

# Stimulus points

A **stimulus** causes something else to happen or develop. In nature we can stimulate plants to grow by ensuring they have plenty of water and sunlight.

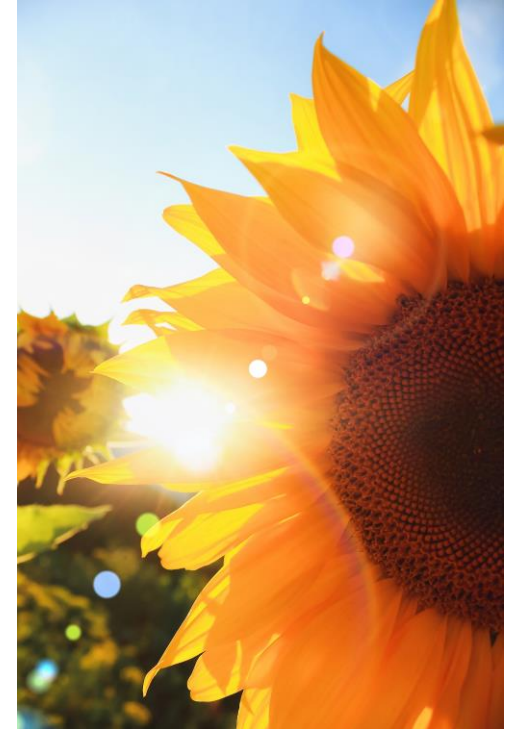
'The role of local communities was the most important factor affecting law enforcement during the Middle Ages.'

How far do you agree? Explain your answer.

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

- tithings
- trial by ordeal

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



In GCSE History we provide **stimulus points** for many high-tariff questions which focus on knowledge and understanding. They are designed to help you to develop your answer by associating what you may have learnt with the question being asked. They enable you to demonstrate positive achievement by reducing the risk of you writing a very knowledgeable response which misses the focus of the question.

# Stimulus points

Stimulus points are designed to help but **you do not have to use them!** If you'd rather talk about examples of your own that is perfectly OK. Examiners will try to select stimulus which they think you will be familiar with from your studies but if you don't recognise one of the points or can't remember any details about it then try to think of a different example of your own.

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Stimulus points act as a guide to how many points you should write about. On questions with stimulus points you should aim to write about at least **three aspects of content**.

In the example provided you **MAY** write about **tithings** and **trial by ordeal** and you **MUST** include an **additional example** of your own... or you could write about three different examples of your own.

Stimulus points are not factors – they are **prompts** which can be developed into factors. In the example above, **tithings** refers to a group of householders who lived close together and were collectively responsible for each other's behaviour. You could develop this stimulus into an argument which **supports** the role of local communities in law enforcement. **Trial by ordeal** is designed to get you to think of an **alternative argument** (the role of religion and the Church in law enforcement).

In 16-mark judgement essays one of the stimulus will always relate to the statement in the question. The other stimulus will try to help you to develop an alternative argument.

# Stimulus points

In the mark schemes for questions with stimulus points you can see there is a '**stimulus cap**' applied to higher-marking levels which means you cannot achieve top marks without writing about three or more aspects of content.

3	7–9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An explanation is given, showing some analysis, which is mainly directed at the conceptual focus of the question. It shows a line of reasoning that is generally sustained, although some passages may lack coherence and organisation. [AO2]</li> <li>Accurate and relevant information is included, showing good knowledge and understanding of the required features or characteristics of the period studied. [AO1]</li> </ul> <p><i>Maximum 8 marks for answers that do not address three or more aspects of content.</i></p>
4	10–12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An analytical explanation is given which is directed consistently at the conceptual focus of the question, showing a line of reasoning that is coherent, sustained and logically structured. [AO2]</li> <li>Accurate and relevant information is precisely selected to address the question directly, showing wide-ranging knowledge and understanding of the required features or characteristics of the period studied. [AO1]</li> </ul> <p><i>No access to Level 4 for answers that do not address three or more aspects of content.</i></p>

This example shows the 12 mark 'explain why' mark scheme. If your response is marked in Level 3 but you only write about two aspects of content (e.g. the two stimulus points provided) and do not include a third example of your own, then you could only score a maximum of 8 marks. You would not be able to access Level 4 without writing about three aspects of content. This is because Level 4 requires 'wide-ranging knowledge and understanding'.

**Paper 2P Analytical narrative stimulus:** this is a special type of question, and the stimulus points need to be treated a bit differently. Instead of developing/building them up into different factors or arguments you should see them simply as **developments, points or stages** which can be included in your narrative, developing links between the events to explain how they led to an outcome.

Write a **narrative account** analysing the key events of the Berlin Crisis, 1948–49.

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

- Stalin's fears
- the Airlift

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

