

## Examiner's General Advice on Unit 2

Students in this AS Unit are expected to demonstrate the following skills:

- the ability to recall, select and use appropriate historical knowledge and to communicate it effectively (A01a)
- historical understanding involving explanation, analysis and judgement, and key concepts such as causation, consequence, change and continuity; and an understanding of the relationships between key features of the period studied (A01b)
- the ability to analyse and evaluate a range of source material (A02a)
- the ability to analyse and evaluate how the past has been interpreted and represented in different ways (A02b).

These skills are also **assessment objectives (AOs)**. All questions will aim to test more than one of these objectives, and in an examination answer will be marked accordingly. On any given examination paper, there will be a planned balance of the various skills across the questions to ensure that all are covered. However, individual questions or part questions will focus on certain skills, not necessarily all of them at once. One of the ways of writing an effective answer is therefore to learn to recognise the particular skill that is the focal point of a particular question. However, it is also important to remember that accurate knowledge and understanding are key elements in any AS answer. In a source-based question, generalised statements showing, for example, a student's awareness that one piece of evidence is less objective and more biased than another will not earn much credit. There must also be a clear indication of some background knowledge and understanding of the topic in addition to the ability to make comparisons and contrasts between sources.

In **Unit 2** you must answer **one** compulsory two-part source-based question plus **one of two** two-part questions, not source-based, on the chosen option from European, world or British history.

It is important to divide your time well. The first part of each question carries 12 marks; the second part carries 24 marks. You should therefore aim to spend less time on the part (a) questions, or you will risk running out of time on the second and longer part (b) questions.

While Question 1 requires a precise focus on sources and your own knowledge, Questions 2 and 3 do not involve sources. Questions 2 and 3 require demonstration of your own knowledge. There are several skills implicit in this. One element is simple **recall**. You will need to **explain**, for example by giving the reasons for a particular event. This requires more than simply listing a series of reasons from memory – a high-level answer will require you to put these reasons in context and relate them to each other. The 24-mark question will require you to examine a particular historical issue, often dressed in the form of a quotation. You must not only call up your knowledge of the topic, you must also **use** that knowledge in such a way that you are able to **analyse** the issues and produce a **reasoned argument** using the knowledge you have.

**AQA – AS GCE  
Historical Issues:  
Periods of Change  
Unit 2 HIS20**

**The Impact of Chairman Mao:  
China, 1946–1976**

**SOURCES  
ACCOMPANYING  
EXEMPLAR  
QUESTION 1**

**SOURCE A** *Adapted from a report by an American official in China, May 1947.*

There is good evidence that apathy, resentment and defeatism are spreading fast in nationalist ranks, causing surrenders and desertions. Main factors contributing to this are: Communists' ever mounting numerical superiority; Nationalist soldiers' discouragement over prospects of getting reinforcements; better solidarity and fighting spirit of Communists; losses and exhaustion of Nationalists; their growing indignation over disparity between officers' enrichment and soldiers' low pay, and their lack of interest in fighting far from home.

**SOURCE B** *Adapted from Mao, A Life by Philip Short, 2004.*

The speed with which Nationalist resistance crumbled astonished even Mao. One factor was the deterioration in the quality of the GMD armies that had followed America's entry into World War 2. In the words of one of Chiang Kai Shek's commanders: 'Our troops became soft and concerned only with pleasure. They lacked combat spirit and there was no willingness to sacrifice.' Incompetent leadership made matters worse. The US commander in China called Chiang's officer corps 'incapable, inept, untrained, petty and altogether inefficient'. But Chiang's constant interventions simply stripped his commanders of what little initiative they had.

**SOURCE C** *Adapted from The Mandate of Heaven by J.F. Melby, 1969.*

The key factor in the Communist victory was morale. But one must ask why the Communists had high morale and the Guomindang did not. I believe the answer is simple. The Communists won in China because they correctly analysed and understood what it was that the mass of the people wanted, and they then proceeded to satisfy those wishes. Mao believed that in the end the people are the only real power. The people of China are peasants. The peasants will give their allegiance to the leader most likely to satisfy their wishes. Mao understood these wishes to be land reform, reasonably honest and efficient government, moderate taxation, minimum interference in the private lives of people and freedom from being attacked by marauding armies. Until 1949 the

Communists gave them just this.

**AQA – AS GCE  
Historical Issues:  
Periods of Change  
Unit 2 HIS20**

**The Impact of Chairman Mao:  
China, 1946–1976**

**QUESTION 01  
(01)**

### **Examiner’s Specific Advice**

Note that the question asks ‘how far’ the views expressed in one source differ from those put forward in the other. It is important, therefore, to identify **both** differences **and** similarities between the sources in order to arrive at an overall conclusion as to how different the sources are. The examiner will be looking for clear, precise and well-selected quotes from the sources which illustrate differences and similarities. Do not give long summaries of both sources as this will earn you very few marks. The question asks about differences in the **views** of the two sources so be careful to distinguish between the opinions of the authors (views) and mere factual information. The question also asks you to use **both** the sources **and** your own knowledge. In order to get to the higher levels you must be able to place these sources in their historical context by providing some background information. This does not have to be extensive but it does need to be accurate and relevant to the question.

### **Exemplar Question**

Read the sources and then answer the questions that follow.

Use **Sources A** and **B** and your **own knowledge**.

1 (01) Explain how far the views in **Source B** differ from those in **Source A** in relation to the weakness of Nationalist forces in the Chinese Civil War in the years 1946 to 1949.

**[12 marks]**

### **Plan**

- Identify differences between sources.
- Identify similarities between sources.
- Include contextual information to explain differences/similarities.
- Conclusion, including an overall judgement about the degree of difference/similarity.

## Examiner's Exemplar Answer 1

Sources A and B have many differences and similarities in regards to the weaknesses of the Nationalist forces in China (1). Source A mostly deals with the reasons why there was 'apathy, resentment and defeatism' among the Nationalist soldiers. This source says that they were suffering heavy losses, they could not get reinforcements and they were fighting far from home. Source B tends to focus more on the incompetent leadership of the Nationalists. The officer corps of the Nationalist army was described by the American commander in China as 'incapable, inept, untrained, petty and altogether inefficient'. Philip Short, the author, says that Chiang Kai Shek did not allow his commanders to show any initiative (2).

Source A focuses on the poor morale of the Nationalist soldiers. Source B, however, talks more about the weak leadership of the Nationalists, although there is some reference to the poor fighting spirit of the Nationalist soldiers (3).

(1) This is a basic but nevertheless effective introduction since it gives some direction to the rest of the answer.

(2) An important difference between the two sources is identified here. There is some development of the point but this is not extensive.

(3) The conclusion does little more than summarise what has already been said in the main body of the answer.

## Examiner's Assessment

This is a direct answer to the question in which a clear difference between the sources is identified with some, albeit limited, development of the point. There are, however, significant weaknesses. Firstly, although the introduction talks of there being similarities and differences, only the differences are identified. Secondly, there is no contextual information. For these reasons this answer would merit a Mid Level 2 mark.

## Examiner's Exemplar Answer 2

Sources A and B show both similarities and differences in their views about the weaknesses of the Nationalists in the Chinese Civil War. Historians disagree over whether the Communist victory in 1949 was due mainly to the strength of their forces or to the weaknesses of their Nationalist opponents (4).

(4) This is a simple but effective introduction which gives shape and direction to the rest of the answer.

Sources A and B are different in a number of ways. Source A highlights the poor morale of the Nationalist soldiers, referring to their 'apathy, resentment and defeatism'. The source gives a number of reasons why the Nationalist soldiers were so demoralised, including heavy losses, the lack of reinforcements, their indignation over the 'disparity' between the pay of officers and the ordinary soldiers, and the fact that they were fighting far from home. Source B was written in 1947 at an early stage in the war, when the Communists were using guerrilla tactics against the Nationalists (5). It is clear that the morale of the Nationalist soldiers had already begun to suffer as a result of their vulnerability to guerrilla attacks.

(5) The answer refers to the provenance of the source in a relevant way and uses contextual knowledge to good effect.

Source B also refers to the morale of the Nationalist soldiers (6). It quotes a Nationalist commander as saying that 'our troops became soft' and 'they lacked combat spirit', but it goes on to say that poor leadership was a major factor in explaining the weakness of the Nationalists. It describes the officers as 'incapable, inept, untrained, petty and altogether inefficient'. It also mentions that the Nationalist leader, Chiang Kai Shek, was constantly intervening and not allowing his commanders to show any initiative. Source A, therefore, focuses more on the weaknesses of the ordinary soldiers whereas Source B places the blame for Nationalist weakness more on the shoulders of the officers and on their political leadership (7).

(6) Although this section of the answer is about differences, there is a reference here to a similarity between the two sources, which helps to keep the answer balanced.

(7) A clear difference between the two sources is identified and the point is developed.

There is also a number of similarities between the two sources. They both agree that the collapse of the morale of the Nationalist soldiers happened very quickly. Source B's reference to the 'lack of combat spirit' in the Nationalist army is similar to the view expressed in Source A that 'apathy, resentment and defeatism' were spreading fast in Nationalist ranks. Both sources also reflect American views of the Nationalist army. Source A was written at the time by an American official in China who had witnessed the events first-hand. Similarly, Source B quotes the view of the American commander in China at the time. Since the Americans were the main backers of Chiang Kai Shek's Nationalist government during the Civil War, it is significant that both these Americans put forward very critical views of the Nationalist army and its leadership (8).

(8) This is an effective paragraph in which the similarities are clearly identified and developed and there is very good use of contextual information.

In conclusion, there are both similarities and differences in the views of both sources about the weaknesses of the Nationalist forces. However, it is clear that the sources differ more than they agree because although they both talk about the poor morale of the Nationalist soldiers, only Source B places the responsibility for this onto their military and political leadership (9).

(9) The conclusion not only summarises the key point about there being both differences and similarities but also addresses the question of 'how far' the sources agree.

## Examiner's Assessment

This is a very good answer which is focused on the question throughout and offers a balanced conclusion. There are several well-selected references to the sources to illustrate the points of difference and similarity and effective use is made of contextual information to support the overall argument. Above all, the answer does address the question of 'how far' the two sources agree – it does not merely list differences and similarities. This answer, therefore, merits a Level 5 mark.

<b>Mark Scheme</b>	
<b>L1:</b>	
The answer simply writes out the sources and offers little or no comparison.	[1–2 marks]
<b>L2:</b>	
The answer identifies similarities or differences between the sources but offers little or no contextual information.	[3–6 marks]
<b>L3:</b>	
The answer compares the sources by reference to similarities and/or differences and provides some contextual information to explain the comparison.	[7–9 marks]
<b>L4:</b>	
The answer compares and contrasts the sources by identifying both similarities and differences, with some precise contextual information, and offers a judgement on the question of 'how far' the two sources agree/disagree.	[10–12 marks]

### **Examiner’s Specific Advice**

As with the previous question, take note of the instruction to use **both** the sources **and** your own knowledge. If you omit either one of these elements in your answer you will not be able to get a high mark. Your references to the sources should be clearly indicated in your text, e.g. ‘Source A states that ...’, and you should refer to all three sources in your answer. The question is about the reasons why the Communists won the Civil War, some of which are clearly referred to in the sources. Source C gives the clear view that the key factor in the Communist victory was morale. Sources A and B also mention the morale of the soldiers on both sides but both offer a number of other possible reasons. From your own knowledge you should be able to add to these reasons and thereby produce an answer that has both range and balance, two key elements in the requirements for the higher levels. To reach the highest level you must offer a judgement and in your conclusion state whether, on the basis of the evidence you have provided in your answer, the superior morale of the Communist troops was the most important factor in their victory.

### **Exemplar Question**

Read the sources and then answer the questions that follow.

Use **Sources A, B and C** and your **own knowledge**.

1 (02) How far was the Communist victory in the Civil War in 1949 due to the superior morale of the Communist soldiers?

**[24 marks]**

### **Plan**

- Introduction – range of factors involved in Communist victory.
- What the sources say about the importance of morale, supported by contextual knowledge.
- What the sources say about other factors contributing to victory, supported by contextual knowledge.
- Conclusion – how important was morale as a factor?

## Examiner's Exemplar Answer 1

All of the sources give information about the reasons why the Communists won the Civil War and all mention morale as a factor. The author of Source C, J.F. Melby, argued that the key factor in the Communist victory was morale. He goes on to say that the Communists' success was due to Mao understanding what the people wanted and being prepared to give them those things. Since the majority of the Chinese people were peasants, Mao understood that to win their support he would have to give them land reform, honest and efficient government, moderate taxation, minimum interference in their private lives and freedom from being attacked by 'marauding armies' (1).

(1) There is a clear reference to Source C here and the answer quotes the relevant passages of the source.

Source A talks about the poor morale of the Nationalist soldiers, referring to their 'apathy, resentment and defeatism'. It goes on to say that the Communist soldiers showed 'better solidarity and fighting spirit'. Source B also mentions the poor morale of the Nationalist soldiers. It says that they lacked 'combat spirit' and showed 'no willingness to sacrifice' (2).

(2) There is a reference to Source A with relevant quotes, but very little in the way of comment.

The sources also mention other reasons why the Communists won the Civil War. Source A gives a list of reasons, including the losses and exhaustion of the Nationalists, their lack of reinforcements, the resentment felt by Nationalist soldiers towards their officers over the differences in their pay and the fact that the Nationalist soldiers were fighting far from home. Source B talks about the inefficiency and incapability of the Nationalist officers and then goes on to say that the poor leadership of Chiang Kai Shek made matters worse. Source C describes how Mao understood that 'in the end the people are the only real power' and that winning the support of the people was vital to the Communists' success (3).

(3) The answer goes on to identify other factors, apart from morale, in the Communist victory, and uses Source B. All three sources have, therefore, been used, but once again there is very limited comment by the student.

In conclusion, all three sources mention morale as an important factor in the Communist victory but all three also give other factors. It is clear, therefore, that the superior morale of the Communist forces was the key factor in their victory (4).

(4) The conclusion is little more than a summary of what has been said in the main body of the answer. It ends by agreeing with the proposition that morale was the key factor in the Communist victory.



## Examiner's Assessment

This is a direct and focused answer to the question which uses the sources to identify a range of factors which led to the Communist victory. However, there is no contextual knowledge beyond the sources. Since the rubric in the question instructs the candidate to 'Use the Sources and your own knowledge', this answer does not fulfil the terms of the rubric and therefore cannot receive a mark higher than the top of Level 2.

## Examiner's Exemplar Answer 2

In any war the morale of an army is a vital factor influencing its success or failure and it is clear that in the Chinese Civil War, between 1946 and 1949, the Communist troops showed better morale than their Nationalist opponents. However, it is also fair to say that there were many other factors which led the Communist forces to victory (5).

(5) The introduction is focused on the question and provides a clear direction for the rest of the answer.

There were a number of reasons why the Communist soldiers showed 'better fighting spirit' (Source A) than the Nationalists (6). Most of the Communist soldiers came from peasant backgrounds and Mao understood that soldiers were more likely to sacrifice their lives if they believed in the cause they were fighting for. Mao believed that, 'in the end, the people are the only real power' (Source C) and he recognised that in China the majority of the people were peasants. Therefore, if he could win the peasants over to the Communist side, he could recruit an army to outnumber the Nationalists and, through political indoctrination, he could instil in his peasant soldiers a willingness to fight for the Communist cause. For this reason he introduced policies which would win the support of the peasants, such as land reform. He also issued strict instructions to his soldiers that they were to treat the peasants with respect since they had for long been the victims of attack by 'marauding armies' (Source C) (7).

(6) The reference to the source here is well integrated into the argument.

(7) The reference to the source is developed and extended by the use of the student's own knowledge. The source reference and the contextual knowledge are well linked together.

Sources A and B provide some insight into the reasons why the Nationalist soldiers had poorer morale than their Communist opponents. Source A suggests that the Nationalists were being worn down by their heavy losses in the war and the lack of reinforcements (8). It also implies that the

(8) This is not a direct quote from the source but is an inference drawn from it. This is an effective way to use the sources.

Nationalist soldiers did not have a strong commitment to the cause they were fighting for since they were fighting 'far from home'. Source B, on the other hand, suggests that the problem for the Nationalist armies started even before the Civil War began. It says that after the entry of the United States into World War 2 in 1941, when the USA became an ally of the Nationalist Chinese Government in the war against Japan, Nationalist soldiers became soft and only interested in pleasure. This implies that the Nationalists relied too heavily on American support and the morale of their own armies suffered as a result.

Although the morale of the fighting forces in the Civil War was a vital factor in deciding the result, there were a number of other factors which helped the Communists to achieve victory. One of the most important was the Communists' use of guerrilla warfare at the start of the war (9). When the war began the Communists were vastly outnumbered by the Nationalists and had fewer weapons and no aircraft. The Communists had also been forced to abandon many of their bases in central and southern China and concentrate their forces in the province of Manchuria. The Communists, however, had had years of experience of fighting the Japanese using guerrilla warfare and they were able to use this experience to good effect in the early stages of the Civil War. The terrain of Manchuria, with mountains and forests, was ideally suited to guerrilla warfare and the Communists were able to isolate the Nationalist forces in the cities and establish control over the countryside and the main supply routes. Gradually the Nationalist forces were depleted by their heavy losses in this type of warfare and the Communists established superiority in men and equipment. By the end of 1947 the Communists were able to switch to more conventional warfare and defeat the Nationalists in a number of key battles. Once they had secured control over Manchuria, the Communists were able to break out into the rest of China and take control over the whole country.

The leadership of Mao Zedong was a key factor in the success of the Communists since it was he who decided to adopt guerrilla tactics in the early stages of the war and it was he who understood the vital importance of winning the support of the peasants (10). By contrast the leadership of the Nationalist side was very weak. Chiang Kai Shek did not trust his military commanders and his 'constant

(9) The argument is being developed and extended by the reference to other factors which led to the Communist victory. This is based solely on contextual knowledge.

(10) The candidate is showing some judgement here by referring to Mao's leadership as a 'key factor'.

interventions' (Source B) undermined them. His American allies had no confidence in Chiang's leadership, regarding him as corrupt, incompetent and arrogant. Chiang made a fatal mistake in sending his best forces into Manchuria at the beginning of the war and paid the price when they were defeated by Mao's guerrilla warfare strategy. Chiang also lost support among the ordinary people of China because he failed to control the behaviour of his troops and he showed incompetence in dealing with the rapid rise in food prices.

Overall there were many factors which led to the Communist victory in the Chinese Civil War. The Communist armies were better led and adopted more effective tactics than the Nationalists. The morale of the Communist troops was undoubtedly better than that of the Nationalist soldiers. Morale, however, was a reflection of the overall situation of both armies in the war. The Communist soldiers were more willing to fight and to sacrifice their lives because they believed in the cause they were fighting for and they had confidence in their ability to win (11).

(11) The conclusion does more than merely summarise the main arguments in the answer. It effectively links the different factors together and shows judgement in arriving at an overall conclusion to the question.

## Examiner's Assessment

This is a very effective answer. It fulfils all of the criteria in the mark scheme by referring to sources and own knowledge, by identifying a range of factors which helped the Communists secure victory and by giving a balanced assessment of the relative importance of those factors. The argument is sustained throughout the answer and the candidate has shown judgement in the conclusion. Overall this answer is worthy of a mark at Level 5.

Mark Scheme	
<b>L1:</b>	
The answer is based on <b>either</b> own knowledge <b>or</b> sources. It is likely to be generalised, descriptive and/or assertive, and with little focus on the question.	[1–6 marks]
<b>L2:</b>	
The answer may be based on relevant selection of material <b>either</b> from the sources <b>or</b> from own knowledge, or they may be combined. The answer will be mainly descriptive about Soviet agriculture up to 1941, with limited links to the question about the impact of collectivisation; or the answer may be explicit about the question but containing limited support.	[7–11 marks]
<b>L3:</b>	

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The answer shows developed understanding of the issue of how collectivisation impacted upon Soviet agriculture, using material **both** from the sources **and** from own knowledge. The answer is likely to lack depth or balance in assessing the importance of collectivisation or other factors in the process, but will be a relevant response, and there will be some understanding of interpretations.

[12–16 marks]

**L4:**

The answer shows explicit understanding of the demands of the question and provides a balanced explanation of the impact of collectivisation on agriculture, backed up by appropriate evidence from the sources and own knowledge. There will be a good understanding of interpretations, for example of how important collectivisation was in relation to other factors such as lack of machinery or modern methods of farming. The answer may focus just on collectivisation, or it may balance collectivisation against other relevant factors.

[17–21 marks]

**L5:**

The answer is well focused and closely argued – supported by precise use of evidence from the sources and own knowledge. There will be a well-developed understanding of interpretations leading to a good understanding, with judgement, of the impact of collectivisation on Soviet agriculture. As with L4, the answer may focus just on collectivisation, or may balance collectivisation against other relevant factors.

[22–24 marks]

## **Examiner's Specific Advice**

This question is testing your knowledge and your ability to communicate it effectively. It is important that you demonstrate both. The key words are 'Explain why', 'launched' and 'Great Leap Forward'. It is not enough just to describe events – that will earn very few marks. You need to explain the **reasons** why Mao decided to launch the Great Leap Forward, and if possible make links between the reasons, showing perspective and understanding. If you do that well you should get to a high level. With very limited time available, you need not write a full essay – two or three paragraphs should be sufficient. An introduction is not required but a short conclusion is essential.

## **Exemplar Question**

2 (03) Explain why Mao decided to launch the Great Leap Forward in 1958.

**[12 marks]**

## **Plan**

- What was the Great Leap Forward and what were its aims?
- Economic factors leading to launch of GLF.
- Mao's ideological beliefs and how these were reflected in the GLF.
- Political factors leading to launch of GLF.
- Conclusion – What was the main factor?

## **Examiner's Exemplar Answer 1**

The Great Leap Forward was the Second Five Year Plan. It was launched by Mao in 1958 to massively increase production of iron and steel and to make China a great power. The aim was to overtake Britain within seven years and the USA soon after that. It was a very ambitious experiment which was doomed to failure from the start (1).

(1) This is a rather descriptive opening which does not directly focus on the reasons for the launch of the Great Leap Forward.

Mao launched the Great Leap Forward because he believed that China could become the world's

greatest industrial power by mobilising the energy of its people (2). Although the First Five Year Plan had been a success, Mao believed that even greater progress could be achieved if the planning was in the hands of local people rather than the state bureaucracy who, he thought, were holding China back (3).

Another reason why Mao launched the Great Leap Forward was because of his belief in continuing revolution. Mao was worried that the Chinese revolution had lost its energy and the Great Leap Forward was his way of breathing new life into the Communist cause (4).

(2) A clear reason is identified here but is not developed.

(3) The paragraph moves quickly on to a separate reason, but again with very limited development.

(4) A third reason is identified. This has more development than the other two, but there is no attempt to link the various factors together.

## Examiner's Assessment

This is a direct answer to the question, albeit after a rather descriptive opening paragraph. Three factors are identified but there is only limited development of the first two factors and there is no linkage between the factors. The answer lacks an overall conclusion. It merits a mark in Level 3.

## Examiner's Exemplar Answer 2

There were many reasons why Mao launched the Great Leap Forward in 1958. These included economic, ideological and political motives and Mao's desire to see China become a great power, capable of standing on its own feet (5).

The Great Leap Forward was China's second Five Year Plan. The First Five Year Plan, which had been completed in 1957, had been very successful in increasing production of important materials such as iron and steel but Mao believed that even more could be achieved, and at a faster rate, if the Chinese Communist Party took a different approach to economic planning. Under the slogan 'More, faster, better, cheaper', Mao set a target of overtaking Britain within seven years and the USA within fifteen. This was to be achieved by allowing the peasants, under the leadership of local Communist Party cadres, to set the pace of economic growth rather than be directed by the central state bureaucracy (6).

This was closely linked to a key ideological belief of Mao – his view that through the mass mobilisation of the Chinese people there were no limits to what

(5) This is a crisp and well-focused introduction. Introductions are not essential in answers to 'explain why' questions but this one does help to show the direction in which the answer is going to develop.

(6) A clear reason is identified and developed here.

(7) The second reason is clearly linked to the first – showing a clear grasp of the

could be achieved (7). He believed that the Great Leap Forward was an opportunity for China to finally overcome China's economic backwardness and to abolish poverty. Mao believed that the peasants were the most revolutionary class in China and that, by grouping them together in large Communes, they could be inspired to produce more food and steel than had ever been thought possible. The Communes were not only large collective farms but also were given the task of producing steel in the so-called 'backyard furnaces'. This approach to economic growth, known as 'Walking on Two Legs', was Mao's way of showing that the Chinese approach to building a communist society was very different to that followed in the USSR under Stalin's leadership.

connections between Mao's economic policy and his ideological beliefs.

For Mao, politics always took priority over economics (8). In the Great Leap Forward Mao was trying to assert his political authority over other leading members of the Chinese Communist Party who wanted a more cautious approach to economic planning. It was another example of Mao waging a political struggle within his own party to assert his own authority and to revive the Chinese revolution. When Mao met with resistance to his plans from the economic planners he turned to more radical local cadres to win support for his plans.

(8) Again, the third reason is clearly linked to the preceding paragraph.

For Mao the ultimate aims of the Great Leap Forward were to build China into a great power and to establish a communist society in China. There were economic, ideological and political motives for launching the Great Leap Forward but for Mao, as always, politics came first (9).

(9) This is a short but effective conclusion in which the candidate summarises the three main reasons, but also makes a judgement on their relative importance.

## Examiner's Assessment

This is a very good answer in which the candidate has identified three main reasons for the launch of the Great Leap Forward. Each of these reasons is well developed and the candidate links them together by organising them into economic, ideological and political factors. There is judgement in the conclusion. This answer merits a mark at Level 4.

<b>Mark Scheme</b>
<b>L1:</b>

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The answer essentially paraphrases or describes the sources with no development. [1–2 marks]
<b>L2:</b> The answer identifies some differences and/or similarities between the sources. There may be some limited own knowledge to explain why Stalin’s attitudes towards collectivisation were what they were. [3–6 marks]
<b>L3:</b> The answer identifies both differences and similarities between the sources, and uses own knowledge about Stalin’s attitudes and the events of collectivisation to explain and evaluate the sources. For example, there is evidence in Source B that Stalin has modified his views on collectivisation, but there are also areas of agreement between the sources. [7–9 marks]
<b>L4:</b> The comparison between sources is well developed. Own knowledge is used effectively to demonstrate good contextual understanding. In this instance there will be a well-sustained examination of how Stalin’s attitudes towards collectivisation remained consistent over time, although there was a temporary modification of attitude during the process for essentially tactical reasons only. [10–12 marks]



### **Examiner’s Specific Advice**

This question is testing several skills and also your knowledge of the topic. Because the question is on an important topic, you are expected to know the main details. You are also being required to provide an historical explanation and make a substantiated judgement.

As always with an essay type question, relevance is the key – your answer can be reasonably concise as long as you address the precise question. Relevance is more important than elegance of style.

The key thing is not to narrate and describe, but to keep the precise question in mind. Keep the focus on the reasons why the Great Leap Forward failed and try to identify a range of different reasons. Consider the reaction of the peasants to the Great Leap Forward and to what extent, if any, peasant resistance caused the failure of this experiment. Consider, also, the many other reasons why the Great Leap Forward failed.

Most importantly, whatever the approach, do make a judgement about the relative importance of the various causes of the failure, either with a concluding paragraph or throughout the essay.

You might find it advisable for an essay type answer of this sort to have a plan, since you will almost certainly be writing several paragraphs.

### **Exemplar Question**

2 (04) ‘The Great Leap Forward failed because Mao over-estimated the revolutionary enthusiasm of the Chinese peasants.’

Explain why you agree or disagree with this view.

**[24 marks]**

### **Plan**

- Introduction – failure of GLF due to a range of different factors.
- How did peasants respond to GLF and to what extent did they contribute to its failure?
- Other factors which contributed to failure:
  - poor science (Four Noes, Lysenko)
  - waste of resources (human, materials, etc.)
  - dispute with USSR, withdrawal of Soviet experts

- bad weather
- the failure of the political system.
- Conclusion – how important was peasant resistance in failure of GLF?

## Examiner's Exemplar Answer 1

I agree that Mao over-estimated the revolutionary enthusiasm of the peasants and this helped cause the failure of the Great Leap Forward. Mao believed that the peasants were a revolutionary class in China and that they were very keen to participate in the new Communes which were very large collective farms. He thought the Communes could produce all of the food that China needed and most of the steel, but in fact many peasants did not want to be forced to give up their land and join the Communes. Peasant resistance was one of the reasons why the Great Leap Forward failed (1).

(1) There is a clear statement of agreement with the question at the start of the answer but this point is not well developed.

Another reason why the Great Leap Forward failed was because Mao introduced the Four Noes campaign to eliminate sparrows and other pests. Killing the sparrows was a mistake because it removed the natural predators which fed on pests such as caterpillars which ate the crops. This led to less food being produced (2).

(2) Another reason is added to the answer but the answer is becoming a simple list of factors.

Another reason why the Great Leap Forward failed was because Mao had a disagreement with the USSR and expelled all of their scientific advisers from China. This left China short of technical experts and led to problems in agriculture and industry.

The final reason why the Great Leap Forward failed was that Mao was too ambitious and set impossible targets. He ignored the fact that China was still an economically underdeveloped country and believed that anything could be achieved if only the people worked hard enough and worked together. A lot of the steel produced in the backyard furnaces was of poor quality and, in fact, China went backwards not forwards as a result of the Great Leap Forward (3).

(3) The answer gives two more reasons why the Great Leap Forward failed. There is some development but no linkage of the factors.

In conclusion, Mao did over-estimate the revolutionary enthusiasm of the peasants but there were many other reasons why the Great Leap Forward failed (4).

(4) The conclusion does no more than summarise what has been said in the body of the answer.

## Examiner's Assessment

This is a direct and relevant answer which identifies four clear reasons why the Great Leap Forward failed. There is some development of each of the factors but there is no attempt to link them together. The answer, therefore, is a list of factors rather than a developed and balanced explanation of the failure. This answer merits a mark in the middle of Level 3.

## Examiner's Exemplar Answer 2

The Great Leap Forward was a catastrophic failure which led to famine and the deaths of many millions of people. When he launched the Great Leap Forward Mao certainly did over-estimate the revolutionary enthusiasm of the Chinese peasants. There were, however, many other reasons why the experiment ended in failure (5).

(5) This is a clear but relatively simple introduction which provides some direction for the rest of the answer.

Mao believed that 'Poor people want change, want to do things, want revolution'. He therefore expected the peasants to be enthusiastic supporters of the setting up of the People's Communes, which were a vital part of the Great Leap Forward. Since 1949 China's peasants had supported the land reform which confiscated land from the landlords, and they had been willing to accept the grouping of their land into the collective farms known as Agricultural Producers' Co-operatives. Many, perhaps most, of the peasants, however, were reluctant to join the much larger collective farms known as People's Communes. This was because they had to give up their private plots and pool all of their resources. They also had to adopt a communal style of living in which all daily life was controlled by the Commune. Peasants showed their resistance by slaughtering their animals rather than hand them over to the Communes and in some areas peasants were accused of hoarding their own private stores of grain. In areas where there was a lot of resistance Mao temporarily slowed down the creation of Communes but, by 1960 he was once again forcing the pace of change. Ultimately the peasants had to go along with the Great Leap Forward and peasant resistance was not the main reason why it failed (6).

(6) The issue of peasant attitudes towards the Great Leap Forward is dealt with in this paragraph in a detailed way. There is balance in the argument and judgement is shown in the final sentence.

A more important reason why the Great Leap Forward failed was because it was based on false

(7) The judgement is also made explicit here in the

theories (7). Mao's eight point agricultural constitution, which directed the peasants towards a more 'scientific' approach to agriculture, was based on the theories of the Soviet scientist Lysenko. Under this constitution, peasants were told to plant crops closer together and to plough the soil much deeper, both of which actually caused crops to fail. Mao also launched the Four Noes campaign which directed peasants to eradicate pests such as sparrows, flies, mosquitoes and rats. Sparrows were targeted because Mao believed that they consumed a lot of grain. In fact, sparrows fed on the pests which consumed crops so by eradicating the sparrows the pests became more prevalent and did more damage to crops.

phrase 'a more important reason'. The point is then developed in some detail.

The Great Leap Forward also involved a serious waste of resources (8). The peasants in the communes were expected to work in the fields, produce steel in backyard furnaces and be fully trained members of the local militia. Military training and work on the furnaces took the peasants away from their work in the fields with the result that there were not enough people available to harvest crops when they were ripe. A lot of food was wasted in this way. The peasants were also directed to melt down their farm implements to make steel with the result that there were not enough tools to cultivate the land.

(8) The answer is becoming more of a list of factors at this point and continues in this vein into the next paragraph.

Bad weather in 1959 and 1960 in some parts of China contributed to the fall in food production. Mao also decided to expel all the Soviet experts who were working in China in 1960 because of an ideological dispute with the Soviet leadership. This also contributed to the failure of the Great Leap Forward.

Ultimately, however, responsibility for the failure of the Great Leap Forward rested on Mao's shoulders (9). It was Mao who believed that, through mass mobilisation under the correct political leadership, the Chinese people could achieve in ten to fifteen years what, in other countries, had taken fifty to 100 years. It was Mao who drove the regime to implement the Great Leap Forward, over-riding the objection of some of his more cautious colleagues. And it was Mao who had created a political system in which nobody dared to tell him the truth when it became clear that targets had not been met and that the policy was failing. Mao certainly did over-estimate the revolutionary enthusiasm of the peasants but the failure of the Great Leap Forward

(9) This final paragraph starts with a judgement, which is then developed and sustained through the conclusion.

was due to many mistakes on Mao's part, not least his creation of a political system in which nobody was able to challenge his authority.

## Examiner's Assessment

This is an explicit answer to the question which identifies a range of factors and has some balance in the analysis of the relative importance of those factors. At times the analysis becomes a list of factors but, overall, there is enough judgement and conceptual understanding to justify a mark at the top of Level 4.

<b>Mark Scheme</b>	
<b>L1:</b>	
The answer is based on <b>either</b> own knowledge <b>or</b> sources. It is likely to be generalised, descriptive and/or assertive, and with little focus on the question.	[1–6 marks]
<b>L2:</b>	
The answer may be based on relevant selection of material <b>either</b> from the sources <b>or</b> from own knowledge, or they may be combined. The answer will be mainly descriptive about Soviet agriculture up to 1941, with limited links to the question about the impact of collectivisation; or the answer may be explicit about the question but containing limited support.	[7–11 marks]
<b>L3:</b>	
The answer shows developed understanding of the issue of how collectivisation impacted upon Soviet agriculture, using material <b>both</b> from the sources <b>and</b> from own knowledge. The answer is likely to lack depth or balance in assessing the importance of collectivisation or other factors in the process, but will be a relevant response, and there will be some understanding of interpretations.	[12–16 marks]
<b>L4:</b>	
The answer shows explicit understanding of the demands of the question and provides a balanced explanation of the impact of collectivisation on agriculture, backed up by appropriate evidence from the sources and own knowledge. There will be a good understanding of interpretations, for example of how important collectivisation was in relation to other factors such as lack of machinery or modern methods of farming. The answer may focus just on collectivisation, or it may balance collectivisation against other relevant factors.	[17–21 marks]
<b>L5:</b>	
The answer is well focused and closely argued – supported by precise use of evidence from the sources and own knowledge. There will be a well-developed understanding of interpretations leading to a good understanding, with judgement, of the impact of collectivisation on Soviet agriculture. As with L4, the answer may focus just on collectivisation, or may balance collectivisation against other relevant factors.	[22–24 marks]

## **Chronology: Key Events in *China 1946–1976***

- 1946** Start of Chinese Civil War (July) after failure of peace talks between Communists and Guomindang.
- 1947** Using guerrilla warfare strategy, Communists gain control of northern Manchuria and move to a more conventional style of warfare.
- 1948** Communist forces gain complete control over Manchuria and begin to attack Guomindang positions in the north of China.
- 1949** In a series of offensives, the Communist People Liberation Army captures north, central and southern China.  
In October, Mao establishes the Communist government of the People's Republic of China in Beijing.
- 1950** Start of Korean War.  
New Marriage Law gives women greater legal protection.  
Suppression of Counter-Revolutionaries Campaign launched.
- 1951** Three-Antis Campaign launched against corrupt Party and government officials.
- 1952** Five-Antis Campaign launched against corrupt businessmen.  
The first Agricultural Producers' Co-operatives established (collective farms).
- 1953** End of Korean War.  
First Five Year Plan for industry launched.  
Purge of Gao Gang and Rao Shushi from Communist Party leadership.
- 1954** Higher-Stage Agricultural Producers' Co-operatives established.
- 1957** Mao launches 'Hundred Flowers' campaign inviting criticism of Party by intellectuals. This is quickly followed by the suppression of criticism in the Anti-Rightist campaign.
- 1958** Mao launches the Great Leap Forward (second Five Year Plan).
- 1959** Peng Dehuai purged from Party leadership for criticising the Great Leap Forward.
- 1962** Third Five Year Plan introduced.  
Start of power struggle between Mao and Liu Shaoqi/Deng Xiaoping.
- 1964** Socialist Education Movement launched by Mao to reassert his control over the Party's ideology.
- 1966** Cultural Revolution launched by Mao and his allies to regain control over the Party and remould Chinese culture.
- 1967** January Revolution in Shanghai overthrows Party leadership in the city.

In the February Crackdown the PLA move against the Red Guards to restore order.

- 1968** Revolutionary Committees established across China. Many thousands of Red Guards sent to the countryside in a move to regain control over the Cultural Revolution.
- 1969** Communist Party Congress officially declares the end of the Cultural Revolution.
- 1971** Lin Biao dies in an air crash after unsuccessfully trying to stage a coup against Mao.
- 1972** US President Richard Nixon visits China for talks with Mao, marking the start of improved relations and co-operation between the USA and China.
- 1973** Anti-Confucius campaign launched by Gang of Four against Zhou Enlai and Deng Xiaoping.
- 1976** January Death of Zhou Enlai.  
April Popular demonstrations against Gang of Four in Beijing.  
September Death of Mao Zedong.

## Teaching Activities

1. Use the following websites to research the use of posters to promote public health in China:

[www.nlm.nih.gov/hmd/chinese/posters/](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/hmd/chinese/posters/)

[http://home.wmin.ac.uk/china\\_posters/health.htm](http://home.wmin.ac.uk/china_posters/health.htm)

Use the research project to explore:

- (a) the health messages promulgated in these poster campaigns
  - (b) the links between health messages and political campaigns.
2. Use the following websites to research the use of propaganda posters to promote the personality cult of Chairman Mao:

[www.iisg.nl/landsberger](http://www.iisg.nl/landsberger)

<http://chinese-posters.net>

[www.sinohits.net/posters](http://www.sinohits.net/posters)

Use the posters to trace the development of Mao's personality cult through the years 1946 to 1976. Compare the way(s) in which Mao was depicted in the 1940s/50s with the way(s) in which he was depicted in the 1960s/70s.

## Additional Sample Questions

- (a) Explain why Civil War broke out in China in 1946. **[12 marks]**
- (b) Explain why Mao declared war on the 'Four Olds' in 1966. **[12 marks]**
- (c) 'The Hundred Flowers' campaign in 1957 was a serious miscalculation by Mao'.  
Explain why you agree or disagree with this view. **[24 marks]**

## Resources

- Shaun Breslin, *Mao: Profiles in Power* (Longman, 1998)
- Jung Chang, *Wild Swans* (Flamingo, 1992)
- Jung Chang and Jon Halliday, *Mao: The Unknown Story* (Vintage, 2006)
- Nien Cheng, *Life and Death in Shanghai* (Grafton, 1986)
- Michael Lynch, *The People's Republic of China Since 1949* (Hodder and Stoughton, 1998)
- Zhisui Li, *The Private Life of Chairman Mao* (Chatto and Windus, 1996)
- Philip Short, *Mao, A Life* (John Murray, 1999)
- G. Stewart, *China, 1900–1976* (Heinemann, 2006)
- Robert Whitfield, *The Impact of Chairman Mao: China, 1946–1976* (Nelson Thornes, 2008)
- Harry Wu and Carolyn Wakeman, *Bitter Winds* (John Wiley, 1994)