

<p>OCR – AS GCE European and World History Period Studies F962: Option B</p>	<p>Peace and War: International Relations c.1890–1941</p>	<p>ESSAY</p>
--	---	--------------

<p>Examiner’s Specific Advice</p> <p>In this question, a full, balanced assessment of the impact of both Manchuria and Abyssinia on the League of Nations is essential, and a considered judgement should form the conclusion. The best answers will offer comparative assessments of different explanations and assess the <i>relative</i> importance of the two episodes before reaching a conclusion. Less effective essays are likely to supply more general comments without relevant supporting details. They will probably consider one or two issues rather than several; they may stray outside the period specified in the question; and they will fail to use historical knowledge effectively.</p>	
<p>Exemplar Question Why did the crises over Manchuria and Abyssinia fatally weaken the League of Nations?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[50 marks]</p>	<p>Click here for a Chronology relating to this topic</p>
<p>Examiner’s Exemplar Plan and Essay 1</p> <p>Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction • Structure of the League • League’s actions in 1920s • Challenges of Manchuria and Abyssinia • Conclusions <p><u>The League of Nations was the brainchild of President Woodrow Wilson of the USA (1). Its covenant was part of every treaty which made up the Paris peace settlement of 1919. This was both an advantage and a disadvantage; it established the League, but also gave it the problem of being associated with what were seen as unfair treaties. Wilson also wasn’t able to take the USA into the League. This was to be a significant weakness of the League as time went on (2).</u></p>	<p>(1) Important to focus immediately on the wording of the question; this doesn’t!</p> <p>(2) Fair points, but this background material needs to be better tied in to the question.</p>

The League's organisation was partly a problem. The structure of the exclusive inner Council (which was seen as the victors' club) (3) and the Assembly, which had to be unanimous in all its decisions, meant that action was usually very slow (4). In addition, there was a slow moving Secretariat which was to support the other parts of the League. Lastly, the League didn't have an armed force to intervene in countries' affairs. Instead it had to rely on collective security as a principle: all countries working together.

During the 1920s (5) the League appeared to be working reasonably well. It achieved success in 1920 over the Aaland Islands dispute with Finland and Sweden. It also sorted out a dispute between Poland and Lithuania over the town of Vilna. The League took firm action with Greece and Bulgaria in 1925. All this seemed positive. However, what happened over Manchuria and Abyssinia spelled far more difficulty for the League in the 1930s (6).

The dispute between Japan and China over Manchuria went back many years (7); the Japanese had been influential in the area since the 1910s and saw it as a province which they could exploit. The Japanese military had been growing in political influence as a result of the country's poor economic performance at the end of the 1920s. The army thus engineered an incident and the Japanese army used this as an excuse to take over the area and to claim it for Japan. The League's reaction appeared to accept Japan's action (Japan was a member of the Council after all). The Lytton Committee's report in 1933 allowed the Japanese to retain their control. As Manchuria was so far away from Europe, there was little that Britain and France were prepared to do but accept the Japanese action. None the less, the Japanese were upset and soon left the League. Much more damaging, other countries saw that the League would do nothing when faced with a done deal; Italy was next to try it on (8).

Interestingly, Italy had been quite close to Britain and France (9). In the early 1930s the Stresa Front had been created to try to keep Italy on side with the British and French. However, the Italian dictator, Mussolini, was determined to expand Italy's overseas empire and was under particular pressure at home in Italy as world economic depression hit home by the mid-1930s. When he saw an opportunity to act against Abyssinia, one of the last African independent states, he did. The Italians also invaded in order to avenge their defeat in 1896 at the battle of Adowa (10). In 1935 and 1936 the Italians used all the latest equipment, including aircraft and poison gas, to quickly subdue the Abyssinians. Again, the British and French didn't stand firm in the face of aggression. Foreign ministers Hoare and Laval offered a Pact at the end of 1935, which would have given in to Italian demands. The British and French hoped to keep alive the Stresa Front (11).

(3) The countries should be listed as Britain, France, Japan and Italy.

(4) Assembly votes had to be unanimous; but the Council could act more swiftly on its own if it wanted to.

(5) The question asks specifically about incidents in 1930s. Is all this material really needed?

(6) This provides a better link with the next paragraph and the title.

(7) An opportunity is missed here to link this directly back to the title.

(8) This section does provide analysis in some detail but a lot of it is background material on the war itself.

(9) Note again how an opportunity is missed to draw the link to the title.

(10) Good context given, but this needs to be sharp around the question.

(11) Important diplomatic position by Britain and France, which helps

However, there was a public outcry against selling out to Italy. Half-hearted sanctions were applied, which didn't stop oil supplies to Italian forces, but this was enough to drive Italy towards Hitler's Germany and the Stresa Front broke down (12).

To conclude, these two challenges to the League's authority were enough to fatally weaken it. The challenges of world economic depression, the problems with the League's organisation and the selfish attitudes of Britain and France came together in these instances. The League was tested and proved lacking; it was thus only a matter of time before Hitler's Germany began to challenge the League's authority and tear up the Treaty of Versailles, which the League was supposed to uphold (13).

Examiner's Assessment

The essay uses accurate, detailed and relevant evidence that demonstrates some command of the topic. The answer is structured and generally clear. This element of the essay merits a Level III mark of 15 (AO1a).

There is a limited and patchy understanding of a few issues in their historical context, and analysis of the importance of developments is weak. Consideration of the League's weaknesses in the 1930s resulting from these two events is limited. The answer misses the opportunity to make clear the links between structural problems of the League and the wider difficulties of the world economy by the 1930s. This is only touched on in the conclusion. This part of the essay merits a Level IV mark of 15 (AO1b).

The overall total mark is 30 (low Grade C).

Examiner's Exemplar Plan and Essay 2

Plan

- Introduction
- Perspectives on the League
- Manchurian crisis
- Abyssinian crisis
- Impact on the League
- Conclusions

The League of Nations was to come under increasing pressure in the 1930s after a reasonably successful start. This essay will evaluate the background to the League's dealing with the two crises over Manchuria and Abyssinia and will consider

explain their actions.

(12) This is the only reference to the League in this paragraph. Need to explain why the sanctions failed.

(13) A sound conclusion, bringing the discussion together.

(14) A good start. It is relevant, clear and to the point, with the title

whether indeed it was these incidents which proved that the League was fatally damaged by 1936 (14).

Initially, let us consider the origins. The League of Nations was created by the American president, Woodrow Wilson. Its covenant was part of every treaty which made up the Paris peace settlement of 1919. This was both an advantage and a disadvantage; it established the League internationally, but also gave it the problem of being associated with what were seen as unfair treaties. Wilson also wasn't able to take the USA into the League. The USA's absence from the League was to be a significant weakness. As time went on this became more of a problem as the two other major players, Britain and France, were concerned with their own interests (15).

The League's organisation was also a problem. The structure of the exclusive inner Council (which was seen as the victors' club) of Britain, France, Italy and Japan, and the Assembly, which had to be unanimous in all its decisions, meant that action was usually very slow. In addition, there was a slow moving Secretariat which was to support the other parts of the League. Lastly, the League didn't have an armed force to intervene in countries' affairs. Instead it relied on collective security as a principle: all countries working together to secure the resolution of a crisis. By the 1930s, such optimism was to prove unfounded. Initially, in the 1920s, it did seem as though things might work out. The League successfully resolved disputes over Aaland and Vilna, and between Greece and Bulgaria. All this seemed positive. However, events in Manchuria and Abyssinia caused far more difficulty for the League in the 1930s (16).

In 1933 the Japanese army invaded the Chinese province of Manchuria. The League's initial reaction appeared to accept Japan's action (Japan was a member of the Council after all). The Lytton Committee's report in 1933 allowed the Japanese to retain their control. As Manchuria was so far away from Europe, there was little that Britain and France were prepared to do but accept the Japanese action. The League had no army and was unwilling to consider economic sanctions against Japan in the face of the world depression. What the League could and did do was to condemn Japan's act of aggression and appeal to her to withdraw. When she did not, the League was shown to be impotent. Moreover, this moral censure so upset the Japanese that they soon left the League. This was a serious but far from fatal blow to the League because Japan was a world power and permanent member of the Council. Most damaging of all, other countries saw that the League would do nothing when faced with the threat of war (17).

Italy's actions over Abyssinia were to take matters for the League further into a crisis which many historians see as fatally damaging (18). Significantly, Italy had been quite close

referred to directly.

(15) The USA's absence is linked to the individual interests of Britain and France. More is made of this later in the essay.

(16) Wisely avoids getting drawn into detailing events of the 1920s. This sentence brings the focus back to the central issue of the question.

(17) A sound evaluation of this event, skilfully using but not accepting the term 'fatal'.

(18) Central issue of the League's problems dealt with effectively here.

to Britain and France. In the early 1930s the Stresa Front had been created to try to keep Italy on side with the British and French, as Hitler came to power in Germany in 1933. However, the Italian dictator, Mussolini, was determined to expand Italy's overseas empire and was under particular pressure at home in Italy as world economic depression hit home by the mid-1930s. When he saw an opportunity to act against Abyssinia, one of the last African independent states, he did. Again, the British and French didn't stand firm in the face of aggression. Foreign ministers Hoare and Laval went behind the back of the League in December 1935 and offered a Pact which would have given two-thirds of Abyssinia to Italy. The British and French hoped to keep alive the Stresa Front (19). However, there was a public outcry against selling out to Italy. The League imposed trade sanctions but Britain and France insisted that oil, coal and steel exports should be exempt. This revealed the selfishness of the League's two main members and seriously weakened its international standing. Worse, the Stresa Front collapsed; Italy kept all of Abyssinia, left the League and joined with Germany.

Whilst all this was going on, events elsewhere in Europe showed how fragile other areas were (20). In Germany, Hitler used the opportunity to march German troops into the demilitarised Rhineland in March 1936. This was in direct contradiction of the Treaty of Versailles. Only limited protests came from Britain and France, who were still tied up with events in Abyssinia, and the League remained ominously silent. At the end of the year, Franco led an army uprising in Spain, which led to three years' of bloody civil war and the downfall of the elected republican government. The League had to stand and watch events without influencing them. Both Germany and Italy were quick to support the right-wing rebels led by Franco (21).

Hitler was swift to mount further attacks on the Treaty of Versailles after 1936. The lack of action by Britain and France and the failure to use the League were major contributing factors. The Anschluss with Austria in March 1938 and the Sudeten crisis of September 1938 showed how Hitler used assertive action to stand up to and win the concessions he wanted (22). By 1939, then, the League had proved itself at best an irrelevance as major powers followed their own interests.

To conclude, these two challenges to the League's authority were enough to fatally weaken it. The challenges of world economic depression, problems with the League's organisation and the selfish attitudes of Britain and France came together in these instances. The League was tested and proved lacking; it was thus only a matter of time before Hitler's Germany began to challenge the League's authority and tear up the Treaty of Versailles, which the League was supposed to uphold

(19) The Stresa Front was in addition to the League. An explanation of what this meant for the future of the League would be useful here.

(20) Good attempt to link into the wider context of diplomacy and show how this affected the League's prospects of success.

(21) Good discussion of the emergence of civil war in Spain; this is made relevant to the crisis over Abyssinia and the problems of the League.

(22) Well-made point to show that Hitler was able to exploit matters to his advantage, with examples given.

(23) Clear conclusions provided; summing up directly around the question.

(23).

Examiner's Assessment

This is a well constructed, focused and, for the most part, clearly argued case. The language and style are easy to read and suggest that you are in full control of your material. The use of factual knowledge is also very sound: names, dates and events are accurately cited and, most importantly, used relevantly to illustrate the answer. It merits a Level IB mark of 20 (AO1a).

The essay is mostly analytical and substantiated, and judgements about the relative importance of factors are made. This AO1b skill merits a Level IB mark of 23.

The overall total for the essay is 43 marks, and worthy of a Grade A.

[Click here for a Mark Scheme that accompanies the exemplar answers provided above](#)

[Click here for further sample Questions to test your skills](#)

[Mark Scheme]

Examiners use Mark Schemes to determine how best to categorise a candidate's essay and to ensure that the performances of thousands of candidates are marked to a high degree of consistency. Few essays fall neatly into the mark levels indicated below: some answers will be particularly well argued but offer little supporting detail; others may be factually full but poorly organised or contain few judgements.

Examiners therefore seek to find the 'best fit' when applying the scheme. Each essay has a final mark based on two Assessment Objectives (AO1a and AO1b) worth 24 + 26 = 50 marks. As the standard of the two essays lies between Level I and Level IV, only the descriptors and marks for these levels have been tabulated below.

Access to History Online OCR European and World History Period Studies – Peace and War: International Relations c.1890–1941 – Standard AS Question

AO1a Mark Scheme for Levels I, II, III and IV	
Assessment Objectives	Recall, select and use historical knowledge appropriately, and communicate knowledge and understanding clearly and effectively
Level IA 21–24 marks	Uses a wide range of accurate, detailed and relevant evidence. Accurate and confident use of appropriate historical terminology. Answer is clearly structured and coherent; communicates accurately and legibly.
Level IB 18–20 marks	Uses accurate, detailed and relevant evidence. Accurate use of a range of appropriate historical terminology. Answer is clearly structured and mostly coherent; writes accurately and legibly.
Level II 16–17 marks	Uses mostly accurate, detailed and relevant evidence, which demonstrates a competent command of the topic. Generally accurate use of historical terminology. Answer is structured and mostly coherent; writing is legible and communication is generally clear.
Level III 14–15 marks	Uses accurate and relevant evidence, which demonstrates some command of the topic but there may be some inaccuracy. Answer includes relevant historical terminology but this may not be extensive or always accurately used. Most of the answer is organised and structured; the answer is mostly legible and clearly communicated.
Level IV 12–13 marks	There is deployment of relevant knowledge but level/accuracy of detail will vary; there may be some evidence that is tangential or irrelevant. Some unclear and/or under-developed and/or disorganised sections; mostly satisfactory level of communication.

Access to History Online OCR European and World History Period Studies – Peace and War: International Relations c.1890–1941 – Standard AS Question

AO1b Mark Scheme for Levels I, II, III and IV	
Assessment Objectives	Demonstrate an understanding of the past through explanation and analysis, arriving at substantiated judgements of key concepts and of the relationships between key features of the period studied
Level IA 24–26 marks	<p>Clear and accurate understanding of key concepts relevant to analysis and to the topic.</p> <p>Clear and accurate understanding of issues in their historical context.</p> <p>Answer is consistently and relevantly analytical with developed and substantiated explanations, some of which may be unexpected.</p> <p>The argument evaluates a range of relevant factors and reaches clearly substantiated judgements about relative importance and/or links.</p>
Level IB 22–23 marks	<p>Clear and accurate understanding of most key concepts relevant to analysis and to the topic.</p> <p>Clear understanding of the significance of issues in their historical context.</p> <p>Answer is mostly consistently and relevantly analytical with mostly developed and substantiated explanations.</p> <p>Substantiated judgements about relative importance of and/or links between factors will be made but quality of explanation in support may not be consistently high.</p>
Level II 19–21 marks	<p>Mostly clear and accurate understanding of many key concepts relevant to analysis and to the topic.</p> <p>Clear understanding of the significance of most relevant issues in their historical context.</p> <p>Much of the answer is relevantly analytical and substantiated with detailed evidence but there may be some description.</p> <p>The analysis of factors and/or issues provides some judgements about relative importance and/or linkages.</p>
Level III 16–18 marks	<p>Some uneven understanding of key concepts relevant to analysis and of concepts relevant to their historical context.</p> <p>Answers may be a mixture of analysis and explanation but also simple description of relevant material and narrative of relevant events OR answers may provide more consistent analysis but the quality will be uneven and its support often general or thin.</p> <p>Answer considers a number of factors but with very little evaluation of importance of or linkages between factors/issues.</p> <p>Points made about importance or about developments in the context of the period will often be little more than assertions and descriptions.</p>
Level IV 13–15 marks	<p>Understanding of key concepts relevant to analysis and the topic is variable but in general is satisfactory.</p> <p>Limited and patchy understanding of a few relevant issues in their historical context.</p> <p>Answer may be largely descriptive/narratives of events and links between this and analytical comments will typically be weak or unexplained OR answers will mix passages of descriptive material with occasional explained analysis.</p> <p>Limited points made about importance/links or about developments in the context of the period will be little more than assertions and descriptions.</p>

Further sample questions

1. How fair was the Treaty of Versailles?
2. To what extent did the League of Nations succeed in its aims in the 1920s?
3. Assess the reasons why the Locarno treaties were so important.
4. Assess the reasons why the League of Nations failed to prevent Japanese and Italian aggression in the 1930s.
5. How similar were the foreign policies of Italy and Nazi Germany in the 1930s?
6. To what extent did the foreign policies of Italy and Japan contribute to the outbreak of the Second World War?
7. Assess the view that the Locarno treaties were the main reason why there were no major international disputes in the 1920s.

Chronology: Key Events in *The failure of the League of Nations, 1919–39*

- 1918: 11 November: Armistice signed (1).
- 1919: January: Peace talks begin in Paris (2).
- 1919: June: Treaty of Versailles signed: settlement with Germany (3).
- 1919: Treaty of Saint-Germain signed: settlement with Austria; Treaty of Neuilly signed: settlement with Bulgaria.
- 1920: January: League of Nations starts work.
- 1920: Treaty of Trianon signed: settlement with Hungary; Treaty of Sèvres proposes settlement with Turkey.
- 1922: Washington Naval Conference (4); Treaty of Rapallo between USSR and Germany (5).
- 1923: January: French occupation of the Ruhr region of Germany (6).
- 1923: Italy invades Corfu (7); Treaty of Lausanne revises Treaty of Sèvres (8).
- 1924: Geneva Protocol discussed (9); Dawes Plan agreed (10).
- 1925: Locarno treaties signed (11).
- 1926: Germany joins League
- 1928: Kellogg–Briand Pact (12).
- 1929: Young Plan (13).
- 1931: September: Japanese invade Manchuria.
- 1932: Lytton Committee Report (14).
- 1933: Breakdown of Disarmament Conference (15); Japan leaves League.
- 1934: Germany leaves League; USSR joins League.
- 1935: Stresa Front agreed (16); Italy invades Abyssinia; Hoare–Laval Pact proposed (17).
- 1936: Anti-Comintern Pact signed (18).
- 1936: Germany remilitarises the Rhineland; Spanish Civil War begins.
- 1938: Germany invades Austria in the Anschluss; Sudetenland given to Germany after the Munich Crisis.
- 1939: March: Hitler invades remaining part of Czechoslovakia.
- 1939: End of Spanish Civil War.
- 1939: August: Nazi–Soviet Pact (19).
- 1939: September: Germany invades Poland (20).

Access to History Online OCR European and World History Period Studies – Peace and War: International Relations c.1890–1941 – Standard AS Question

- (1) A ceasefire.
- (2) The Big Three of Wilson (USA), Clemenceau (France) and Lloyd-George (Britain) met to discuss a peace settlement.
- (3) The most argued-over peace treaty. Germany lost all colonies and 15 per cent of her land, and had to agree to a 'war guilt clause' and eventually pay a reparations bill of £6.6 billion.
- (4) A major military agreement, which limited naval armaments, involved the USA, Japan and Britain but was also outside the League's remit.
- (5) A treaty between two states excluded from post-war diplomacy; included a secret agreement to allow Germany to produce military technology banned by Versailles in the USSR.
- (6) Without consulting the League or Britain.
- (7) Showed the League to be unable to stop aggressive action by a leading member.
- (8) Showed how one of the Paris settlement treaties could be renegotiated by force. The Turks went to war against the Greeks to do this.
- (9) Attempt to strengthen the League by giving it the option to use force; British Labour Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald supported it, but when he left office, the Protocol was dropped.
- (10) Plan helped stabilise the German economy after the years of hyperinflation.
- (11) Treaties saw Britain and Italy guarantee France's border with Germany. It thus left open the question of Germany's border in the east and also went above the League. Germany was to join the League in 1926. Spirit of Locarno was seen as a new age of international cooperation.
- (12) Agreed by USA's Charles Kellogg and France's Aristide Briand. Countries who signed it renounced war as a means of settling disputes. Most countries signed it, but it did little to stop war in the future, as the 1930s showed.
- (13) Reduced reparations and extended payment period for Germany.
- (14) Lord Lytton's report allowed Japan to keep control of the land taken by force.
- (15) Conference organised by the League but too late to make real progress. Allowed Hitler to walk out and claim that Britain and France were refusing to make concessions.
- (16) Britain, France and Italy agreed to uphold frontiers in Western Europe. Broke down over Abyssinia.
- (17) Pact suggested Italy keep two-thirds of her gains; another victory for aggressive behaviour.
- (18) Initially between Germany and Japan. Italy joined soon after.
- (19) Surprised Britain and France; a pact between two rivals which suited both their objectives in the short term.
- (20) The start of war in Europe, as Britain and France kept to their promise to support Poland.

Teaching Activities

It's September 1939 and the League of Nations is on trial. Divide into two groups. One group should work together to defend the League from accusations that it was a weak organisation, incapable of restraining the strong nations and of little benefit to the minor powers. Look through your notes to find examples of and reasons for the League's success and attempt to justify the League's continued existence.

The second group presents a case for the prosecution. What main arguments can be levelled against the League, how are they likely to be countered and what would be your responses? Do not confine yourself to Abyssinia and Manchuria.

At the end of the trial everyone votes to determine a verdict on the League's conduct and whether or not it should receive a stay of execution.

Resources

- F. MacDonough, *Conflict, Communism and Fascism, Europe 1890 to 1945* (Cambridge University Press, 2000)
- A. Marwick, *A War and Social Change in the Twentieth Century* (Macmillan, 1988)
- R.J. Overy, *The Interwar Crisis 1919–1939* (Longman, 1940)
- M. Robson, *Italy, Liberalism and Fascism* (Hodder and Stoughton, 1992)
- J. Traynor, *Europe 1890–1990* (Nelson, 1991)
- R. Wolfson, *Years of Change* (Hodder and Stoughton, 1996)

Weblinks

- www.coursework.info/i/12735.html
- www.historylearningsite.co.uk/causesofWW2.htm