

Explain

Explain means to make something clear, supporting your answer with reasoning and examples.

In order to explain something, you need to do more than simply describe events. To explain something effectively is to ‘analyse’.

Useful words for **explaining**:

- Because...
- Therefore...
- This means that...
- This is supported by...
- An example that shows this...

The focus of the question

Such as smaller events or different factors

Analysis means to break down a complex issue into more manageable parts to help people to better understand the issue. This is done by writing an account that considers the role of each part, and/or the relationship between the parts, in bringing about an outcome.

How they link to the question

Its link to the issue

Such as how they interact or affect each other

A good explanation should be:

- Coherent – this means it makes sense.
- Sustained – this means it is focused on answering the question.
- Logically structured – the response is set out in a sensible way.

Explain

Your explanation should be directed at the **conceptual focus** of the question – the relevant second-order concept.

Second-order concepts are ideas which can be used to explain things in history, e.g.

- Causation = explain why
- Consequence = explain how something happened as a result of an event or development
- Significance = explain importance/impact

You need to give reasons for the opposition, but then use reasoning and examples to explain why it caused opposition.

Explain one consequence of the Cuban Missile Crisis (1962).

As well as **identifying** the consequence, you need to **explain** how it was a result of the Cuban Missile Crisis.

‘The threat of invasion was Elizabeth’s main problem when she became queen in 1558.’
How far do you agree? **Explain** your answer.

As well as making a judgement, you need to **explain** your answer, which means using reasoning and examples to support your judgement.

Explain why there was opposition in Germany to the Treaty of Versailles (1919).

One reason is that people were angry that they had to pay reparations. The money Germany had to pay was set at \$6.6 billion. This was far more money than Germany had, and as a result, Germany had to print money, which led to hyperinflation. Because of this, many people faced poverty as their savings became worthless. This caused opposition because people blamed the treaty for their suffering.

The answer identifies a reason...

...then supports it with explanation using knowledge and reasoning...

...and finally links back to the question.