



IGCSE HISTORY

Exam Paper 2 Guide

Paper 2 consists of a number of documents on a given topic, followed by 6 or 7 questions. See attached example

Topics for IGCSE Paper 2: May 2010

- The decline and collapse of Soviet control over Eastern Europe

Paper 2 Assessment Objectives:

- To comprehend, interpret, evaluate and use a range of sources as evidence in their historical context.

Instructions:

1. Read all the questions.
2. Skim through all the sources and background information, making notes in the margins if you wish.
3. Go through and answer the questions, rereading the relevant sources as you go.

Advice:

1. Allow twice as many minutes for each question as there are points awarded for that question. If the question is taking too long to answer, leave some space and go on to the next one. You **MUST** manage your time carefully on this paper or you will not finish.
2. Make sure you focus on the question you are asked. Begin each answer with a sentence that answers the question. Then use the rest of your answer to prove that statement.
3. Do not expect the examiner to remember your previous answers. If information is relevant to two different questions, write it down twice. However this will not happen regularly.
4. Refer directly to the sources in your answers. If possible, paraphrase them in your own words; if not, quote them in such a way as to show that you understand them, but whatever you do, refer to them ie "Source A says that...".
5. For many of the questions you need to consider the reliability of the relevant sources. This is particularly important in the last question if you want the bonus marks (2). Run through the following questions in your mind to determine whether each source is reliable. Then discuss the relevant questions in your answer.
 - What is the audience for which this source was originally intended?
 - Why was this source produced? i.e. entertainment/information/propaganda?
 - What is the context of this source?
 - Does the author have a reason to lie? Who stands to gain if this version of events is accepted?
 - Is the author in a position to know what is going on?
 - Is this source typical?
 - Is this source supported by information in other sources and by evidence from my study of this topic?
6. Although it is very important to use your knowledge as context and to support or refute the reliability of sources, your answers should focus on the sources and not your own knowledge.
7. Whenever you get a "how far" question or a "to what extent question" always discuss both sides of the question in your answer and provide an appropriate conclusion that addresses "how far?".

8. If asked if any source “proves” anything, **never** say that it does. Say “it seems to show this in many ways but we have to consider other factors...” or something along those lines. Similarly, avoid saying that any source is entirely reliable or unreliable. Most sources can at least be considered as reliable evidence of what the author wants us to think, and most sources have some potential bias.
9. If you are asked if a source is useful, your answer should include BOTH discussion of the relevance of the information in the source to the topic AND discussion of the reliability of the source. If no specific topic is given, you need to suggest topics for which the source might be useful and topics for which it would not be useful.
10. In the final summary question, make sure your answer is about how far the sources support the opinion quoted in the question. DO NOT try to use your own knowledge to discuss the opinion.
11. In the final summary question, divide the sources into groups according to where they stand on the opinion stated in the question: a) support, b) disagree with, c) support in some ways but disagree in others, or d) have no evidence. Put an asterisk beside sources that are unreliable. Then your first sentence should be: sources A, B, and F agree with this opinion (but source B is unreliable), sources C, G and H disagree, source D agrees with some aspects but disagrees in others, and Source I contains no relevant information. Then go through the sources in these groups and explain why you grouped each one where you did. Make sure you mention them all. Finally conclude by saying something along the lines of, “Therefore although some of these sources support this opinion, many of these sources do not. Some of these sources directly disagree with this opinion that..?”
12. If you have determined that any of the sources are unreliable, say so in the final summary. Unreliable sources cannot be used to support anything and up to two points are awarded for demonstrating your awareness of this.

Study hint! Go through all the relevant sources in your textbook during your exam review and analyse them. Quite often some will turn up in the exam paper.

Following are some ways that questions can be answered

Sample Answer Key

How far do these two sources agree...?

Level	Description	Marks
Level 1	Describes one of the sources without comparing it to the other.	[1]
Level 2	Describes both of the sources without comparing them.	[2]
Level 3	Lists similarities OR differences between the sources without identifying the aspects of the sources that are being compared (without points of comparison).	[3-4]
Level 4	Lists similarities AND differences between the sources without identifying the aspects of the sources that are being compared (without points of comparison).	[4-5]
Level 5	Deals with the question of “how far” the sources agree using points of agreement and disagreement to support the answer.	[6]

Does Source X prove source Y is more reliable than Z?

Level 1	Simple assertion that X is unreliable because of the kind of source it is, therefore it cannot prove anything. or General assertion that one source is right or wrong with no other evidence.	[1]
Level 2	Decides on the reliability of both Y and Z based on the kinds of sources they are.	[2]
Level 3	Decides on the reliability of X, Y and Z based on the kinds of sources they are. or Attempts to cross-reference the sources but misinterprets one or more of them.	[3-4]
Level 4	Explains X does not contain enough information to prove anything about Y and Z. or Cross references the sources to show X supports Y or Z.	[5-6]
Level 5	Cross references the information in X, Y and Z and uses contextual knowledge to show both ways X suggests support for Y and reasons why it doesn't PROVE Y is reliable.	[7-8]

Why do you think this source was published?

Level 1	Accepts the source at face value and says it was published to show what happened.	[1]
Level 2	Gives a valid general purpose for the publication of the source, but doesn't support it from the source or from contextual knowledge.	[2]
Level 3	Gives a valid general purpose for the publication of the source, and supports answer with information from the source OR contextual knowledge.	[3-4]
Level 4	Gives a valid general purpose for the publication of the source, but not one that shows knowledge of the period. Supports answer with information from the source AND contextual knowledge.	[5-6]
Level 5	Gives a valid reason for the publication of the source and supports it with specific reference to the source and detailed knowledge of the events of the period in which it was published.	[7-8]

Is one of these sources more reliable than the other?

Level 1	Answers based on source type or origin. or Generalized assertion that one is right or wrong.	[1-2]
Level 2	Discussing the degree to which the two sources agree/disagree with each other (supported by cross-referencing between the two).	[3-4]
Level 3	Answers discuss ways the sources are or are not supported by the candidate's contextual knowledge, but do not reach any conclusions about the relative reliability of the sources.	[5-6]
Level 4	Answers use contextual knowledge and possibly other sources to discuss both reliability and unreliability. Answers come to supported conclusions about the relative reliability of the sources.	[7-8]

Is this source reliable?

Level 1	Answers based on source type or origin. or Generalized assertion that it is reliable or unreliable.	[1-2]
Level 2	Answers that assert the source is reliable or unreliable and support the answer from contextual knowledge or other sources.	[3-4]
Level 3	Answers that look at both factors suggesting unreliability and factors suggesting reliability. These answers should be supported with evidence from contextual knowledge or other sources.	[5-6]
Level 4	Answers that look at both factors suggesting unreliability and factors suggesting reliability and reach a conclusion that is supported with evidence from contextual knowledge and with specific information relating to the reliability of the author from the student's study of the period.	[7]

Is one of these sources more useful than the other?

Level 1	Answers based on source type or origin. or Generalized assertion that one is right or wrong.	[1]
Level 2	Answer compares the information in the two sources to indicate which is more useful. (ie Which has more information?)	[2]
Level 3	Answers cross-reference the sources to the candidate's background knowledge and discuss the degree to which each source's account is complete. (ie What information is included? What is left out?)	[4]
Level 4	Answers that use contextual knowledge to determine the relative reliability of each source. (ie Which is more supported by the evidence?)	[5]
Level 5	Answers that point out that the sources could possibly each be useful for different aspects of the topic.	[6]

Explain why these three sources have different points of view.

Level 1	General answers that state that everyone has a different point of view or that make unsupported generalizations about the types of sources or the backgrounds of the authors.	[1-2]
Level 2	Answers that restate the information in the sources without dealing with the differences between them.	[3-4]
Level 3	Answers that identify each point of view and give reasons for each that are supported from the sources.	[5-6]
Level 4	Answers that draw in contextual knowledge to help to explain different points of view.	[7-8]

How far do the sources in this paper support the opinion that...?

Level 1	Discusses the opinion mentioned in the question using the candidate's own knowledge, without making reference to the sources.	[1]
Level 2	Talks about the sources without explaining how far each agrees or disagrees with the opinion stated in the question.	[2]
Level 3	Discusses ways the sources EITHER support OR do not support the opinion stated in the question.	[3-4]
Level 4	Discusses ways the sources support AND do not support the opinion stated in the question	[5-6]
Level 5	Discusses ways the sources support AND do not support the opinion stated in the question and reaches a supported conclusion about the degree to which the sources support the opinion.	[7-8]
+2	Discusses the reliability of some of the sources as evidence.	+2

