

**A LEVEL**

**Examiners' report**

# **HISTORY A**

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**H505**

For first teaching in 2015

**Y222/01 Summer 2024 series**

# Contents

Introduction .....	3
Paper Y222/01 series overview .....	4
Question 1 (a) .....	5
Question 1 (b)* .....	5
Question 2 (a) .....	6
Question 2 (b)* .....	10

## Introduction

Our examiners' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on candidates' performance in the examinations. They provide useful guidance for future candidates.

The reports will include a general commentary on candidates' performance, identify technical aspects examined in the questions and highlight good performance and where performance could be improved. A selection of candidate answers is also provided. The reports will also explain aspects which caused difficulty and why the difficulties arose, whether through a lack of knowledge, poor examination technique, or any other identifiable and explainable reason.

Where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report.

A full copy of the question paper and the mark scheme can be downloaded from OCR.

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## Paper Y222/01 series overview

Y222 is one of 24 units in Paper 2 for the A Level examination for GCE History. This unit tests an extended period of History of about 100 years through a short answer essay question and a traditional essay question. The paper contains two questions, each having two parts, a short answer essay and a traditional essay. Candidates have to answer both parts of one question.

To do well on the short answer essay question, candidates need to consider the significance or importance of both issues, factors, individuals or events mentioned in relation to the question. Having analysed or explained both they must reach a supported judgement as to which is the most important or significant.

To do well on the traditional essay, candidates need to address the issue in the question, using detailed supporting knowledge. To reach the higher levels candidates need to assess the issues they discuss and reach a supported judgement, at least in the conclusion.

On this paper Question 2 was the overwhelmingly more popular choice of question this year.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>gave equal consideration to the two issues in the short answer essay</li> <li>reached a developed and supported judgement as to which issue was more significant or important</li> <li>linked their knowledge of the issues to the focus of the question</li> <li>discussed at least two issues in depth when answering the essay question</li> <li>comparatively evaluated their chosen factors in the essays</li> <li>provided accurate and relevant supporting detail to the question set, not just the topic</li> <li>reach a supported judgement about the issue in the question</li> <li>made a series of interim judgements about the issues discussed in relation to the question.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>considered only one of the issues or discussed one in a superficial way</li> <li>produced a judgement that was not supported and was therefore assertion; or a judgement that did not follow logically from the response</li> <li>were unable to use their knowledge to address the issue in the question</li> <li>showed a poor understanding of the major issues relevant to the essay</li> <li>were unable to support their answer with relevant or accurate material</li> <li>did not focus on the precise wording of the question</li> <li>made unsupported comments about issues which were no more than assertions.</li> </ul>

## Question 1 (a)

1

(a) Which of the following was of greater importance as a reason for the weakness of the Non-Aligned Movement during the period from 1955 to 1977?

- (i) The influence of the USA and the USSR
- (ii) Divisions between Non-Aligned Movement members

Explain your answer with reference to both (i) and (ii).

[10]

Many responses wrote quite generally about the influence of the USA and USSR, discussing the significance of their economic influence as well as their military support. Few specific examples of this were noted, although the best responses noted the involvement of the USSR in Korea and the USA in Vietnam as evidence of this.

Divisions between members of the Non-Aligned Movement were similarly lacking in specific examples. The very best responses noted divisions between capitalist and communist members, although without stating examples. Other divisions were less well known with a few responses mentioning the divisions between India and Pakistan for instance. The general nature of the responses meant that many were confined to Level 4 and below.

## Question 1 (b)\*

(b)\* To what extent was Vietnam responsible for the instability in Cambodia during the period from 1978 to 1993?

[20]

The best responses were able to examine the responsibility of various protagonists including Vietnam, the USA, the USSR and Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge. Most responses noted the invasion of Cambodia by Vietnam in 1978, although details were less-well known. Some candidates developed this by examining Vietnam's use of the Ho Chi Minh Trail through Cambodia during the war with the US and the destruction of the surrounding lands as part of a longer term responsibility. This argument was generally countered by examining Pol Pot's legacy and the atrocities of the Khmer Rouge as well as their deposition in 1978. Other factors including the USA's support for anti-Vietnamese forces was sometimes noted as well as the USSR's support for Vietnam.

## Question 2 (a)

2

(a) Which of the following was of greater importance as a reason for the Paris peace talks (1967–1973)?

(i) US military and diplomatic policies

(ii) US public opinion

Explain your answer with reference to both (i) and (ii).

[10]

This question was reasonably well answered. Most candidates were able to discuss the impact of US public opinion in some detail, with the best responses talking about student opposition including the Kent State shootings, the role of the media and its impact on public opinion and the role of Khrushchev. Public opinion polls and the 1972 election were also often seen in many responses.

In discussing US military and diplomatic policies, the performance of many candidates was mixed. Weaker responses tended to talk about military tactics rather than policies, with many discussing tactics from before 1967. Diplomatic policies were sometimes ignored in these answers too. The best responses dealt with a range of US policies including the offensive of 1971 and the bombing of North Vietnam, Nixon's commitment to Vietnamisation as well as improving relations with China. Few references to the role of Kissinger were seen.

### Assessment for learning



It is important that candidates focus on the key words and dates in the question.

## Exemplar 1

2	a	<p>             US Military and diplomatic policies <del>was</del> <sup>less but had some</sup> <del>as</del> <sup>importance</sup> as a reason for the Paris Peace talks. Firstly, Nixon's use of linkage pressured Hanoi into negotiations. Through diplomatic efforts to strengthen ties with the USSR and China, like with Nixon's visit to China in 1972, he was able to use these improvements in relations and the concessions to force the communist Superpowers to pressure Hanoi into engaging in peace talks with the US, therefore forcing Hanoi into the Paris peace <del>see</del> talks <del>as</del> with the US. Moreover, the success of Vietnamisation also further enabled the talks, as it weakened the North's ability to wage war. Despite some setbacks, by 1972 Vietnamisation had greatly strengthened the ARVN, allowing them to even <del>has</del> <sup>halt</sup> the North's 1972 spring offensive. This shows the importance of Vietnamisation, as it not only proved to the North that they needed to remove US direct support of the ARVN, but it was also the Spring offensive's failure left them in a vulnerable position, further forcing them to negotiate with the US at Paris. However, some US military and diplomatic policies only further escalated the war and damaged talks. Nixon's attempt to demoralise and intimidate Hanoi with his escalation of the air offensive in 1969, <del>was</del> <sup>being</sup> completely failed in its objective, with Hanoi           </p>
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not being intimidated at all, and still launching their February offensive. This shows how not all US military and diplomatic policies succeeded, as not only did this not escalate the war in Vietnam but it also emboldened Hanoi to keep fighting, and not seriously take part in peace talks at Paris. Overall, US military and diplomatic policies, whilst later forcing Hanoi to negotiate with the US over a withdrawal and peace, ~~strengthened~~ the efforts to intimidate Hanoi only made talks less likely. Therefore US military and diplomatic policies were less important.

US Public opinion was of greater importance as a reason for the Paris peace talks. Firstly, the Tet offensive turned most of the US against the war. After the humiliating and horrific Tet offensive in January 1968, not only did it turn many of those in the media such as the beloved Walter Cronkite against the war, but it also turned many in government against the war, such as the Wiseman in March 1968. This was crucial in causing the negotiations, as not only did the media outlook following the Tet lead to Johnson's approval rating to fall from 48-36%, but the loss of the confidence in victory from the Wiseman to Johnson in March directly preceded his announcement



on March 31st is that they'd begin to desecrate and negotiate with Hanoi, thus suggesting that the loss of confidence amongst the US public in victory triggered the peace talks themselves. Moreover, US public protests also pushed for negotiations. In October 1969, 2 million Americans protested Nixon's approach to Vietnam in every major city, forcing him to withdraw his threatening November 1st deadline for Hanoi. This too was crucial in negotiations, as it forced Nixon to abandon the threatening forceful approach to diplomacy and rather focus diplomatic efforts on negotiations and linkage, thus pushing ~~to~~ for the Paris peace talks. Furthermore, Nixon's election victory in 1972 also ~~the~~ greatly ~~past~~ forced Hanoi into negotiating with the US. With his historic 1972 election landslide, this proved to Hanoi that the US public were supporting Nixon's policies, and thus not wanting to have to face another 4 years of war and prolonged talks. Hanoi finally sat down and ~~took~~ ~~part~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ negotiations at Paris, thus further enabling the continuation of the Paris peace talks. Overall, US public opinion not only both forced the US and Hanoi into negotiations, but ~~was~~ the change in attitude after Tet is what triggered desecration and allowed for peace talks to occur. Therefore US public opinion was ~~of~~ more importance as a reason for the Paris Peace talks.

		In Conclusion, US public opinion was of
		More importance as a reason for the Paris
		peace talks. Whilst US diplomatic policies
		like Linchong forced Hanoi to negotiate, it was the
		criticism of the US public <del>the</del> like with the Maiorem
		protests which forced Nixon to <del>take</del> take that
		diplomatic approach, and whilst Vietnamisation also forced
		Hanoi, it was the US' public's opinion change over
		time which triggered the change in policy which led
		to negotiations beginning. Therefore US public opinion
		was of more importance.

This exemplar demonstrates a good Level 5 response with some explanation and evaluation of both factors.

## Question 2 (b)\*

(b)\* Assess the reasons for Chinese intervention in the Korean War.

[20]

This question elicited a range of responses, with many candidates able to construct a detailed argument which looked at a range of reasons for Chinese intervention. Some responses listed these and were confined to Level 4 and below. The best responses produced a comparative evaluation of a range of factors, examining Chinese security, US aggression as well as China's desire to demonstrate itself as a major power. The best answers were also able to point to North Korea's interventions in the Chinese Civil War and the need to repay that debt, while these candidates also noted the influence of the USSR in China's actions. The chosen exemplar demonstrates a good answer that was placed in Level 5. There is a consistent focus on the question with some judgement in the conclusion. More evidence of interim judgements would help this response reach Level 6.

### Assessment for learning



Candidates should ensure they are comparatively evaluating their chosen factors in their essays, arriving at interim judgements as to the importance of that factor in terms of the question. This will help them to reach the highest level of the mark scheme.

## Exemplar 2

2	b	<p>Chinese intervention into the Korean War is largely believed to be the turning point in the prolonging of the war, as US and UN victory prior to this was successful and managed to drive North Korean forces out of the south. The fall of China to Communism in 1949 spurred motivation, as well as the growing threat of the war entering China. The actions of the US were also contributory as they left a vulnerable South Korea that allowed for invasion by China and the North.</p> <p>The victory of Mao Zedong in the 1949 Chinese Civil War motivated communist expansion and gave China the momentum to venture into Korea. The CCP enacted successful policies of land reform and guerrilla warfare, appealing to the peasants in their vanquishing of the Japanese and contributing to the large manpower that gave China its strength; in January 1951 190,000 Chinese troops crossed the border. Thus, the greater motivation behind China due to the Communist victory gave them the confidence to intervene into the Korean War, threatening the US as they faced the communist allies of both China and the USSR, a formidable force. Mao Zedong considered himself to be the 'world leader of communist struggles in Asia', a vanguard for spreading revolution, and this directly led to Truman's Defensive Perimeter Strategy and the NSC-68 document that aimed to escalate involvement and triple the military defense budget to contain communism. Zedong and Stalin saw this 'live in the sand' as an encirclement of their communist sphere of influence, thus meaning that once the USSR had atomic power and Zedong had communist influence, China was encouraged to intervene in order to protect communism against containment. Hence, Zedong and Communist China intervened in Korea to maintain communist power, directly catalysed by US actions.</p> <p>The victories of US and UN troops over North Korea initially meant that the war was threatening to enter China, Zedong's greatest fear as the US was evidently</p>
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hardening its resolve against communism and was willing to use military might, as shown by the shaping of US policy that extended its foreign aid from that of financial, such as Marshall Aid, to one of proactive defence in NSC-68. The momentum that spurred the US to cross the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel in September 1950 reached the Yalu River at the Chinese border and was not seen to be halting. Thus, China concluded they had to combat this growing power and personally intervene as the 'buffer state' of North Korea was no longer providing China protection. The success of the Incheon landings in September 1950 were also threatening, as UN troops had landed 200km behind North Korean lines and taken Seoul from the communists, and despite fluctuations in the power balance between North and South, China simply saw intervention as the logical next step as the artillery, weapons and troops of the US were proving superior to that of the North, with the US airforce conducting over 1 million strategic and tactical operations. Thus, China's intervention retook Seoul and regained communist influence, damaging ROK and US motivation, one of China's aims alongside maintaining the strength of communism that was being damaged in North Korea.

The actions of the US provided China with more confidence that their intervention would be successful, as the US demonstrated short-term thinking by withdrawing from South Korea in 1949. ~~and North~~ The construction of a presidential government under the pro-US, right-wing Syngman Rhee was not only a demonstration of conflicting ideology as the North was controlled by the pro-Stalinist Kim Il Sung, a strong communist, but also a mistake on the US' part as they were overconfident the North would not invade, which they did, and also confident that China would never intervene, one of MacArthur's static beliefs. The US left a vulnerable South Korea to militarise and create a nation, but to the communists like USSR, North Korea and most importantly China, this was merely a welcoming as the South appeared easy to invade. Hence,

The US made mistakes at the start of the Korean War ~~that~~ that led to the foundations of ~~communist~~ vindictive, communist motivation. As the war progressed, the role of General MacArthur also contributed to China's intervention. He convinced Truman the war would not be entered by China, and then mismanaged their onslaught when  $\frac{1}{2}$  a million Chinese troops crossed the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel. As well as broadcasting his military plans on the radio, giving China the information they needed, MacArthur was also a strong advocate for nuclear warfare and asked for dispensation to use nuclear bombs to prevent the Chinese overwhelming the US 8<sup>th</sup> army. However, it was later revealed that he intended on using 30 bombs to destroy Chinese targets, ~~all~~ culminating in a major threat to China due to MacArthur's desire to escalate war. Thus, MacArthur's incompetence gave China the motivation to fight against US influence, as well as broader US failures in leaving a vulnerable Southern Vietnam. If MacArthur had been successful, it would have led to USSR atomic intervention, which would have been catastrophic for the whole world, and China saw this nuclear threat as a direct reason to intervene and capitalise on US shortcomings.

Therefore, the Chinese intervention in the Korean War can be attributed to a myriad of reasons, namely that of growing communism beliefs in South-East Asia after World War II and after the fall of China in 1949, providing communist ~~momentum~~ momentum to combat the US' policy of containment, implemented using the Defensive Perimeter Strategy and the subsequent NSC-68. Further US actions simultaneously threatened China, like with their advancements into North Korea, as well as failing to build a strong South Vietnam, which motivated Chinese intervention. Thus, China intervened to maintain communism against the threat posed by the US, yet it may be said that it was merely looking to expand its own sphere of influence.

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