

GCSE History

Exam Guidance

The GCSE History Exam will consist of three exams - one for each unit you have studied over the two years of your GCSE History course.

Unit 1: Peace & War - International Relations 1943-1991

Duration: 1 hour 15 minutes

*The topics you have studied are:

- 1) How did the Cold War develop (1943-56)
- 2) Three Cold War Crises: Berlin, Cuba and Czechoslovakia (c1957-69)
- 3) Why did the Cold War end? The invasion of Afghanistan (1979) to the Collapse of the Soviet Union (1991)

*For each of these topics you will need to answer the following three types of question:

- a) A **describe** question worth 2 marks
- b) A **briefly explain the key features** question worth 6 marks
- c) An **explanation of change** question worth 12 marks

*You will need to spend approximately 25 minutes on each topic - answering total of 9 questions.

Aim to spend the following time on each question:

- 2 marks = about 3 minutes
- 6 marks = about 7 minutes
- 12 marks = about 14 minutes

*Make sure you create a brief plan for the 12 mark question to help you structure your answer.

Unit 2: Russia 1917-1939

Duration: 1 hour 15 minutes

*The topics you have studied are:

- 1) The collapse of the tsarist regime, 1917
- 2) Bolshevik takeover and consolidation, 1917-24
- 3) The nature of Stalin's dictatorship, 1924-39
- 4) Economic and social changes, 1928-39

*You have to answer all parts of question 1, and then either question (2a) or (2b) and either question (3a) or (3b). Aim to divide your time up as follows:

- (1a) = **source inference** - getting messages from a source. (4 marks = abt 6 minutes)
- (1b) = **Describe the key features** - give a detailed description of the key events in a given period. (6 marks = abt 8 minutes)
- (1c) = **Consequence** - explain the effects or results of an event. (8 marks = abt 10 minutes)
- (1d) = **Causation** - explain the reasons why something happened. (8 marks = abt 10 minutes)
- (2a) or (2b) = **Change** - explain how or why something happened. (8 marks = abt 12 minutes)
- (3a) or (3b) = **Scaffolding/Judgement** - assessing the importance of causes, changes or consequences. It will give you four main points which you should develop and explain the importance of each one. (16 marks = abt 25 minutes)

Unit 3: A Divided Union? The USA 1945-1970

Duration: 1 hour 15 minutes

*This is the sources paper. You will be given an insert with five or six sources which focus on a particular aspect of this topic.

*The topics you have studied are:

- 1) McCarthyism and the Red Scare
- 2) The Civil Rights Movement, 1945-62
- 3) Changes in the Civil Rights Movement, 1963-70
- 4) Other protest movements in the 1960s

*You are expected to attempt all questions on the paper. The maximum mark for this paper is 50.

This is divided up as follows:

Inference question (6 marks = abt 9 minutes)

Source interpretation question - purpose of source. (8 marks = abt 12 minutes)

Cross-referencing question - comparing sources. (10 marks = abt 15 minutes)

Utility/Reliability question - assessing accuracy or usefulness of source information. (10 marks = abt 15 minutes)

Hypothesis testing question - using the sources and your own knowledge to agree or disagree with a particular view. (16 marks = abt 24 minutes)