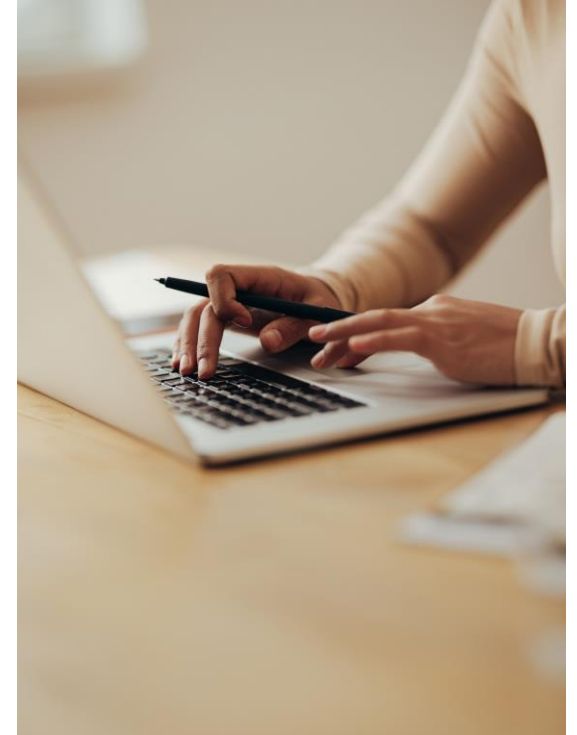


Why interpretations differ

An **interpretation** is a secondary extract such as a book, webpage or magazine article. It is written later, after the event, usually by a historian who is attempting to portray or make meaning of the past using sources from the period as evidence of what happened. Interpretations should be treated differently from sources and **not as evidence** of the past. They are **views**!

People can have different views on an issue. It is perfectly possible for two historians writing about the same issue to reach completely different or opposing views, even if they have had access to the same evidence (sources).

In this question you will be provided with two different views (interpretations) on an issue. You will be asked to **suggest one possible reason why the views differ** then to **support your answer with a bit of detail** from each interpretation (and the sources if you use them).



Why interpretations differ

Suggest one reason why Interpretations 1 and 2 give different views about the attitudes of young people towards the Hitler Youth movement. **You may use Sources B and C to help explain your answer.**

The mark scheme suggests different ways of answering this question – you only need to suggest **one** reason! The question states that you **may** use Sources B and C to help explain your answer and that is one way of explaining a difference.

Source B: From a private letter, written by a Hitler Youth member to a friend in Germany in 1936.

What is life like in this camp, which is supposed to be the best example of all the Hitler Youth camps? There is little enthusiasm. We don't have a minute of the day to ourselves. This isn't camp life, no sir! It's army life. Drill starts right after a very small breakfast. We would like to have athletics but there isn't any. Instead we have military exercises, down in the mud, till our tongues hang out of our mouths. We have only one wish: sleep, sleep and more sleep.

Source C: From a book about the Hitler Youth, published in 1954. A Hitler Youth leader is remembering what the Hitler Youth was like in the mid-1930s.

What I liked about the Hitler Youth was the comradeship. I was full of enthusiasm when I joined the *Jungvolk** at the age of ten. I can still remember how deeply moved I was when I heard the club mottoes: '*Jungvolk* are hard. They can keep a secret. They are loyal. They are comrades.' And then there were the trips, especially camping! Is anything nicer than enjoying the beauty of the homeland in the company of one's comrades?

Interpretation 1: From *Germany 1918–45* by J Cloake, published in 1997.

Many young people were attracted by the exciting and interesting activities of the youth movements. There were many outdoor events such as camping and hiking as well as sports. Some enjoyed the military aspects of the youth movements, the uniforms, the marching and the discipline. Other young people liked the music that was a frequent part of cultural activities or the military parades. There was great comradeship among the Hitler Youth.

Interpretation 2: From *Germany 1858–1990: Hope, Terror and Revival* by A Kitson, published in 2001.

The movement became less popular towards the late 1930s as the activities became increasingly focused on preparations for war and the discipline became more strict when membership became compulsory. There was a growing resentment at the way Hitler Youth leaders acted as if they were better than members who were barely younger than they were. Some youngsters began to kick against the restrictions of the Hitler Youth.

Steps to think about when answering question using sources

- We know that evidence from the past can differ – Source C talks about the fun and attractive parts of the Hitler Youth such as camping which supports Interpretation 1. Source B talks about the less popular activities such as military exercises which supports Interpretation 2.
- It's possible the two historians used different sources from the past to form their views. Your explanation needs to include specific details from the sources to match the interpretations, not simply saying 'could have used evidence like source C'.

Why interpretations differ

Using the two sources provided is **not the only way** of answering this question.

The authors are presenting views that have been constructed from different sources, but they may also have a **different focus**. They may have chosen to include / select **different examples** and **emphasise different aspects** of the topic.

Different aspects of topic:

The author of Interpretation 1 is trying to explain what attracted boys to join the movement whereas the author of Interpretation 2 is explaining why it became unpopular.

OR

Different focus / timescale:

Interpretation 1 is talking about the movement generally whereas Interpretation 2 is focused on the later 1930s and suggests the movement had changed to become increasingly militarised which made it unpopular.

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