



AS
History

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Report on the Examination

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General

Students mostly responded well to the demands of the paper and the majority were able to write substantial answers to both the compulsory source question and their choice of essay question. Most demonstrated good organisational skills and there was little indication that students were pressed for time to complete their answers. A few responses did present some challenge in terms of legibility. With regard to popularity, the question on Hitler's responsibility for the growth of Nazism (03) was noticeably more popular than the question on the stability of the Weimar Republic (02). A good range of levels of response were demonstrated across both essays, although there was some indication 03 performed more strongly than 02.

Section A

Question 01

For the source question the majority of students were able to maintain focus on the period in question. However, some included post -1922 information. A common feature of the interpretation of this question was that although the question provided opportunity for comment on positive attitudes to the Republic, the predominant emphasis tended to be on weaknesses of the Republic. There were also some students who discussed the weaknesses of the Weimar Constitution. If analysis was based solely on weaknesses of the Constitution these responses were placed in lower levels. It is advised that students are made more fully aware of the difference between discussing the Constitution in political terms and discussing the wider Republic.

Of the two sources Source A proved to be the most accessible and there was widespread agreement that A was the more valuable source. Most students recognised the source originated from a right-wing nationalist and linked this to the Kapp Putsch. Some noted the date as being the date of the putsch, although there were fewer than might be expected who highlighted this. In terms of commentary on the content, a good number spoke about why the Republic was perceived to be 'ineffective and lacking in authority'. Better answers focused on the lack of authority domestically whilst others attempted to link this to Germany lacking authority in Europe. These responses sometimes lost focus on the issue of German attitudes. A number of responses linked the attitudes in the source to right wing political violence, and a few mentioned the assassination of Erzberger. There was also some useful comment on the reference to the terms of the Treaty of Versailles and resultant attitudes to the Republic.

Source B proved more challenging in terms of assessing value. The most accessible feature of the provenance was the fact that Mann supported democracy. Some students were able to place the date of the source amongst examples of political instability of the period. In terms of content, the majority recognised the references to the inception of the Republic and understood what was meant by the assertion that Republic should not be regarded as 'weak and shameful'. The reference to 'corrupt individuals' facilitated comment on extremists, often supported by specific knowledge.

Overall, the majority satisfied the question's requirements in that there was comment on provenance and content, supported by contextual knowledge. Notably there were a few who failed to provide a comparative judgement. It should be emphasised that a comparative judgement is required to access the higher levels of the mark scheme.

Section B

Question 02

With regard to 02 a small minority of students failed to focus on the given date range, instead producing a response looking at the early years of Weimar. References to earlier instances of political instability were valid if used to support comparison with the period in question which was more politically stable. A further feature of weaker answers was that there was sometimes a tendency to produce a pre-learned ‘Golden Years’ response whereby students described features of the period with little explicit focus on political stability. Students should be encouraged to prepare for a variety of issues, rather than producing learned responses. Furthermore, a significant number of students found it challenging to maintain focus on political stability, instead discussing economic issues or foreign policy. Much of the information on economic issues was outside of the time frame of the question, and there was sometimes extended comment on foreign policy which was not linked to political stability. Stronger answers showed a good knowledge of both the causes and consequences of political instability and included a range of comment typically focusing on the advantages and disadvantages of proportional representation or the significance of the Grand Coalition.

Question 03

This was the more popular essay option. Students often possessed a good knowledge of the growth of Nazism over the given period. The strongest responses were able to balance Hitler’s personal responsibility as a factor with a range of other factors, but there were a significant number of responses which strayed from the key issue. Some of students produced an answer explaining why Hitler was appointed Chancellor, rather than focusing on the growth of Nazism and Hitler’s personal responsibility for this. Another common characteristic of weaker responses was the tendency to focus on the role of Hitler in the earlier development of Nazism, in particular looking at the Munich Putsch and Hitler’s time in prison, usually linked to the impact of Mein Kampf. Hitler’s role in the development of the 25-point programme was also mentioned on occasion. At the opposite end of the time frame, some students strayed beyond January 1933 producing a consolidation of power style response, referencing the Reichstag Fire or the Enabling Act. A further feature of less secure answers was to describe the reasons for the popularity of Nazism rather than focusing on the key issue. Such additional factors could be used effectively as counter argument to the main point, but often this link was not fully established. The best answers were able to consider the extent to which Hitler was personally responsible by evaluating his charismatic personality and oration skills in particular in relation to the election campaigns of the period. A number of better responses referenced election statistics in support of their answer.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.