



2008 History: Revolutions GA 3: Written Examination

GENERAL COMMENTS

In 2008 assessors found a significant reduction in students' factual knowledge and skill in working with documents and visual representations as evidence of the period. Poor handwriting and control of expression was prevalent; it would be useful for students to practise writing neatly in defined spaces and to learn to spell terms accurately. Teachers should also remind students that pencil is not to be used in examinations. There were still a number of answers in dot point format; students cannot obtain full marks when answers are presented in this way. Quite a number of students still made errors in their selection of options and wrote on the same revolution in both parts of the paper. This mistake meant students lost marks for one of the sections.

As in the past the discriminating part of the paper was the response to the document and visual representation questions. Some students seemed unaware that they needed to use the extract or visual representation by direct reference to it and also use both their own knowledge and knowledge of historians' views.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Note: Student responses reproduced herein have not been corrected for grammar, spelling or factual information

Section A – Revolution One

Part 1 – Revolutionary ideas, leaders, movements and events

Revolution chosen	None	America	France	Russia	China
%	2	13	40	34	10

Question 1

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
%	7	6	8	9	12	13	13	12	10	5	5	5

Question 2

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
%	8	7	8	9	11	12	13	13	9	5	4	4.9

Questions 1 and 2

Generally students used factual information well and also used the cues in the questions to make judgements by using the terms 'how did', 'explain the importance of', 'contribute to a revolutionary situation', and 'in the development of the revolution'. There were fewer students who simply gave a narrative response and most constructed a position regarding the development of the revolution. However, there were still too many answers that relied on a generalised description of the event rather than stating why it contributed to developing a revolution. It is recommended that students give more consideration to stating reasons why revolution occurred during the construction of their answer and not just in a sentence at the end. Some answers were needlessly long, sometimes at the expense of the rest of the paper. Students seemed to often spend too much time on this section of the paper by writing very lengthy answers. It is recommended that answers are confined to the space provided so that other parts of the paper do not suffer.

The best student responses showed an excellent range of knowledge and responded to the cue of 'how did'. They showed clear understanding of the contribution of events to a revolutionary situation and explained the steps in a logical sequence. High-scoring responses used correct and specific historical terms.

However, many students simply supplied a list of events without making the connection to the role they played in bringing on the revolution. On the whole students showed knowledge of relevant information and generally used the time frame given in the question correctly. It was noted that some students are signposting their response very well by using 'firstly', 'secondly' and 'thirdly' to note their points, or words such as 'furthermore' to link points, which helps them build their position in regard to the onset of revolution.

In Question 2 the more successful answers demonstrated an understanding that revolution is a **developing process**. The less successful answers only used one or two points, expanded on them and generalised, or gave a narrative response.



Students are advised to use information to show how events caused revolution to develop. The majority of answers were medium to low level answers that mentioned a couple of ideas rather than facts, in a general way.

America

It appeared that students found this question accessible and the best answers showed very good understanding of the British measures to gain more revenue. These included the *Stamp Act 1765*, the Townshend Duties and the Sugar Act. Students showed a clear ability to discuss how these measures raised issues of colonial political representation, as well as present and future economic and political relationships between Britain and the colonies. However, many answers did not focus on the measures; this revealed poor reading of the question.

The question on the actions of the Continental Congress was answered well with many students naming the Olive Branch petition, taking control of the war, the appointment of George Washington in command of the army and discussions on independence and drafting the Declaration of Independence.

France

There was weakness in students' knowledge of the ideas expressed in the Cahiers de Doleances. It may have been that students did not read the question closely. There were many non-specific examples and therefore students could not explore the 'ideas' in them or show their contribution to the revolution other than very generally. Some of this information, such as the Estates General and Tennis Court Oath, was then repeated in the second question. Weak answers used words contained in the question, for example, 'contributed to a revolutionary situation' at the end of the answer, which was, at best, a list of events.

There were some weak responses to the second question about 'social distinctions in the calling of the Estates General' where students used superficial information about black clothing and different entrance doors. Better answers contained discussion of voting distinctions, verification of credentials and the demand to meet as one order.

Russia

Knowledge of the October Manifesto was very good. Most students showed knowledge of the fundamental laws, and detailed knowledge of the failure of the Dumas and how this contributed to growing frustration.

Question 2 on the actions of the Provisional Government was also handled well and students showed very good ability in explaining a sequence of events in the development of the revolution.

China

The first question on nationalist groups was responded to very well by the majority of students. A range of knowledge was shown, with frequent mention of the Tongmenghui, the three principles, the Boxers, and railway recovery. The question on the Warlord era was also answered well and students generally answered within the stated time frame, although some still ignored the dates given in the question. The best answers argued that the death of Yuan Shikai in 1916 left a vacuum that was filled by urban and rural warlords. They went on to explain how the CCP-Nationalist alliance was an orchestrated attempt to defeat the warlords and establish a democratic system, although this also failed because of the different agendas of each group.

Successful responses identified four clear points about the event or actions and developed an argument using precise factual information such as names, dates and statistics that were linked to the question. Students often used the terms 'firstly', 'secondly', 'which contributed to' or 'this lead to', rather than merely adding 'leading to revolution' at the end of their response with little demonstrated understanding of the process.

Following is an example of a high range response to Question 1. This response demonstrates specific knowledge of the Cahiers and uses it to point out the stages in the denial of reform and how this contributed to a revolutionary situation. The careful linking of ideas in the Cahiers to following events was required.

It was due to the unfulfilled hopes and expectations of a nation expressed in the Cahiers that caused a heightened revolutionary situation. Firstly the Cahiers marked a culmination of widespread tensions as the parlement's resistance prompted new ideas of democratic representation. The ideas in the Cahiers were largely derived and inspired by the 18th century philosophes including Montesquieu's 'Spirit of the Laws' and Rousseau's 'will of the people'. Furthermore, the Cahiers demonstrated a strong presence of dissatisfaction among all three Estates as the noble cahiers showed large support for a constitution and taxation by representation. Above all the ideas had the greatest effect on the bourgeoisie as they dominated the Third Estate cahiers. George Lefebvre attributes the revolutionary period prior to the Estates General (5th May) as the 'bourgeois revolt' as the ideas of the Cahiers manifested itself into calls for 'doubling of the third' and 'voting by head'. The demand for representation outlined in the Cahiers was effected independently as the deputies of the Third Estate who were clergy members drew upon the 'will of the



people' to declare a National Assembly (17th June 1789). The subsequent declaration of the Tennis Court Oath (20th Jun) marked a revolutionary defiance and shaped the direction for a constitution. As Historian Crane Brinton remarked 'no ideas, no revolution'. The cahiers demonstrated the grievances of a 'nation of people that drove the revolution onwards.

Following is an example of a high range response to Question 2. This answer shows a strong command of knowledge of the build up leading towards the October Revolution. It clearly points out how the development progressed from the mistakes made in the formation of the Provisional Government and indicates the pathway of the Revolution.

In February 1917 leaders of the fourth Duma formed the Provisional Government and forced the Tsar to abdicate. Under the leadership of Prince Lvov, they issued liberal democratic reforms which included freedom of speech and the release of all revolutionaries. This amnesty was a mistake as it allowed revolutionaries like Lenin to return from exile and to resume contributing to the revolutionary situation. Their second mistake was the continuance of the war, which was extremely unpopular among the people and resulted in a loss of support for the new regime. They instead turned to the Soviets, resulting in a period of 'Dual Government', where the Provisional Government held authority but no power and the Soviets, power but no authority. This was evident in the Kornilov attack in August where Kerensky armed the Soviets so they could protect Petrograd from Kornilov's soldiers. This Dual Government created great political instability as it allowed the Bolsheviks to build support during September with a majority in the Moscow Soviet. Now armed, courtesy of Kerensky, Trotsky formed the Red Guard and Military Revolutionary Committee in preparation for armed insurrection. After gaining confidence in the Provisional government's weakness and their own popularity, the Bolsheviks seized power in the name of the Soviets on the 25th of October 1917. The formation of the Provisional Government in February 1917 was to be followed by a series of mistakes made, which contributed to the development of the revolution by all other parties being able to exploit these weaknesses. The Bolsheviks would eventually be able to exploit these weaknesses and successfully stage the October Revolution in 1917.

Following is an example of a medium range response to Question 1. This answer identifies one nationalist group and their ideas. The response wanders from nationalist groups by the introduction of the historian's view, which is not necessary or desirable in this section of the examination. The answer goes on to loosely describe the three principles and is not fully focused on how they contributed to a revolutionary situation by 1911.

It was largely the influence and work of Sun Yat Sen that led to the Revolution of 1911. As there was considerable dissent growing in the form of regionalism following the Qing reforms of 1901, his three distinct policies of Nationalism, Peoples' Livelihood and Democracy were hugely significant. Gray contends that 'Sun's ideals were instrumental in distinctively presenting the revolutionary ideas growing at the time', suggesting that it was this that collaborated the political dissent and dissatisfaction into a cohesive revolutionary force- the GMD. Nationalism was the people's answer to the hated Japanese influence. People's Livelihood directly addressed the issue of land distribution that so plagued the nation and Democracy satisfied their plea for executive provincial government.

Typically, the medium range responses had some accuracy, showing the ability to identify perhaps one or two pieces of information. They were general in content and loosely controlled. There might have been only two main ideas, which were described in loose terms and other ideas might have been less relevant or of lower significance. They sometimes wandered from the time frame or slipped in relevance. There was little demonstration of the pathway to revolution.

Part 2 – Creating a new society

Revolution chosen	None	America	France	Russia	China
%	1	13	41	35	10

Question 3

Questions 3ai-ii.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	3	15	82	1.8

Questions 3bi-ii.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	8	22	70	1.6

Question 3c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	6	10	19	22	20	16	8	3.2



Question 3d.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
%	9	8	11	11	12	13	11	10	8	4	4	4.5

Students demonstrated good ability to read and comprehend basic information in the documents. There was less skill in analysing the views expressed. Students may benefit from practise writing short summaries of the viewpoint contained in the extracts. Students do not need to know the school to which a historian belongs, rather they should know what the historian is saying about the revolution.

The majority of students were able to identify the relevant information directly from the document to answer the two questions. However, it was clear that students were not using the document by quoting from it to frame their answer in Questions 3c-d. Teachers must inform students of the requirement to quote from the extract.

Question 3c. was accessible to most students. Weaker answers told a story of events rather than explaining in the context of the document, using it, as well as including several pieces of additional information. Improvement is needed in reading the question and identifying what to focus on.

Question 3d. was poorly done. Students seemed to either repeat knowledge already presented or compare historians. They did not tackle the ‘strengths and limitations’ of the document as evidence and at times referred to the strengths and weaknesses of the event itself. There was a lot of ‘dumping’ of learned quotes that lacked relevance to the context of the document and question. A typical weak statement was, for example, ‘this is written by a historian and not someone who experienced the event first hand and therefore it is bias’. Students should also learn how to use the terms ‘bias’ and ‘biased’ correctly.

High-scoring responses used outside factual knowledge to illuminate ideas presented in the document. Medium and weak responses either did not move beyond information contained in the document and did little more than describe or paraphrase the content, or on the other hand, they ignored the document and simply expressed their own knowledge. Most students made a generalised attempt to analyse the view but they must identify specific words in the document that provide clues to the position held by the author. The best approach is one where a historian’s viewpoint is explained and the response shows how it differs from, or confirms, the ideas expressed in the extract.

America

Some students answered the first questions well by quoting from the extract, but too many students did not. In Question 3c. the answers showed good knowledge of reasons why the Articles of Confederation were regarded as temporary. Responses to Question 3d. did not show strong knowledge of the nature of the debates, but rather students often discussed shortcomings of the constitution. There was frequent reference in the document by Howe to the ‘responsibility’ facing the Americans as they drafted the constitution, which needed to be linked to the protracted debates which had surrounded the ratification of the Articles of Confederation. Students should have been able to say that Howe focused on the challenge facing the Americans who had few models upon which to draw as they embarked on the task of creating a new political structure.

France

Students responded well to the short questions and showed their own knowledge to answer Question 3c. but often did not quote from the extract to support their answer. Question 3d. was poorly done. Students seem to focus on only part of the question, for example, the ‘significance of the Assembly’s work’, ‘strengths and limitations’ or ‘views of the period’. Too many students focused only on the Civil Constitution of the Clergy, when the question asked about the whole ‘work’ of the Assembly. They should have been able to grasp that Doyle highlighted the important decisions made by the Constituent Assembly regarding the relationship between church and state; he regards their work as pivotal in dividing those who supported the revolution from those who were against it.

Following is an example of a high level answer to Question 3d. The student has used a strategy to commence the response from outside the extract, which immediately places the discussion in historical debate and then goes into the extract to examine particular parts of the view. This method works well. The answer infers the significance of the work of the Constituent Assembly by pointing out the *‘uneasiness that accompanied the ascent of the Legislative Assembly’*. The student then moves away from the extract to discuss other perspectives in relation to the extract (*‘would point to the glorious gains Doyle cites at the extract’s beginning’* and *‘foreshadowed in the passages’s end’*).



William Doyle is a historian in the British tradition of revisionist historians who see the French Revolution as an event unnecessary for the level of bloodshed it produced, manifested in his sweeping statement that the revolution was not 'worth it'. However this extract provides a balanced view, contrasting the gains of the revolution- dismantlement of the old regime, nationalisation of administration etc. With the uneasiness that accompanied the ascent of the Legislative Assembly (September 1791) the split between republican and moderate liberals. Marxist historians such as Georges Rudé and Albert Soboul who tend to be maximalist in their revolutionary view would point to the glorious gains Doyle cites at the extract's beginning, supporting their overall contention that the revolution was beneficial and would state the upcoming violence foreshadowed in the passage's end, is necessary to mark 'the advent of the bourgeois-capitalist class'. Contrastingly, further right wing revisionists like Schama would underline the upcoming violence of the terror declaring violence as 'the engine of the revolution' and refute the benefits of the Constituent Assemblies work for the cost of life it would soon present (40,000 – 60,000). Overall in this passage Doyle presents a balanced and reliable view and supports his contention that it is resistance such as the flight to Varennes 'that makes the Revolution become violent'.

Russia

Students had little difficulty with the short questions. Responses to Question 3c. showed that most students had good knowledge of the way War Communism functioned, although surprisingly, many answers did not show precise knowledge of the use of terror.

It appeared that Question 3d. presented many students with problems because they did not answer the question about 'Bolshevik victory in the Civil War'. Instead students wrote again about War Communism or Civil War but did not write about alternative reasons for victory outside of Bolshevik actions. Many students simply delivered a comparison of views about War Communism. Students must pay attention to the question and break it down. A surprising number of students claimed that the limitation of the piece was that the historian ignored the violence of the Cheka. Students should be aware of the historian's work as a whole since Figes devotes much space to discussion of the brutality of the Cheka. Students should have been able to grasp that Figes argues the duality of the policies surrounding War Communism, which he says were not only a means of fighting the war against external enemies but also a means of targeting counter-revolutionaries.

Following is an example of a high level answer to Question 3c. The response does both things required by the question; it quotes from the extract and uses additional knowledge to discuss how War Communism operated.

War Communism was introduced in 1918 to keep the army supplied during Civil War 1918-1921. It did so by placing Russia under a 'command economy' where the state directly influenced the economy as Figes states, 'in the military interests of the state'. This was achieved by the nationalisation of all banks, businesses and factories and grain requisitions. These grain requisitions were carried out by the cheka, who used force to collect the grain from peasants. Due to food shortage peasants were hoarding their grain, however due to War Communism's requisitions over 7 million died due to starvation. Through the use of violence the Bolsheviks succeeded in keeping the army supplied but this was done at the expense of their popularity among the people.

China

Responses to the extract on China were good.

Responses discussing the reasons for launching the Great Leap Forward in Question 3c. showed good knowledge but many students did not receive full marks because they did not use the extract. Some students discussed the 'outcome' of the Great Leap Forward material, which was then repeated in the next question.

The question on historiography, Question 3d., evidence of the outcomes of the Great Leap Forward, was addressed well and students then explained limitations and which historians might agree or disagree. The piece from the *Epoch Times* speaks of the propaganda that surrounded the launching of the Great Leap Forward and notes the pervasive effect this had on the Chinese population. If students grasped the central argument they had a good foundation for their response.

Students are strongly discouraged to merely produce an outline of the perspective of particular historical 'schools' without reference to the document material. Students do not need to label historians and labels like 'liberal', 'soviet', 'libertarian', etc. are to be discouraged because they do not demonstrate real understanding of a particular view. Students need practice measuring views expressed in documents against historians' or contemporaries' views of particular events. The key to a good response is to first analyse the historian's view and express it clearly, explain whether or not this view is supported by evidence, and then explain who shares the view or opposes it.

Following is a high level response to Question 3d. While this is a very good response, it seems to miss the writer's strong criticism of the Great Leap Forward and the CCP and does not reference the 'policy of keeping people ignorant' and the propaganda exercise.



The extract mentions some of the mass campaigns during the GLF such as the backyard furnaces, in addition to one of the reasons behind the GLF which are strengths of the article in explaining some of the aspects of the Great Leap Forward. However, the article does not specify how these mass campaigns led by Mao – ‘who knew nothing of economic planning’ – failed so spectacularly. The article fails to mention that, according to Snow, it was a movement that ‘lacked proper planning and experimentation’ or that according to Chang and Halliday ‘Mao knowingly worked tens of millions of people to death’. It was because the energy of the people was directed towards the killing of sparrows or towards the implementation of 600,000 backyard furnaces by October 1958 that they did not work the land properly and consequently grain yields fell by 40% and famine therefore caused the deaths of 43million. Nor does the article explain that due to the damage done by the Great Leap Forward, in the following years Liu Shaoqi had to encourage private ownership (3 privates 1 Guarantee) to restabilise the economy, nor that his ‘capitalist roading’ led to the Cultural Revolution of 1966 which can be seen as an outcome of the failure of the GLF.

Following is an example of a medium level response to Question 3d. This response shows some ability to comprehend the extract but hangs onto it, explaining events, and does not state why there are strengths or limitations in the view. It does not demonstrate the skill of measuring the viewpoint against the views of others. The student should have clearly expressed the strengths or limitations by elaborating on his/her statement ‘scathing of Mao’s policies’ and the nature of CCP propaganda. The student then should have shown understanding of the viewpoints of various historians to illuminate the strengths and weaknesses of the extract as an accurate portrayal of the outcomes of the Great Leap Forward.

This extract albeit scathing of Mao’s policies, accurately illustrates the devastating consequences of the GLF. Mao’s ministers consistently covered up the losses and exaggerated the amount of grain and steel being produced, in order to please Mao. Yet this caused extreme poverty and famine, compounded by devastating drought, events that due to Mao’s mass indoctrination and censorship of the media were relatively ‘lost in translation’. This policy was designed to better the nation, but as the extract shows, it only caused millions of deaths and wasted tonnes of valuable resources and commodities.

SECTION B – Revolution Two

Part 1 – Revolutionary ideas, leaders, movements and events

Revolution chosen	None	America	France	Russia	China
%	1	5	27	52	15

Questions 4ai-ii.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	3	10	87	1.9

Questions 4bi-ii.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	6	19	75	1.7

Question 4c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	5	10	19	25	20	15	8	3.2

Question 4d.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
%	7	9	12	12	14	12	11	9	7	4	3	4.4

Question 4

Generally student responses to this task showed the same weaknesses as the responses to the extract. Students were able to identify features from the graphic and read it symbolically but were not able to make links to their own knowledge and respond to historiography.

America

Most students correctly linked the graphic with the Intolerable Acts. They were able to use a very good range of factual knowledge to explain the link between the Intolerable Acts and the outbreak of military conflict. Question 4d. was quite well done in relation to the growth of the Independence movement.



France

The cartoon on 'Justice stands with the strongest' showed that many students were not able to draw inferences. It was disappointing that too many students generalised names for members of the Third Estate, for example, by referring to them as 'peasants'. Students should be able to correctly identify a group by their clothing. There was also a problem in reading the outcomes depicted in the image. Few students understood that violence was depicted and many said that equality was depicted, which was not accurate. Question 4c. was poorly done with many generalised answers. Students wrote generally about 'equality' rather than the precise social and the political change shown in the image. Question 4d. was also poorly done. Students wrote generally about 'justice' rather than specific events. Many students referred to historians' views in a meaningful way but most students simply inserted some learned sentences about historians. Typical comments were, for example, 'revisionist historian so therefore looks at a range of views' and 'primary evidence and is therefore biased'.

Following is an example of a high level response to Question 4c.

The culture of deference displayed in France resulted in corrupt inequalities for the Third Estate, seen as of lesser importance in French society, however, 1789 changed these preconceptions. Firstly, Abbé Sieyès 'What is the Third Estate' pamphlet, January 1789, inspired revolutionary thought, initiating action. Secondly the Estates General meeting of 5TH May 1789, led to the Third Estate claiming to be the National Assembly at the Tennis Court Oath 20th June 1789, politically gaining power. The ensuing events such as the fall of the Bastille, 14th July, and Peasant Revolt July-August, resulted in the August 4th decrees, as depicted in the visual. The Third Estate, appearing to hold power at the bottom of the see-saw, signifies the political shift in power, as a culmination of the events of 1789 where they took control. In doing so, they abolished the notions of privilege, evidenced in their hold of swords, previously an honorific privilege available only to the nobility. Thus the significance of these social and political changes in the visual, highlights the changing times of 1789 and the impact of such events in these outcomes, where 'Justice stands with the strongest'.

Compare the above example with the following medium level response. The problem with this answer is that it is very general and it only identifies change in a general way. It understands a shift in power in a superficial way and loosely or inaccurately notes social change. It does not directly reference the image.

On August 4 the night of patriotic delirium, all feudal dues were abolished and privilege destroyed. The representation shows the shift in social and political powers from the once over represented nobles and clergy, whose votes were by class in the Estates General rather than by head, to the Third Estate who France comprised of the most. The abolition of privilege meant that the Third Estate could enjoy the benefits that the First and Second Estate had. A fiscal change also eased the burden.

Russia

The graphic was generally well handled and students showed familiarity with this image.

Students extracted information for the short questions very well and were able to relate the image to Bloody Sunday. However, the question asked about events that influenced this view of the Tsar and students mainly wrote about Bloody Sunday rather than a series of events culminating with Bloody Sunday. All students covering the Russian Revolution should have known about the contents of the petition pictured, which were long-term grievances of the lower classes. Unfortunately some good answers did not achieve the highest marks because they did not refer specifically to the graphic in Question 4c. Question 4d. was not as well done as expected. Information was repeated from Question 4c. Students should use a wide range of information in testing reliability of an image.

Following is an example of a high level response to Question 4d.

The representation presents Nicholas II as naive to events around him and impervious to reform. The Soviet official orthodoxy would highly praise the message of the cartoon, as they state the 1905 revolution was only not successful as a Marxist revolution is due to the fact that they lacked a centralised cause and a courageous leader such as Lenin. However, the Western liberal view of the Russian revolution, exemplified by historian Richard Pipes, would argue the Tsar not only ignored pressure from below, manifested in the worker in the cartoon; he often avoided the advice of his ministers, such as Sergei Witte who ardently argued for some sort of liberal concessions. However, he would agree with Nicholas II's depiction as a skeleton, as he suggests liberal reform could have occurred if the Tsar was not so outdated in political views, citing the national zemstvo meetings held in late 1904. Similarly Revisionists such as Figs and Fitzpatrick would agree with the cartoon's message, Figs stating 'the Tsar was truly out of touch with his people', and by pointing out the Tsar's avoidance of the political necessity of reform after Bloody Sunday, January 4th 1905. Overall historians are unanimous in their condemnation of Tsarist government prior to February 1905. Therefore this cartoon is reliable.

Following is a medium level response to Question 4d. This answer did not respond to the question carefully. It focuses on the event and the content of the graphic in its depiction of the Tsar. The understanding of causes of 1905 is limited. The response shows little ability to move away from the image and place it in a wider context.



The graphic is reliable in that it presents a view of both Tsarist weakness and a failure by the workers to coordinate their efforts. Liberal historian Richard Pipes contends that Bloody Sunday was an ‘overwhelming display of Tsarist incompetence’, depicted in the cartoon by the dead Tsar, suggesting obsolete leadership and reflective of Father Gapon’s cry ‘There is no Tsar!’ Orlando Figes, however, emphasises the masses ‘inability to coordinate and collaborate their movements’, shown in the graphic by a seemingly weak man, contrasted to Soviet cartoons which generally depict a strong man or woman of fortitude.

China

Students had little trouble connecting the graphic to the Yen’an Period and the development of the mass line. However, many students shifted the focus to write about the Long March that ‘established’ Yen’an at the end. Students must read the question more carefully. Question 4d. gave many students problems because they did not move to the broader context of the war against Japan. The ‘role of the CCP during the Japanese invasion’ was not well addressed. Students tended to write about what happened during the war and the GMD, but could not make the link between what was in the image and the role of the CCP in the war.

Overall, Questions 4c-d., like Questions 3c-d., were the discriminators on the paper.

Teachers need to give students the opportunity to practise the skill of contextualising and examining the nature of evidence in relation to events from a broader context than that depicted in the image.

In relation to historiography, students must link historical views with specific details about the event portrayed in the representation rather than giving generalised comments about ‘historians’ schools’ of thought, or using labels like ‘liberal historians’ to discuss a school of thought without any link to the representation. Assessors are looking for accurate identification, recognition and discussion of the period named in the question, with specific references made to the content of the image, such as what is present or omitted. Next they should discuss the ways historians might side with, or oppose, the view of the period expressed by the representation. Students must read the question carefully and address the period or event raised by the question.

Part 2 – Creating a new society

Revolution chosen	None	America	France	Russia	China
%	3	5	26	51	15

Question 5

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	Average
%	5	2	3	3	3	3	4	5	5	5	6	5	7	8	8	7	7	5	4	2	2	10.6

There were still too many students who explored aspects of the regime before the revolution. Students should be taught to focus their response on the new society rather than construct a comparison between the old regime and the new society.

The best responses referred closely to the terms in the question and used a range of evidence to support their interpretation. Too often historians’ views were used in place of evidence rather than an opinion to support their evidence. It is preferred that students supply their own factual evidence and confirm it with a viewpoint rather than only use the viewpoint. The highest scoring essays used specific factual evidence such as statistics, quotes, dates, names, policies or events to support all of their points and maintained question focus throughout. The best essays clearly and accurately named different groups of people rather than using the generalised labels of ‘the people’, ‘the rich’, ‘the poor’, or classifying all those who were not nobility as peasants. Weak responses tended to narrate, describing anything about the revolution, often without clear relevance. Most students used the three pages of the exam booklet efficiently and some made use of the extra space at the end of the script booklet. Successful answers were confined to this space.