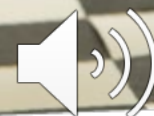


# GCSE History

Paper 2 British Depth Study  
Question 2  
Explain why...



## Q2: Explain why .....

- **This question will ask you to explain why an event or development in history happened (causation).**
- It is worth 12 marks.
- We advise that you spend 20 minutes answering this question (extra time: 25 minutes), including up to 2 minutes for thinking/ planning time.
- Using knowledge in addition to the stimulus points can help you to achieve a higher mark.
- You do **not** need to write an introduction or conclusion. This means you do not need to write more than 3 paragraphs.



## Q2: Explain why .....

### Our question

Explain why the Spanish Armada was defeated.

(12)

You **may** use the following in your answer:

- Sir Francis Drake
- the use of fire ships

You **must** also use information of your own.

- You will be given 2 **stimulus points** to help you answer the question.
- You do not have to use these – you can replace them with knowledge of your own.
- You should aim to cover 3 aspects of content throughout your answer.

1. Look for the focus of the question - what you need to explain – **failure**
2. Look for the historical event you need to focus on – **Spanish Armada**
3. Take up to 2 minutes to plan your answer



## Q2: Explain why ..... Other options

Explain why the Normans built so many castles in England during William I's reign. (12)

You **may** use the following in your answer:

- England's border with Wales
- rebellions

You **must** also use information of your own.

Explain why the Church had so much influence during the reigns of King Richard I and King John. (12)

You **may** use the following in your answer:

- people's everyday lives
- the Church's role as landowner

You **must** also use information of your own.

Explain why Wolsey had become Henry VIII's most important minister by 1519. (12)

You **may** use the following in your answer:

- Wolsey's personality
- the Treaty of London (1518)

You **must** also use information of your own.



## Q2: Explain why .....

### How to answer the question

Explain why the Spanish Armada was defeated.

(12)

You **may** use the following in your answer:

- Sir Francis Drake
- the use of fire ships

You **must** also use information of your own.

1. **Explain why - defeat.** *For example, the experience of Sir Francis Drake, tactics, Spanish ships.*
2. **Support your explanation with knowledge of the Spanish Armada.** *For example, successes of Sir Francis Drake, the use of fireships, Spanish ships were not well suited to conditions in the Channel.*



## Q2: Explain why .....

How to answer the question – planning/ thinking time

Explain why the Spanish Armada was defeated. *tactics*  
*advice, planning, weather, crew, ship design*  
(12)

You **may** use the following in your answer:

- Sir Francis Drake
- the use of fire ships

You **must** also use information of your own.

- English  
- Spanish  
*weather*

Use key words when you plan – Think: knowledge, reasons.  
Do not write too much.



## Q2: Explain why ..... What is your examiner looking for?

A clear reason for the defeat.

Knowledge about the Spanish Armada to support the reason and explanation.  
3 aspects of knowledge.

An explanation of how this led to the defeat of the Spanish Armada

One reason why the Spanish Armada was defeated was because of English <sup>advice taken on board</sup> ~~ships~~. Several years before the Armada happened, a man called John Hawkins advised Elizabeth that she should improve British war ships so they are more manoeuvrable and have better defence systems. The British ships were therefore more equipped than the Spanish. They had many cannons or decks to fire at the opposition and galleons were used as they could take more cargo and were more manoeuvrable. When the British engaged the Armada in the Battle of Gravelines they were able to fire 6 times more cannon balls as the Armada sat further away. This caused the Armada to become scattered and destroy the Armada, resulting in its defeat.



## Q2: Explain why .....

### What makes a good answer?

- **Start each paragraph with a direct focus on the question**

*“The Spanish Armada was defeated because ...”*

- **Connectives to explain the focus of the question.**

*“This led to defeat because ...”, “As a result, the Spanish Armada was defeated because ...”, “This caused the defeat of the Spanish Armada because ...”*

- **Knowledge to support the explanation – try not to just describe what you can remember.**

*“This can be seen when ...”*

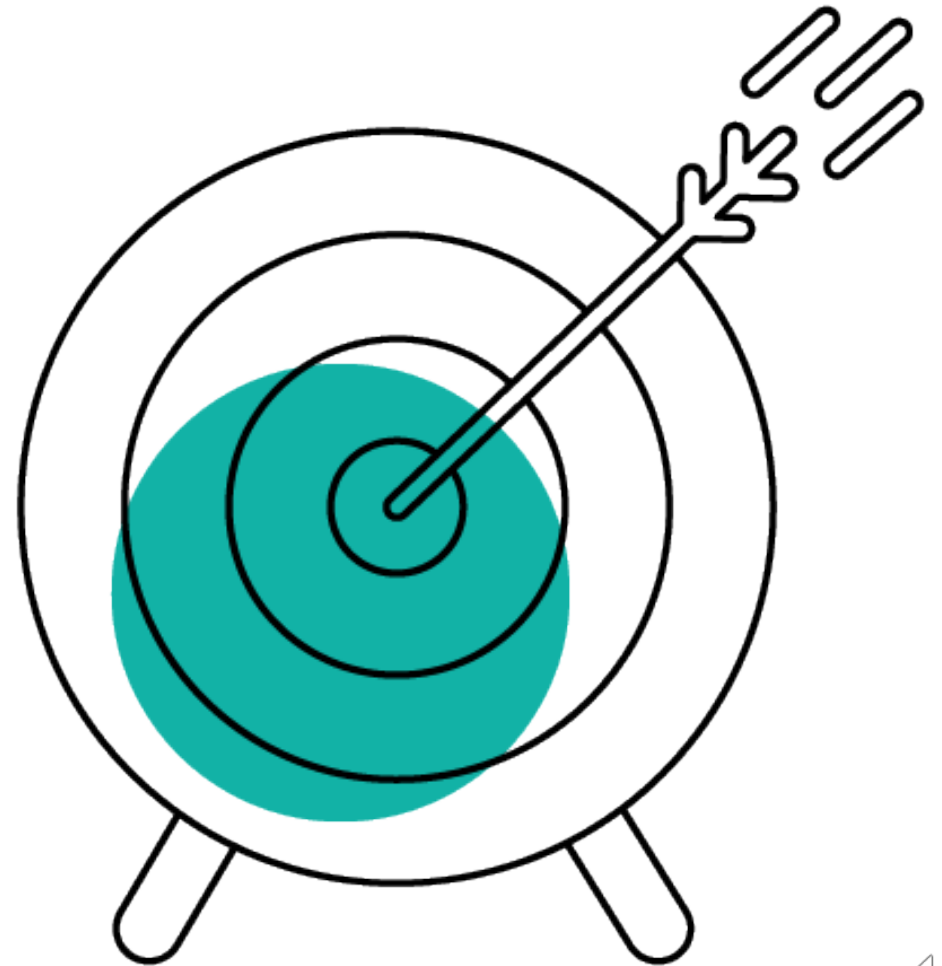




# Student support

In this video we have looked at how you should answer Q2 on Paper 2 British Depth Study of your GCSE History exam.

Find revision tips and guidance on command words on the Edexcel website [here](#).





Pearson

