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Examiners' Report January 2011

GCSE History 5HA02 2A

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Introduction

It was heartening to see that centres seem to have taken little time to assimilate the advice on the most effective approach to the various question types in the examination. There were many high quality answers, though some candidates found it difficult to access the top levels, despite having a detailed knowledge of the topic. The following general comments may assist.

On Questions 1c, 2 and to some extend 1d, the key to gaining top marks is to see the ‘big picture’, to give an overview or to prioritise. All of these approaches are an integral part on explanation. So in 1c candidates need to show how the Enabling Act had an impact on the development of Nazi totalitarianism; in 1d they should talk about which reasons were more important; in 2a they should explain change rather than measures and in 2b how Hitler used the fear of Communism to strengthen his position.

Question 3 remains an area where there is room for improvement in many scripts and some generic advice may prove of benefit.

Four bullet points are given and candidates should explain why these (or other factors) contributed to the given outcome (in this case, difficulties for the government or support for the Nazis). But such an approach will get candidates only to the bottom of Level 3. To score highest marks, the answer must compare the relative importance of a number of factors. In trying to do this many candidates asserted that one factor was the most important because it was very important. Such an approach is flawed.

Comparison must involve an analysis of at least two factors.

Question 1 (a)

Candidates found this first question very much to their liking and most were able find at least one inference in the source. Whilst some candidates supported their inference from general knowledge (and thus were not rewarded at the highest level), generally answers were well supported from the information given. There were few examples of candidates copying or paraphrasing the source.

The example is based around the inference that the Nazis had a high degree of power and two examples are given from the source to support this. Such an answer scores full marks.

Germany, 1918–39

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 2000.

replaceable → no longer needed → no need for them

By 1934, the SA had outlived its usefulness. It had been used to guard large Nazi Party meetings and demonstrations and to intimidate opponents, such as communists. The SA had approximately two million members, many of them unemployed. Their continued violence was giving a bad reputation to the Nazi regime. On the night of 30 June 1934, Hitler used the SS to arrest and shoot leading members of the SA, including Ernst Röhm. Over the next few days, up to 200 people, including politicians, were killed. These events became known as the 'Night of the Long Knives'.

→ could do what they wanted

(a) What can you learn from Source A about the power of the Nazis in Germany?

(4)

Source A suggests that by 1934 the Nazis were so powerful that they no longer needed to intimidate Germans with the SA. The source says that by this time "the SA had outlived its usefulness."

The source also says that "Hitler used the SS to arrest and shoot leading members of the SA." This suggests that the Nazis were so powerful that they could do what they wanted.



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Examiner Comments

The answer begins with the inference (were so powerful) and moves from there to quote the source to support the inference. This is excellent technique.



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Examiner Tip

Be direct in your response. We don't need to have introductions or background information. Just answer the question directly.

Question 1 (b)

Stresemann proved to be a popular topic with the candidates and many wrote at length on this topic. Where candidates sometimes went astray was to give long and detailed accounts on the problems created by hyperinflation before writing about what Stresemann did to alleviate those problems. So the rewardable part of the answer began where the detail of Stresemann's actions started. In the same way, Stresemann's foreign policy was not directly relevant to the question, though some candidates were able to explain how the foreign policy underpinned Stresemann's economic policy.

Generally, examiners were looking for details of the new currency and the Dawes and Young Plans. The answer provides information on the Rentenmark and Dawes Plans. It scores 5 and with a little more detail on Dawes would have been awarded 6 marks.

(b) Describe the economic policies of Gustav Stresemann in the years 1924–29.

(6)

One of Stresemann's policies was to replace the ~~old~~ old currency with the rentenmark. This worked because the old currency was effectively worthless, so the new currency would get people buying things and boost the economy. Another policy was signing the Dawes plan with an American banker. This gave Germany an extended period of time to pay off their reparations for the war. This allowed Germany to put more money into rebuilding their economy and country. Another policy was joining the League of Nations. This worked because it allowed other countries to Germany to trade and work with other countries which created more money to boost the economy.

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Examiner Comments

Two points are developed (the Rentenmark and the Dawes Plan) so the mark of 5-6 is appropriate. A little more detail on Dawes would have brought 6 marks.

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Examiner Tip

Good technique is shown in using ‘one of...’ and ‘another’. This clearly shows that separate points are being made.

Question 1 (c)

As mentioned in previous reports, the focus of this question is consequence. Some candidates tended to limit their answer to details of the Enabling Act, or indeed, how Hitler managed to ensure that the Act was passed. What examiners were looking for was the impact of the Act. Candidates would do well to consider this question as meaning ‘what difference did ... make’.

Those who understood that the question required an explanation of the change brought about by the Enabling Act generally scored well. Most answers gave details of the new powers gained by Hitler; the more able candidates argued that the Enabling Act was a major step on the road to totalitarian rule and limitations on the rights and freedoms of the Germans. Such an ‘overview’ approach took candidates into the highest level.

The paragraph provides information on the effects of the Enabling Act. It hints at an understanding of the wider picture, but stops short and does no more than argue that Hitler had power because there were no other parties. Had it been developed further to say that the Enabling Act helped move Germany towards a one party state, it would have been rewarded at Level 3.

(c) Explain the effects of the Enabling Act (1933) in Germany.

(8)

The enabling act was passed when Hitler became chancellor. He became chancellor because the Nazi party were the most popular party in government. Whilst he was chancellor, he was able to pass the enabling act. This had many effects on Germany.

Firstly, the enabling act let Hitler pass laws without taking them through the Weimar Republic / Reichstag. This meant other parties had no say on what laws were passed. Basically, Hitler was now able to dictate Germany. This is one effect of the enabling act. This then obviously led to Hitler ruling Germany - no other parties could stop him.



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Examiner Comments

Solid on the detail of the effects of the Enabling Act, and no irrelevant detail' but no real explanation of the wider impact.



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Examiner Tip

Try to see the 'big picture' in this question. So other parties lost influence; how did this affect Germany as a whole?

Question 1 (d)

Candidates were readily able to identify the reasons why Germany was difficult to govern in these years, though there were a number of errors in examination technique which hindered high scoring. Firstly, candidates must always pay close attention to dates given in questions. The context for this question was 1919-22, which meant that the French occupation of the Ruhr and the period of hyperinflation lay beyond the scope of question.

More significantly many candidates believe that the way to answer this question is to identify reasons (in this case, the impact of Versailles, uprisings by left and right wing groups and proportional representation) and then to give details of those reasons. Such an approach will produce 'solid' marks at Level 2, but will not take the answers into the top level. What is required to reach the highest marks is an explanation of why the particular reason made Germany difficult to govern. It may be self-evident that opposition hindered government, but an explanation of why the government was not able to deal effectively with such opposition adds much to the quality of the response.

The answer explains a number of reasons why Germany was difficult to govern (the impact of Versailles is shown) and then moves to a final paragraph which attempts to link the reasons. This is clearly a good Level 3 response.

Another reason Germany was difficult to govern was because of the Treaty of Versailles (June 1919). This resulted in unemployment ~~of~~ of ex-soldiers, as the army was reduced to 100 000. It also made many people angry at the "Diktat" - their name for the Treaty. Therefore, this is closely linked to the left-wing uprising as it caused many of the workers to be disgusted with the Weimar government for signing the Treaty. This is because as well as hurting their pride, it removed heavy industry areas from Germany such as parts of the Saarland and Alsace - former regions, so reducing economic welfare of Germany, also making it difficult to govern.

In conclusion, Germany was difficult to govern for several reasons, but the common theme throughout all these is opposition to the government by the four workers, the right wing army or left wing communists. This made Germany very turbulent and unstable; the government twice ^{had to flee} from Berlin: once to Wiesbaden and once to Dresden. Not only did this make the practicality of governing Germany difficult, but it made politicians unwilling to force radical reform, for fear of revolution. It also meant that outsiders did not see Germany as a safe place for investments, and so Germany was in a vicious cycle of not being strong economically, and not being able to do anything about it.



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Examiner Comments

The answer goes straight into addressing the question ‘One of the reasons why Germany was difficult’ and has other paragraphs stating ‘another reason’, a ‘third reason’. This is good technique.



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Examiner Tip

Pay particular attention when a question has dates in it. Examiners often use dates to limit the amount they want candidates to write about. So writing outside the given period is just wasting valuable time.

Question 2 (a)

This was a topic which candidates knew well and answers generally reflected a good level of knowledge of the measures set out in the Nuremberg Laws and subsequent actions up to 1939. Some candidates chose to write on the Final Solution, which was outside the scope of the question (and indeed the specification).

Whilst knowledge of the Nuremberg Laws was usually good, only the most able candidates were able to analyse the actual change that resulted in the position of the Jews. It was one thing to say that their lives worsened, but a more rewardable approach was to consider the general impact i.e. Jews ceased to be respected members of the community under the Nazis and the Nuremberg Laws emphasised how they became non-citizens in their own country.

The extract shows a clear understanding of the measures set out in the Nuremberg Laws, but does not explain the overall impact. As it stands, it would be marked in Level 2.

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

When the Nuremberg laws were put in place in 1935, antisemitism had been steadily growing since the end of the war really when people blamed the Jews for losing the war. 1935 however, is when ~~antisemitism~~ antisemitism not only ~~was~~ became acceptable, but the law. The Nuremberg laws were invented to change the lives of German Jews, it now ~~meant~~ meant that they could no longer own businesses and shops, they could no longer own land, they could no longer hold jobs within the civil service and it was now forbidden for a Jew to marry a non-Jewish person.



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Examiner Comments

The answer shows a good understanding of the Nuremberg Laws and includes good detail. Answers which give precise information are always likely to score better marks



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Examiner Tip

Can you give an 'overview' here? What did these measures mean in terms of the position of Jews in German society?

Question 2 (b)

As with Question 2a, candidates generally knew the events surrounding the fire well. There were many answers which told the story of Marinus van der Lubbe and what happened to him. What examiners really wanted to know was what happened to Germany as a result of the fire. In most cases, we were told this. Where answers were able to move away from the immediate detail ('Hitler used it to attack Communists'), and consider the wider impact (It was the beginning of the end for democracy in Germany. Hitler was able to persuade Hindenburg to declare a state of emergency and from this it was a short step to Nazi totalitarianism.') then high Level 3 marks were given.

Question 3 (a)

As explained in the Introduction, many students interpret this question not as whether one of the reasons was more important than others, but simply as whether it was important in itself. As a consequence candidates often go through the four bullets and explain, with varying degrees of sophistication how each was important. Such an approach will bring reward, but the best marks are reserved for prioritising and/or linkage.

The example below is the final paragraph of an answer which considers each bullet point individually, but tries to show links between them. In this final paragraph the candidate brings the argument together by showing how hyperinflation was the reason which pulls all the others together. Level 4 was awarded.

So I think that hyper inflation was the main reason because it left their economy in a shambles and left the government with no money. If their government still had a good economy then the french would be hard and would not be invading the reich. The economy being good will have also stopped ~~the~~ people thinking the weimar republic were bad and they would not look at groups such as the nazis. Also if there money hadn't been taken by hyperinflation the great depression wouldn't have had such an effect. Hyper inflation was the ~~not~~ only reason germany was hard to govern after 1922 because it lead to ~~these~~ these things happening.



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Examiner Comments

The final paragraph shows that the candidate fully understands how reasons link together to create an outcome.



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Examiner Tip

Try to avoid leaving your analysis to the final paragraph. Answers are much stronger if you can demonstrate links or prioritise as you go through the answer. Then it is easier to draw the essay together in a final paragraph.

Question 3 (b)

As with Question 3a, the key to success on this question lay in explaining how the given factors (or others) won support for the Nazis , and their comparative importance in doing so. Better candidates had little trouble doing this. Some candidates were good at providing detail, but did not prioritise; other candidates attempted to prioritise but made assertions without support. This answer is an example of a response which sees a link, but does not explain effectively. It was marked at Level 2.

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 3(a) Question 3(b)

I do believe that people voted for the Nazi party for their simple solutions not fast rearmament.

Rearmament was not as important as tackling unemployment.

Hitler promised to However, it is linked with unemployment. Hitler promised to bring unemployment down. He did this by using the army. People needed jobs so he made them build roads, and shells and weapons.

Hitler also started made youth movements. This was to gain the respect of the younger generation. He did this by issuing Hitler youth, and this gave boys basic survival skills.

Secret goepels helped him with censorship and propaganda.

Hitler made his speeches broadcasted on every radio. The radio stations were all strictly controlled by the Nazis. The movies were not allowed to show anything other than Nazi ideas as a hero. They - the public could only see the bright side of supporting Nazi ideas.

However, rearmament was one way of getting the vote. But I do not see it as being more important than any other factor. I believe they all had a role to play in why people supported the Nazi party in 1933-39.



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Examiner Comments

The answer asserts that rearmament was not as important as tackling unemployment, and that there was a link, but a much more detailed explanation is needed to score high marks.



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Examiner Tip

Remember that you cannot prove that one factor is more important than another unless you write about both and compare them.

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