

Examiners' Report
January 2012

GCSE History 5HA02 2B

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Introduction

Candidates seem to have been comfortable with the questions set in this year's paper and examiners reported very few 'blank' answers or examples of misunderstanding of what was expected in individual questions. It was pleasing to see that so many candidates knew their material well, though some of it was 'off-specification' Centres need to remind candidates that the specification starts in 1917 and examiners will not expect them to know about events before that date. Nor will they generally reward them for such knowledge. Obviously it is essential to look at events pre-1917 to understand Russia at the time, but this should be done as a short introduction and with candidates aware that they will not be asked to write on this period in the examination.

As mentioned in previous reports, there is still a tendency amongst some candidates to write what they know, rather than focus on 'effects', 'causes' or 'changes' but it is apparent from student responses that centres are working hard to improve the exam technique of their candidates.

One point which is worth highlighting from this year's responses is that candidates need to read questions *very carefully* to ensure that they understand the parameters of the question that they are answering. For example, Question 1b was on '*the key features of opposition to collectivisation*', which is by no means the same as the '*key features of collectivisation*'.

Answering Question 3 continues to challenge some candidates, though others have mastered the technique and score well. Feedback from some centres is that they ask their candidates to answer this question first, so as to ensure that they devote sufficient time to it. This may be a good approach, as long as any time problems are not then transferred to 1a and 1b, which seem to be more accessible to some candidates who score higher marks for these than for Questions 1c-2b.

In terms of the technique for answering Q3, it seems that most candidates are comfortable with having to explain the impact of the stimuli (or other factors they choose to write about), but less confident on prioritisation. This is not surprising, as the successful juxtapositioning of various factors is challenging. It is worth repeating comments made in previous reports; prioritisation must involve explaining why the impact of this factor was more important than the impact of others, by looking at the impact of all factors being considered. Giving an explanation of the impact of e.g. hyperinflation and concluding that it was the most important "because of all the things I have told you about it" does not constitute prioritisation.

Question 1 (a)

This question presented few difficulties for candidates and most were able to make a supported inference from the source. The vast majority of candidates argued that Lenin must have been 'a very respected man because they named a city after him'. Others concentrated on his flexibility or realism, as shown in his decision to bring in war communism.

This answer shows a candidate reaching the top mark with a supported inference, but also doing much more work than was needed to answer the question.

Russia, 1917-39

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 dictionary of modern history, published in 1962.

In October 1917 Lenin led the rising that overthrew the Provisional Government. He introduced communist economic policies, but they were not successful. So he brought in the New Economic Policy, which had measures which went against communist thinking. He died in 1924 and five days later Petrograd was renamed Leningrad in his honour.

(a) What can you learn from Source A about Lenin? (4)

Source a ~~states~~ States that Lenin led the Revolution and ~~was the~~ introduced Communism as it says 'Lenin led the rising' and 'He introduced communist economic policies' the source also suggests that Lenin was loved by the people as five days after his death 'Petrograd was renamed Leningrad' the source ~~also~~ infers that Lenin was ~~democratic~~ and ~~can~~ diplomatic as the source shows that he would change policies to make Russia a better place.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

The first paragraph is confusing and is probably just paraphrasing
The second paragraph is direct and supported. Really, this paragraph is all that was needed.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

This is a question on which you should be concise and not waste time in detailed explanation. Make your inference (and make sure you aren't just repeating what the source says), then provide a quote and move on to the next question.

Question 1 (b)

Collectivisation is a topic well-known to candidates, but they must take care to read the question thoroughly to ensure they focus on the precise aspect which the question demands. This was not a question on the reasons for collectivisation or how Stalin tried to enforce it. It was a question on opposition to collectivisation and examiners expected to see answers focusing on the opposition of the peasants and the opposition of the Kulaks. Why there was opposition and the impact of that opposition can be seen as key features and are a perfectly valid route to high marks

This answer focuses on opposition and does not stray into Stalinist policies or reasons for collectivisation. The last paragraph on effects of opposition is rewardable

(b) Describe the key features of the opposition to Stalin's policy of collectivisation.

(6)

There were many features to the opposition of Stalin's policy to collectivisation such as the fact that peasants didn't agree because of the fact that they were able to feed themselves always and they had free will to grow what they wanted.

The peasants did not like the idea that they had to meet certain targets before they could eat and were fined if they did not meet these targets. They felt angry because they thought why should they have to feed the army it was not their problem, and feeding the army only meant there would be less food for them.

Another opposition to Stalin's policy of collectivisation was the rich peasants otherwise known as the KULAKS. They opposed to collectivisation because they knew it would make them poor again. The kulaks were often educated and disliked the fact that they were going to be told what to grow, or what type of animal to breed. They knew that collectivisation meant that they won't have as much food

as they usually would have.

In response to their anger the peasants slaughtered their animals and destroyed their crops, which meant that Stalin would not be able to supply the factory workers and army as quickly as he should have.



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Examiner Comments

Detail on peasants and detail on Kulaks. Perhaps a little light on facts, but plenty to score a high mark in Level 2.



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Examiner Tip

The examiner is looking for at least two developed points to award top marks. So answers should help the examiner to see where one point finishes and another starts by using key words such as 'firstly' and 'secondly'. This answer has used 'another opposition'

Question 1 (c)

As in Question 1b, answers need to focus on a particular aspect of the civil war, rather than to give details of what happened in the period. Most candidates did this and there were some very good answers on the overall impact. Whilst Level 2 answers concentrated on the detail of food and fuel shortages, civilian casualties and damage to infrastructure, Level 3 answers were able to explain a growing disillusionment with the Bolsheviks (as witnessed in the Kronstadt Mutiny and the move to the New Economic Policy). Paradoxically, others argued that the major impact of the civil war was to ensure communism survived, particularly after the death of Tsar Nicholas.

This answer categorises the effects of the war. In the paragraphs shown, economic effects are discussed.

(c) Explain the effects of the civil war on the people of Russia in the years 1918–22.

(8)

One of the main effects on the civil war was the economic effects. The policy of war communism, the nationalisation of most industry and the use of all other resources to help the state, led to an economic crisis in Russia. For example production of machinery fell to around $\frac{1}{7}$ of its pre-war peak. The diversion of resources also caused major hardships on the population, for example chronic shortages in the cities.

One of the worst results of all these shortages and policies were the famines that occurred in rural Russia. The policy of requisitioning grain to feed the red army, coupled with the destruction and labour shortages, the civil war caused a famine that was responsible for the deaths of around 10 million people, and even led to reports of cannibalism.



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Examiner Comments

The answer concentrates on effects, rather than on what happened. The organisation of the answer into categories, supported with factual detail, takes the answer to Level 3



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Examiner Tip

Remember this question is about 'effects'. So you need to say what happened as a result of the war. Can you see a 'big picture' here? There was a lot of damage and there were food shortages. What overall effect would this have on the Russian people?

Question 1 (d)

Candidates had a good understanding of why the Provisional Government was overthrown and there were some good answers based on the failure to leave the war, Bolshevik promises and strengths, and the impact of the Kornilov Revolt.

Where some candidates let themselves down was in not taking the extra step to link the factors to the actual overthrow. Quite often candidates explained why staying in the war was a bad thing, or why the Kornilov Revolt made the Provisional Government look weak, but they did not then go on to develop this to show why these factors actually brought the government down. This is essential to reach Level 3.

This is a brief answer, but it is focused on why the causes produced the outcome.

(d) Explain why the Provisional Government was overthrown in October 1917.

(8)

The provisional government was ~~over~~ overthrown in October 1917 mainly because of their attempts to continue the war, most people in Russia were against the war. Russia was losing the war and most of her men in the war, ~~also also~~

Moreover, ~~people~~ ^{Lenin and} the Bolsheviks got more popular ~~anger intensified the~~ on the people got angrier with the provisional government because ~~the Bolsheviks~~ Lenin ~~promised~~ the people an end to the war in his April Thesis he also promised 'land and ^{Peace} bread' this made the Bolsheviks a better government in the eye of the public as they would give what ^{the} people ^{wanted}

furthermore, the ~~Provisional~~ Provisional government was overthrown because of the ~~events~~ Kornilov revolt, the Kornilov revolt Provisional government were not able to stop General Kornilov but the Bolsheviks were, making the Provisional government look weak and the people didn't want a weak government ~~also the~~ this led to their overthrow as the Bolsheviks were armed for the takeover and the Provisional government had no support.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

The first paragraph doesn't explain why the war brought the government down, but this is picked up in the next paragraph and there is a good statement on why people wanted the Bolsheviks rather than the Provisional Government. The paragraph on Kornilov also relates well to the outcomes, so this is a safe Level 3.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Don't forget that this question is about causes, not about what happened. So don't tell the story, instead say why it happened. Then, when you have done that, check you have actually said why your reason made it happen.

Question 2 (a)

This question presented something of a problem. Candidates are obviously well-versed in the reasons why the Whites were defeated in the Civil War and believed that this was what the question was asking. However, the question clearly states: 'Explain the steps' which requires a *process* answer setting out **how** it happened, rather than **why**. The two are so closely related that an answer explaining why often hit on the process by accident. The work of Trotsky, the introduction of War Communism and the use of the Cheka might be seen as causes or as steps. This did not apply to some other factors, such as the weaknesses of the Whites.

As a result, most answers giving the reasons for defeat often remained in Level 2, when a more focused explanation of the way the Whites were defeated might well have moved the answer into Level 3.

This is the second paragraph of an answer giving two paragraphs of detail, marked at Level 2. Note the use of 'the second' and the repetition of 'step' to try to ensure a focused answer - though the answer may well be addressing the reasons!

2 (a) Explain the steps by which the Whites were defeated in the civil war in Russia (1918-22).

The second step was war communism. At first the whites were well supplied but then they started to run out. War Communism kept the Red Army supplied. The whites were defeated as they had too many officers and not enough soldiers. The whites only shared one aim which was to beat the bolsheviks. ~~They~~ They ~~often~~ often argued. Also the soldiers they had were conscripted peasants who did not want the old Tsar's regime back.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

I like the way that the paragraphs begin with direct reference to the question, though the paragraph on War Communism is really about the weaknesses of the Whites and is low Level 2.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Be careful on this type of question not to just list what happened, or to give examples of the topic mentioned in the question. When answering this question, for example, explain the methods that the Bolsheviks used to win, not just the story of their success.

Question 2 (b)

This was by far the more popular of the Question 2 options and produced some detailed and impressive answers. Almost all candidates achieved a good Level 2 mark. To reach Level 3 candidates had to do more than describe the 5 year plans, or the Stakhanovite Movement. To reach this level answers needed to include an indication that Russia was industrialised by using control or compulsion or that one aspect of policy was more important than another. There were some good answers which adopted this approach.

The paragraph shown is a good example of how candidates can achieve a high mark in Level 2, by knowing their detail.

2 (b) Explain how Stalin industrialised the Soviet Union in the years 1928–39.

(8)

one way Stalin industrialised the Soviet Union was by bringing in the 5 year plans. In 1928, ~~the~~ Stalin wanted a series of 5 year plans which would bring the USSR up to the west's standard. The Gosplan set up 5 year plans each with set goals that must be achieved by the 5 years. The first 5 year plan ran for only 4 years, from 1928–1932. It mainly focused on heavy industry, ~~and these~~ items like coal and metal. The second 5 year plan, also focused on heavy industry, ~~as well as~~ consumer goods, it ran ~~set~~ from 1933–1937. The 5 year plan was a reason for how the Soviet Union was industrialised.



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Examiner Comments

The paragraph on the 5 Year Plans is Level 2 as it just provides detail (though does it well)



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Examiner Tip

In this type of question try to do more than just list the detail. Can you find some overall policies to link your detail together? For example, did Stalin use encouragement, or compulsion? (or both?)

Question 3 (a)

The technique for answering the essay type question has been discussed in detail in the Introduction. Although this question proved very much less popular than 3B, where it was answered, there were some good explanations of the impact of the war and the discontent of the people as a result of poor living standards. Candidates often wrote at length on the weaknesses of the Tsar, but some went as far back as the Russo-Japanese War to prove the weaknesses of the Tsarist regime. The specification starts in 1917 and whilst some leeway is given in explaining the impact of the war, or weak government whilst the Tsar was away, examiners cannot be expected to credit events as far back as Bloody Sunday.

Question 3 (b)

Candidates very much liked this question and there were some impressive answers. Whilst some candidates found it very difficult to explain the role of the 1936 Constitution in helping Stalin to maintain control, most had no difficulty explaining the contribution of propaganda, or of removing political opposition. The 'carrot and stick' approach in terms of better opportunities for women, reinforced with propaganda based on the Cult of Stalin compared with the fear of being purged was well-known by candidates and often accompanied by good prioritisation

Here are the last two paragraphs of an essay which has already given an impressive explanation of the role of propaganda and the use of the purges.

He also used the 1936 Constitution to control people. This Constitution was made to keep the people happy. It said that the Supreme Soviet would rule the country. It was made up of 2 houses: the Soviet of Union and the Union of Nationalities. Both of these would contain elected people in them. The Supreme Soviet would meet a few times per year, but for more than 1 week at a time. The Presidium would rule all of the time the Supreme Soviet were away. The 1936 Constitution also contained a Bill of Rights, giving people freedom of speech and religion. The idea of a democratic government and the freedom of expression pleased the people (although it didn't work in practice). Who would want to oppose someone like who cares as much for the people as Stalin did?

The use of propaganda may have been big, but I believe that the Purges was the main reason why Stalin stayed in control. Propaganda may be good - it can reach a wide audience but not everyone believed the propaganda, so it wouldn't have kept him in control on its own. The Purges however, was a sort of censorship of its own. The Purges created fear which was so great, people started thinking and acting

differently, so as not to be killed or arrested. The 1936 Constitution may have made the people happy, but the reason why Stalin remained in control after it was because of his army (he could use it to maintain power). This is why I think the Purges were the main reason as to why Stalin maintained control.



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Examiner Comments

Very impressive analysis. The paragraph on the 1936 Constitution is very sophisticated and there is a clear message that the purges were more important than either propaganda or the Constitution. This is a Level 4 response.



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Examiner Tip

Don't just describe the factors given in the question. Explain how they link to the question you are asked and then try to say which of these was the most important

Paper Summary

Key learning points

- * Questions can be answered in any order, but candidates need to take care to ensure all questions are answered.
- * Candidates must make sure they read questions to ensure they appreciate the parameters of the question and do not waste time by providing irrelevant detail. They should also note that events pre-1917 are not on the specification.
- * Candidates must make sure they understand the specific requirements of each question e.g. to explain 'effects', 'changes' or reasons 'why'.
- * In Q3 (and elsewhere) prioritising factors can only be done by looking at the significance of at least two factors - not just by arguing that one factor was the most important "because it was very important".

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