to identify valid similarities and differences of the content of the sources. Weaker responses often included large sections of contextual knowledge or stock paragraphs of 'evaluation' rather than tackling the focus of the question. Although there are marks in the top level for commenting on the usefulness of the sources, the focus of the response should be on making a developed comparison, i.e. identifying similarities and differences.

When analysing the sources many candidates confused themselves by picking out sections of text which ran counter to the overall message of the source. Some candidates were prone to just looking for similar words without thinking about their context. Thus, candidates should be careful to look at the whole source not dissected sections of it when making links to the questions and further judgements.

To achieve higher evaluation marks, it is necessary to explain why the nature, origin or purpose of the source makes it more or less useful when answering the question. One example of where this could be achieved was in ***Section A***, Source C. Responses that dealt with this source successfully used their knowledge of the context to comment on the position of Wirth within ongoing discussions surrounding who should rule Germany and the question of unification. As such, when using these ideas, it is important that candidates explain why this makes the source more or less useful for the question rather than just stating the date or type of source and saying it is unreliable.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: European Option: Liberalism and Nationalism in Germany 1815–1871

Question 1

(a) How far do Sources A and D agree on Metternich's attitude towards supporters of revolution in Germany?

The question focussed on Metternich's attitudes, so candidates needed to be clear that they were comparing his views rather than other sections of the extracts which might be comparable. Candidates made good attempts at this question and were often able to identify similarities and differences in the sources. In stronger responses this was accompanied by clear contextual knowledge that was used to clarify or further explain the areas of comparison and contrast. The best responses began to use this knowledge to explain the evolution of Metternich's thinking about revolutionaries during the decade that these sources cover.

(b) 'There was a real threat of revolution in Germany after 1815.' How far do the sources support this assertion?

This question was generally well attempted, and responses showed an ability to use the sources to support and challenge the assertion given in the question. Candidates used the phrase 'real threat' in different ways, but this was credit worthy if they were using the sources to support and challenge the meaning of the statement. Most candidates were able to recognise both support and challenge in the sources and good responses used clear quotations or paraphrases to support their points. The better responses were then able to use their knowledge to contextualise the sources in order to explain them further and answer the question given. There were also a significant minority of strong responses which started to use the provenance of the sources to weigh up the evidence they give. This meant that answers began to evaluate sources for use in answering the question. There was still some evidence of candidates using time to write long sections of contextual knowledge or rote provenance discussions. Neither of these were successful when answering the question and were often not credit worthy beyond Level 1 in the mark scheme.

Section B: The American Option: Southern Reactions to the Result of the 1860 Presidential Election

There were too few responses to this section to provide a general comment.

Section C: International Option: The League of Nations and international relations in the 1930s

Question 3

(a) Compare and contrast Sources A and C as evidence about Hitler's attitude to Czechoslovakia.

This question required candidates to focus on Hitler's attitudes to Czechoslovakia in both source extracts. Some candidates confused this with trying to look at wider issues and it should be remembered that **part (a)** questions have a specific focus which should be followed by candidates. Most candidates were able to recognise both similarities and differences in the sources as detailed in the mark scheme. Better responses were able to use their knowledge of the period to contextualise these sources and clarify or explain the positions taken in them. Some candidates got distracted from the content of the sources by their own knowledge of the events surrounding the Munich agreement and this often led to analysis of the sources not being the focus of their answers. The best responses used their knowledge of the period to explain the differences

between the sources using the provenance which went beyond rote evaluation phrases. Overall, this question was well attempted.

(b) How far do the sources support the view that Britain and France opposed the German takeover of Czechoslovakia?

This question required some consideration of the meaning of 'opposition' within the context of the period. This required candidates to use their topic knowledge to contextualise the sources and test them against the assertion in the question. Many candidates were able to use all four sources to support and challenge the assertion in the question. The majority of candidates used evidence from the sources to clearly support their argument. Better answers used clear and precise contextual knowledge to clarify the evidence from the sources and further explain some of the details. The best answers used their knowledge of the period to evaluate the sources and explain how this evaluation made the sources more or less useful when answering the question. Overall, candidates displayed good knowledge in this question and were increasingly adept at working with the sources.

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HISTORY

Paper 9489/22
Outline Study

Key messages

It is important that candidates are equally familiar with all three topics within the section they are studying in order to give themselves the best chance of having a good choice for the questions they answer.

The strongest responses showed evidence that the candidate had read the available questions carefully in order to choose the best options for themselves and had planned their answers. It is not a good idea to start **part (a)** without checking what the focus of **part (b)** of a question is going to require and vice versa.

Having made a plan, it is a good idea to follow that plan and check carefully at the end of each question that nothing on the plan has been missed out of the final response. It was not uncommon that details appearing at the planning stage did not then appear in the final response.

General comments

Many candidates demonstrated good knowledge of their chosen topics. Responses were generally well structured and showed that many candidates had made good use of the extra time available to plan the content and structure of their essays. All responses were well written and easy to read.

For **part (a)** questions, candidates generally recognised the need to identify causal factors and many were able to offer at least some explanation of the part that one or more of these factors played in explaining a specific event. The best responses identified links between these factors and established some order of relative importance between them.

For **part (b)** questions, most candidates were able to offer an explanation of events. Most recognised the need to consider different possibilities and provided details to support different interpretations of events. Many responses demonstrated detailed knowledge of the topics and used this to build carefully considered and well-supported analysis of alternative perspectives. The best responses compared the relative strengths of different arguments and drew reasoned conclusions in answer to the specific questions that had been set.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

(a) Explain why the monarchy was abolished in 1792.

The question required an identification of the key factors that led to the abolition of monarchy in France in September 1792. It was not about the execution of the king in January 1793. Most candidates were able to identify some the key factors such as the king's reluctance to accept change, the growing threat of foreign intervention and the rising tide of Republicanism led by groups such as the Jacobins. Weaker responses were more generally about the causes of the revolution and the events between 1789 and 1792. These candidates needed to use the information to explain the abolition of monarchy. Several very weak responses were focused only on the general causes of revolution not on the abolition of monarchy. The best responses were able to explain the significance of several different factors and link them to show how the cumulative effect of different factors led to the decision to abolish monarchy.

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(b) How far did Napoleon's domestic policies benefit the French people?

Most candidates had good knowledge of the details of Napoleon's domestic policies and wrote relevantly about the topic. Good responses effectively contrasted the overall effect of Napoleon's policies in transforming and improving many aspects of French society, with the adverse effects that his policies had on some sectors of the population. For example, most candidates described and explained the positive effects of the Code Napoleon in simplifying and improving the legal system of France compared to the confusion of systems in pre-revolutionary France. They then contrasted this with the specific issue of the adverse change to the position of women, which was embedded within this system, and compared it to the advances made in women's rights during the years of revolution. The best responses provided well-balanced analysis with clearly supported conclusions that demonstrated a good understanding of the issues involved in judging the overall effects of Napoleon's reforms.

Question 2

(a) Explain why the 1848 Public Health Act was introduced.

(b) 'Agricultural changes caused the Industrial Revolution.' How valid is this view?

There were too few responses to this question for detailed commentary but, given that this is a significantly different unit from the previous syllabus it is worth noting that some very strong responses were seen. In these responses the explanations in **part (a)** were clear and detailed and the essays in **part (b)** demonstrated a thorough understanding of a range of relevant factors and the way they linked together, ending with a supported judgement about the particular contribution of the agricultural revolution to the process of industrialisation in Britain.

Question 3

(a) Explain why Lenin agreed to the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk in 1918.

There was a good general understanding of Lenin's motives and most candidates provided some basic ideas expressed in terms of Lenin's promises to the population before the November Revolution regarding 'Peace, Bread, Land, etc.' Better responses developed further arguments relating to the failure of previous regimes and the continuing threat of further German offensives which the Russian army was in no condition to resist. The strongest responses set Lenin's decision in the context of his wider ideology of worldwide revolution, expressing this in terms of short-term loss in order to enjoy longer term gains and provided a clear picture of how the different elements worked together to justify an overall judgement. Most candidates displayed good knowledge of the conditions and instability in Russia at the time with good candidates explaining how these influenced the decision. Weaker responses tended to simply describe conditions with a basic assertion that these were significant.

(b) To what extent did Russian military defeats in the First World War cause the Revolution of February 1917?

There were many good responses that recognised that the deeper impact of the military defeats suffered went far beyond the simple fact of the effect on morale and support for the war and the Tsar. Such responses linked defeat to disruption of supplies, effects on the civilian population and the effects of the messages brought back to the wider population by returning and/or deserting soldiers. In the best responses these were then effectively compared to the effects of other factors such as the failure of food supplies in the cities, the growth of worker discontent and dissatisfaction with the administration when it was left in the hands of the Tsarina and the highly unpopular Rasputin. Weaker responses often contained a much more general consideration of the long-term weaknesses of Tsarist government, referring back to the 1905 revolution or in a few cases, even earlier. Such responses whilst providing some accurate background information, often did not engage effectively with the effects of the war in both military terms and in its effects on wider social and economic conditions. Such responses scored poorly.

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Section B

There were too few responses to this section to make a general comment appropriate.

Section C

Question 7

(a) Explain why Africa was the focus of an international conference in Berlin in 1884.

Most candidates showed an understanding of the reasons for the 'Scramble for Africa'. Not all candidates applied this knowledge to an explanation for the calling of the Berlin Conference in 1884. Good responses demonstrated not only a good knowledge of the reasons for the sudden rise in interest in imperial expansion in Africa, often referring to the concept of 'New Imperialism', but also of the specific problems that this created in relations between the major powers of Europe. Weaker responses tended to focus of the reason for interest in Africa without specific reference to the reasons for the conference. There is a need to have a clear awareness of the chronology of events – a number of candidates referred to the clash between Britain and France at Fashoda as being a causal factor whereas in fact it occurred 14 years after the Berlin Conference. Most candidates provided some explained reasons for the conference and the best demonstrated a good understanding of the links between them and their relative importance.

(b) 'The signing of a Treaty of Alliance with Britain in 1902 marked Japan's emergence as a significant world power.' How far do you agree?

In order to reach the top Level for this type of question it is necessary to provide a contrast between evidence that supports the assertion and that which challenges it. Most candidates displayed some knowledge of the way in which Japan was transformed after the Meiji Restoration and how this led to the signing of a Treaty of Friendship with the British in 1902. Good responses offered a positive assessment of the effects of this on Japan's international standing whilst also recognising that there were limitations to the extent of Japan's rise in status. The strongest responses then justified an alternative view, often along the lines that whilst this was an important step it was later events such as the Russo–Japanese War and participation in the First World War that really cemented Japan's claim to being a major international power. Weaker responses did not provide such balance and often offered little more than a narrative account of the development of Japanese power in this period.

Question 8

(a) Explain why the League of Nations was involved in a dispute over the Aaland Islands in 1921.

Most candidates were aware of the basic issues in the Aaland Islands dispute and were able to identify factors that led to the involvement of the League. Good responses explained how the dispute had arisen and why the League was involved in it, with the strongest responses explaining the establishment of the League as part of the Versailles settlement and the underlying principle, enshrined it the Treaty of Versailles, of self-determination and its relevance to this case. More modest responses provided a narrative of the nature of the dispute and its outcome. A few very weak responses had no specific knowledge of the Aaland Islands or their location. Another feature of weaker responses was that they were unable to provide a reasonable suggestion about why the League might have been involved in a dispute, such as a reference to why the League had been set up.

(b) To what extent was 1925 a turning point in international relations in the 1920s?

The essence of analysing a turning point is to compare what came afterwards with what had happened before. Many candidates made a good attempt at this, recognising that the Locarno Treaties of 1925 would naturally form a focus for this question. They were able to explain why international relations after this point were better and were able to support this by reference to relevant details of the Locarno Treaties. Not all responses supported this argument by doing an effective comparison with the period before 1925 highlighting why it had been a period of poor relations between some European states. The best responses recognised that there had been positive achievements in improving international relations before 1925 such as the Dawes Plan and

that there were underlying issues that remained a cause of conflict after 1925. A feature of a few stronger responses recognised that the essay title did not necessarily confine their analysis to European affairs and added relevant analysis of issues in other parts of the world.

Question 9

(a) Explain why the Japan was unhappy with the outcome of the Paris Peace Conference.

(b) How successful were Chiang Kai-shek's attempts to re-unite China?

There were too few responses to this question to make a general comment appropriate

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HISTORY

Paper 9489/32
Interpretations Question

Key messages

- It is essential for candidates to take enough time to read the extract thoroughly, to think about the historian's arguments, and to plan their answers.
- Candidates must understand that the historian's interpretation has to be inferred from the extract as a whole, and not just from parts of it.
- Answers should focus on the historian's interpretation, illustrating and explaining it, using the content of the extract. Writing about the topic, or the views of other historians, will only be credited if it helps to explain the interpretation.

General comments

The general level of responses was good. All candidates understood what the question demanded, and to made a positive attempt to answer it. The best answers demonstrated complete understanding of the historian's interpretation, and found evidence in the extract to support their analysis. Weaker responses understood that the extract contained an interpretation, though their answers were limited either by a lack of comprehension of the claims the historian was making, or a lack of ability to find appropriate material from the extract to use in their answers.

There were ways in which many of the answers could have been improved. It was noticeable in the strongest responses that the candidates knew what they were going to argue from the very beginning of their answers. There was a clear statement of what the interpretation was thought to be, with a short indication of the kind of evidence the extract contained to support this. The rest of the answer then presented the supporting evidence in more detail, building around the way in which inferences could be made about the historian's argument from what the extract said. This contrasted sharply with the approach shown in weaker responses, which often worked through the extract paragraph by paragraph, almost as if in search of an interpretation. Thus the first paragraph might yield one interpretation, and the second an entirely contradictory one. This shows that candidates needed to consider the extract as a whole, otherwise they demonstrate a lack of understanding that the historian's interpretation will be consistent with everything said in the extract. A prime example of this occurred on the Holocaust question. Did Hitler have an early plan for genocide? The first couple of paragraphs of the extract might possibly be read as suggesting that he did. The rest of the extract conclusively argues that he did not. The historian sets up the argument at the start of the extract in order to reject it. Yet in many responses this was left as the unresolved inconsistency that Hitler both did and did not have such a plan.

There are also some straightforward technical issues that could easily be resolved. Some responses included what can be termed 'truncated quotes' when trying to support a point being made. So, for example, an answer might have said that Stalin's expansionism was seen by the historian as being the cause of the Cold War, and that you can tell this because the extract says 'Moscow possessed…….became irresistible.' This is not acceptable – taken on its own it means nothing, and such examples often include more than one substantive point within the dots. An answer must indicate properly the support that is intended. Another technical issue arises over the use of knowledge, either of the historical context of the events in the extract, or of the interpretations of other historians of the topic. The question candidates are asked is about the historian's interpretation. It follows from this that the use of knowledge will only be relevant if applied to the process of explaining the interpretation. Many answers include knowledge that does not meet this purpose, and it is therefore irrelevant. The most frequent way this occurs is when contextual knowledge is used to explain or further illustrate events or developments described in the extract. Some examples of this produced answers that contain more on the context than on the extract.

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Comments on specific questions

Section A: The origins of the First Wold War

There were too few responses to this question to make a general comment appropriate.

Section B: The Holocaust

The central argument of the historian who wrote this extract is that although Hitler claimed to intend some kind of final reckoning with the Jews, no plan for this existed by 1939, nor could have existed at that stage. The best answers recognised these aspects of the interpretation and illustrated them using material from the extract. There was a clear distinction between candidates who genuinely grasped the historian's argument in the extract as a whole, and those who looked at each paragraph separately. The latter group were often led into inconsistencies and contradictions, failing to detect the way in which the historian mentioned certain points only so that they could subsequently be discounted. The best answers understood the idea that, whilst Hitler certainly was a violent anti-Semite and would threaten genocide, this could not be taken as evidence of his intentions in 1939. They concluded that the historian's approach was functionalist in arguing that only circumstances as yet unfulfilled could bring about genocide. When these responses detected an element of intentionalism (thus overall a synthesis) they avoided thinking this showed that the extract suggested that Hitler always had intended genocide, and limited themselves to commenting on Hitler's anti-Semitism and the way in which the extract portrayed him as at the heart of Nazi policy-making.

Those scripts which took a paragraph by paragraph approach usually saw Hitler's threats as proof of intent, glossing over the historian's point about the importance of not taking words as being the same as actions. These answers almost always noted the historian's argument about the lack of planning, yet missed the idea that this was offered as evidence of lack of intent. The historian believed that not only was there no evidence of a plan by 1939, but also that there could not have been any such plan, because of a whole series of preconditions that would have to be satisfied before genocide would even be feasible. These candidates would then read the last paragraph as indicating that Hitler was just waiting for the right opportunity to put his long-held intention into practice, with the war providing the opportunity – even though the extract said nothing about the events of the war. These answers often showed understanding of some important aspects of the interpretation, such as the lack of a plan for genocide. However, to demonstrate sound understanding of the interpretation as a whole, responses needed to deal adequately with the issue of Hitler's intent.

It was notable that many answers included mention of other historians and their interpretations. Sometimes this was helpful, for example when contrasting the hints of intentionalism in the extract with the views of an extreme intentionalist like Dawidowicz. Often it was irrelevant, a mere listing of other views, and sometimes it was misleading, as with those candidates who saw a mention of Goebbels, Himmler and Heydrich and jumped straight into the conclusion that the historian was reflecting the views of a structuralist such as Mommsen. Similarly, some responses unnecessarily provided additional contextual background to almost any reference they made to the extract in order to explain the interpretation. The weakest answers paraphrased points in the extract or wrote about the Holocaust with no reference to the extract.

Section C: The Origins and Development of the Cold War

The central argument of the historian who wrote this extract is that Stalin's policy was essentially expansionist, and that despite the deficiencies of the West, he was responsible for the confrontation between them. The best answers recognised these aspects of the interpretation and illustrated them using material from the extract. They would usually conclude that the approach of the historian was post-post-revisionist, in that it focused on Stalin's actions, yet did not attempt to show that the West was free of blame, as a traditionalist might have been expected to do.

A few answers missed the central place of Stalin in the interpretation, and saw the blame being placed instead on the Soviet Union. If properly supported, and perhaps leading to the conclusion that the interpretation was traditional in nature, this kind of answer could still be regarded as showing sound understanding of the extract as a whole, though lacking the level of insight of the very best responses. It was also important to deal properly with what the historian said about the West. There was some blame placed on Roosevelt and Churchill, but the best responses saw that this did not undermine the main point about Stalin's blame.

Those answers that worked through the extract paragraph by paragraph showed a tendency to be deflected into less central aspects, often claiming to detect some attempt by the historian to explain away or justify Stalin's actions. A good example took points such as Stalin's hope that he could expand the Soviet Union's

influence without using force, or that he had not desired confrontation with the West, and see these as signalling a lack of blame – even though the extract as a whole was very clear about Stalin's responsibility. These answers would often also make too much of what was said about the West, elevating it to an equivalent share of the blame with the Soviet Union, and reaching a post-revisionist conclusion, or, more rarely, seeing only the West to blame in what was claimed to be a revisionist interpretation. The weakest answers paraphrased points in the extract or wrote about the origins of the Cold War with no reference to the extract.

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HISTORY

Paper 9489/42
Depth Study

Key messages

- A sustained focus on the specific nature of the question asked is the key to accessing the higher levels of the mark scheme.
- Stronger answers are analytical throughout and attempt to address all aspects of the question.
- Analysis should be supported by relevant and accurate factual information, and this knowledge should be in-depth.
- Candidates must take note of the chronological timeframe of the question as assessment of events outside of the question remit cannot be credited.
- Stronger answers provide a balanced argument and evaluation.
- Candidates are advised to read the questions carefully and analyse what is required before starting to write their answers.

General comments

Higher quality answers were clearly analytical in approach and had a well-argued case that was supported with good levels of relevant subject knowledge and then reached a logical final judgement. A good example of this was Question 4, where higher quality answers examined repression and also many other factors that allowed the Nazi regime to survive. They then drew up a balanced judgement, based on very good in-depth factual knowledge. Weaker responses tended to just describe the events of the period and offered no real opinion or tended to focus either on repression or the other factors and did not offer a balanced approach.

Lack of subject knowledge sometimes hampered candidates, and this was illustrated in Question 2, where some responses demonstrated very little knowledge about the role and support of the King and how this might help explain why Mussolini was in power for so long. Sometimes answers just ignored the question and wrote a description of how Mussolini stayed in power.

Having an answer that looks at both sides of the question and is balanced is very important. Question 10 highlighted this very well and higher quality candidates were able to look at the policies followed by Gorbachev, but also looked at other significant factors too.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: European option, European history in the interwar years, 1919–41

1 Assess the impact of Mussolini's foreign policy on Italy.

The candidates who answered this question had a sound grasp of the aims, events and outcomes of Mussolini's foreign policy.

Identified aims included the desire to make Italy a respected international force and to recreate the glory of the Roman Empire. Responses often included examples such as Corfu, Mussolini's involvement in Locarno, the Stresa Front, Abyssinia, involvement in the Spanish Civil War and the Rome-Berlin Axis. The best answers assessed the impact of Mussolini's actions in relation to their impact on international relations, domestic popularity and the economy. There were attempts to discuss economic policy, which did not address the question directly. Some responses considered the most significant outcome of Mussolini's policies as being Italy's disastrous involvement in the Second World War, resulting in his fall from power, although this was not common.

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2 Evaluate the causes of the Great Terror

This was a popular question and most candidates identified and evaluated a range of causes.

Among the most commonly discussed factors was Stalin's paranoia and desire to protect his own position from the 'Old Bolsheviks'. Some candidates correctly identified the Terror as being sparked by the murder of Kirov and there was speculation about Stalin's role in it. There was also an understanding from many candidates that the Terror was used to subdue the general population and that this partly stemmed from the negative consequences of Stalin's domestic policies and the resultant social instability. Many candidates also were able to consider the role of the NKVD and of the Terror 'from below'. Wider discussions about the role of external threats helped to develop some candidates' responses, but less useful were lengthy passages on Stalin's dekulakisation policy, which pre-dated the Great Terror. Candidates rarely examined these issues explicitly through the intentionalist/structuralist arguments, although sometimes this was implicit in responses. The evaluation generally came in the form of a comparison of the significance of each factor.

3 Assess the aims of Hitler's foreign policy in the years 1933–41

This was another popular question and the candidates who attempted it were generally knowledgeable about Hitler's aims and the methods that were employed to achieve them.

Most candidates were conscious of Hitler's desire to return Germany to its former glory and position on the world stage and that reversing the Treaty of Versailles was a fundamental part of this process. Accordingly, there was discussion of rearmament and of the remilitarisation of the Rhineland in defiance of the treaty. It was also well understood that Hitler aimed to reunite German speakers and that his actions in bringing about Anchluss with Austria and in taking over the Sudetenland were examples of this in action. The desire for Lebensraum in the east was regularly included in responses and Hitler's invasion of Poland in 1939 and subsequent breaking of the Nazi-Soviet Pact were included to support this goal, as well as being examples of Hitler's racial and anti-communist policies. More uneven was the approach taken to the assessment of Hitler's aims and actions. The criteria used to do so included how successful he was, although occasionally candidates went beyond 1941 to make their judgement. Some candidates considered the consistency of Hitler's actions and whether or not war was a common goal and this approach helped to meet the AO2 part of the mark scheme. It is important for centres to be aware that AO2 is now assessed separately from AO1 and therefore candidates' analytical skills are crucial. Although candidates do not necessarily have to identify their criteria explicitly, it may help them to do so.

4 'Britain followed a policy of appeasement because it was militarily unprepared for war'. Discuss this view.

This question was relatively unpopular and there were not enough responses to make clear judgements about candidates' responses. Those that did answer it were aware of other explanations for appeasement in addition to the stated factor, such as pacifism among politicians and the general public and a recognition of the harshness of the Treaty of Versailles and a mistaken belief in Hitler's trustworthiness.

Other factors which might have been used are identified in the mark scheme.

Section B: American option, The USA, 1944–92

There were few or no responses to Questions 5–8 to make a general comment appropriate.

Section C: International option, International history, 1945–92

9 Assess the impact of the Prague Spring on US-Soviet relations.

This was a popular choice, although the quality of responses was extremely variable. Some candidates showed little knowledge of the events of 1968 and there was sometimes confusion between this and Gorbachev's policies in the 1980s. Where candidates were aware of events, their knowledge of the consequences on US-Soviet relations was occasionally limited.

The best responses were able to identify and explain why Brezhnev's response to Dubcek's attempt to create 'socialism with a human face', and the subsequent development of the Brezhnev Doctrine,

would negatively affect relations. Although it was commonly argued that the impact was limited because of the later development of détente, it was rarely recognised that Brezhnev was clearly more concerned with internal security within the Warsaw Pact than with improving relations within the USA or that a desire for peaceful co-existence led to Johnson's muted response. There were attempts to link the Prague Spring with the human rights element of the Helsinki Accords and with the Afghanistan War. Candidates often attempted to compare the impact of the Prague Spring with other events, both before and after it. This was not directly answering the question.

10 'It was the failure of the US post-war policy in China which enabled the Chinese Communist Party to gain power in 1949.' Assess this view.

Candidates generally understood that this question required a comparison of the stated factor with others such as the strengths of the Communists and the failings of the Nationalists. Knowledge of the extent of US support for the Nationalists was not always detailed, although the best responses were able to explain why the US was not successful in containing communism in China.

Among the arguments put forward was that the USA was more concerned with developments in Europe and was stretched accordingly. The lack of support among public opinion for war in China was not considered. Some candidates followed that argument that the US government itself had absolved itself from blame and that the various weaknesses of the Nationalists and strengths of the Communists were more important. There was some attention paid to the two sides' different attitude towards the peasantry and to military factors, although these were sometimes not developed far enough.

11 Analyse the reasons why the United Nations failed in Somalia.

There were too few responses to this question to make a general comment.

12 Evaluate the role of the United States in the creation of Israel

The candidates who answered this question often displayed good or detailed knowledge of events leading to the creation of Israel in 1948 and were able to discuss the role of the US with confidence.

There was an understanding of how and why the US supported the partition of Palestine. Coverage of Truman's recommendation for the admittance of 100 000 displaced persons and his support for Resolution 181 was commonly seen and explanations commonly included the moral dimension following the Holocaust and Truman's desire to avoid migration to the USA. The Cold War considerations were considered less often. Some candidates were also able to discuss the reasons for British withdrawal and some also considered the role of the Jewish community in Palestine alongside this. The role of the United Nations was less explicitly discussed, usually referenced in terms of the actions of the US administration.