

Specimen Paper Answers – Paper 1

Cambridge O Level History 2147

For examination from 2024



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Introduction

These specimen answers have been produced by Cambridge ahead of the examination in 2024 to exemplify standards for those teaching Cambridge O Level History 2147. Questions have been selected from Specimen Paper 2, Questions 2, 6, 12 and 15.

The marks given are for guidance only and are accompanied by a brief commentary explaining the strengths and weaknesses of the answers. Comments are given to indicate where and why marks were awarded, and how additional marks could be obtained. There is also a list of common mistakes and guidance for candidates for each question.

The specimen materials are available to download from the [School Support Hub](#).

2024 Specimen Paper 1

2024 Specimen Paper Mark Scheme 1

Past exam resources and other teaching and learning resources are available on the [School Support Hub](#).

Details of the assessment

The syllabuses for Cambridge O Level History are available at www.cambridgeinternational.org

Paper 1 – Structured Questions

2 hours
60 marks

Candidates answer **two** questions from Section A (Core content) and **one** question from Section B (Depth studies).

All questions are in the form of structured essays, split into three parts: (a), (b) and (c).

Externally assessed

55% of the O Level

Question 2

Question 2(a)

Describe political events in Rome in 1848–49.

Specimen answer

In 1848 there was an uprising against the Pope and the French sent an army to help him. Garibaldi led the defence of Rome against the French and a truce was declared on July 1 1949. The Pope was restored to power.

Mark awarded = 4 out of 4

Examiner comment

This answer gains maximum marks since five points are made about the events in Rome, and only four are needed.

Common mistakes

A common mistake is for candidates to include background information which is not necessary for part (a) questions. Part (a) responses should focus on description and only include relevant details. Explanation is not required.

Question 2(b)

Why was Garibaldi important to Italian unification?

Specimen answer

Garibaldi was important to Italian unification as the leader of the Thousand. With this group of volunteers, Garibaldi was able to land in Sicily, and despite the fact that they were facing a much larger army, the Thousand obtained notable victories such as at Palermo and Calatafimi. Finally, they were able to successfully bring Naples and Sicily into the Kingdom of Sardinia after a plebiscite. These actions are considered a crucial step on the path towards unification.

Garibaldi was also important as a hugely popular figurehead in the struggle for unification. He was known as the 'man who does not lose battles', and his achievements in South America and in the war of 1859 inspired many to believe that he would lead them to victory and that the unification of Italy was possible.

Mark awarded = 6 out of 6 (Level 4)

Examiner comment

This answer would gain full marks as it contains two explanations, both of which show how Garibaldi helped Italian unification. Specific contextual knowledge is used to support the reasons given, and the answer is structured sensibly.

Common mistakes

In answering part (b) questions, some candidates provide narrative or lengthy introductions which 'set the scene'. This is not required.

Question 2(c)

'Foreign powers held back moves towards Italian unification.' How far do you agree with this statement? Explain your answer.

Specimen answer

Foreign powers both helped and didn't help Italian unification to happen.

Firstly, France was very helpful, as they wanted to see Austria lose some of its power. Austria controlled much of the Italian peninsular and if it could be driven out with help from France, as engineered by Cavour, this would be an important step on the road to eventual unification. Napoleon III was keen to humiliate Austria to attain glory for France and reduced influence and power for Austria, and this is why he agreed a secret agreement with Cavour at Plombières. The resulting military defeat of Austria in 1859 inspired some of the Italian provinces to vote in favour of unification.

A country that obviously didn't want to see Italian unification happen was Austria. As I have said previously, Austria was in control of large areas of Italy, and was determined to retain control over these areas. Therefore, when Sardinia mobilised its troops in 1859, Austria firstly demanded that they demobilise, and when that didn't happen, they invaded Sardinia in April 1859. Although the Austrian army was subsequently defeated in the battles of Magenta and Solferino, their determination to fight proves that they were aiming to hold back unification from happening.

Mark awarded = 7 out of 10 (Level 4)

Examiner comment

This answer has achieved Level 4 as it provides one explanation on each side of the argument. The candidate provides a supported explanation for the involvement of France aiding unification, and then provides an explanation to show that Austria tried to prevent unification. In order to progress within Level 4, at least one more explanation would be necessary.

Common mistakes

It is important not only to provide a balanced answer, i.e. one explanation on either side, but also to provide more than two explanations.

Question 6

Question 6(a)

Describe the involvement of German armed forces in the Spanish Civil War.

Specimen answer

Germany sent troops to aid rebel General Franco. Hitler tested new tactics like dive bombing and carpet bombing, causing massive destruction on cities like Guernica. The new German airforce (Luftwaffe) and Messerschmitt fighters were used. Hitler was hoping to gain Franco and Fascist Spain as an ally. Hitler's involvement helped Franco's rebels defeat the Republican government.

Mark awarded = 4 out of 4

Examiner comment

This answer gains full marks as it contains specific contextual knowledge about the involvement of German forces. A general point about supporting Franco is followed by relevant examples of German tactics, and the example of Guernica is also given.

Common mistakes

Lengthy answers that include introductions or conclusions are not necessary for part (a) questions.

Question 6(b)

Why did Hitler take Germany out of the League of Nations in 1933?

Specimen answer

There were several reasons why Hitler took Germany out of the League of Nations, one of which was due to his hatred for the Treaty of Versailles. The League of Nations had been created as part of the discussions after the end of the First World War, and this meant that just as Hitler was determined to destroy the terms of the Treaty, he was also determined to leave the League which was linked to Germany's defeat in the war.

Germany also left the League of Nations due to the failure of the Disarmament Conference in 1933. France had refused to disarm as they were concerned about a future war with Germany, and this failure gave Hitler an excuse to leave the Conference as he claimed that Germany was not being treated fairly. Leaving the League as well would enable Hitler to rearm as part of his foreign policy aims.

Mark awarded = 6 out of 6 (Level 4)

Examiner comment

This answer gains full marks as it provides two relevant explanations. It also includes some supporting detail. This response is carefully organised, using separate paragraphs for the different reasons that are being explained.

Common mistakes

Part (b) responses require facts and explanation. Candidates must be selective of the factual knowledge needed to explain events and always write in continuous prose, rather than using a 'listing' approach.

Question 6(c)

'The policy of appeasement played a greater part in the outbreak of war in 1939 than the Nazi-Soviet Pact.' How far do you agree with this statement? Explain your answer

Specimen answer

In 1939, Germany invaded Poland without considering warnings from Britain and France, in order to achieve Hitler's foreign policy of wanting extra Lebensraum for Germany. This led to the declaration of war. In my view, both appeasement and the Nazi-Soviet Pact were important reasons for the outbreak of war.

On the one hand it can be argued that appeasement led to the invasion of Poland due to the success of gaining land without any military intervention, and this gave Hitler the confidence to invade Poland. The French and British had not done anything to stop the Anschluss of Austria in 1938 and had given him the Sudetenland after the Munich Conference. They had not even attempted to stop him when he invaded the rest of Czechoslovakia. Hitler was therefore confident that they would not do anything to stop his invasion of Poland, which is what led to the outbreak of World War Two.

On the other hand, the Nazi-Soviet Pact enabled Hitler to ensure that he would not get involved in a war on two fronts, and thus he invaded Poland without any concern. Stalin signed the Nazi-Soviet Pact with Germany which promised not to attack each other, and to divide Polish territory after a successful invasion. Having the assurance of the Nazi-Soviet Pact, Hitler was confident, and he gained morale to invade Poland as he would not be attacked on both sides which had been such a problem in World War One.

After considering both sides, I have decided that appeasement was the more important cause of the Second World War as it directly led to the Nazi-Soviet Pact. Stalin signed it because he was highly suspicious of the Munich agreement and Hitler's success of Anschluss with Austria. He was concerned that Britain and France had no power to stop Hitler, or even worse, that they were attempting to appease Hitler because Germany was considered a great buffer against communist Russia. Therefore, Stalin signed the pact in order to gain extra time to prepare for the upcoming war. Since appeasement led to the Nazi-Soviet Pact, and this in turn gave Hitler the confidence to invade Poland, appeasement must be considered the more important of the two.

Mark awarded = 10 out of 10 (Level 5)

Examiner comment

This answer gains full marks as the candidate provides one explanation on each side, and then a conclusion which contains a supported judgement on 'how far'.

The answer starts with an explanation of the part played by appeasement in the outbreak of war, and by the end of the first paragraph the answer has reached Level 3 with 4 marks awarded.

The next paragraph explains the role of the Nazi-Soviet Pact, and this moves the answer into Level 4 with 7 marks for one argument on each side.

The final paragraph argues that appeasement is more important as it led to the Nazi-Soviet Pact, and this supported judgement moves the answer up to Level 5 with a total of 10 marks.

Common mistakes

In comparison questions such as this, it is not necessary to explain factors other than the ones provided in the question.

Question 12

Question 12(a)

What was the Four-Year Plan?

Specimen answer

The Four-year Plan was introduced to make the German economy ready for war. This was to be achieved by increasing agricultural production and making Germany self-sufficient in raw materials. The plan was also intended to allow for the rearmament necessary for Germany to go to war.

Mark awarded = 4 out of 4

Examiner comment

This is a very succinct answer that provides four points identifying what the Four-Year Plan was.

Question 12(b)

Why were some women unhappy with life under the Nazi regime?

Specimen answer

Some women were unhappy with life under the Nazi regime due to the traditional roles that they were expected to fulfil. Women were encouraged to give up their jobs, stay at home, look after their families and have many children. They were even awarded with a medal called the Mother's Cross if they had four or more children. Propaganda was everywhere pressuring women into carrying out these traditional lives, but many women who had previously had independence and satisfaction through employment resented these new restrictions.

Mark awarded = 5 out of 6 (Level 3)

Examiner comment

This is a good answer as it provides one explanation which is supported by specific contextual knowledge in order to gain 5 marks. In order to reach Level 3, 6 marks, a second explanation would need to be provided.

Common mistakes

Weaker responses are often not carefully organised. Candidates are advised to use separate paragraphs for the different reasons that are being explained.

Question 12(c)

'The standard of living in Germany improved under the Nazis.' How far do you agree with this statement? Explain your answer.

Specimen answer

The standard of living in Germany certainly improved for workers under the Nazis, as they provided jobs and therefore managed to reduce unemployment from six million to only a few hundred thousand. Jobs were created building the new motorways and through the rearmament factories. Not only were there more jobs available, but the Strength Through Joy movement also created opportunities for leisure activities such as cheap cinema and theatre tickets, and the Beauty of Labour movement provided facilities in their workplaces such as cheap canteens. All of this meant that the standard of living for workers improved under the Nazis.

Another group who benefitted under the Nazis were farmers as the Reich Food Estate was set up which meant that their produce would be bought at guaranteed prices. This meant that they knew they would be able to sell their products, and also how much money they would get for it. Ownership of their farms was also made more secure as the Reich Entailed Farm Law stated that banks were not able to take farms away even if farmers were not able to pay their mortgages.

But there were some ways in which the standard of living did not improve for people living in Germany, and this was particularly true during the Second World War, for example with the introduction of rationing. As the course of the war turned against Germany after the invasion of Russia, working hours were made longer and women were asked to return to working in factories to replace the men who were fighting in the army. This meant that the war had a negative impact on the standard of living at this time.

Overall, I think that the standard of living did improve for many people living in Germany initially, but not for everyone, and not as the war carried on.

Mark awarded = 8 out of 10 (Level 4)

Examiner comment

This answer has two explanations arguing that the standard of living improved, and one explanation to show that it did not improve during the war. All these explanations also have specific support, and therefore the answer achieves Level 4 for an answer with arguments on both sides, and 8 marks, as there are three explanations.

Another explanation on either side would have enabled the answer to reach the top of Level 4, and a judgement on 'how far' would have allowed the answer to reach Level 5.

Common mistakes

Weaker responses often focus only on one side of the argument. These answers can be improved by including more contextual examples on both sides of the argument to produce a balanced response.

Question 15

Question 15(a)

What policies did Republican governments follow in the 1920s to encourage industrial growth?

Specimen answer

The Republican governments during the 1920s introduced the Fordney-McCumber tariff act, as they believed in raising tariffs to protect American trade. They also didn't believe in much government intervention.

Mark awarded = 3 out of 4

Examiner comment

This answer has provided a specific example of one of the Republican policies and identified why the policy was introduced. The third point is gained by a further identification of Republican policies.

Common mistakes

In order to gain full marks, four features need to be identified.

Question 15(b)

Why was the development of assembly-line production important for the growth of the economy?

Specimen answer

Assembly-line production was important for the growth of the economy because it meant that unskilled workers could be employed on the production line since a worker only had the same one or two jobs to do which they could learn how to do very quickly. This meant that there were more job opportunities for unskilled workers, and they would then be able to spend their wages on the new goods that were being produced, thereby helping the economy.

Another reason was that Henry Ford used assembly lines to mass produce cars, and this meant that the cost of cars fell, meaning that more people bought them. In 1919 9 million people had cars, and by 1929 this had risen to 26 million. Since more people were able to buy cars, this stimulated the economy because it helped other industries such as rubber for tyres, road building, and leather. All of this increased growth in the economy in more sectors than just the car industry.

Mark awarded = 6 out of 6 (Level 4)

Examiner comment

This answer provides two clear explanations of how the development of assembly-line production stimulated the economy. Both are supported with specific contextual evidence, reaching Level 4 for the second explanation.

Common mistakes

Most part (b) questions ask 'why' a particular event happened, so it is important that candidates direct their response to address the reasons, rather than to provide a description of what happened. Narratives or long introductions which 'set the scene' are not required.

Question 15(c)

'The lives of Americans improved in the boom years.' How far do you agree with this statement? Explain your answer.

Specimen answer

Through the growth in the American economy in the 1920s, some Americans reaped great benefits. Prime among these were the young men and women in urban areas that got greater liberation. With the increase in the number of cars and the cinema, young Americans were able to escape the control of their parents and engage in more activities such as freer, new, provocative dances like the Charleston, and also new fashion styles. Young women in urban areas were able to start wearing more revealing, knee-length dresses and go outside without a chaperone. All these developments led to greater liberation for young Americans in urban areas.

Additionally, the rich business leaders and workers in new industries also benefitted from the boom. In 1928, the richest 5% of the population controlled 32% of the national income. Big business leaders like Ford and the Dupont brothers benefitted from the boom as consumerism increased and the Republican government policies meant low taxation, leading to great wealth for them. The workers in their industries also benefitted and their wages rose through the decade, so they were then able to engage in and benefit from the new consumer goods and labour-saving devices now available. Thus, the big business leaders and workers in new industries benefitted from the boom.

However, to a larger extent, large sections of society did not benefit from the boom of the 1920s. The farming community struggled at this time. The farmers were the worst critics of the Republican laissez-faire policies that the boom was attributed to, particularly the Fordney Mccumber tariff. From 1919-1930 the farming industry's value decreased from \$22 billion to \$13 billion. Prohibition also meant a decrease in demand for barley. There was dire overproduction and prices fell as farmers and farm workers became bankrupt and lost their jobs. The income of around 60 million Americans depended directly or indirectly on farming and so the decline in farming brought economic hardship to many. These people were unable to benefit from the new consumer goods and services and therefore did not benefit from this aspect of the economic boom.

Furthermore, workers in old industries did not benefit from the boom. There was a decline in old industries such as coal and cotton as they faced competition from new industries and demand plummeted. As a result, workers were laid off and wages were cut. In 1922 600 000 coal miners went on strike for better conditions, but to no avail. Workers could not

join unions because non-union mines charged less for their coal and controlled more of the market – 65% in 1926. As these industries were in decline, large numbers of people did not benefit from the boom and the new goods, services, entertainment and leisure opportunities it offered.

Additionally, black Americans also did not benefit from the 1920s boom in the American economy as they faced discrimination and could not find employment. This is seen from factories operating 'white-only' policies. They also faced violence and harassment from groups such as the KKK. They were often discriminated against and only earned low wages. In the city of Milwaukee, 60% of black women worked as low paid domestic helpers in white households. Finally, many black Americans worked as agricultural share-croppers and suffered during the agricultural slump.

In conclusion, Americans benefitted from the boom to a small extent as those in farming and older industries could not benefit and were subject to poor wages and living conditions.

Mark awarded = 9 out of 10 (Level 4)

Examiner comment

This answer provides several very detailed explanations, with two arguments showing how some Americans benefitted from the boom, and three arguments discussing the groups who did not benefit from the boom. This balanced answer therefore reaches the top of Level 4.

The conclusion does not provide a supported judgement of 'how far', and the final concluding paragraph would need to be more than a summary of previous points in order to reach Level 5.

Common mistakes

In part (c), candidates need to argue both for and against the focus of the question and reach a balanced conclusion. The conclusion should go beyond being a summary of what has already been stated by addressing the requirements of the question.

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