

**Preliminary  
Lesson**

# Using Historical Sources

**Aims**

The aim of this lesson is to enable you to develop and practise historical skills as set out below. For IGCSE History you should be able to:

- recall, select, organise and deploy knowledge of historical themes
- communicate knowledge of historical themes through description, explanation and analysis of events, people, issues and change
- understand, interpret and analyse historical sources in context
- show that you can comprehend, analyse and evaluate how and why events, people, situations and changes have been interpreted and represented in relation to the historical themes and periods studied.

**Context**

This lesson will enable you to practise using historical sources and skills in context. It will give you opportunities to understand, interpret and analyse a variety of textual and visual sources. It will then review exam technique more generally and introduce some of the wider themes included in the course.



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## Historical Sources

A key aspect of historical study is the understanding, interpretation and analysis of historical sources in context. Part of your examination (Section B) requires you to use a range of historical sources that relate to the in-depth study chosen. In this course you will be studying topic B5: Colonial rule and the nationalist challenge in India, 1919–47. In the exam you should answer questions on this topic. The historical sources will relate to this topic, and so as you progress through the course it would be a good idea to investigate some historical sources for yourself. You can find lots of eye-witness accounts, diaries, photographs, letters and other kinds of material in books on this topic and on the internet. Some suggestions for further reading are given at the end of this lesson.

Studying images such as photographs and posters, tape recordings and films, and comparing these with each other and with written documents is a good way to start evaluating sources. By finding inconsistencies, or things that do not ‘add up’, you will find yourself questioning the source and thinking, for example, ‘who wrote this?’ ‘where did this come from?’ ‘when was this written?’ ‘how could he have known that if he wasn’t there at the time?’ ‘if A says this, then B can’t be true, can it?’ or ‘these photographs show exactly what was happening in this diary entry, and the diary entry tallies with this letter so that’s probably what happened’. You will then be evaluating the sources and thinking as a historian!

In Section B the answer booklet will include extracts from a number of historical sources labelled, for example, A, B, C, D. These may have been written by people involved in the events and described at the time they happened (‘eye-witness’ accounts). These accounts are examples of **primary sources**. These accounts are often used by later historians who evaluate their authenticity (that is, establish whether or not they are genuine), analyse their information, perhaps by comparing them with other primary sources, and then write their own interpretation of events. Historical accounts that use primary sources to interpret events are called **secondary sources**. They may not be pieces of writing at all but photographs or cartoons or posters or maps or statistics or other material.

**Activity 1**

Study the following passage from the 1933 diary of the German writer and broadcaster, Jochen Klepper, and then say whether you think this a primary or a secondary source.

*30<sup>th</sup> March.* I had just finished 'Atlantis' on time. Now it was a case of rehearsing it quickly for Saturday. The rehearsal had to be cancelled. The manuscript had not been duplicated because the firm with which the radio station had up to now been working quite happily is Jewish.



One of the first things to look for is **when** the source was created. This may tell you whether or not it is a primary or secondary source. Primary sources are often more reliable because they were created at the time of the events, but sometimes you get a better, calmer opinion after some years when the events can be looked at from a distance.

Anyone looking at events after they have happened can take a more general view but, unlike those involved at the time who may only have seen an event from a narrow perspective, later observers **have access to many accounts**. This means that they observe the events in a certain way. It is quite a lot easier to seem wise when you know how things turned out. An eye-witness account, for example, is a primary source that can often seem confused and uncertain and may be only a part of what is happening, but it makes you feel you are there at the events themselves.

What you are always looking for is evidence about events in the past you can rely on. Just like evidence in a court, you check for obvious differences in several pieces of evidence about the same thing. Look carefully at the sources given for places in conflict. One source may say that something happened on one day, but a second source may say that it happened on another. Conflicting accounts about what happened, and when, are quite easy to detect.

**Activity 2**

Study the two sources below, one from Lord Irwin, Viceroy of India, written in 1929, and the other from early in 1930 by J. Nehru of the Indian National Congress, and then answer the question that follows.

'The goal of British policy was stated in the declaration of August 1917 to be that of providing for the gradual development of self-governing institutions, with a view to the progressive realization of responsible Government in India as an integral part of the British Empire. As I recently pointed out, my own instrument of Instruction from the King-Emperor expressly states that it is His Majesty's will and pleasure that the plans laid by Parliament in 1919 should be the means by which British India may attain its due place among His Dominions'.

Lord Irwin's statement on Dominion Status for India, 31 October 1929.

We believe that is the inalienable right of the Indian people, as of any other people, to have freedom and to enjoy the fruits of their toil and have the necessities of life, so that they may have the full opportunities for growth. The British Government in India has not only deprived the Indian people of their freedom but has based itself on the exploitation of the masses, and has ruined India economically, politically, culturally, and spiritually. We believe, therefore, that India must sever the British connection and attain Purna Swaraj or Complete Independence.

Jawaharlal Nehru, 26 January 1930.

Does Nehru agree with Irwin early in 1930 about moving gradually to Dominion Status for India? Explain your answer.



More difficult are cases where one source may say that something happened for this reason, while another source may say that it happened for another reason. Remember, both opinions about why things happened may be valid ones but from different points of view.

Another thing to look out for is **who** created the source. If you know, for example, that they are likely to be biased, then their account is not going to be a very reliable one. Detecting likely **bias** is an important skill when dealing with sources, but it is often not an easy thing for exam candidates to do. You have to know about the person creating the source. For example, if the source was about the Nazi party in Germany after 1933 and it was written by Dr Joseph Goebbels, then you can be fairly sure that it is going to be biased in favour of the Nazis, and is not to be relied on.

### Activity 3

Study the source from the German National Socialist Womenhood (NS Frauenschaft) Basic Principles from 1932 or 1933 and then answer the question that follows:

We desire the awakening, the training, and the renewal of women's role as the preservers of the nation's springs: the nation's love life, marriage, motherhood and the family, blood and race, youth and nationhood. The whole education, training, careers and position of women within the nation and state must be organized in terms of their physical and mental tasks as mothers.

Do you think this source is biased? Explain your answer.



Sometimes you are asked in an exam to infer things from a source or asked what inferences you can draw from it. This means that the examiners want you to study the source carefully and then to extract from it the things you can learn about the situation or person. Usually this is quite straightforward, but sometimes you need to use your intelligence to see what the source is implying, and then draw an inference that is indirect.

**Activity 4**

Study the extract below from the speech given by British Prime Minister, Harold Macmillan, to the South African Parliament in February 1960, and then answer the question that follows:

We have seen the awakening of national consciousness in people who have for centuries lived in dependence on some other power...In different places it takes different forms but it is happening everywhere. A wind of change is blowing through this continent, whether we like it or not.

*Harold Macmillan address to Parliament in South Africa, 3 February 1960.*

What inferences can you draw from this extract?



**Activity 5**

Study the image below and make three inferences from what you see:



Look carefully at what the question actually asks you to do with a source. Sometimes you are asked to 'use the source for your answer'. This means that you should **only** use the source you can see in your answer booklet. Don't bring anything into your answer that is not in the source. If you put anything in the answer from your own knowledge but that is not in the source, the person marking your exam will ignore it and give you no marks for it.

If the question asks you to, for example, 'use the sources and your own knowledge' that is an important signal that they expect you to use what you know about the events **as well as** information in the sources. In fact, you will not get good marks for this answer unless you include something from your own knowledge.

All exam boards that offer IGCSE History publish sample assessment material for all papers freely on their website. You can find the sample paper for your depth study in section B on the Edexcel website at

<http://www.edexcel.com/quals/igcse/igcse09/history/Pages/default.aspx>

When you have clicked on 'Sample Assessment Material' go to pp.26 and 27.

Have a look at this now to see how Section B of the paper is set out, what kinds of sources are used, and what the questions ask you to do. At a later point in the course you will be asked to go back to the sample assessment material and use it as revision for your exam.

## Exam Technique

You will have one 2 ½ hour written examination paper. You must choose **two** themes from section A, **one** depth study from section B and **one** study of change from section C. That makes four questions altogether. All questions will be marked out of 25, so there is a total of 100 marks to be gained.

In this course you will study the following themes:

- A3: Development of dictatorship: Germany, 1918–45
- A7: A divided union. Depression and recovery in the USA, 1929–45
- B5: Colonial rule and the nationalist challenge in India, 1919–47



- C7: Change in Africa from colonialism to independence, 1945–2000

You should answer questions on these themes.

As all questions carry the same marks, it makes sense to spend a roughly equal amount of time on all four questions. Each question may be sub-divided into, for example, a, b, c. and d. Mark allocations for each element are given in brackets to the right of the question. This means you should spend about thirty-five minutes on each of the four questions, leaving some ten minutes at the end for checking. As usual in exams, the management of your personal time is vital. Remember – if you answer only three questions instead of four, the most you can get is seventy-five marks out of a hundred, assuming that you get full marks for each question!

Also remember that you don't have to answer questions in Section A before those in section B or C if you don't want to do so. It often makes sense to start with an answer you feel most confident about and leave the questions you like least to the end. It doesn't make any difference to the person marking your exam, provided you answer all four questions. Try to keep to the thirty-five minutes a question guide though.

## Answer the Question

When you are writing your answers, the single most important piece of advice to remember is **ANSWER THE QUESTION**. I know that teachers have been saying this to you for years but you might be surprised how often candidates still don't answer the question, even at university level. Anyone who has marked exams will tell you that this is still the most common fault. Anything in your answer that does not answer the question asked will be ignored and get no marks at all. Whatever you do, try to make your answer a direct response to the particular question you have been asked. Do not be tempted to write down everything you know about x.

It is sometimes useful to start your answer with the question itself. For example, the question might be 'why did the Nazis increase their share of the vote in Germany between 1928 and 1933?' and your answer might begin 'The Nazis increased their share of the vote in Germany between 1928 and 1933 because.....'.

## Questions that start with 'What'

These are questions that test your ability to remember facts – names, dates and places for example. It is obviously very important when studying history to know what happened and when. One of the exam questions in **Section A** for instance asks you to put a number of events in chronological order. It is important that you

know the order in which events took place. For example, it would be difficult to understand why the Nazis increased their vote in Germany so dramatically unless you remembered that the Wall Street Crash took place in October 1929. Events are often important because of the **effects** they have on other events. Section A also has a question on effects.

For example, a question might ask:

*‘What were the main points of the Versailles Treaty of 1919?’*

A good answer would mention that Germany lost territory to France and Belgium and also to Poland; was not allowed to have troops west of the river Rhine; was allowed only a small army and no air force, and was not to merge with Austria. It also had to pay huge sums of money (reparations) as compensation for the damage it had caused. An even better answer might mention also the break-up of the empires of Austria-Hungary, Turkey and Russia.

## Questions that start with ‘Why’

These are often more interesting questions, but also more difficult ones that require longer answers and carry more marks. There are often complicated reasons why people behave as they do. Certain events may have many different causes. It is also true that not everyone thinks the same way about why certain things happened in the past. It can often depend on your point of view. The important thing as far as the exam is concerned is that you have a definite point of view and can use enough correct facts to back your ideas up. Often there just is no ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ answer.

For example, a question might ask:

*‘Why were most of the Nazi extermination camps located in occupied Poland?’*

A good answer might mention that five of the six extermination camps were located in Poland because the German invasion of Russia in 1941 had placed this territory under complete German military control. The secret ‘Final Solution’ could be carried out in Poland by the SS well away from Germany itself. An even better answer might point out also that Poland had a large Jewish community; that there was a busy railway network from Germany and other occupied countries into Poland to supply the German armies then in Russia, and that this network was also to transport Jews and other victims to the extermination camps.

**Activity 6**

Why is there too much food in some parts of the world but in other parts people are starving?

You may use the following information to help you with answer.

Support for farmers in wealthy countries.

Difficulty and cost of shipping food a long distance.

Food does not reach those who need it most.

Reliance on donations rather than developing own agriculture.

**(15)**



\* Remember the number in brackets at the right hand margin tells you how many marks the question is worth.

## Questions that start with 'How far'

You probably won't get a question of this sort in your IGCSE History exam paper but if you do, this form of words gives a heavy hint about how to answer. The answer they are looking for here is one that says 'up to a point' and then goes on to say what that point is.

For example, a question of this sort might ask:

*'How far do you agree that the people of Germany were responsible for the rise to power of the Nazis in 1933?'*

A good answer to this question would mention that the German people were responsible because they voted the Nazi party into power in 1933 in a democratic election, **but** that the particular circumstances of the time, the ruthlessness Nazi methods and propaganda skills, and the weakness of the Weimar Republic were also responsible.

## Depth Studies

**Section B** of the exam is called 'Depth studies'. As mentioned above, this section asks you to understand, analyse and interpret historical sources. You should answer questions on topic B5: Colonial rule and the nationalist challenge in India, 1919–47.

## Change and Continuity

In **Section C** of the exam paper 'Studies in Change' there are eight topics. This course includes topic C7: Change in Africa from colonialism to independence, 1945–2000. You should answer one question on this topic.

'Change' is a familiar thing in all our lives. Something is always changing. You get older, for example, or change schools. Your circumstances change. The change that the study of the past is most interested in is major change affecting whole nations or many people. It is this sort of 'change' that section C of this exam is all about.

This section will include some shorter, paragraph-length questions on, for example, the key features of a particular event in a particular place. It will also include a longer, essay-length question on broader aspects of change over a longer period over a whole country or continent. The question in Activity 6 asks you to think about a large topic over a long period. To give a good answer you need first to make an essay plan so that you can organize your answer to include several changes and then address the second part of the question. The following activity provides some information to help you plan your answer. You may not want to use all of them.

**Activity 7**

What are the main changes that have taken place in TV broadcasting in your lifetime? Why have these changes taken place?

You may use the following information to help with your answer.

Increase in the number of TV channels.

Cable TV.

DVDs.

BBC i-player.

Recording TV to video.

Cassette tapes.

Digital radio.

Pay to view television.

Information technology.

Black and white to colour on TV.

Videos.

Using computers.

Set box switches to remote control.

Digital cameras.

Advertising on television.

TV licensing.

Money.



To achieve a higher level in the exam, you must be able to plan and structure an essay effectively. You will notice that in Activities 5 and 6 you were given a list of topics to help you plan. In Activity 5 these all related to the question. In Activity 6, some topics were unrelated to the question, and you had to make a choice about whether to include a topic or not. When you are given essay questions as part of your course, you should routinely make a list of points to include in your answer, decide on an order and how to link them, begin with an introductory paragraph, and write a conclusion. Here is a sample plan:

**Statement:** This is the introduction to the essay. Tell the examiner how you intend to answer the question. You should show that you understand the focus of the question. You may briefly outline the points you are going to make.

**Support:** This is the main body of your answer. You need to write a series of paragraphs. There may be three, four or more paragraphs. Make sure that the paragraphs are in a logical order and that they are linked together. For example, if you are referring to long- and short-term causes, make sure that you explain the long-term causes first. But, if you are referring to long- and short-term effects, make sure that you refer to the short-term effects first. Write down what you are going to mention in each paragraph, and how you are going to link it to the next one.

**Paragraph 1**

**Link**

**Paragraph 2**

**Link**

**Paragraph 3**

**Link**

**Paragraph 4**

**Link**

**Summary:** In this section you finish off your answer. Try to explain how the points you have included helped to bring about the event or change. You may want to summarize the points you made, or refer back to one or two key points to back up your conclusion.

Use the plan when you are answering essay questions in your assignments. In that way, you will build up a method of working that will help you to think about the question as a historian would.

## Key Themes: Agents of Change and Independence from Colonial Rule

What causes change is something that historians have always found interesting. An important agent of change that applies to both the USA and Germany in the period we are studying is the worldwide economic crisis that follows the Wall Street Crash of October 1929 in the USA. There are political consequences in Germany in the early 1930s, as there are in the USA. The change that World War brings is a feature of the history of Germany after 1918, and the USA from 1941. In studying these events we will look at how both economic and political crises combined to effect huge change both in America and Europe.

Two further topics deal with the impact of the Second World War on the independence movements in countries under colonial rule: India and Africa. The near-bankruptcy of many colonial powers from 1945 resulting from the enormous cost of the war is a frequent theme in the history of decolonization.

Freedom from colonial rule certainly marks a big change for any nation, but you should always be looking as well for those things that continue to be important. This is usually known as **continuity**. It is the same as in making a film when it is important that the actors are dressed the same way as they were in the previous shot, or that jug of water that was on the table in the last shot is still there. The people whose job it is in film-making to make sure about these things are known as 'continuity' women or men. Some things that continue to be important after independence are obvious enough – the physical structure of a country, its natural resources, and the location of its cities, or the sources of water it uses, for example. There are sometimes elements of continuity that are less obvious – educational and legal traditions, for example, or civil service systems. The forms and procedures of National Assemblies or Parliaments often aim to reflect those of colonial times.

When you are asked to identify the change that was taking place, at the same time you need to consider those things that do not change. For example, you might be asked:

*'What change in government took place in Germany in 1933?'*

A good answer would mention that the Nazi party coming to power in Germany in 1933 was a major change. An even better answer would be to add that the rather slow procedures of the civil service in Germany continued much as before for a number of years, much to the frustration of Adolf Hitler.

**What** happened is usually quite easy to describe. For the exam candidate it is important to recall events in their proper, chronological order. The timing of events can often be very important because some events have an effect on other events. They may even cause them to happen.

**Why** changes happen is harder to decide, but is an important question. Big changes are mainly driven by something. Trying to identify that 'something' is not easy, but can be important. How often do you hear people talk about 'the lessons of history' when they are thinking about events in the present? These 'lessons of history' can be useful guides to the present. The experience of Germany in the Depression of the 1930s, when extreme political parties received more and more votes, is one such important 'lesson'.

## Self Assessment Test: Preliminary Lesson

This is your first Self-assessment Test (SAT). You will find answers to SATs at the end of the course. Please do *not* send written answers to the test to your tutor.

- 1 Name six different types of material that might be used as a historical source.
- 2 What is an 'inconsistency'?
- 3 Give an example of a 'primary source'.
- 4 Give an example of a 'secondary source'.
- 5 What is an 'inference'?
- 6 What is 'bias' and how would you detect it?
- 7 If the question asks you to 'use your own knowledge' what does that mean?
- 8 What does 'continuity' mean?
- 9 Why is answering the precise question asked so important?
- 10 Why should you always keep to a strict time schedule as you answer the questions?



## Suggested Answers to Activities

### Activity One

This entry from the diary of Jochen Klepper is a primary source because it was created at the time or shortly afterwards.

### Activity Two

Nehru's account does not agree with Lord Irwin's on Britain's record as ruler of India. Irwin wants 'the gradual development of self-governing institutions' and an India which is 'an integral part of the British Empire'. In a grand way he offers Dominion Status to India. Just a few months later Nehru believes 'that India must sever the British connection' and go for full independence instead.

### Activity Three

The source from the Nazi Women's' Organisation is likely to be biased because of its origin. The language used, with much talk of the 'nation' and some of 'blood and race' makes it clear that these are extreme views to be treated with great caution. The writer of these 'Basic Principles' has a Nazi point of view about the role of women as mothers first and foremost.

### Activity Four

Harold Macmillan's speech in South Africa in 1960 suggests firstly that independence is happening all over Africa ('the awakening of national consciousness in people who have for centuries lived in dependence on some other power'); secondly that this process takes different forms in different parts of Africa ('in different places it takes different forms'), and thirdly that these changes are 'happening everywhere', a 'wind of change'.

Macmillan's words 'whether we like it or not' suggest that either he or his audience, or perhaps significant numbers back home in the UK, did not especially like what was going on in Africa but would have to accept it.

### Activity Five

1. Britain is at war: there are tanks and warplanes in the picture.
2. Britain needs women to work in the factories because the men are away fighting the war.
3. Women may be needed to work in factories that make warplanes or bombs or tanks.

4. The poster suggests that women will want to support the airmen: the woman is holding up her arms as if she is cheering on the airmen above.
5. The woman is blond: this might suggest that not all blond women are Aryans, the race the Nazis identified as superior. The Nazis regularly used blond women in their war propaganda, so this image may also be part of a counter-propaganda attack by Britain.

## Activity Six

Despite the work of governments, international health organizations, charities, and individuals to try and resolve the problem of hunger, there is too much food in some parts of the world, and in others people are starving.

More food than is needed is produced in some wealthy countries because the Governments have wanted to support their own farmers and have paid them to produce a lot of food. This has been changing and now, at least in Europe, many farmers are paid to leave some fields alone and not produce crops on them.

At the same time, it is often difficult and expensive to ship large amounts of food around the world to countries without enough food of their own. These difficulties become much greater when the countries are not easily accessible or the roads are in a bad state. It is even worse when there is fighting going on because security is needed and there is disruption to transport. Food has often been seized by soldiers for their own use.

There are other reasons why the food does not always reach those who need it most. In some countries with a major problem of corruption, aid in the form of food or cash is sometimes diverted to the benefit of some group or government before it can reach those who need it.

Most food aid is a response to an emergency - famine, drought, flood, earthquake, hurricane, fire or some other natural disaster. These are desperate situations where emergency aid is needed but a longer term answer to the problems of food supply lies in better seeds, agricultural practices, irrigation, use of fertiliser and other improvements within the countries themselves. A reliance on food aid from countries with a surplus will in the longer term only get in the way of better food production in the countries themselves.

## Activity Seven

In my lifetime there have been huge changes in television broadcasting. There is now a far greater choice of channels, with digital TV, a far better picture quality, and impressive news coverage from all over the world. There have been huge changes in the

physical dimensions of televisions, through bulky boxes with tiny screens carrying fuzzy black and white pictures (if you are as old as I am) to the large flat screen sharp colour TVs of today.

The BBC has managed to keep pace with these changes and is still a major force in the TV industry in the UK, but the internet and on-demand television use are continuing to change the situation. Commercial television, which relies on advertising revenue, goes through difficult times but will survive in some form.

These changes have taken place partly because of changing demand and partly because of technical advances. Public demand for entertainment, information and news has been rising fast but recently it has become possible to watch what you want when you want without being tied to some channel timetable. People watch television broadcasts on television but also on their computers and mobile phones.

Technical developments of the last few years have been spectacular but are mainly driven by customer demand. The huge growth worldwide in mobile phone use means that ever greater capabilities has changed the way we all behave. So too has the availability of communication satellites in earth orbit.

## Suggestions for Further Reading

There are many textbooks available on this period. Those listed below are all available in paperback.

### A3: Development of Dictatorship: Germany, 1924-29

#### IGCSE level

1. Aaron Wilkes, *Germany 1918-1945* (ISBN 978-1843 -038323-20, published by Folens, 2006). This is a short introduction (96 pages), presented in a lively way with good use of colour and lots of sources, as well as concentrating on developing history skills.
2. Steve Waugh and John Wright, *Nazi Germany 1930-39* (ISBN 978-0435-309206, published by Hodder-Murray, 2007). This is also short (96 pages), and only covers part of our period but is a useful introduction.
3. Dale Banham and Christopher Culpin, *Essential Germany 1918-1945* (ISBN 978-0-7195-775543, published by Hodder Education,

2004). This is also short (94 pages), but is a Schools' History Project official text in the UK. It has lively presentation and good use of colour.

4. Andrew Boxer, *Germany 1918-1945* (ISBN 0-00-7155-05-0 published by HarperCollins, 2003). This is another short introduction (80 pages) with lively presentation and some useful source material.
5. The Diary of Anne Frank. You can find this in lots of different paperback editions. There is also a lot of information about Anne Frank, and more generally the Jewish people in World War Two, on the website of the Anne Frank Museum at:

<http://www.annefrank.org/content.asp?pid=1&lid=2>

### A/S level (more for reference)

6. Geoff Layton, *From Second Reich to Third Reich: Germany 1918-1945* (ISBN 978-0340-865-818 published by Hodder Education, 2008). This is endorsed by Edexcel and has exam tips and lots of sources but no colour.
7. John Hite and Chris Hinton, *Weimar and Nazi Germany* (ISBN 978-0-7195-7343-9 published by Hodder Education, 2000). This is a Schools History Project book with plenty of useful sources.

### Reference

8. Eric D Weitz, *Weimar Germany* (ISBN 978-0-691-14096-4 published by Princeton University Press, 2007). This is an excellent new book that is very detailed and full of good things.
9. Ian Kershaw, *The Nazi Dictatorship* (ISBN 978-0-340-76028-4, published by Hodder, 2000). This remains the standard book on the period in English, now in its fourth edition (the first edition was in 1985). It is rather detailed but excellent, especially on the various interpretations.

## A7: A Divided Union: Depression and Recovery in the USA, 1929-45

### IGCSE Level

1. Derrick Murphy, *The United States of America 1918-41* (published by HarperCollins, 2003). This is a good IGCSE text covering this period with good use of colour.

2. Terry Fiehn and others, *The USA Between the Wars 1919-1941* (published by Hodder, 1993, reprinted 2008). The official Schools History Project text as a Study in Depth. This has plenty of very useful material.

### IGCSE/AS Level (more for reference)

3. Doug and Susan Willoughby, *USA 1917-45* (Heinemann, 2000, price: £16.99. This is an excellent text.

### Reference

4. Hugh Brogan, *The Penguin History of the USA* (Penguin, 2001, price: £14.99. This is the second revised edition of a standard work on the History of the USA first published in 1985. It has 792 excellent pages for reference.
5. The online archive of *The New York Times* includes first hand accounts of ordinary people living through the Great Depression.

## B5: Colonial Rule and the Nationalist Challenge in India, 1919-47

### IGCSE/AS Level

1. Tim Leadbeater, *Britain and India 1845-1947* (ISBN 13 978-0340965979, published by Hodder Murray, 2008). This is in Hodder's Access to History series and goes a bit further back in time. It does have useful material however.
2. Tony McAleary, *Twentieth Century History: International Relations since 1919* by Tony McAleary was published (2<sup>nd</sup> edition) by (published by Cambridge University Press, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 2002). It helps to put our topic into an international context and is written at IGCSE level.

### Reference

3. Ian Copland, *India 1885-1947: From Empire to Republic* (ISBN 13 978-0582381735, published by Longman, 2001). This is in the Seminar Studies in History Series. It covers the period and more (160 pages). It is a very useful book, at a higher level.
4. Jane Samson, *Race and Empire* (published by Longmans, 2005). This is also in the Seminar Studies series,

5. Judith Brown, *Modern India: The Origins of an Asian Democracy* (published by Oxford University Press, 1994). This is a standard text in the Short Oxford History of the Modern World Series. It covers our period well.

## C7: Change in Africa: from Colonialism to Independence, 1945-2000

### IGCSE

1. Martin Collier, *Colonisation and Conflict 1750-1996* (Heinemann 2002) has reasonable coverage of Africa as well as of other parts of the world. It is strong on the use of evidence.
2. Tony McAleavey, *Twentieth Century History International Relations since 1919* (ISBN-13: 9780521893503, Cambridge University Press, 2002), 176pp. IGCSE textbook.

### Reference

3. Jane Samson, *Race and Empire* (published by Pearson/Longman, 2004). Published in the Seminar Studies series. This is very useful for reference. It is aimed at A level.
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6. Channel 4, *On tour with the Queen* (a television documentary first shown on 24 August 2009). See:  
<http://www.channel4.com/programmes/on-tour-with-the-queen/4od>
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# IGCSE

## History

## Module One: Development of Dictatorship: Germany, 1918-45

## Lesson One

# The Establishment of the Weimar Republic and its Early Problems

### Aims

The aim of this lesson is to enable you to learn about:

- the German Revolution of 1918
- the strengths and weaknesses of the new Constitution
- reactions to the Treaty of Versailles
- the Spartacist and Kapp uprisings
- the French occupation of the Ruhr
- the causes and effects of hyperinflation

### Context

This is the first of five lessons that cover theme A3 of Section A in your examination, 'Development of dictatorship: Germany, 1918-45'.



Oxford Open Learning

Armistice, November 1918



At 11:00 a.m. on 11 November 1918 the shooting stopped to bring to an end the First World War. Eight million soldiers of all nations had been killed and perhaps fifteen million wounded. Over two million German soldiers alone had been killed and about 420,000 civilians. Some called it 'The Great War' and others 'The war to end all wars'. Some hope. This cease-fire was the **Armistice**.



This photograph was taken after reaching an agreement for the armistice that ended World War I. This is Ferdinand Foch's own railway carriage and the location is in the forest of Compiègne. Foch is second from the right.

## The German Revolution of 1918

The German generals had told the politicians back in Berlin that there was no hope of victory any more. The German armies had not been pushed back into Germany itself, but in November 1918, following a Naval Command decision in the face of defeat to engage in one last battle with the British navy, the sailors revolted. Combined with social tensions throughout the German Empire, its undemocratic constitution, and lack of willingness to reform, this revolt generated a revolution. A republic was proclaimed and in Berlin the Kaiser – the German emperor – was forced to abdicate

(resign). A Socialist government led by Friedrich Ebert took power. These events resulted in the formation of the Weimar Republic in August 1919.

The socialist government agreed to sign the Armistice and accept whatever peace terms were to be offered by the Allied Powers. They had very little choice.

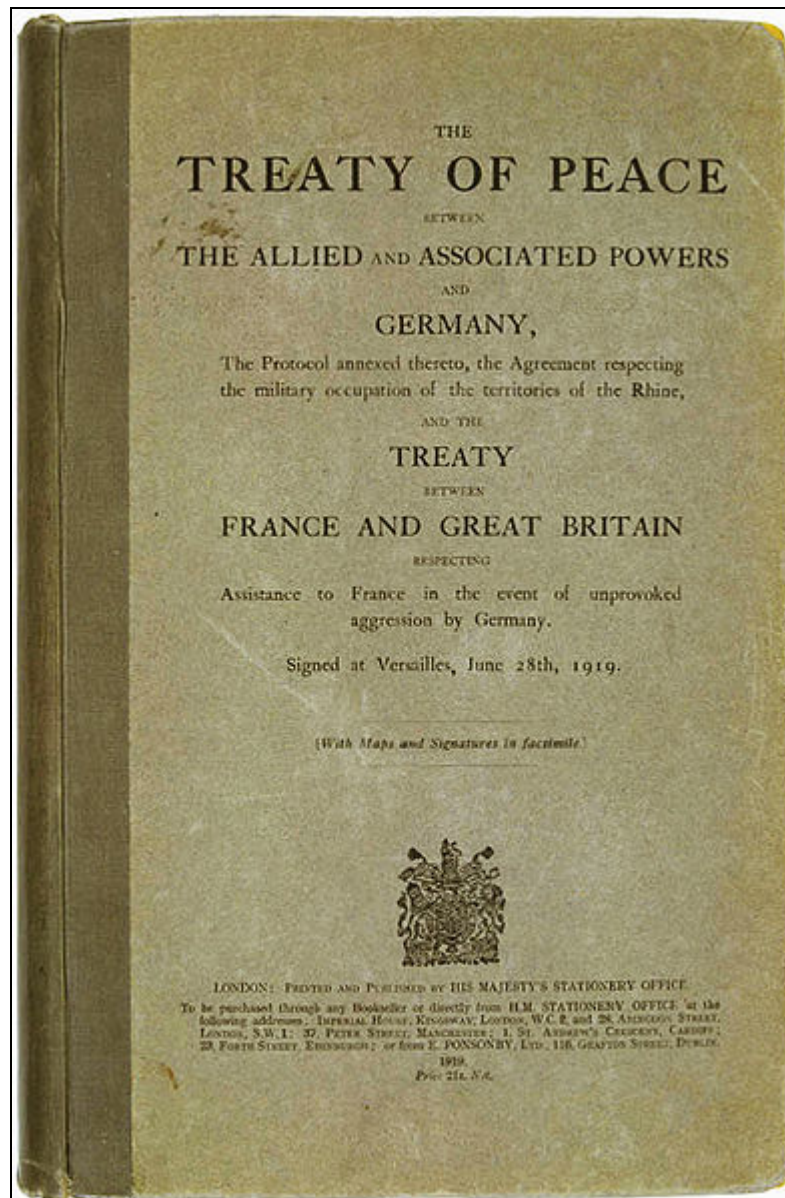
### Activity 1

Describe the scene in the railway carriage at Compi gne where the German army surrendered to the Allies in 1918 through the eyes of Matthias Erzberger, the politician who signed the Armistice document on behalf of Germany. He was assassinated by a German extreme nationalist group in 1921.



## The Treaty of Versailles, January 1919

The Allied Powers – the United States of America, the United Kingdom, France, the Russian Empire, and the other Allied countries - held a peace conference in the Palace of Versailles outside Paris starting in January 1919. This conference was called to decide on the exact terms that had to be accepted by defeated Germany. On 28 June 1919 two representatives of the German government signed the document laying out the Allied terms for peace. This document was **The Treaty of Versailles**.



A copy of the English version of the Treaty of Versailles

The Treaty declared that Germany and her allies were alone responsible for starting the war (Article 231). Germany lost territory in the west on the French border (Alsace Lorraine) and in the east on the border with Poland (The Polish Corridor), splitting the part of Germany called East Prussia from the rest and giving Poland access to the Baltic Sea. The German army had to remain small and no Air Force was allowed. Germany was forbidden to have troops or fortifications in a large area around the River Rhine near France and was forbidden to merge with Austria.

Germany had to pay huge amounts of money in compensation for the damage she had caused. The exact amount of these '**Reparations**' was to be decided later by a Reparations Commission.

An important effect of the Treaty of Versailles was the creation of ten countries such as Czechoslovakia which were based on national groups. Until 1918, these groups had been a part of one of the three multi-national empires which had dominated the Middle East and Europe for centuries. These were Ottoman Turkey, Austria-Hungary and Russia and the first two had been on the losing side in the First World War. Russia had withdrawn from the fighting in 1917 when the Bolsheviks seized power in the Russian Revolution of that year.

Austria, Czechoslovakia and Hungary were created from the collapsed Austria-Hungarian Empire. A shaken Russian Empire had to surrender control over the Baltic States (Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia) as well as losing territory to Poland.

The victorious allies at Versailles also re-organised lands outside Europe. The former Turkish Empire largely came under the control of France and Britain. The exception was modern Turkey which emerged as a proud independent country under Mustafa Kemal (Ataturk). Germany was also stripped of her colonies in Africa and Asia.



Left to right: Lloyd George (Britain), Orlando (Italy), Clemenceau (France), Wilson (USA)

The final terms of the Treaty of Versailles were the result of months of arguing between the victorious Allies, especially among the 'Big Three', USA, France and Britain. United States President Woodrow Wilson was very keen to punish Germany, but even more keen to see the forming of Nation States from the ruins of old Europe. His pet project was the establishment of a League of Nations, where countries could discuss their problems and solve them without war.

France had suffered more than any other country both in terms of war dead and damage. She wanted revenge, reparation and some guarantees that Germany would never be a threat to peace in the future. Her President, Georges Clemenceau, pressed for settlement terms that would punish Germany and cripple her.

David Lloyd George, the British Prime Minister, wanted to punish Germany, too, but he was most alarmed at recent events in Russia and feared the spread of Bolshevik revolution to other countries in Europe.

### Activity 2

Choose to be either Woodrow Wilson, David Lloyd George or Georges Clemenceau. What words would you have used to describe the Treaty of Versailles from your point of view on return to Washington, London or Paris?



## The Spartacist Uprising

On 2 January 1919 a general strike began in Berlin and there were many street battles with police and troops loyal to the new government. After a few days the Communists (Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands or KPD) and a small group called the Spartacist League joined the demonstrations.

For four days the strikers seemed to control the Berlin streets but on 8 January the government of Ebert called in the armed band of mercenary soldiers known as the Freikorps. Their weapons and determination to strike at the communists quickly enabled them to regain control. The best known leaders of the Uprising were two communists, Rosa Luxembourg and Karl Liebknecht. Both were shot in the streets by the Freikorps.

For many, this Uprising marks the end of the German Revolution of 1918 which started on 9 November 1918 with the declaration of a Republic in Germany, and the abdication of Kaiser Wilhelm.

## The Weimar Republic

In mid-1919 Germany reformed itself. Instead of rule by an unelected Kaiser (Emperor) a new Republic was founded based on free elections, with an elected President and control by the Reichstag (Parliament). A new constitution, or foundation and source for the legal authority of the nation's system of government, was debated and agreed.

These debates took place in the small town of Weimar, south of Berlin. In practical terms it was far enough away from a Berlin still suffering riots and disturbances of many kinds to be a safe and tranquil place. It was also not in Prussia, the part of Germany most identified with military strength and aggression.

Weimar was and is, for many Germans, forever associated with many of the giants of German culture, especially the writer Goethe. Although it continued to be known as the Deutsches Reich, the new Germany was now politically a republic. Friedrich Ebert was its first President. The harsh terms of the Treaty of Versailles made for a difficult birth and the new Germany faced many challenges. It was hoped that the new Constitution would enable Germany to move forward democratically in rebuilding the nation.

## Strengths and Weaknesses of the New Constitution

### Strengths

1. The main strength of the new Constitution was the fact that it was a very **democratic** one. This means that it aimed to rule by the will of the majority and by fair processes including elections.
2. There was an elected President and elected Reichstag (parliament).
3. A **Bill of Rights** gave every German citizen over the age of twenty a free vote. (At that time women in Britain had to wait until they were thirty to vote.)
4. The Bill of Rights gave all German citizens freedom of speech, religion and equality between women and men under law.

5. The constitution stipulated a number of social reforms including state responsibility for the welfare of the unemployed, and the protection of mothers and children.
6. Another key strength was that it was the outcome of long discussions between many diverse groups in German society. There were compromises along the way, but the final version of the Weimar Constitution was at least one that had been agreed by many groups. It represented a commitment from these various groups to try to make it work.

## Weaknesses

1. One of these compromises was between the representatives of the states of Germany, such as Prussia, and the central government. These states had been used to having considerable powers, for example, over the police. The new Constitution was heavily weakened by leaving too much power with the German states.
2. **Article 48.** Another weakness of the Weimar Constitution was that it gave its elected President the right in times of national emergency to govern by decree (to make laws passed which have not been approved by the majority parliament). This was Article 48 of the Constitution. It meant that in emergencies the President could govern without the control of the Reichstag (national parliament). Another problem here was that the Constitution did not state clearly what was meant by an emergency. The power to govern by decree was used in 1923 to save Germany from a crisis that year, but made the rise to power of Hitler and the small Nazi Party (National Socialist German Workers' Party) much easier in 1933. (The term 'Nazi' comes from the German word '**N**ational**s**ozialismus' meaning national socialism.)
3. **Proportional Representation.** The members of the Reichstag were elected by a voting system known as *proportional representation*. Under this system each political party publishes a list of candidates and voters vote for the *party* they prefer. (This is different from the voting system in Britain where voters vote for the *candidate* they prefer not the party.) Each party was allocated seats in the Reichstag in proportion to the number of votes it had received. Depending on the proportion of votes received, the parties work their way down their list as far as their proportion of the vote lets them. This seemed like a fair system, but in practice it meant that lots of very small parties were represented in the Reichstag, but none was strong enough to win a majority of the votes and form a government that could get its legislation passed. This was disastrous for the Weimar Republic. Nevertheless, it is also true to say that Hitler and the Nazi Party would probably have come to power in Germany in 1933 whatever voting system was used.

The main threats to the Weimar Republic came from events within Germany and outside it. German society was still fragmented and by 1933 was just not strong enough to resist the rise of the Nazis.



## The Kapp Putsch

The new Republic faced its first major challenge in March 1920. The Treaty of Versailles had limited the new German army to 100,000 men, but there were, in addition, the Freikorps who tended to be very nationalistic and hostile to the Weimar Republic.

In March 1920 the German government ordered a prominent Freikorps group to be disbanded. Nationalists were outraged. Walter Kapp was a Freikorps commander, an ardent nationalist who had been fighting in Poland in the east. He was the nominal leader of an attempt in March 1920 to seize power in Berlin by armed force or 'putsch'. This is known as **The Kapp Putsch**.

In fact the driving force behind the putsch was Walther von Lüttwitz, commander of the Reichswehr (regular army) in Berlin. The putsch was suppressed by troops from outside Berlin who were loyal to the Weimar Republic. The Kapp Putsch is a good example of the disturbances caused mainly by ultra-nationalists like the Freikorps that were faced by the Weimar Republic, especially in Berlin, in the years following the Treaty of Versailles. The Freikorps had never accepted the defeat of Germany in 1918, and felt that the terms of the Treaty of Versailles were both unfair and deeply humiliating for Germany.



Demonstration in Berlin against the putsch



**Activity 3**

Look at the photograph of the demonstration against the Kapp Putsch in Berlin in 1920. Why do you think these people are marching in support of The Weimar Republic?

**French Occupation of the Ruhr 1923**

In January 1921 the Reparations Commission decided that Germany had to pay the Allied Powers a total sum of 269 billion gold marks (German) a huge sum. There was to be a large initial payment right away. It proved to be impossible for the German government to find so large a sum given the shattered economy of Germany in the early 1920s and they defaulted (were unable to pay).

In retaliation French and Belgian troops occupied the Ruhr area of Germany in early 1923. This was the industrial heartland of Germany. It was, if anywhere, the area where Germany might generate the sums of money needed to pay Reparations.

The idea was that the French and Belgians would seize the factories and steel mills of the Ruhr and take their profits as compensation. The sight of French and Belgian troops in possession of German factories gave much satisfaction to citizens of France and Belgium. It was, however, very humiliating for all Germans and damaging to the Weimar Republic.



French troops in the Ruhr, 1923

The invasion was never going to be effective in terms of securing Reparation payments. By the time the last French troops left the Ruhr in August 1925 the economy of Germany was in an even more dire state than in 1919. The value of the German mark compared to other currencies had been tumbling since 1919 and reached crisis levels by the end of 1923.

## Hyperinflation 1922-23

**Hyperinflation** occurs when the value of a currency falls so fast that it is out of control. In Germany from 1919 until the end of 1923, the German currency – the mark – became almost worthless. Every day your money could buy less. You might need a suitcase of banknotes to buy a loaf of bread. People papered their walls with the near-worthless notes. In August 1923 the Central Bank in Germany (the *Reichsbank*) issued 2 trillion mark banknotes.



Germany, 1923: banknotes had lost so much value that they were used as wallpaper

#### Activity 4

How do you feed a family in Germany by 1923 as your cash is now almost worthless? Who do you blame for the bad situation?



## The Dawes Plan 1923

The situation was out of control in Germany. The inevitable result would be ruin for the country and the rise of violent extremist politics with the collapse of the Weimar Republic. It wasn't only David Lloyd George who was worried about the prospect of Bolshevism spreading from Russia. Even the French, who were most determined on punishment for Germany, came to agree that Reparations would never be possible at all under these circumstances. The Allies had to act.

The only country powerful enough to make a real difference was the USA. A committee led by Charles G. Dawes, US banker and future Vice President of the USA, drew up a rescue plan. Announced in August 1923, it called for the withdrawal of Allied troops from the Ruhr, a re-organisation of the Reichsbank (central bank) of Germany, and the rescheduling of Reparations payments. In November 1923 a new currency, called the **Rentenmark**, was issued by the Reichsbank. It was supported by large new loans of money from the USA. It replaced the now worthless papiermark.

## The Munich Putsch November 1923

If any reminder was needed of the unsettled state of politics in Germany, events in Munich between 8 and 9 November 1923 provided it. On the evening of 8 November, the then small Nazi Party led by the Austrian Adolf Hitler, attempted a putsch in Munich, the capital of the state of Bavaria in southern Germany.

This attempt to take power in Bavaria by force is sometimes known as 'The Beer Hall Putsch' because Hitler's tiny, violent group used to gather in certain beer halls in Munich. They were on the extreme fringe of German politics, fervently nationalist, violently opposed to the Weimar Republic, convinced of the injustice of Versailles. They had much in common with Wolfgang Kapp.



SA men arrest Socialist city councilmen

The attempt failed. Hitler was arrested and put in prison, although his many influential friends made sure that his time in jail was both short and comfortable.

## Self Assessment Test: Lesson One

Please attempt the following questions on your own paper, in short essay form.

- 1 Why did Germany surrender in November 1918 when their army had not been defeated?
- 2 What military restrictions did the Treaty of Versailles impose on Germany?
- 3 Why was the new Germany called 'The Weimar Republic'?
- 4 What sort of government was established for Germany by the Weimar Constitution?
- 5 What triggered the Kapp Putsch in 1920?
- 6 Why did the French occupy the Ruhr region of Germany in 1923?
- 7 What were the two main strengths and two main weaknesses of the Weimar Constitution?
- 8 What was the Plan of the committee chaired by Charles G. Dawes in 1923?
- 9 Why was there hyperinflation in Germany in 1923, and what were its main effects?
- 10 Why did the Munich Putsch fail in November 1923?

Suggested Answers to Self-Assessment Tests are to be found at the end of the course.

## Suggested Answers to Activities

### Activity One

The early morning light coming through the forest trees is bleak and pale. Everyone is exhausted. The battlegrounds around us are devastated. The Emperor has abdicated. The government in Berlin has fallen. The Allied Powers peace terms are harsh, impossible in my view to meet, but I have no choice but to sign the armistice document. How humiliating that Germany should sign away its military power and economic future in a railway carriage, in a siding, deep in the forest in Northern France! This is indeed a sad day for Germany, and no-one will thank me for what I have done.

### Activity Two

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Woodrow Wilson: 'Well, that will teach the Germans a lesson! But I doubt whether it will last forever. What the world needs is a League of Nations that can become a forum for discussion. If all nations could sit down together and talk about ways to resolve their differences, then we wouldn't need to go to war.'

Georges Clemenceau: 'It's right that Germany should be punished for what she did. I hope she will never again have the strength to invade France. My people have suffered cruelly from German aggression. Germany must pay heavily in compensation. I hope the Treaty means that our western border is now secure from future invasion.'

David Lloyd George: 'It's right that Germany should pay a heavy price for her military aggression. But I wonder how long the peace will last? Those Bolsheviks are making trouble in Russia, and in time, this will de-stabilize Europe. Well, it's a step forward, but there's more work to do.'

### Activity Three

They are demonstrating because, as Berliners, they support the democratic basis of the Weimar Republic and do not want the ultra right nationalists, backed by the Freikorps, to seize power in Germany. They want peace, and the opportunity for Germany to rebuild itself by peaceful means. They want a democratic country, based on constitutional rights and responsibilities, not a fascist state and dictatorship.

### Activity Four

It is very difficult to feed a family at this time. Money is worthless and can't buy food. People in the cities are hungry, and have used all their savings to buy what they can. Black market prices are out of reach for most people. If you live in the country you can perhaps grow vegetables and keep chickens. But it's not easy.