

Edexcel – AS GCE Unit 1: Historical Themes in Breadth Option D	D2 Mao’s China, 1949–76	Essay Question
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Examiner’s Specific Advice

Unit 1 essays require a series of skills. These include focusing on the specific requirements of the question, selecting appropriate and detailed historical knowledge, and analysis and evaluation.

It is important to understand what the question is asking. For example, does the question implicitly or explicitly refer to a specific time period? You should also consider the topic that the question is addressing and the ‘key concept’ raised by the question. The key concept could be causation, consequence, continuity, change or significance.

You will then need to make a series of points supported by detailed historical knowledge. It is important that this knowledge is relevant to the question.

In your essay, you must avoid telling the story of the events you are covering. A better approach is to break down, or analyse, the events. This could be done by arranging your information thematically rather than chronologically.

Finally, it is important to deal correctly with the ‘key concept’. For example, in a question addressing causation, you must explain explicitly how the factors you have discussed caused the event in question; whereas in a question regarding significance, you must weigh the different factors and reach an overall judgement.

Exemplar Question

How successful was Mao’s first Five-Year Plan?

(30 marks)

Planning Your Response

In this question, the topic is the first Five-Year Plan, and the ‘key concept’ is significance, specifically success or failure.

In order to evaluate the success of the first Five-Year Plan, it is necessary to consider a range of economic factors. It is also important to consider Mao’s aims for the Plan, and to use these as a benchmark for success. Notably, there is no need to discuss agriculture as farming did not form part of the Plan. At the end of the essay, you must reach a judgement about how far the Plan was a success. It is important that this judgement considers the extent of success rather than concluding only that there

was success.

One possible way of structuring an answer to this question would be:

- Introduction: list the factors you are going to discuss and provide a brief answer to the question
- The extent of success in heavy industry
- The extent of success in energy production
- The extent of success in transport
- The extent of success in terms of Sino-Soviet co-operation
- Conclusion

Examiner's Exemplar Answer 1

Mao's first Five-Year Plan was introduced to change China. He set targets for every industry to meet. The plan copied Stalin's plan in Russia which helped the Russian economy grow very much. It was a big success to a large extent but there were also weaknesses to a large extent. In this essay I am going to talk about the strengths of the plan and its weaknesses and then I will reach a judgement about just how successful Mao's plan for China was (1).

Targets were set for industry, like coal and oil. Coal and oil both grew during the plan and both made more oil and coal than the plan said. Steel was also set targets and at the end of the plan steel was ahead of the target and chemical fertiliser was also planned for and also did well under the plan (2).

Cement didn't do well. Agricultural collectives were not as successful as they hoped they would be. Mao believed in agriculture because he loved the peasants, so when he came to power he started land reform giving land to the peasants and taking it away from the wealthy middle class. This was called the land reform law of 1950. Then Mao made the APCs and finally the advanced APC which meant that almost all of Mao's agriculture was collectivised and Mao hoped that this would increase production and let industry grow by making it more efficient and people could leave the farms and work in factories without starving (3).

Overall, the plan was successful to an extent and it had strengths and weaknesses. Agriculture was a weakness but coal was a success. Some of the statistics are biased because they were lied about by the Chinese government to make them look better than they actually were (4).

Examiner's Assessment

(1) The introduction shows some focus on the question, but it is confused. It claims that the Plan succeeded and that it had weaknesses, both to a large extent. It would be better to give a single overall judgement. The final sentence adds nothing to the answer.

(2) This paragraph is focused on the correct topic, but it lacks detail. Also, it does not address the extent to which the achievements in coal and oil indicate success.

(3) This paragraph focuses on agriculture. However, agriculture was not part of Mao's first Five-Year Plan and therefore this paragraph misses the point of the question.

(4) The conclusion does discuss the successes and failures of the Plan, but in a very simplistic way.

This essay is generalised, partially irrelevant and simplistic and therefore belongs in Level 2. A greater amount of specific relevant detail is needed to take this essay into Level 3.

Examiner's Exemplar Answer 2

China's first Five-Year Plan was undoubtedly a great success because it raised production in almost all areas. However, some areas were more successful than others and not all aspects of the economy met the targets set by Chinese State planners. In order to show this I will consider the Chinese heavy industry, energy, transport, and the impact of the Sino-Soviet Pact. Nonetheless, in the final analysis the Plan boosted the Chinese economy greatly and should be considered very successful (5).

China's heavy industry was undoubtedly very successful during the first Five-Year Plan. Steel production increased from 1.3 million tonnes in 1952 to 5.35 million tonnes in 1957. What is more, steel production exceeded its Five-Year Plan target of 4.12 million tonnes by more than one million tonnes. Similarly, the production of iron increased dramatically. From 1949 to 1952 iron production never exceeded 1.9 million tonnes. However, by the end of the plan in 1957 production had increased to 5 million tonnes. Once again iron production had beaten its target of 3.7 million tonnes. Clearly, the first Five-Year Plan was successful in terms of heavy industry because it increased production of iron and steel dramatically and in both cases exceeded its targets (6).

China's first Five-Year Plan was fairly successful in terms of energy. The production of oil, coal and electricity all increased. However, not all of these energy sources met their planned targets. Electricity production was highly successful as over 19 billion kilowatts were produced and this was more than the planned 15.9 billion kilowatts. However, the power generated by hydroelectric turbines did not meet its target of 79,000 kilowatts as it only generated 75,000 kilowatts during the plan. Equally, oil production did not meet its 2012 million tonnes target as only 1458 million tonnes were produced. Coal, however, was more successful as it exceeded its target of 113 million tonnes by 2 million tonnes. In this way, although the plan raised energy production from 1952 it was not wholly successful because not all of the energy targets were met.

Transport was a broadly successful part of the first Five-

(5) This introduction is clearly focused on the question. It considers the successes and failures and reaches an overall judgement about the extent of the success. What is more, it sets out the different areas that it will consider in order to answer the question.

(6) This paragraph does three things very well. First, it clearly addresses the question in terms of the success of heavy industry. Second, it supports this with very detailed figures and finally it evaluates the extent of success.

Year Plan. Major civil engineering works such as the Yangzi bridge were constructed as planned. Also the plan produced more than twice as many bicycles as planned and also produced more trucks than had been anticipated. However, only a third of the merchant ships that were planned were actually produced. Locomotives and freight cars also missed their target. Again, the plan did improve China’s transport but it was not a total success because in important areas such as locomotives production the plan was not fulfilled (7).

The Sino-Soviet Pact (1950) was of mixed economic benefit to China during the period of the plan. Only 5% of Russia’s aid was actually in capital goods, and China had to pay a high price in terms of gold reserves and high interest loans. Nonetheless, China did get 10,000 economic experts and was able to learn from the successes and failures of the Russian plans which had been going on since 1929. In this way the Pact helped but this help came at a high price and because of this it was only a limited success (8).

In conclusion the plan was a great success, but it was more successful in some ways rather than others. Heavy industry was highly successful because it raised output and exceeded all of its targets. Energy and transport were also successful, but less so because although they increased production they did not always meet their targets. Finally, the Sino-Soviet Pact had mixed results and was only of limited help because Russian aid came at such a high price. Therefore, it is clear that the plan was highly successful but there was room for improvement in some areas (9).

Examiner’s Assessment

This essay is focused, detailed and evaluative and therefore it is worth at least high Level 4. Moreover, it is structured around the relative success of the different aspects of the economy, dealing with the most successful aspect first, and the least successful last. This prioritisation, and the sustained evaluative focus, puts the essay into Level 5.

(7) Again, these paragraphs are focused, detailed and evaluative.

(8) This paragraph deals with the Sino-Soviet Pact of 1950. Although the Pact is outside the timeframe specified in the question, the essay deals with its effects during the Plan and therefore it is relevant to the question.

(9) This conclusion summarises the findings of the essay in such a way that it aids the creation of an overall judgement. Significantly, the judgement is made in terms of extent.

<p>Edexcel – AS GCE Unit 1: Historical Themes in Breadth Option D</p>	<p>D2 Mao’s China, 1949–76</p>	<p>Mark Scheme</p>
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How successful was Mao’s first Five-Year Plan?

(30 marks)

Target: AO1a and AO1b

Level 1	<p>Candidates will produce mostly simple statements. These will be supported by limited factual material which has some accuracy and relevance, although not directed at the focus of the question. The material will be mostly generalised. There will be few, if any, links between the simple statements.</p> <p><i>The qualities of Level 1 are securely displayed; material is convincing in range and depth consistent with Level 1. The writing may have limited coherence and will be generally comprehensible, but passages will lack both clarity and organisation. The skills needed to produce effective writing will not normally be present. Frequent syntactical and/or spelling errors are likely to be present.</i></p> <p>Low Level 1: 1–2 marks The qualities of Level 1 are displayed, but material is less convincing in its range/depth and the quality of written communication does not conform.</p> <p>Mid Level 1: 3–4 marks The qualities of Level 1 are displayed, but material is less convincing in its range/depth or the quality of written communication does not conform.</p> <p>High Level 1: 5–6 marks The qualities of Level 1 are securely displayed.</p>	(1–6)
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<p>Level 2</p>	<p>Candidates will produce a series of simple statements supported by some mostly accurate and relevant factual material. The analytical focus will be mostly implicit and there are likely to be only limited links between the simple statements. Material is unlikely to be developed very far.</p> <p><i>The writing will have some coherence and will be generally comprehensible, but passages will lack both clarity and organisation. Some of the skills needed to produce effective writing will be present. Frequent syntactical and/or spelling errors are likely to be present.</i></p> <p>Low Level 2: 7–8 marks The qualities of Level 2 are displayed, but material is less convincing in its range/depth and the quality of written communication does not conform.</p> <p>Mid Level 2: 9–10 marks The qualities of Level 2 are displayed, but material is less convincing in its range/depth or the quality of written communication does not conform.</p> <p>High Level 2: 11–12 marks The qualities of Level 2 are securely displayed.</p>	<p>(7–12)</p>
<p>Level 3</p>	<p>Candidates’ answers will attempt analysis and will show some understanding of the focus of the question. They will, however, include material which is either descriptive, and thus only implicitly relevant to the question’s focus, or which strays from that focus. Factual material will be accurate but it may lack depth and/or relevance in places.</p> <p><i>The writing will be coherent in places but there are likely to be passages which lack clarity and/or proper organisation. Only some of the skills needed to produce convincing extended writing are likely to be present. Syntactical and/or spelling errors are likely to be present.</i></p> <p>Low Level 3: 13–14 marks The qualities of Level 3 are displayed, but material is less convincing in its range/depth and the quality of written communication does not conform.</p> <p>Mid Level 3: 15–16 marks The qualities of Level 3 are displayed, but material is less convincing in its range/depth or the quality of written communication does not conform.</p> <p>High Level 3: 17–18 marks The qualities of Level 3 are securely displayed.</p>	<p>(13–18)</p>

<p>Level 4</p>	<p>Candidates offer an analytical response which relates well to the focus of the question and which shows some understanding of the key issues contained in it. The analysis will be supported by accurate factual material which will be mostly relevant to the question asked. The selection of material may lack balance in places.</p> <p><i>The answer will show some degree of direction and control but these attributes may not be sustained throughout the answer. The candidate will demonstrate the skills needed to produce convincing extended writing but there may be passages which lack clarity or coherence. The answer is likely to include some syntactical and/or spelling errors.</i></p> <p>Low Level 4: 19–20 marks The qualities of Level 4 are displayed, but material is less convincing in its range/depth and the quality of written communication does not conform.</p> <p>Mid Level 4: 21–22 marks The qualities of Level 4 are displayed, but material is less convincing in its range/depth or the quality of written communication does not conform.</p> <p>High Level 4: 23–24 marks The qualities of Level 4 are securely displayed.</p>	<p>(19–24)</p>
<p>Level 5</p>	<p>Candidates offer an analytical response which directly addresses the focus of the question and which demonstrates explicit understanding of the key issues contained in it. It will be broadly balanced in its treatment of these key issues. The analysis will be supported by accurate, relevant and appropriately selected factual material which demonstrates some range and depth.</p> <p><i>The exposition will be controlled and the deployment logical. Some syntactical and/or spelling errors may be found but the writing will be coherent overall. The skills required to produce convincing extended writing will be in place.</i></p> <p>Low Level 5: 25–26 marks The qualities of Level 5 are displayed, but material is less convincing in its range/depth and the quality of written communication does not conform.</p> <p>Mid Level 5: 27–28 marks The qualities of Level 5 are displayed, but material is less convincing in its range/depth or the quality of written communication does not conform.</p> <p>High Level 5: 29–30 marks The qualities of Level 5 are securely displayed.</p>	<p>(25–30)</p>

Edexcel – AS GCE Unit 1: Historical Themes in Breadth Option D	D2 Mao's China, 1949–76	Chronology
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Chronology: Key Events in *Mao's China, 1949–76*

Year	Month	Event
1949		Communists establish the People's Republic of China: Mao begins governing China
1950–53		Korean War
1950	February	Mao visits Moscow, Sino-Soviet agreement signed
	October	China enters the Korean War
		Communist campaign against religion starts
		Marriage law passed
1951		Mao launches the anti-movements
1952		Abolition of rival political parties: China becomes a one-party state
1952		Launch of the first Five-Year Plan (1952–56)
1953	March	Death of Joseph Stalin, leader of the Soviet Union
1954		The Gao Gang and Rao Rashi affair
1955		Reform of the Mandarin language
1956		Beginning of Collectivisation
		De-Stalinisation begins in the USSR
1957		Mao attends Moscow Conference
		Launch of the 'Hundred Flowers' Campaign
1958		Launch of the Great Leap Forward (second Five-Year Plan, 1958–62)
		Soviet leader Khrushchev meets Mao in Beijing
		The Great Famine (1958–62)
		Communist campaign against the family launched
1959		Lushan Conference
		Tibetan Rising
1961		Soviet advisors withdrawn from China – breakdown in diplomatic relations between China and the USSR
1962		Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping appointed to tackle the famine
		The Panchen Lama's report
		Mao temporarily withdraws from public life
		Sino-Indian War
		Cuban Missile Crisis
1963		Publication of <i>The Thoughts of Chairman Mao</i> (the Little Red Book)
		Publication of <i>The Diary of Lei Feng</i>
1964		China produces its own nuclear bomb
1965		The Wu Han affair: the play <i>The Dismissal of Hai Rui from office</i> attacked by Mao's supporters
1966		Creation of the Central Cultural Revolution Group
		Mao's first public appearance since 1962

		First Tiananmen Square rally
		Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping dismissed from government
		Launch of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (1966–76)
1967		Launch of the 'Up to the mountains and down to the villages' campaign (1967–72)
1968		Launch of the 'Cleansing of the class ranks' campaign (1968–71)
1969		Lowest point in China's relationship with Russia
1971		Lin Biao killed in a plane crash
		The People's Republic of China officially recognised by the United Nations
1972		Launch of the 'Criticism Lin Biao and Confucius' campaign
		Liu Shaoqi dies in prison
		Nixon visits China
		Deng Xiaoping and Zhou Enlai re-enter government
1972		Cultural Revolution becomes increasingly less radical
1973		1 million barefoot doctors trained
1976		Death of Mao Zedong

Teaching Activities

1. Peer revision

Divide students into groups of four. Students should number themselves 1–4, with the numbers corresponding to the four bullet points of the Edexcel specification. Each student should then plan a ten-minute mini-revision lesson for the other students in the group. The mini-lesson should be a recap of the content for the relevant bullet point. Each mini-lesson should contain the following:

- a handout comprising one A4 side containing key information about the topics
- an activity designed to help students to learn the information
- a test to assess how well students have learnt the information.

In turn, each student then delivers their lesson to the other students in their group.

Hints:

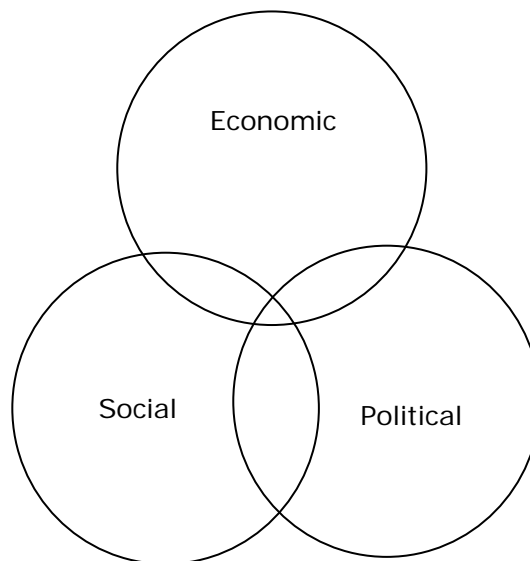
- Students could also peer assess each others' mini-lessons using the following template:

	Mark out of 10
How well did the handout and mini-lesson cover the content in the bullet point?	
How well did the activity help you to learn the content in the bullet point?	
How effectively did the test highlight the strengths and weaknesses in your knowledge?	
Total:	

- It could be insisted that the test comprises three types of question:
 1. recall questions (e.g. When did Mao launch his first Five-Year Plan?)
 2. explain questions (e.g. Why did Mao launch his first Five-Year Plan?)
 3. evaluative questions (e.g. How effectively did Mao's first Five-Year Plan meet its aims?)

2. Venn diagram – revision activity

As a class, produce a timeline of the key policies of Mao's government. Students should be given an A3 copy of the following Venn diagram:



Students should then place each policy onto the Venn diagram, showing which aspects of life in China were affected by each policy. They should be encouraged to see how the different policy areas (economic, social and political) interrelated, and how many policies had an impact outside the sphere they primarily addressed.

Additional Sample Questions

1. How far was Communist power in China primarily consolidated through terror?
2. How far were Mao's agricultural policies responsible for the scale of the great famine, 1958–62?
3. How accurate is it to say that Mao's economic policies met their aims?
4. Why did Mao decide to launch the Cultural Revolution in 1966?
5. How far did the Cultural Revolution strengthen Mao's control over China from 1966?
6. Why was Mao able to defeat his political opponents in the period 1962–76?
7. How far did Mao's economic and social policies promote equality in the period 1949–76?

8. How far did Mao's social policies benefit the Chinese people in the period 1949–76?

Resources

Jung Chang and Jon Halliday, *Mao: The Unknown Story* (Jonathan Cape, 2005)

Delia Davin, *Mao Zedong* (Sutton, 1997)

Michael Lynch, *Mao* (Routledge, 2004)

Philip Short, *Mao: A Life* (Hodder & Stoughton, 1999)

Jonathan Spence, *Mao* (Weidenfield & Nicolson, 1999)