

Examiners' Report

June 2015

GCSE History 5HA02 2B

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Introduction

There were many impressive responses to the question set on this year's paper. Candidates wrote with confidence and often in great detail, with only Question 1(c) causing difficulties, as a result of some candidates lacking an understanding of what was meant by the 'cult of Stalin'.

To enable centres to continue to work on improving performance, it may prove beneficial to consider the demands of Question 2 and the revised Question 3 before looking at performance in the individual questions.

Both alternatives in Question 2 this year were on change. Candidates must, therefore, take care to ensure that they do not just write on what happened, but explain how the position was different from what had gone before. Where a question requires a discussion of what went before, candidates need not write in detail, but it was easier to emphasise the changes in agriculture by giving a brief account of the New Economic Policy so as to be able to compare it with collectivisation.

There was an amendment to Question 3 this year which resulted in only two stimuli, instead of the usual three. Examiners were instructed to limit reward within a level where candidates did not use additional knowledge (as per Ofqual's ruling). Whilst most candidates have looked to do this in the past, centres should note that it is now a requirement and Level 4 cannot be accessed without three explanations being given. As only two stimuli are provided, by definition, the use of a third explanation using additional knowledge is required.

Question 1 (a)

Candidates had few difficulties with this opening question. Although a very small minority extracted or paraphrased information in the source and were rewarded only at Level 1, the vast majority of candidates had little difficulty making an inference. Most common were suggestions that Stalin was 'cunning' or 'ruthless'. In most cases, these inferences were supported from the source and Level 3 was awarded.

Russia, 1914–39

Answer Questions 1(a) to (d), then Question 2(a) OR 2(b) and then Question 3(a) OR 3(b).

Question 1 – you must answer all parts of this question.

Study Source A.

Source A: From a history of the modern world, published in 1996.

Stalin became leader of the Communist Party by gradually removing all those who opposed him. After Lenin's death, Stalin sided with those members of the Politburo who supported the New Economic Policy. The support Stalin gained by doing this made it possible for him to remove Zinoviev, Kamenev and Trotsky from the Politburo. In 1927 Stalin had Trotsky and Zinoviev expelled from the Communist Party. Stalin then had Trotsky murdered in Mexico in 1940.

(a) What can you learn from Source A about Stalin?

(4)

We can infer that Stalin was ruthless and did anything to increase his power. This is shown by the fact that he had Trotsky killed. It also showed that Stalin would make temporary alliances in order to get rid of a rival, and then to remove them after. This is shown by how he 'made it possible to remove Zinoviev, Kamenev and Trotsky'



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This is an excellent example of a candidate getting straight to the point. The inference is given in the first line and the support in line three. The rest of the answer is unnecessary, as full marks have already been achieved.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Remember that candidates do not have to write at length on this question. They need to make an inference, support it with a quote from the source - and move on!

Question 1 (b)

This question showed some confusion in the candidates' minds about the position of women in the Soviet Union. What examiners wanted to see was detail on the increased importance of women in the workforce and steps taken by the State to help women work, but also remain responsible for family life. Many candidates wrote on this, along with details of how divorce was made more difficult and abortion banned. Some mention of the theoretical political equality not being matched in reality was also seen.

There was, however, a lot of misplaced detail about women working because the men were at war (perhaps the Home Front in Britain in the First World War?) and increased freedom as a result of Bolshevik measures (which Stalin largely reversed).

(b) Describe the key features of life for women in the Soviet Union in the years 1928–39.

(6)

One key feature of the role of women in the Soviet Union was that they had more job ~~opportunities~~ opportunities. Women were encouraged to get jobs. There was a wide range to choose from, ^{including} ~~other~~ teachers, factory workers ^{and} or even canal diggers. ~~They were soon taking~~ Soon, women had nearly 40% of all jobs. Creches were set up so women could still work ~~and~~ and put their ~~child~~ child in childcare.

Another key feature was the women ~~was~~ were nearly completely equal to men. ~~It was~~ Abortions were allowed more freely as well ~~as~~ as divorces which could be done by women. Women were now paid nearly the same as men in the same job sector.

~~Furthermore~~ However women were still seen as 2nd class citizens. Women were still expected to have a job as well as ~~continue~~ to cook and clean and look after their children. If the parents got divorced it would be the mother who had to ~~be~~ look after the children. Also, women were still not allowed to own their own property.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This is not a strong answer. The first paragraph reaches Level 2 for a discussion on the increased role of women in employment, but the last two paragraphs add little and contain factual errors.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

In this question, the examiners are looking for precise detail. So candidates should organise their response into two paragraphs and then provide as much detail as they can to support those points.

Question 1 (c)

Most candidates had a good understanding of the cult of Stalin (there was some confusion between the cult and the purges) and wrote at length about the use of posters and propaganda portraying Stalin as the father of the nation. Where greatest reward was gained came where candidates were aware that the question required an explanation of the consequences of the cult. Here it was perfectly possible to argue that the popularity and support created by the cult allowed Stalin to maintain himself in power, to win support for his controversial agricultural and industrial policies and even for the purges and the terror. Candidates who appreciated this wider impact scored well in Level 3.

(c) Explain the effects of the cult of Stalin on the Soviet Union.

(8)

One effect of the cult of Stalin was that Stalin was well-liked. Stalin used to photograph himself near flowers and children to make him look like the most loved man, a friendly man and a man that cares for everyone. This made people really like him and think of him as a God almost, as Stalin is the one that can give. People used to write letters to him, asking him for help, at times Stalin would give the help they asked for. Pictures of Stalin were all around on ^{blocks of} flats or supermarkets, where you went you saw Stalin, the ~~wonderous~~ wonderful leader of Mother Russia.

This led to everything Stalin said being words that have to be listened to. Stalin's three pronged attack against agriculture, industry and the people was therefore accepted, because if Stalin did it then it must be good. This led to things like the stakhanovite movement, where everyone tried to please Stalin and therefore worked extra hard. This was good as it boosted Russia's economy. Everything that Stalin did was seen in the good light as Stalin did.

The effects of the cult of Stalin were that everyone saw him also in a good light and therefore listened to everything he said.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This answer is generally Level 2 for explaining what the cult was, but the suggestion that it led to more support for Stalin's policies takes it into the bottom end of Level 3



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

To score at the highest level candidates need to explain the wider effects of the cult. It made Stalin more popular, but what was the impact on the Soviet Union of this popularity.

Question 1 (d)

It seems all candidates are familiar with Stalin's paranoia and were able to explain how this led to the purges. Other answers considered a more general 'getting rid of the opposition' or the fear created by the death (or deliberate murder) of Kirov. There was good detail provided and such answers generally scored well in Level 2. Where Level 3 was achieved it was for explanations of how the purges were part of a wider policy of controlling all aspects of Soviet life, so as to ensure complete obedience and ensure the success of Stalin's reforms.

(d) Explain why Stalin introduced the purges in the Soviet Union in the 1930s.

(8)

Stalin firstly introduced the purges in order to eliminate any political rivals who may constitute a threat to his rule, thus consolidating his power over the USSR; using the assassination of rival Sergei Kirov as a justification for the purges, the ~~land~~ ~~then~~ launched 'fixed show trials' in order to effectively remove political opponents such as Kamenev, Zinoviev and Bukharin ^{In 1926 and 1934}, as well as other political rivals, who accused of treason against the state, were executed; this left Stalin politically in total control of the USSR, with no threats to his power at all. In addition to this Stalin also began a mass purging of the Communist Party due to any 'betrayal', in order to highlight his control over the party and make it even more loyal to him.

Stalin secondly introduced the purges in order to consolidate a sense of terror and fear of him by the whole country, adding them into obedience and loyalty. Using NKVD squads in such regions to arrest people in the dead of night - sometimes at 4am in the morning - about intimidation of random civilians and forcing them to inform on their friends to save their own lives, and signing thousands of death warrants overnight, even after the bullet, present by the end of the 1930's, people in the USSR lived in fear of Stalin and his secret police, also afraid to oppose him in any way; and submission thus meant Stalin emerged to achieve his goal of further extending and heightening control over the

people themselves.

Finally Stalin introduced the purging of the Red Army in order to remove any popular or powerful general and officers who may potentially use the army against him, thus guaranteeing the loyalty of the army; by removing 90% of general, and executing thousands of officers, who were seen as a threat by Stalin because of their power and influence over the Red Army, which might be used against him, meant she felt it was necessary to purge the army to completely feel secure and have an army wholly loyal and afraid of him, and run by loyal commanders who were to argue or challenge Stalin; thus she introduced this purging between 1937 - 1939 to gain full control and obedience of the army too.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

A clear Level 3 answer. Reasons are given and factual detail is used to explain how the purges brought about the desired outcome.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Candidates need to make sure that they link their reasons to the outcome. It is not enough to say that Stalin introduced the purges to make sure his policies were not opposed. How did the introduction of the purges bring this about?

Question 2 (a)

Candidates had few problems relating the story of the introduction of the policy of collectivisation and its impact on Soviet agriculture. The degree of knowledge was impressive, but despite this, marks were sometimes restricted to Level 2 because candidates failed to explain the degree of change. There is a significant difference between saying that Stalin introduced the policy of collectivisation and explaining that there was a significant change from the NEP to the state controlled, mechanised system of farming introduced by Stalin.

Answer EITHER Question 2(a) OR 2(b).

EITHER

2 (a) Explain how agriculture changed in the Soviet Union in the years 1928–39.

(8)

OR

2 (b) Explain how industry changed in the Soviet Union in the years 1928–39.

(8)

Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross in the box . If you change your mind, put a line through the box and then indicate your new question with a cross .

Chosen Question Number: Question 2(a) Question 2(b)

Agriculture changed through Stalin's introduction of collectivisation. One change was that peasants' small, individually owned farms turned into big collective farms run by the state. Stalin introduced this to reduce famine and to increase Russian food production, however the peasants didn't like being told what to grow by the state and preferred the NEP under Lenin.

Another change in Agriculture was that peasants now had to sell all excess crops to the state for a fixed price, whereas before ~~under~~ under the NEP, they could sell surplus in the market for a profit. Stalin made this law in order to get rid of Kulaks, who were rich peasants who had benefited under the NEP, Kulaks were often seen as powerful and influential people in the villages, however Stalin wanted himself to have all the power. This links to another change as the number of

Kulaks ~~was~~ significantly decreased in the 10 years 1928-39, due to the process of de-kulakisation.

Anyone ~~at~~ who opposed collectivisation were also classed as Kulaks, so they were also sent to Gulags by the OGPU (Stalin's secret police).

Overall, agricultural life became worse for peasants in the years 1928-39 as they had benefitted under Lenin's NEP, being allowed to make profit from selling excess crops in the market. They also resented collectivisation as they didn't like being told what to grow, how many hours to ~~grow~~ work for and how to sell their crops. So overall, for peasants, agriculture changed for the worse, although it did allow the state to have control of food by 1934, so in the long run, it changed production for the better.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

A concise, but very good response. The candidate does not simply give details of the policy of collectivisation, but explains how it was different to the NEP and what changes it brought about.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

This question is about change, so it is not enough to explain how Stalin brought in collectivisation. Candidates have to explain how the policy changed the Soviet Union.

Question 2 (b)

In much the same way as in Question 2(a), candidates tended to divide into those that could give details of Gosplan and the Five Year Plans, and those who could explain what difference this made to Russia in general. Where candidates concentrated on the detail of the industrialisation policy (increased production, forced labour, etc.) Level 2 was awarded. Where they were able to explain that under Stalin the industrialisation of the Soviet Union turned it into an industrial giant able to compete with the world's leaders, then Level 3 was awarded.

Answer EITHER Question 2(a) OR 2(b).

EITHER

2 (a) Explain how agriculture changed in the Soviet Union in the years 1928–39. (8)

OR

2 (b) Explain how industry changed in the Soviet Union in the years 1928–39. (8)

Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross . If you change your mind, put a line through the box and then indicate your new question with a cross .

Chosen Question Number: Question 2(a) Question 2(b)

Agriculture changed through Stalin introducing Collectivisation. One change was that peasants' small, individually owned farms turned into big collective farms run by the state. Stalin ~~was~~ introduced this to reduce famine and to increase Russian food production, however the peasants didn't like being told what to grow by the state and preferred the NEP under Lenin.

Another change in Agriculture was that peasants now had to sell all excess crops to the state for a fixed price, whereas before ~~under~~ under the NEP, they could sell surplus in the market for a profit. Stalin made this law in order to get rid of Kulaks, who were rich peasants who had benefited under the NEP, Kulaks were often seen as powerful and influential people in the villages, however Stalin wanted himself to have all the power. This links to another change as the number of

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ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

An excellent example of a Level 2 response. A lot of impressive detail, but no explanation of the significance of the changes for the Soviet Union.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

This question is about change, so it is not enough to explain how Stalin introduced the Five Year Plans. Candidates have to explain how those plans changed the Soviet Union.

Question 3 (a)

It seems that candidates were glad to see Rasputin back on the specification, and many of them wrote at length about his alleged behaviour whilst the Tsar was absent from court. Unfortunately, some candidates then forgot to explain how such behaviour helped bring about the Tsar's abdication. Candidates were more secure on how the defeats of the Russian armies helped bring about the downfall of the Tsar (though he was often blamed for defeats which pre-dated his taking command). Candidates also wrote well on the influence of the Bolsheviks and general discontent with the Tsar's autocratic rule. Where such answers were able to explain how this brought about the Tsar's fall (as opposed to simply asserting that 'this made him unpopular'), Level 3 was awarded. Where there was a direct comparison between the impact of the various factors, Level 4 was achieved.

The Tsar's absence from Petrograd left a gap in the power which was quickly filled by Rasputin. When the Tsar left for the frontlines the inexperienced Tsarina was left in charge who relied heavily on the ~~word~~^{advice} of Rasputin. The Tsarina dismissed the Duma upon his advice, leaving even more inexperienced leading the country. Rasputin was hated by many for his rumoured orgies and worsened the Tsarina's status, already held in suspicion for being German. This was so much so that in 1916 Rasputin was murdered. This is an important reason why the Tsar abdicated because his influence over the Tsarina and unpopularity challenged people's belief in the monarchy.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This extract from a candidate's answer gives a good example of how an explanation links the stated reason to the stated outcome (the Tsar's abdication). Here the candidate concludes that Rasputin and the Tsarina's actions brought about a loss of belief in the monarchy.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Candidates must make sure that they do not lapse into writing extensive narrative without explaining why the factor they are describing contributed to the outcome in the question.

Question 3 (b)

This was very much the more popular of the two Question 3 options, and there were some highly impressive responses. Many candidates explained the importance of war communism in keeping the Red armies supplied and the role of Trotsky in organising and controlling the Red forces. It was common to see a discussion on how the weakness of the Whites contributed to Bolshevik success or how foreign powers were half-hearted in their opposition to the Bolsheviks.

On this question there were more answers which were able to prioritise and some extremely impressive responses explaining how the factors combined to bring about Bolshevik victory.

meant the Reds could over-
rule them. The Whites army
were not organised or trained
correctly and were therefore not
prepared. However, I think the
most important thing that
led to the Bolsheviks winning
the Civil War was the role of
Trotsky. He was able to motivate
the Red Guard and build high
morale. He was also able to
plan and organise very
effectively and I think that
without Trotsky, the Reds
may not have succeeded



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Examiner Comments

This extract from a candidate's answer reflects a common error made on Question 3. The candidate has previously explained how three factors were responsible for the Bolshevik victory in the Civil War. Then the candidate looks to address prioritisation. The answer, however, falls into the trap of stating that the role of Trotsky was the most important because it was very important. There is no comparison of factors.



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Examiner Tip

Remember, that to prioritise reasons candidates must make a direct comparison between factors. Why was one reason more important than another?

Paper Summary

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates are offered the following advice:

- Make sure you are aware of the different skills tested in each question (e.g. Question 1(c) is always about effects).
- When addressing the issue of change in Question 2 make sure you show the position 'before' in order to show how what you are explaining is a change.
- Remember that the top levels are for explanation. That involves using factual knowledge to make your points, not just asserting that something is the case.
- In Question 3, you cannot reach the top of Level 2, or Level 3 (and cannot reach Level 4 at all) without bringing a factor additional to those in the stimuli into your answer.
- In Question 3 prioritisation involves direct comparison between at least two factors. It is not sufficient to explain why one factor was the most important without reference to other factors.

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