

Getting Started with...

History

Welcome!

During the A-Level History course you study two modules, plus a piece of coursework.

The first module, which we begin in September, is ***Industrialisation and the people: Britain, c1783–1885*** focusing on the change brought on by the industrial revolution. The second module we'll begin after Christmas, ***The American Dream: reality and illusion, 1945–1980***: a depth study focusing on the extent to which Americans achieved the 'American Dream' during that period.

How to prepare for A-level History:

1. Here you can find a link to the specification to give you an idea of the range of topics you will study:
<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/history/as-and-a-level/history-7041-7042/subject-content/1f-industrialisation-and-the-people-britain,-c17831885>
<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/history/as-and-a-level/history-7041-7042/subject-content/2q-the-american-dream-reality-and-illusion,-19451980>
2. Read around the topics online or watch relevant clips online. Some examples are:
<https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/sessions-and-resources/?time-period=empire-and-industry>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xLhNP0qp38Q>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x9BdVHCuNPs>
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9C72ISMF_D0
3. Have a go at completing the source exercises that follow. The structure is what we would need to see at A-Level, but the content is based on what you have already studied for GCSE.
4. Looking ahead: Find out more about careers that use your skills as a historian - <https://online.flowpaper.com/79590737/History20/>

Any questions? Contact us on JC6@hajc.leics.sch.uk

continued.....

What do A-Level source questions look like?

At A-Level there are two different types of source question. One looks at historians' interpretations and requires you to evaluate how convincing that interpretation is based on the knowledge you have. This is very similar to the interpretation questions you have already done at GCSE. The second question is based on Primary sources and you need to look at the Provenance (who wrote it) and in what context it was written, so you need to apply your own knowledge. This is very similar to the source work you have been doing for Germany.

Paper 1 – Britain	Paper 2 - America
Breadth paper	Depth paper
You will need to show a range of examples over time.	You will need to show more in depth examples.
Secondary sources	Primary sources
Must use knowledge to evaluate a historian's opinion	Must look at the provenance/tone and context to assess how valuable the source is.
Questions stem: How convincing is this interpretation of.....	Question stem: How valuable is this source to a historian studying.....



JC6

How convincing is this interpretation to a historian studying the origins of the Cold War

Interpretation C US historian John Lewis Gaddis, writing in 1997.

Here, then, was the difficulty after the war. The Western democracies wanted a form of security that would reject violence. Security was to be for everyone, it was not to be a benefit denied to some in order to provide it to others. Stalin saw things very differently: security came only by intimidating or eliminating potential challengers. The contrast, or so it would seem, made conflict unavoidable.

<p>Summarise the source (include the argument / point of view of author)</p>	<p>What arguments in the source are convincing based on what you know?</p>	<p>What arguments in the source could you challenge based on what you know?</p>
<p>Context: What were relevant events? What contextual knowledge could you use?</p>		



<p>Overall how convincing is the argument?</p>	
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How convincing is this interpretation to a historian studying the Cold War

America's leaders often whipped up Cold War fears that were very exaggerated. These at times frightened its allies but also deepened divisions at home. However, whether the Cold War could have been managed much less dangerously is doubtful. This is because of the way Stalin and his successors operated, and because of the refusal of American policy-makers to retreat from their grand expectations of their role in the post-war world.

From 'Grand Expectations', written by the US historian James Patterson and published in the USA in 1996.

<p>Summarise the source (include the argument / point of view of author)</p>	<p>What arguments in the source are convincing based on what you know?</p>	<p>What arguments in the source could you challenge based on what you know?</p>
<p>Context: What were relevant events? What contextual knowledge could you use?</p>		



<p>Overall how convincing is the argument?</p>	
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How convincing is this interpretation to a historian studying appeasement

Interpretation A

After March 1939 British attempts to build a barrier to Hitler's expansion were either half-hearted or too late. Led by Chamberlain, the government chose not to deter Hitler. Chamberlain's powerful, stubborn personality and his skill in debate probably held back serious chances of preventing the Second World War. **From 'Chamberlain and Appeasement' by British historian Robert Parker, published in Britain in 1993.**

Summarise the source (include the argument/ point of view of author)

What arguments in the source are convincing based on what you know?

What arguments in the source could you challenge based on what you know?

Context: What were relevant events? What contextual knowledge could you use?



Overall how convincing is the argument?

How valuable is Source 4 to a historian studying the role of women in Nazi Germany?

Source 4: Joseph Goebbels, *The Womanhood* (1934)

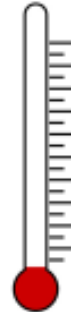
Our displacement of women from public life occurs solely to restore their essential dignity to them... It is not because we did not respect women enough but because we respected them too much that we kept them out of the miasma of parliamentary democracy.

Summarise the source (include the argument / point of view of author)

Context: What were relevant events?

Content

What does the source say that's relevant to the question?



Tone: How does it communicate the information? How does that affect the value?

Provenance

Who made /wrote it? How does that affect the value?

Why did they make/write it? How does that affect the value?

When was it made/written? What going on then, before, after? How does this affect the value?

Where was it made/written? Why was this significant? How does this affect the value?



Overall value





How valuable is Source 5 to a historian studying the experience of young people in Nazi Germany?

(Source 5) [Adolf Hitler](#), speech at the [Nuremberg Rally](#) (10th September, 1935)

In our eyes the German boy of the future must be slender and supple, swift as greyhounds, tough as leather and hard as Krupp steel. We must bring up a new type of human being, men and girls who are disciplined and healthy to the core. We have undertaken to give the German people an education that begins already in youth and will never come to an end... Nobody will be able to say that he has a time in which he is left entirely alone to himself.

Summarise the source (include the argument / point of view of author)

Content

What does the source say that's relevant to the question?



Provenance

Who made /wrote it? How does that affect the value?

Why did they make/write it? How does that affect the value?



When was it made/written? What going on then, before, after? How does this affect the value?

Where was it made/written? Why was this significant? How does this affect the value?

Context: What were relevant events?

Tone: How does it communicate the information? How does that affect the value?

Overall value





How valuable is Source 3 to a historian studying the hyperinflation in Weimar Germany?

(Source 3) *Daily Express* (24th February, 1923)


A Berlin couple who were about to celebrate their golden wedding received an official letter advising them that the mayor, in accordance with Prussian custom, would call and present them with a donation of money. Next morning the mayor, accompanied by several aldermen in picturesque robes, arrived at the aged couple's house, and solemnly handed over in the name of the Prussian State, 1,000,000,000,000 marks or one halfpenny.

Summarise the source (include the argument / point of view of author)

Context: What were relevant events?

Content

What does the source say that's relevant to the question?




Tone: How does it communicate the information? How does that affect the value?

Provenance

Who made /wrote it? How does that affect the value?

Why did they make/write it? How does that affect the value?



When was it made/written? What going on then, before, after? How does this affect the value?

Where was it made/written? Why was this significant? How does this affect the value?

Overall value



How valuable is Source 15 to a historian studying the opposition to the Nazis in Nazi Germany?


(Source 15) Extract from the second leaflet published by the [White Rose Group](#) (June, 1942)

Since the conquest of Poland three hundred thousand Jews have been murdered in this country in the most bestial way. Here we see the most frightful crime against human dignity, a crime that is unparalleled in the whole of history... All male offspring of the houses of the nobility between the ages of fifteen and twenty were transported to concentration camps in Germany and sentenced to forced labor, and all girls of this age group were sent to Norway, into the bordellos of the SS.....The German people slumber on in their dull, stupid sleep and encourage these fascist criminals; they give them the opportunity to carry on their depredations; and of course they do so... But now, now that we have recognized them for what they are, it must be the sole and first duty, the holiest duty of every German to destroy these beasts.

Summarise the source (include the argument / point of view of author)

Context: What were relevant events?

Content
What does the source say that's relevant to the question?




Tone: How does it communicate the information? How does that affect the value?

Provenance
Who made /wrote it? How does that affect the value?


Why did they make/write it? How does that affect the value?

When was it made/written? What going on then, before, after? How does this affect the value?

Where was it made/written? Why was this significant? How does this affect the value?



Overall value






How valuable is Source 3 to a historian studying the terror in Weimar Germany?

[3] A truck driver witnessed the killing of Jews by the Schutz Staffeln (SS) at Babi Yar in the Soviet Union in September 1941. On the way there we overtook Jews carrying luggage marching on foot in the same direction that we were traveling. There were whole families. The farther we got out of town the denser the columns became. ...I watched what happened when the Jews - men, women and children - arrived. The Ukrainians led them past a number of different places where one after the other they had to remove their luggage, then their coats, shoes and overgarments and also underwear. They also had to leave their valuables in a designated place. There was a special pile for each article of clothing. It all happened very quickly and anyone who hesitated was kicked or pushed by the Ukrainians to keep them moving. I don't think it was even a minute from the time each Jew took off his coat before he was standing there completely naked. No distinction was made between men, women and children. One would have thought that the Jews that came later would have had a chance to turn back when they saw the others in front of them having to undress. It still surprises me today that this did not happen. Once undressed, the Jews were led into a ravine which was about 150 meters long, 30 meters wide and a good 15 meters deep. Two or three narrow entrances led to this ravine through which the Jews were channeled. When they reached the bottom of the ravine they were seized by members of the Schutzpolizei and made to lie down on top of Jews who had already been shot. This all happened very quickly. The corpses were literally in layers. A police marksmen came along and shot each Jew in the neck with a submachine gun at the spot where he was lying. When the Jews reached the ravine they were so shocked by the horrifying scene that they completely lost their will. It may even have been that the Jews themselves lay down in rows to wait to be shot.

Summarise the source (include the argument / point of view of author)

Context: What were relevant events?

Content
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Where was it made/written? Why was this significant? How does this affect the value?




Overall value

[Empty box]

How valuable is Source 1 to a historian studying the growth of the Nazi Party in Germany?


(Source 1) Ernst Hanfstaengel first met Anton Drexler in 1922.

Anton Drexler, the original founder of the Party, was there most evenings, but by this time he was only its honorary president and had been pushed more or less to one side. A blacksmith by trade, he had a trade union background and although it was he who had thought up the original idea of appealing to the workers with a patriotic programme, he disapproved strongly of the street fighting and violence which was slowly becoming a factor in the Party's activities and wanted to build up as a working-class movement in an orderly fashion.

Summarise the source (include the argument / point of view of author)

Context: What were relevant events?

Content
What does the source say that's relevant to the question?




Tone: How does it communicate the information? How does that affect the value?

Provenance
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Overall value



Extension Level

Paper 1 Skills

How convincing is this interpretation to a historian studying of the economy of the Weimar Republic in the years 1919 to 1928?

Extract A

Germany suffered economically because of the terms of the Paris Peace Settlement. Reduced trade and a permanent loss of an important part of the industrial base limited the room for possible German economic growth. Economic growth also fell because of the level of wage settlements and because of the political strength of the labour unions. Germany's future looked bleak by 1928 and businessmen scaled back their investments. The lower level of investment in the later 1920s, when the Weimar Republic is generally thought to have been most prosperous, was also due to the reaction of the financial system to Germany's post-war inflation. Savers had lost a great deal of money and suffered a major blow to their confidence.

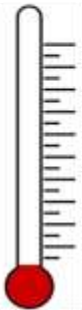
Adapted from H James, Economic Reasons for the Collapse of the Weimar Republic, 1990

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What arguments in the source are convincing based on what you know?

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Context: What were relevant events? What contextual knowledge could you use?



Overall how convincing is the argument?

Extension Level

Paper 1 Skills

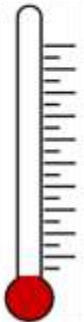
How convincing is this interpretation to a historian studying Nazi policies towards the workers in the years 1933 to 1939.

Extract A

From a speech by Robert Ley, leader of the German Labour Front, to the annual meeting of the 'Strength Through Joy' organisation, on the anniversary of its establishment, November 1934.

It was the Führer who, as usual, set the tone. He said, "I want every worker to be guaranteed sufficient vacation time and I want all his free time to be genuinely relaxing". This will of the Führer was like a sacred command. This is why we have undertaken a systematic organisation of workers into the Labour Front. The essence of life cannot be reduced to a simple matter of bread and butter or to one of wage issues. We have learned, rather, that life is a sum of many things – participation in culture, taking in the sights of splendour that our Fatherland has to offer, the design of the workplace, keeping the body physically fit, awakening folkloric customs, traditions, and sensibilities. Never before in history has an upheaval of this overwhelming magnitude been achieved and yet this is the miracle of what we have done. And so it is, that after not even two years in existence, Strength Through Joy is a resounding success.

Summarise the source (include the argument/ point of view of author)	What arguments in the source are convincing based on what you know?	What arguments in the source could you challenge based on what you know?
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Overall how convincing is the argument?	
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