

Examiners' Report

June 2014

GCSE History 5HA02 2A

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Introduction

Candidates appear to have found this year's paper accessible and providing plenty of opportunities for them to demonstrate an understanding of the key features of German history between the wars.

None of the questions caused any significant difficulties for the candidates, though responses to Question 1b were sometimes outside the chronological framework of the question. It was pleasing to see continued development of examination technique to allow candidates to frame their answers in a way which enabled them to focus on the central theme within the question and to complete the paper within the given time frame. Although some candidates wrote extensively (particularly on Question 1d, 2a and Questions 3a and 3b), there was little evidence that they were adversely affected by time pressures. Where there were difficulties, this was usually the result of candidates including unnecessary detail. This was most common on Question 1c where candidates included irrelevant material on why the French occupied the Ruhr, or extensive detail of hyperinflation.

Generally, however, candidates seemed to have coped well with the demands of this year's paper and responded effectively to the questions set.

Question 1 (a)

Candidates found it a relatively straightforward task to make valid inferences about attitudes towards the Jews from the material given in Source A. Most answers noted that the Nazis had very negative views towards the Jews or that the public were not quite so sure that they were comfortable with the treatment Jews received. Where such inferences were supported, Level 3 was awarded. Some candidates made inferences about Nazi control, which were not rewarded, or provided contextual knowledge to support inferences about the Jews. This was not accepted as support and so Level 3 was not achieved.

Source A infers that lots of German people didn't like the events that happened against the Jews because "many Germans watched... with alarm and concern".

Source A also infers that ~~most~~ ^{hardly anyone} wanted to help or stand up for the Jews against the Nazis because of their "fear of arrest."

There is also evidence that the Nazis influenced people's attitudes towards the Jews by propaganda as the "Nazi-controlled press" presented it as "ordinary Germans against Jews" influencing people's views.



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Examiner Comments

This answer contains several supported inferences about attitudes towards the Jews in Nazi Germany and Level 3 was reached in a number of places.



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Examiner Tip

Candidates should make the inference in the first line of the response and then ensure the support comes from the source, not general knowledge.

Question 1 (b)

This was a question which some candidates found challenging. There was a degree of confusion between the Nazi Party in its early years and the events of 1923-29, or on occasions, post-1929. Where candidates did write within the correct chronological framework, there were some very good responses detailing the 25 Point Programme, Hitler's assumption of the party leadership and the establishment of the Sturmabteilung. Candidates also seemed to have a good understanding of the anti-Jewish and anti-Versailles beliefs held by party members.

Socialist → DAP
(b) Describe the key features of the Nazi Party in the years 1920-21.

(6)

One key feature of the Nazi Party was their socialist agenda. Originally named the DAP or German Workers' Party, they were set up to encourage socialism and ~~to~~ ^{aimed} to try to stop the spread of communism.

Another key feature of the Nazi party was their views on the Aryan race. When Hitler became head of the Nazi party in 1921, he renamed the party the NSDAP or National Socialist German Workers Party, shortened to 'Nazi' party. He firmly believed that their was a superior race; the 'Aryans'.

A final key feature of the Nazi party was their lack of support for the Treaty of Versailles. They felt they had been cheated by France and the other nations. They also supported the uprising of the Freikorps in 1920 against the government and they wanted to ~~to~~ go against the Treaty and return Germany to its former glory.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

Although there are some factual errors in this answer, the candidate shows good examination technique and has provided factual detail to support at least two features. Consequently, the answer was marked at the top end of Level 2.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

The question asks for candidates to describe features. Best technique, therefore, is to begin each paragraph 'One feature was', 'A second feature was' etc.

Question 1 (c)

The vast majority of candidates wrote extensively on the economic problems caused by the French occupation of the Ruhr. They had a good understanding of how failure to pay reparations led to the occupation, which resulted in passive resistance and shortages. The German government's decision to print more money fuelled the growing inflation until hyperinflation set in. At this point, some candidates gave rather too much detail on the impact of that hyperinflation, but the point had been made.

By relating the economic impact, most candidates' answers reached the top of Level 2. Where they were able to make conclusions about the wider impact (perhaps on international relations, or more commonly, on the declining popularity of the Weimar government - as witnessed by the Munich Putsch) then Level 3 was achieved.

It showed how ~~weak~~ ~~weak~~ weak Germany was to the German people that ~~the~~ ~~just~~ passive resistance would have a large economic effect on Germany. Also, it ~~meant~~ ^{meant} the ~~fact~~ ^{Weimar} implied to the German people that ~~the~~ republic was ~~not~~ ^{some} even more support as ~~the~~ ~~fact~~ German people believed they would ~~personally~~ be more aggressive and less passive ~~in~~ in fighting for German rights. This then rose support for extremist groups ~~to~~ who were advertising more appealing, decisive actions to combat ~~the~~ forces like the French occupation of the Ruhr.



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Examiner Comments

This answer sets out the economic problems created by the occupation (not shown) before concluding that the events made the government less popular. The concluding paragraph shown is not strong, but takes the answer into Level 3.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

To score at the highest level candidates need to explain the wider impact of the occupation. It led to hyperinflation, but what were the consequences of the problems created by hyperinflation?

Question 1 (d)

This was a very popular topic, with considerable knowledge of the reasons for the unpopularity of the treaty. Most answers provided details of land losses, military restrictions and reparations. Best answers took details such as Article 231 and explained why making the Germans accept blame for the war was an unacceptable blow to their pride - especially when there were many in Germany who did not accept that Germany had started the war, or indeed, that it had necessarily lost it on the battlefield. Other ways into Level 3 were to explain why the terms were such a bitter blow. Here candidates usually concentrated on the pride the Germans had in their now-dismantled armed forces or the reasons why certain land losses were particularly unpopular.

One reason why Germans opposed the signing of the Treaty of Versailles because they thought it wasn't going to be as harsh. German citizens thought that it wouldn't be harsh due to Woodrow Wilson and his 14 points. However Clemeneau wanted to destroy Germany and when the terms of the Treaty of Versailles came out the Germans felt really hard done by. This led to Germans opposing the Treaty of Versailles because they felt betrayed and didn't expect the terms to be that harsh.

Another reason why Germans opposed the signing of the Treaty of Versailles was because they felt humiliated. When the terms of the Treaty of Versailles came out it meant that Germany had to lose all their colonies, 48% iron and 13% of its land was gone. Also their army was reduced to 100,000 men and was only allowed six battleships and had to pay reparations of 16 billion. The Germans felt violated and humiliated. On top of that Germany had to accept the blame for the

out break of war (~~At the~~ ~~At the~~ war guilt clause).
This led to Germans opposing the signing of
the Treaty of Versailles because it
meant that they was most likely to lose
their 'great power' status also they that the
terms were too harsh.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This answer clearly reaches Level 3. In the first paragraph German opposition is linked to a sense of betrayal. In the second paragraph the terms of the treaty are given and used to explain how they made Germans feel humiliated.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

Candidates need to remember to make sure that their explanation clearly links the explained reason to the outcome

In this case it is not enough to just give details of the unpopular elements of the treaty. Candidates need to explain why they were unpopular.

Question 2 (a)

This question gave candidates the opportunity to explain how Stresemann's policies brought Germany out of the economic problems created by hyperinflation. Although the dates of the question specifically excluded the details of hyperinflation, there was a need to establish the difficulties that Stresemann inherited in order to show how the economy changed. Almost all those candidates who answered this question knew about the introduction of the Rentenmark and how the Dawes Plan helped stabilise the Germany economy. The Young Plan was often mentioned, though its impact in 1929 was minor. Some candidates noted a change for the worse as a result of the Wall St. Crash. This was rewarded, though, again, the impact on Germany in 1929 was minimal.

There were many reasons that contributed to the improvement of Germany's economy between 1924-1929. Firstly, Gustav Stresemann became Germany's foreign secretary and introduced a new currency known as 'The Rentenmark'. This improved the economy as it solved the issue of hyperinflation in Germany and with the new Reichbank, Germany's economy was greatly improved both home and abroad.

In April 1924, Stresemann agreed to the Dawes plan. Charles Dawes was a U.S. Banker which prepared a plan to Germany that would decrease the annual amount that Germany would have to pay in reparations and make it much easier to pay off annual payments. The Dawes plan also prepared

That ~~German~~ US. banks would invest in German industry. However, many Germans believed that Germany was becoming too dependent on U.S. loans, one commentator likened it to 'dancing on a volcano'. Nevertheless, the Dawes Plan made it possible for employment to rise and also exports and imports of German goods. Therefore, improving the economy.

In August 1929, Stresemann agreed to the Young Plan. The Young Plan was proposed by U.S. Banker, Owen Young and stated that Germany could have a total of 59 years to pay reparations off, which decreased the annual payment by a lot and also the overall payment of the reparations was decreased from £6,600 million to £2,000 million. Making it much easier for Germany to pay reparations. Taxes were decreased, employment went up and the German economy was improving. However, many Germans didn't like this either. Adolf Hitler said 'we are passing the penalty to the unborn' due to the 59 years in which Germany were given to pay reparations.

Gustav Stresemann, during the Stresemann era 1924-29 was definitely the key reason as to why Germany's economy improved by agreeing to the plans.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This is a very good account of the major elements of Stresemann's economic policy. Details and impact of the new currency, the Dawes Plan and the Young Plan (though over-emphasising its impact in 1929) are given.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

This question is about change. Candidates should, therefore, make sure they do more than just explain what happened. To score highest marks they must show how those events made a difference.

Question 2 (b)

Although considerably less popular than Question 2a, where chosen, this question was very well answered. Level 2 answers tended to concentrate on the details of Locarno, the League and Kellogg-Briand. Level 3 answers explained how those agreements brought Germany out of the international isolation imposed by Versailles and back into the international community. Some candidates also noted how the Dawes Plan had an effect on international relations.

From the ¹⁹²⁴⁻²⁸ years there were three main things that affected international relations. Of these two were directly orchestrated by Gustav Stresemann the German who fixed their economy.

In 1924 the Dawes plan was set up between Mr Dawes and Mr Stresemann, the plan reduced reparations from £6.6 billion to £2 billion and US loans were provided to help Germany. These changed relations as Germany now felt they were being recognised again and that they were a strong partner in trade for other countries.

The next two parts directly involved the League of Nations, the first part was the Locarno pact

which was signed in 1925. In this pact Germany agreed to respect the buffer zone between France and them, then when they did sign the allies were to pull troops out of the Rhineland. Also ~~the~~ Germany were accepted into the League of Nations and invited to the small concert. This pact was signed by 5 countries (Britain, France, Belgium, Italy and Germany). This was a step forward for German relations as they were finally being recognised ~~&~~ as a world power again.

Both of these pacts were linked together because of the role they played in Germany's international relations. Without them relations may not have improved and Germany will never have been strong and seem like a world power again.

Another pact was the Kellogg-Briand pact in 1928 in which ~~&~~ over 40 countries agreed to protect each others borders. This again showed that Germany was seen as a strong and trustworthy country that other countries wanted as an ally. This helped to remove some of the bitterness people still had over the treaty of Versailles.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This answer reaches Level 3 by explaining the difference that agreeing the Dawes Plan, joining the League of Nations and signing the Locarno Pact made to German international relations. Dawes made Germany feel part of the trading community and joining the League and signing the Locarno Pact saw Germany 'recognised as a world power again'. In the final paragraph, the same point is made about Kellogg-Briand.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

This question is about change. Candidates should, therefore make sure they do more than just explain what happened. To score highest marks they must show how those events made a difference.

Question 3 (a)

There were many interesting responses to this question with candidates showing a detailed knowledge of the Reichstag Fire, Munich Putsch and the impact of the Great Depression. The roles of von Papen, von Schleicher and von Hindenburg were less well-known. The general opinion appeared to be that it was Great Depression which brought the greatest stimulus to Nazi support, though many candidates argued that the Munich Putsch sowed seeds for future developments and the Reichstag Fire gave Hitler a chance to remove opposition. There were some excellent attempts and showing how the factors 'fed off each other' and where this was successfully explained, Level 4 marks were awarded.

Overall, I think that the Reichstag fire was not the most important factor in the gain of influence of Nazis over Germany as without the Munich Putsch, Hitler would never have been able to carefully plan the path of Nazis to power and if would still have acted illegally and not have influenced Germany. However I still feel that the Reichstag fire was more important than the Great Depression ^{and the political influence} as even though the great depression got people to turn to Hitler and the Nazis ^{and the Reichstag allowed the Nazi ~~to~~ influence} the Reichstag fire was what enabled Hitler to get rid of communists, their main opposition, meaning that the Nazis were by far the biggest party.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This answer shows the final paragraph of a candidate's answer. Previous paragraphs have explained how the individual factors contributed to the growth of influence and this paragraph aims to prioritise. The first half of the paragraph is a reinforcement of the importance of the Reichstag Fire, but does not compare with other factors, so does not add to what was written earlier. However, the second half of the paragraph sees a direct comparison between the importance of the Fire and the Great Depression, taking the answer to the top of Level 3.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

There are no rewards for saying 'this was the most important reason...this was the second most important reason ...' etc unless you can prove those statements by direct comparison between the factors discussed.

Question 3 (b)

This was a very popular question and one on which a number of candidates wrote lengthy and well-supported responses. Most answers argued that Hitler's legitimate control came from the Enabling Act, that propaganda and education helped him win support through popularity, but the use of the Gestapo and other institutions enabled him to force acquiescence if necessary. Where candidates were able to show clear links between the factors, Level 4 was awarded. It was common, however, for candidates to remain in Level 3 by explaining how each factor helped bring control and then concluding that one of the factors was most important without making direct comparisons or links.

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 (eg Question 1d is always about causation).
- When making an inference, always support it from the source, not your knowledge.
- When considering effects (Question 1c) or change (Question 2) always look for the wider implications. What did the surface changes cause to happen on a more general scale?
- If you are asked for the effects of an event, don't waste time explaining why that event happened.
- Always take note of the dates given in a question (eg Question 1b). They are there for a reason.

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