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Examiners' Report June 2010

GCSE History 5HA02 2B

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Introduction

This option is the least popular of the three alternatives offered for Unit 2, but candidates coped well with the demands of the paper and there were many excellent responses to the questions set. Performance was considerably stronger than in the January session, perhaps as candidates had been able to spend longer preparing, but more probably because centres will have used the opportunities provided by the January examination and Edexcel guidance thereafter to reinforce their teaching on examination technique. Whatever the reason, it was highly encouraging to see the candidates adapting to the new examination with few difficulties.

Individual questions are discussed below, but there are several introductory points which should be made before looking at the performance on those questions.

As stated in January, candidates should not concern themselves with the amount of space allocated to an answer. Edexcel centres will be aware that online marking requires candidates to write within a given space. As a consequence more space is provided for each answer in the booklet than is usually needed, thus allowing for error, large writing etc. As explained below, a focused, concise response is usually more highly rewarded than a lengthy response which does not directly address the issues at hand. So candidates should not concern themselves with 'filling up the space'.

Candidates should also realise that with the exception of Q1a, this paper tests their knowledge and understanding of the period studied and their ability to select relevant detail from their knowledge to answer the question set. So in preparation for this paper, it is vital to learn the topic in detail, but in answering the questions, it is equally important to spend time considering which information is to be used. Such reflection would save many candidates wasting their efforts by writing in depth on, for example, events before 1917 in question 3A. Indeed, candidates should remember that the specification begins in 1917 and, whilst an overview of the events leading up to the 1917 revolution is essential, there will never be questions requiring an analysis of the role of Rasputin.

Question 1(a)

Performance on this question was strong, with most candidates inferring that Stalin had great authority or, less convincing but acceptable, was popular with the Russian people. A minority of candidates disadvantaged themselves by writing at too great a length, identifying three or four inferences, or considering the nature, origin or purpose of the source. This question does not require source evaluation, but instead asks candidates to interpret the source content to make one inference from what they are told - and to support that inference from the source.

Weaker candidates have difficulty differentiating between what the source actually says and what we might infer from it. The example below clearly shows how this distinction can be achieved. The last five lines show an inference being made from the content of the source.

The answer contains a number of inferences about Stalin's rule.



The last 5 lines on their own provide an inference, supported by reference to what is in the source.

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.

Stalin's achievements were constantly praised. Part of Stalin's approach was to use the 'cult of personality'. The Soviet people were taught that Stalin was an all-powerful and all-knowing leader. He was the father figure who ruled with all their interests at heart. His image was everywhere – in posters, statues and books. There was even a set of eight recordings made of his speeches.

(a) What can you learn from Source A about Stalin's rule of the Soviet Union?

(4)

Source A suggests that a 'perfect' image of Stalin was created ~~so that~~ ^{as} he became more and more popular. It suggests that the 'cult of Stalin' was engrained in people everywhere by constantly showing images of him. The source suggests that Stalin had a very powerful rule of the Soviet Union, as he was able to get his image put out there and a positive image at that.



This answer achieves Level 3 by referring to what is in the source. A better technique is to directly quote e.g. 'I know this because...'

Question 1(b)

This question provides the candidates with an opportunity to provide precise historical detail on one topic or aspect of the specification. Candidates are rewarded for identifying a number of statements or features and then adding support from their contextual knowledge. One well-supported statement will be awarded 4-5 marks, depending on the quality of the support; two supported statements will be awarded 5 to 6 marks.

Candidates are asked to write about 'features'. This candidate has written about the events of the revolt and its impact.

(b) Describe the key features of the Kornilov Revolt.

(6)

Kerensky, the leader of the Provisional Government set General Kornilov as commander of the army. He grew tired of the Provisional Government and ordered an attack on Petrograd as he was in command of the Russian Army.

Kerensky was scared as the Provisional Government didn't have much support and asked the Bolsheviks for help in return that they'd release all Bolsheviks captured in the July Days attempt revolution and supply the Bolsheviks with weapons.

The Bolsheviks stopped all trains carrying the Russian Army and encouraged them to retreat.

Kornilov's attempt of takeover was not successful and in the end not a threat ~~the~~ to the Provisional Government.

Kerensky forgot to take back the weapons he supplied the Bolsheviks with.

The Bolsheviks were not seen as 'the protectors of Petrograd' and the Kornilov Revolt showed the Russia's civilians how weak the Provisional Government was. Soldiers from the Petrograd

* to protect Petrograd.

Soviets were encouraged to join the Bolsheviks



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Examiner Comments

There is sufficient support for each answer to allow a high Level 2 mark to be awarded.



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Examiner Tip

To ensure that the examiner is clear where support for one feature ends and another starts, it is a good idea to use terms such as 'Firstly' or 'Another feature is'

Question 1(c)

The focus of this question is consequence. Candidates are asked to explain the impact of an event or policy, rather than just writing on that effect or policy itself. Weak answers tend to list without providing supporting detail, but the majority of candidates are able to reach Level 2 by supporting their statements with relevant contextual knowledge. One supported consequence will be awarded 3-4 marks, depending on the quality of the support; two supported consequences will be awarded 4-5 marks. Where improvement can be made is in establishing links between the effects being explained, or in being able to give an overview of the impact of War Communism on Russia. (ie the positive of helping win the Civil War, but the negative of causing widespread hatred of the Bolsheviks). Such an approach moves the answer to Level 3.

The answer addresses the impact of war communism on the populace and on the work of the Bolsheviks.

(c) Explain the effects of Lenin's policy of War Communism on Russia.

(8)

War Communism had many effects on Russia such as helping to win the civil war but also causing much opposition.

The main effect of War Communism on Russia was the millions it left starving from the grain that was taken from the peasants. Almost all the grain that the peasants had produced was taken to feed the army leaving millions hungry and giving them great opposition from peasants.

However another effect that War Communism had was that it created a communist state which the Bolsheviks had wanted by taking control of the industry and food and then redistributing it but mainly to the army. This brought the Bolsheviks together and enabled Lenin to be seen as a true communist leader.

War Communism also helped ^{the Reds} Russia to win the civil war by keeping the soldiers fed this kept moral high and made them fight better. Without proper food the Red Army would not have been able to fight the way it had ~~because~~

The last but not serious effect for the Bolsheviks was the Kronstadt mutiny because of opposition to war communism. 10,000 soldiers were killed or

injured because of it and so shows that War Communism lost the Bolsheviks a lot of support as the navy had been a big support during the revolution. The Kronstadt mutiny was the 'light' Flash that lit up reality for Lenin and led to the creation of the New Economic Policy.

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Examiner Comments

It contains positive and negative aspects of the policy and so has an 'overview' which moves it into Level 3.

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Examiner Tip

As this answer does, candidates should avoid just writing about the identified policy. The question asks for effects. This answer is clearly explaining what War Communism caused to happen

Question 1(d)

This question focusses on causation. Candidates are not asked to give details of the event, person or policy in the question. Instead they are asked to explain why something happened. As in the previous question, Level 2 marks are awarded for identifying and supporting an answer with contextual knowledge. One supported reason will be awarded 3-4 marks, depending on the quality of the support; two supported reasons will be awarded 4-5 marks. Level 3 is reserved for those that can then give a more sophisticated explanation of the importance of the reasons given. Why were these reasons particularly important, was any one more important than the others, is there a link between them? Candidates who could work at this level scored very high marks on this question.

This question asked candidates about why Stalin became leader of the Soviet Union. That is a different question to how he maintained himself in power. So, unfortunately, those candidates that wrote at length about the purges received no reward for such information.

The candidate avoids the trap of writing about Stalin's time in power and instead concentrates on the events of the 1920s.

General ~~Leftist~~ Prop. Trotsky ~~GS~~

(d) Explain why Stalin became the leader of the Soviet Union. (8)

Stalin became the leader of the Soviet Union because of a number of reasons. Firstly it was his position within the party as General Secretary. This enabled him to appoint ministers who agreed with his ideas and dismiss those who didn't. It also made him in effect the third most powerful member of the Communist Party.

Secondly Lenin never chose a successor but he did write a last testament in which he advised that Trotsky should be the next leader and that Stalin should be dismissed from the party because he was "too rude" and "had too much power in his hands". But this was never published because Stalin, Zinoviev and Kamenev all felt they would come out of it badly and Trotsky didn't want to cause divisions within the party. ~~as that was seen as~~

Thirdly Trotsky made many mistakes during the 'leadership contest'. Firstly he did not push for the last testament to be published meaning the party never knew of Lenin's wishes. Secondly

He underestimated the power of Stalin after calling him the 'grey blur'. Thirdly he used to be a mendicant and was ~~was~~ from Jewish origins which meant many people did not trust him. Fourthly he didn't turn up to Lenin's funeral because Stalin allegedly gave him the wrong date. This was one of his ~~of~~ biggest mistakes because the funeral gave Stalin a chance to appear as Lenin's closest friend and ~~his~~ chief mourner. Portraying himself as the most obvious successor to Lenin.

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Examiner Comments

Although analysis is not strong in places, this is explanation of why the various factors helped Stalin in achieving power

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Examiner Tip

The answer would be much stronger if links were made between the factors eg how Stalin used his position to suppress Lenin's last testament.

(Total for Question 1 = 26 marks)

Question 2(a)

Questions 2a and 2b are 'process' questions. Candidates are asked to select one of two questions requiring them to explain 'how' a particular event, policy or trend occurred. As in earlier questions, candidates are required to identify ways and to support them with relevant contextual knowledge. One supported statement will be awarded 3-4 marks, depending on the quality of the support; two supported statements will be awarded 4-5 marks.

Candidates answering Q2a had little difficulty identifying the methods by which the Bolsheviks overcame opposition. Details of the work of the Cheka and how victory was achieved in the Civil War were well-known, though not always linked effectively to how success was achieved.

The candidate has identified a number of ways in which the Bolsheviks were able to overcome opposition.

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

EITHER

2 (a) Explain how the Bolsheviks overcame opposition to their rule in the years 1917–24. (8)

OR

2 (b) Explain how the Provisional Government lost support during 1917. (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)**

The Bolsheviks overcame opposition to their rule through their strengths and the weaknesses of the provisional government.

The Bolsheviks became very popular through many elements. One of which was Lenin's catchy, memorable and persuasive slogans such as 'PEACE, BREAD, LAND!' or 'ALL POWER TO THE SOVIETS'.

In addition to the Bolshevik strengths, the provisional government had a great deal of weaknesses.

One included their being un-elected, which appeared as if they didn't represent the people. Another weakness was their unpopular decision to remain fighting in the war, even though most people opposed.

Returning back to Bolshevik strengths, one was Trotsky's train. Trotsky's train had a cinema which played tough music and propaganda like movies to cheer on and encourage the Bolshevik soldiers.

Another way in which the Bolsheviks overcame their opposition was by increasing numbers in the Red army through violent threats. People were scared that if they didn't support the Bolsheviks Lenin would have their families killed.

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Examiner Comments

There is development of the points, but it is not strong and so a Level 2 mark is achieved.

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Examiner Tip

Candidates should try to see an overview in their answer. Perhaps in this question it might be by saying 'They did so through the use of fear. First they made use of the Cheka to...'

(Total for Question 2 = 8 marks)

Question 2(b)

Question 2b proved difficult for some candidates who read the question as 'Why' did the Provisional Government lose support? In the final analysis, high marks could still be achieved with this approach, but it was easier to pick up marks by explaining the process, rather than treating this as a causation question. The answer below shows how a candidate has covered the main points and provided sufficient linkage and explanation to reach Level 3, even though the question was addressed as if it were testing causation.

The question is answered as if it were 'Why' did the Provisional Government lose support?

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

EITHER

2 (a) Explain how the Bolsheviks overcame opposition to their rule in the years 1917–24. (8)

OR

2 (b) Explain how the Provisional Government lost support during 1917. (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)

The Provisional Government lost support during 1917, partially because of their mistakes, but also because of the appeal of the Bolsheviks.

The PG made many mistakes, including allowing the formation of other parties such as the Bolsheviks, which in turn allowed people to support other parties, rather than in the (majority of the) Tsarist rule other parties were not allowed to form, so the people had no option but to support the Tsar.

Another major mistake of theirs was to continue with WWI. This was the opposite of what the people wanted and


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Examiner Comments

The main points are covered, with explanation to show the Provisional Government losing support

The numerous defeats caused people to lose faith in the PG (Provisional Government). Additionally, the Bolsheviks were the only party to oppose the war, thus increasing support for them, because of the lack of options.

Also, the PG were not popular with the public because they were not a publicly elected body, they were the Tsar's old Duma and not representative of the people. They were also weak because they were a temporary body and were not a stable government, with many changes of people's positions.

The PG also lost support because the Bolsheviks gained support. Lenin used ^{German} foreign money to fund campaigns (which the PG had made legal, so people were not afraid to openly support them) and Lenin invented slogans such as "peace, land and bread" and "power to the soviets". These increased their support because they addressed problems, such as the peasant land question which the PG had failed to answer, and they spoke to the people.

In conclusion, the PG lost support mainly because of their mistakes, such as ignoring what the people want and carrying on with the war and ignoring the peasant land question. This all increased support for the Bolsheviks. (Total for Question 2 = 8 marks)


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Examiner Tip

When asked a process question, candidates should not make it more difficult by turning it into a question on causation.

Question 3(a)

Questions 3a and 3b are, in effect, 'essay' questions. Candidates are asked to select one of two questions requiring them to explain the relative importance of a number of factors linked to causation or effect. It is extremely important that candidates are aware of how they should test for relative importance. In this question some candidates simply provide detail about the given, or their own, factors. Such an approach will not result in high marks. If there is an explanation of how the factors helped bring about the stated outcome, then such an approach may result in a mark at the top of Level 2. Where no such explanation is given, low Level 2 or Level 1 marks will be awarded. Candidates need to be aware that they cannot reach Level 3 without prioritising the factors given (ie they cannot score more than half marks on this question). Equally, they should be aware that relative importance comes from comparing the importance of two or more factors. Explaining that poor performance in the war was the most important reason why the Tsar had to abdicate is not addressing relative importance, but is merely reinforcing the explanation given in Level 2. Where candidates can explain why the poor performance was more important than the opposition of peasants and town workers, then a mark at Level 3 is justified. Where three or more factors are compared, or an understanding of the causal web created by all the factors is shown, then Level 4 is achieved.

The answer has been edited to save space.

The first page explained why each factor contributed to the downfall of the Tsar and reached the top of Level 2.

In conclusion, I feel that the main reason why the Tsar abdicated was the opposition of peasants and town workers. Over 80% of the Russian population opposed him, which meant the peasants had the best say in who should be the Tsar. They were unhappy at the lack of food and the amount of deaths due to starvation. Even though the poor performance by Russia in the war was key, because to the Russians it looked as if the Tsar was to blame, I feel the peasants opposing him was more important. The Revolution was the second most important reason because some soldiers lost faith with his decision and actually shot their own officer. I feel the least most important reason was the weakness of the Tsar. Even though he made some bad decisions, in the long term they didn't matter due to factors such as the revolution and the peasants, which is why I feel the most important reason of why the Tsar was forced to abdicate was the opposition of the peasants and town workers.

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Examiner Comments

The conclusion draws together the reasons and prioritises between a number of factors. However, the prioritisation is not entirely convincing and in places merely repeats the original argument. The answer, therefore, is marked at Level 3.

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Examiner Tip

When prioritising it is important to compare the importance of factors, rather than just stating why they were important.

Question 3b

Question 3b was significantly more popular than Question 3a. Candidates, unsurprisingly, were not convinced that living and working conditions were a real problem and most argued that it was the inefficiency of Soviet industry that was Stalin's greatest challenge. The answer below shows how one candidate addressed this factor, but chose not to go beyond it. Consequently a low Level 2 mark was all that could be awarded.

The answer addresses just one factor.



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Examiner Comments

Indicate which question you answer
If you change your mind
and then indicate

This is very weak, but it does more than provide just unfocussed description, so is rewarded at the bottom of Level 2.

Chosen Question Number: **Question 3(a)** **Question 3(b)**

The inefficiency of the Soviet industry was one of Stalin's greatest problems because not enough supplies were made. For example, the amount of tractors were very good but practically all of them did not work because the peasants cared about quantity, not quality of what they had made. Food was scarce which resulted in peasants dying, which meant not enough food was made anyway. ridiculous targets were set for the peasants to achieve, the weather and conditions were awful, many of the workers died because of the weather, machinery hazards and unstable structures which collapsed onto the workers.



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Examiner Tip

If candidates are asked to write about a number of factors, choosing to answer on just one will severely restrict the mark which can be given.

Grade boundaries

Grade	Max. Mark	*A	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
Raw mark boundary	50	38	33	28	23	20	17	15	13	0
Uniform mark scale boundary	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20	0

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