

A level History Coursework marking training – Module 4

Script D

Transcript of teachers' comments (with name redacted)

13/40	<i>I think it is important to note that [student] did not engage with any support with his coursework. He did not hand in any reading logs until the final submission and he did not meet with me to go through his rough draft. Despite various means to offer support this was rejected. Parents were aware during the whole process.</i>
BP1 2m	There is some effort to do citations but this is inconsistent. Had [student] accepted any support he would not have used some of his references such as “Hitler’s Secret Sex Life” on Netflix.
BP2 2m	[Student’s] reading log reflects a limited amount of reading. A judgement on the question is given but with limited substantiation.
BP3 2m	[Student] is able to explain the viewpoints of each historian, backed up by various quotes which, on the whole, are relevant. There is some effort to add some generalised historical context to explain the quotations he uses. There is no cross-referencing.
BP4 2m	The Supplementary materials are not historians and the materials [Student] accesses do not really enhance his argument. There is some attempt to evaluate the basis of the historian’s argument but this is based upon the concept that the most recent historian has access to new materials – but [Student] does not explain what this material is! This is undermined by the fact they were all writing at almost the same time.
BP5 2m	There are a number of grammatical and spelling errors littered through this coursework. The structure is a little jumpy and there are some random paragraphs ie Page 5 paragraph 1. Mostly accurate knowledge is included by this lacks range and depth.
[Student] has attempted to analyse and evaluate 3 historians’ view, but this does have scope to be more effective. A wide and more appropriate range of supplementary reading could have been used and more care taken over organisation. 14.	

Historians have argued about the reasons as to why Germany lost the second world war.

What were the reasons as to why Germany lost the second world war?



Why Germany lost WW2:

World war two was a war between 1938 and 1945 which saw the allied nations of Britain, France, Russia and later the United States try to defeat the axis nations that consisted of Germany, Japan and Italy. This was a far bloodier war than WW1 with an estimated 70-85 million deaths including both military and civilian casualties. Around 6 million of these were Jewish people who were subjected to imprisonment, torture and death at the hands of the Germans in what is known as the Holocaust. The war was significant for various fields of industry, including medicine, technology as well as the creation of the hydrogen bomb. This sparked the ultimate deterrence as well as helping to end the war. America's creation of the hydrogen bomb before Germany were able to allow the allies to have the leverage needed to end the war and march on Germany.

Germany had not started the war like this, in fact it was quite the opposite. Germany had surprised many when it tore through the likes of Poland, France and the Netherlands using the blitzkrieg doctrine. German for lightning war, Germany used speed, surprise and overwhelming force to capture and take over countries to profound effect. Things slowed down however when Hitler went behind Stalin's back and tried to take Russia and end the war as soon as possible in 1941 in a plan called Operation Barbarossa. Not only did it turn Russia against Germany and to side with the allied powers, but it also stretched the German forces thin across the east and west. Ultimately, it gave the allied powers a foothold into the war and without it, it can be argued that Germany would win the war.

Russia was not the only country who entered the allied war effort late, with the United States also joined in 1941 following the attack on Pearl Harbor. America was not initially going to fight against Germany and would only concentrate on Japan who had orchestrated the attack. However, Hitler then called war on America, an act many historians believe was an act of hubris and a complete oversight by Hitler. As mentioned earlier, the Americans were the ones to create the hydrogen bomb and used its around 15 million soldiers to help reinforce allied positions and help to turn the war around for the allies. Additionally, they had a substantial impact on Japan and helped China to defeat Japan and remove much of the help that Japan could give to the other axis powers.

On top of this, Britain was instrumental in holding off the Germans for as long as they did, being at one point the only major power standing directly against Germany. Britain's relentless hope and optimism came in handy in the later years of the war when the Germans dropped bombs on Britain with regularity and deadly effect, killing around 70 thousand civilians and displacing a million homeowners. Furthermore, Britain embraced a rationing system and women and children played a key role in growing food and working to make up for the lack of manpower in everyday life.

Germany had a clear advantage early in the war, but ultimately lost. It can be seen that a lack of cohesion among leadership played a part but also the furhrer Adolf Hitler had an influential part to play in the collapse of the Germans post 1941. Japan famously did not tell the German leadership that they were planning to attack Pearl Harbour and things such as this piled up to a cataclysmic administrative nadir. Hitler's pragmatic approach to war failed spectacularly and his role as a god like figure prevented his subordinates from giving him the proper advice and criticism that he needed. All of this resulted in an attempt on Hitler's life in 1944 by Nazi higher ups who had become disillusioned with Hitler's methods and ways of war. Other German leaders did not help either with constant bad judgement calls and errors resulting in nothing more than temporary retirements and demotions.

Altogether, these are the reasons for Germany losing World War two. my historians focus on German military system failures, Adolf Hitler's failure to lead a country during war and the strength of the Allied powers.

my three historians are Andrew Roberts, Ian Kershaw, and Richard Overy. Roberts covers the failures that fall at the feet of Adolf Hitler, like his documented substance abuse issues and his lack of military skill and experience. Kershaw encounters the problems Germany faced internally during the tail ends of the war, like the lack of food and Germany's use of child soldiers in the last days of the war. Overy instead focuses on the problems that are caused by the Allies, such as the soviet union's relentless attitude over men and the United States' resources and manpower. Throughout this I will reach an evaluative conclusion to my target question: why Germany lost WW2.

Andrew Roberts' book "The Storm of war: a new history of the second World War" talks about Hitler's errors, the things that he did that turned the tide of the war in favour of the allied forces. Hitler had truly little military experience, unlike other German leaders in the past, Hitler did not have the upbringing of leaders such as kaiser Wilhelm, who spent years of his life learning and deploying military tactics of both the past and the present. Hitler's main military tactic; the Blitzkrieg, became heavily inept once the second World war started. the blitzkrieg was only effective when utilised against countries that were not prepared for Germany's speed and power. Countries such as Poland and The Netherlands were perfect examples of this. This can be seen in the Battle of Dunkirk from may 26 to June 4 1940. "¹Hitler halting Germany's advance there, the Allies are able to perform a daring—and successful—evacuation, called Operation Dynamo. Germany claims victory with remaining Allied troops surrendering, but the evacuation serves to boost British morale, still referred to as the "Dunkirk spirit." This is exactly the kind of problem that Hitler made. That allowed the allies to regain control In the Second World War. Roberts talks about this saying "²It is noticeable from Directive No. 21 that Hitler did not envisage a race straight to Moscow, that the capture of Leningrad was regarded as key to the operation". This is proven by the Siege of Leningrad, it took over 3 years to finish and does not amount to any strategic gain, only killing civilians (800,000). Hitler's incompetence can be summed up with a phrase from the Netflix documentary "Hitler's secret sex life", "³by the time the end came, Hitler no longer had a clear understanding of what was happening to him.". This is also compounded by the fact that Hitler chose to persecute the Jewish community during the second World War instead of after it. Around 6 million Jewish people were killed in WW2, many of which could have helped to further the Nazi cause. This course of action was even seen in France, as "⁴Hundreds of thousands of French workers are deported to Nazi Germany to work as forced labour for the war effort". Surely, an action like this

¹ <https://www.history.com/topics/world-war-ii/world-war-ii-battles-timeline>

² the storm of war: A new history of the second world war
2011

Andrew Roberts
pg. 304

³ Hitler's secret sex life episode 1 04:14

⁴ greatest events of WW2 in colour episode 1 46:04

could have been taken with the Jewish contingent of Europe. This kind of oversight is what cost Hitler, and Germany in WW2.

Hitler is also widely known to use and administer drugs to German troops and citizens alike. Lester Grinspoon and Peter Hedblom wrote the 1975 study *The Speed Culture*, saying, “⁵World War II probably gave the greatest impetus to date to legal medically authorized as well as illicit black-market abuse of these pills on a worldwide scale.”. it was also noted by Norman Ohler in the book “Blitzed: drugs in Nazi Germany,” a book helped by the journals of Theodor Morell, Hitler’s personal physician. “⁶But as soon as he encountered genuine Russian resistance that couldn’t be removed with a sweep of the hand, “the greatest commander of all time” retreated further and further into his world of make-believe.”.

Germany would have never been able to win a war of tactical genius such as Herrs Churchill, Mussolini and Stalin. Following on from this, Roberts wrote this about Hitler’s military prowess.” ⁷Hitler’s dislike of static, attritional warfare was a natural response to his years in the 16th Bavarian Infantry Regiment between 1914 and 1918.”. this emotional connection to his tactical outlook only made his military mind worse, this is something that certainly did not happen to leaders such as Churchill, who declared on the 5th of June 1940 “⁸we will never surrender”. This is after Churchill had his own poor experiences of war in WW1 at Gallipoli, losing both men and land. Hitler went against the wishes of his commanders in 1939 when (according to Roberts) “Hitler unleashed Blitzkrieg on the West.” To his credit, the Blitzkrieg was a roaring success, with its parachutists and panzer division taking Poland, Norway, holland, Belgium and France in ridiculous timing, taking all of these countries by the end of summer 1940. For example, “⁹shell shocked French tank drivers are slow to react,” this is morale being broken on the 13th of May, just 3 days after the initial attack on France. This can be quantified by a statement made later in the documentary “¹⁰the soldiers

⁵ the speed culture (1975)

⁶ blitzed drugs in Nazi Germany pg. 81

⁷ the storm of war: A new history of the second world war
2011

Andrew Roberts

pg. 188

⁸ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jun/05/winston-churchill-we-shall-never-surrender-speech-1940>

⁹ greatest events of WW2 in colour episode 1 28:44

¹⁰ greatest events of WW2 in colour episode 1 29:57

performed like supermen". This shows the fact that Hitler could not rely on his soldiers to do this, especially under the circumstances. These circumstances were the use of Pervitin (crystal meth). As Norman Ohler wrote "¹¹In 1939 Pervitin fever was rife in the Third Reich,". This heavy-handed approach to drug use in the German army led to incredible highs, such as the speed of the Blitzkrieg and the occupation of France but also lows, such as the final days of the war when allied forces were bearing down on Berlin.

Hitler's problems were only exasperated when, as Ian Kershaw explores in his book "the end: Hitler's Germany 1944-45", problems begin to arise in not only the home front but also with the German higherups. Kershaw writes "¹²at the very pinnacle of the regime, Hitler could still muster his tried and tested act of supreme confidence and optimism, however bleak the reality." This could only inspire his deputies to make decisions that were increasingly more arrogant. For example, "¹³ the person running the Air force Intelligence Agency was a man called Beppo Schmid. He ignored the defence system which was crucial in enabling Britain to defend itself from the air. He started to encourage the belief that the Luftwaffe could win.". Based on this information being fed back to him in 1940, "¹⁴ on 16th July, Hitler issued a directive to start operation Sea Lion". This bone-headed mistake leads to Germany losing the Battle of Britain, an integral part of WW2 and with this was a big reason as to why Germany lost World War 2. Kershaw tells us just how tense things are in Germany in the last 2 years of the second World War. He speaks of how "¹⁵A nineteen-year-old theology student,

¹¹ blitzed: drugs in Nazi Germany
2017

Norman Ohler
pg. 41

¹² the end: Hitler's Germany 1944-45
2012

Ian Kershaw
pg. 166

¹³ greatest events of WW2 in colour episode 2 10:45

¹⁴ greatest events of WW2 in colour episode 2 11:38

¹⁵ the end: Hitler's Germany 1944-45
2012

Ian Kershaw
pg. 3

unfit for military service, Robert Limpert, decides to act, to prevent his town being destroyed in a senseless last-ditch battle.” . he is hung for his treasonous act by a town still utterly infatuated by the Nazi regime up until its final days. It also speaks as to how far down the rabbit hole the German populace really had fallen by the last moments of the war, that they would offer up this 19 year old boy to be sacrificed, for trying to save the city and the people in it, all to obey their fleeing Nazi leaders. Kershaw asks the question “¹⁶Why were subordinate Nazi leaders and military commanders prepared to follow him down to the complete destruction of the Reich?” this is certainly a fair question to ask as by 1944, things were going tremendously bad for the Germans at this time, with operation Barbarossa in tatters, the Soviet Union breathing down the necks of the Germans due east as well as the oncoming allied forces due west. Hitler's supreme composure could only get him so far, this level of obedience went far beyond any words Hitler could have said. It was in fact the lifestyle of Nazism that ensnared so many German civilians. The German people lived a life of luxury and grandeur up until 1940, that it was enough for them to follow the Nazi regime even when people such as Adolf Hess were running to make plea deals with the Allied powers in exchange for protection and safe passage out of Germany in 1941. This is nothing compared to the last two years of the war, where Nazi leaders fled in droves fearing the worse for the regime that they had committed so much to just 4 years earlier.

The German leadership was far from steady during this time. Hitler had a needless habit of making key military posts a carousel, firing and retiring and then bringing back military leaders (seemingly at a whim), all the while assuming authority in the meanwhile. Whilst gifted on the administrative side of dictatorship up to this point, this signpost of ineptitude is part of what led to the assassination attempt of 20th July 1944. “¹⁷The leaders of the plot included retired colonel general Ludwig Beck (formerly chief of the general staff), Major General Henning von Tresckow, Colonel General Friedrich Olbricht, and several other top officers.”

¹⁶ the end: Hitler's Germany 1944-45

2012

Ian Kershaw

pg. 12

¹⁷ <https://www.britannica.com/event/July-Plot>

After this failed attempt, "¹⁸About 180 to 200 plotters were shot or hanged or, in some cases, viciously strangled with piano wire or hung up on great meat hooks.". This showed just how chaotic the Nazi party was in its final years, it would have been seen as absurd if a member of the Nazi party in 1938 was told of the party's demise and the bedlam that ran amuck in its leadership.

The people of Germany were still firmly behind Hitler and as was mentioned earlier, were quick to be assign the roles of judge, jury and (literal) executioner. During the last days of the war, Germany was still under Nazi rule but had assumed a form of martial law, where any act of treason against the motherland would be met with swift and definitive 'justice'. The kind of Nazi fanaticism worked against Germany, with defiant Germans being killed for a cause its leaders had already deserted.

Richard Overy's book "why the allies won" covered the problems that were not the fault of any German leader or civilian. These are the problems caused by other nations, both friend and foe such as Japan, The Soviet Union and The United States. Starting with the Soviet Union, its relentless approach to was summed up best by its leader Joseph Stalin who said in an Order of the Day in February 1944 "¹⁹As yet, there has been no instance in the history of war of the enemy jumping into the abyss of his own accord. To win the war one must lead the enemy to the abyss and push him into it. Only shattering blows steadily growing in weight can crush the resistance of the enemy and bring us to final victory." This idea of "shattering blows" was something that became a theme following on from defences such as the siege of Leningrad and the battle of Moscow of 1941 and 1942 respectively. by the end of the siege of Leningrad in 1944, it was time for the Soviet Union to start advancing on the German forces, and just like that, it was the hunted becoming the hunters and the Soviet Union was never ending. Stories spread like wildfire of the Russians killing every Axis soldier they found, taking no prisoners. Mass graves were found of German soldiers, desecrated corpses stripped of all valuable items like clothes and rations.

¹⁸ <https://www.britannica.com/event/July-Plot>

¹⁹ <https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/stalin/works/1944/02/23.htm>

It is most telling that by 1942 “²⁰in the jargon of modern strategy, the Allies faced the worse-case scenario. “Despite this, the Axis powers faced ridiculing retreats following 1942 and this culminated in defeat on the second of September 1945. It is yet to be fully seen as to how the Axis lost the second World War from this point but the lack of communication between Germany and Japan was a definitive issue. Japan's decision to attack and bomb pearl harbour, whilst unknown to the German leaders, was a crucial mistake as it forced the united states’ hand in entering the war. this was an error compounded by Hitler deciding to declare war on the United States. America was never going to attack Germany unless they acted in a show of intent against America, the declaration of war was certainly an act of intent. In Hitler’s defence, he was forced into signing a declaration of war on the United States in order to preserve the relationship with Hirohito and the Japanese forces. Had Hitler been able to communicate with Hirohito prior to the attack on Pearl Harbour, Japan would have never attacked the naval base and America would have not entered the second World War until it was too late.

Britain on the other hand, was in the second World War from the very beginning, and never relented over the 7 years of active war. Despite this, Britain still faced its share of attack, including the lengthy bombing raids of its cities called the Blitz. The Blitz was a double edged sword that favoured the British by the end of the war. On one hand, the damage to cities such as London and Manchester as well as naval and air bases. On the other hand, the attacks worked as to galvanise the “Blitz Spirit“, an idea felt across the country that the British people could indeed handle this and more, forming feelings of unity and nationalism that spurred the British on far more than Germany could have anticipated. it does not help Germany that “²¹for most of the second world War Britain and the United States fought a predominately naval conflict“. These tactics, utilised brilliantly by

²⁰ Why the Allies won
1997

Richard Overly
pg.15

²¹ Why the Allies won
1997
Richard Overly
pg.18

Churchill, Roosevelt and later Truman, gave the Allies the greatest possible advantage they could muster in their situation.

The United States were dragged into war following the attack on pearl harbour, and the subsequent declaration of war by the Axis forces. Like World War 1 previously, America coming into the war late gave the States an advantage that they have had before. By the end of the war, America were far outproducing the Axis powers and its pure industrial might payed dividends for them, allowing for increased military power to the biggest international superpower of the time period. Winston Churchill had reassurance that “²²For him, the entry of the United States into the war meant that the ultimate outcome—favourable for his country—was now assured. Feeling "the greatest joy" that the attack had arrayed his mother's country on the side of Britain, he "went to bed and slept the sleep of the saved and thankful."”. The allied powers also had one of the great leaders of the 20th century in Theodore Roosevelt. Roosevelt was one of the three main leaders of the Allied forces up until his death on the 12th of April 1945, when Truman took control of the United States. One of Roosevelt’s lasting actions during the war was”²³The first time that the three Allied leaders came face to face was at the Teheran conference in November 1943.” this meeting set in motion the communication that allowed the Allies to break through the German lines and start on the march to Berlin.

To offer an evaluatory view on these historians, I have read their books as well as consumed other sources such as the Netflix documentaries “Hitler’s secret sex life” (episodes 1 to 4) and “Greatest events of WW2 in colour” (episodes 1 to 10) as well as articles like the history.com article on the timeline of World War 2 Battles. I have even read the journals of Winston Churchill from during the second World War. With these supplementary sources under my belt, I will now evaluate the argument of my three historians to reach a conclusion on which historian’s arguments hold the most weight.

²² Winston S. Churchill. *The Second World War*, vol. 3

²³ Why the Allies won
1997
Richard Overy
pg.245

The Andrew Roberts book "The storm of war: a new history of World War 2" came out in 2011 and is a comprehensive history that covers both sides of the second World War. Roberts had the advantage of newer maps and materials that would not have been available for the book of Richard Overy "why the Allies won" which was published in 1997. This allows Roberts to have the foresight when criticizing Hitler's decisions and his errors. Roberts' book is limited by the fact that it is not a book about Hitler and his mistakes and is instead a book about the whole of WW2. This not only limits the book but it also limits his use of the resources that he has at his disposal, the maps he uses are great for the comprehensive history of the second World War but does almost nothing to tell us anything about the problems Hitler causes. Much of the same can be said about the resources Roberts uses, Roberts instead using a more narrative style of writing to tell us of the mistakes Hitler made.

Ian Kershaw's book "The end: Hitler's Germany 1944-45" drills into the theme of a lack of disenchantment from the German people as well as the disillusion of the Nazi leadership in the last 2 years of the war. Kershaw's book came out in 2012, and was able to utilise the reports that were released from the Russians as well as the reports that were released with the Nuremberg trials of 1945 and 1946. These reports tell us of the dissension of the Nazi leaders like the assassination attempt on the 20th July. Information like this does great work to locate the when, where, and how German leadership deteriorated by the time the second World War ends. However Kershaw is also limited by the fact that much of the German leadership revolves around Hitler and is also there are only so many reports of the German home front and the actions of it by the end of the war.

The oldest book of the three, Richard Overy's "why the Allies won", published in 1997. This is the most in depth book as to why Germany lost the second World War but it is taken from the other side of the coin, a positive spin for the Allies. Whilst it is the oldest book, it uses vastly more diverse sources from the other two books that used. Overy focusses on a more journalistic approach and does this in a highly effective way, using the quotations that are available to him, many of which from Allied military leaders. Part of this can be argued against Overy, as his lack of military resources are evident in his writing, the journalistic approach does not allow for close historical analysis.

In conclusion, whilst the works of Roberts and Kershaw were great tools to the inquiry at hand, only Overy's Book actually takes a real point of view of the question posed as well as the journalistic approach being highly effective at allowing a reader to see the effects the resources Overy uses.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Hitler's secret sex life" (episodes 1 to 4) - Netflix - 2021

Greatest events of WW2 in colour" (episodes 1 to 10) - Netflix - 2019

The Second World War, vol. 3 – Winston Churchill - 2005

Why the Allies won - Richard Overy – 1997

<https://www.history.com/topics/world-war-ii/world-war-ii-battles-timeline> - 2021

the storm of war: A new history of the second world war - Andrew Roberts – 2011

the end: Hitler's Germany 1944-45 - Ian Kershaw – 2012

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<https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/stalin/works/1944/02/23.html> - 1944

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jun/05/winston-churchill-we-shall-never-surrender-speech-1940> – 1940

blitzed: drugs in Nazi Germany - Norman Olher - 2017

Coursework resource record

Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Advanced GCE in History				
Centre name:				
Candidate name: [REDACTED]				
Resources used. The three works chosen for the assignment must be asterisked.	Page/web reference	Student comments	Student date(s) when accessed	Teacher initials and date resource record checked
Norman Ohler-Blitzed(drugs in Nazi Germany)	Methamphetamine, the <i>volksdroge</i> (pg. 1-49)	This book talks about the use of Pervitin, a legal form of methamphetamine, and its use in Nazi Germany. It also details the story of Dr Theodor Morell, a doctor who later becomes Hitler's personal physician. Whilst being an insightful read into Hitler's and Germanys Drug habits, it does not help with the	13/09/21	

		question at hand and so is not necessary to read any further.		
Norman Ohler-Blitzed(drugs in Nazi Germany)	Chapter 2 "siege high"	This told me about the importance of drugs in the German industry and society		
Norman Ohler-Blitzed(drugs in Nazi Germany)	Chapter 3 "High Hitler: Patient A and his personal physician"	This informed me about how serious Hitler's drug problems truly was		
Norman Ohler-Blitzed(drugs in Nazi Germany)	Chapter 3 "The wonder drug"	This informed me about how necessary the drugs were to the German war effort		
Ian Kershaw – the end – Hitler's Germany 1944-45	introduction	This informed me about the troubles Germany faced on the homefront.		
Andrew Roberts - The storm of war	Chapter 1	It told me about the initial invasions of 1939 and 1940.		
Richard Overy – why the Allies won	Chapter 10	It gave me a complete overview on how the allies won ww2.		
Greatest events of WW2 in colour	Episode 1	I found out about the Blitzkrieg and how Germany initially attacked		

Greatest events of WW2 in colour	Episode 2	This told me about the air battles of the second world war and how integral the air was in ww2		
Greatest events of WW2 in colour	Episode 3	This informed me about pearl harbour		
Greatest events of WW2 in colour	Episode 5	This told me as to how the siege of Stalingrad occurred		
Greatest events of WW2 in colour	Episode 6	This told me about the D-day landing		
Greatest events of WW2 in colour	Episode 10	It allowed me to find out about Hiroshima but I didn't need this information		
The Second World War, vol. 3 – Winston Churchill		This gave me an idea of the inner workings of Churchill		
https://www.history.com/topics/world-war-ii/world-war-ii-battles-timeline - 2021		This gave me a detailed idea of the battles that happened during ww2		
https://www.britannica.com/event/July-Plot		It helped me find out about the assassination attempt in 1944		

https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/stalin/works/1944/02/23.html		It told me what Stalin and the russian people were thinking towards the end of the war.		
https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jun/05/winston-churchill-we-shall-never-surrender-speech-1940		The speech was very interesting as it shows the mindset of the british leaders and by extention the british people		