

OxfordAQA

International GCSE

History (9245)

Scheme of work

Life in Germany, 1919-1949

For teaching from September 2026 onwards
For International GCSE exams in June 2028 onwards

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Introduction

This scheme of work is intended to help teachers plan and implement the teaching of Life in Germany, 1919-1949 option of the Oxford AQA International GCSE History (9245) specification. The purpose is to provide advice and guidance to teachers, not to prescribe and restrict their approach to the specification. There are obviously many other ways of organising the work, and there is absolutely no requirement to use this scheme. We hope the suggested activities will support your teaching of this topic.

The scheme focuses on life for the people of Germany during a turbulent period. It was a period of opportunity and rapid social change in the 1920s but also one that saw the rise of extremism with people struggling against discrimination and prejudice. The 1930s in Germany stand in contrast to the optimism and economic progress of the 1920s. The unit allows for students not only to consider how life changed under Nazi rule but also how recovery was planned post 1945. The specification content is based on an unfolding narrative of key developments in Germany's domestic history and allows students to explore the effect these developments had on people.

Students will study how people's lives were affected by the political, social, economic and cultural aspects of the period and the role ideas played in influencing change. They will also look at the role of key individuals and groups in shaping change and the impact the developments had on people.

Assumed coverage and teaching hours

This scheme of work assumes that the OxfordAQA International GCSE History (9245) is taught as a two-year linear course, with approximately 120-140 guided learning hours in total, in line with specification guidance. This equates to approximately two hours of teaching per week over two academic years, although this may vary according to local timetabling arrangements and students' prior experience. As this particular optional topic equates to one quarter of the qualification, this scheme of work is designed to be taught in around 30-35 hours.

Work will also need to be completed outside of lessons. The amount of independent study required will depend on curriculum time, the pace of delivery and the extent to which assessment practice and consolidation activities are incorporated into timetabled lessons.

Assessment

Assessment points in the learning activity column indicate possible assessment opportunities. These could be short tests of about ten minutes (exam-style questions, short factual tests, source evaluation) or longer assessments (exam-style questions).

The assessment in Section B is based on a series of short and extended response questions.

- Question 1 tests AO1 and is worth 3 marks. It requires students to show their knowledge of a given issue.
- Question 2 tests AO1 and AO2 and is worth 6 marks. It requires students to explain one way in which a given issue developed, supporting their explanation with knowledge and understanding. It will focus on the 2nd order concept of cause/consequence or change.

- Question 3 tests AO1 and AO2 and is worth 9 marks. It requires students to explain two changes or two ways/reasons why a given issue developed, supporting their explanation with knowledge and understanding. It will focus on the 2nd order concept of cause/consequence or change.
- Question 4 tests AO1 and AO2 and is worth 12 marks. It requires students to construct an extended response with a line of reasoning. It requires students to explain a given cause/consequence/change and at least cause/consequence/change in the context of a broader development leading to a judgement that evaluates their relative importance. It will focus on the 2nd order concept of cause/consequence or change.

Resources

Research exercises assume students have access to a textbook(s) and / or the internet. You can supplement textbook(s) by other sources.

OUP support this option with 'Life in Germany 1919-1949', published in 2026 as part of the OxfordAQA International series and available in various formats.

Part 1: Weimar Germany, 1919–1933

The problems facing people at the end of the First World War

Suggested timing

5 hours

Specification content

The problems facing people at the end of the First World War: defeat and the effects of the Treaty of Versailles; political instability and violence; the weaknesses of and attitudes to the Weimar Republic; the Spartacists; the Freikorps; the Kapp Putsch; the Munich Putsch; Economic challenges, including reparations, the Ruhr and hyperinflation; the impact of these problems on different groups, including women, workers, farmers, big business, landowners, the elderly and unemployed.

Teaching guidance

- This study, by its nature, relates to the lives of people who lived and experienced events during the period in question. Recurring questions will relate to the problems they faced, how far the problems were dealt with and how far their lives were affected.
- At any early stage, students might consider different groups in society and compare their experiences, so building up a complex view of the past. These groups might include some or all the following – the list is not exhaustive: farmers, workers in industrial settings, professional people such as bankers, teachers etc, the unemployed, immigrants, women representing different socio-economic groups, religious groups such as Germany's Jewish community, and those with disabilities. The lives of these groups can be tracked through each part of the specification, taking their stories up to 1949.
- Here is an early opportunity to practice writing in response to 'explain' style questions: questions 2, 3 and 4. A common method to approach this is using the structure Point, Evidence, Explain, though this is by no means the only permissible approach.

Possible teaching and learning activities

- Centres could organise their teaching around the enquiry question: 'In what ways did the consequences of the First World War affect the lives of the German people?'
- Students might first discuss what is meant by a revolution and how there are different types such as political, economic and social. Students are asked to focus on the concept of a revolution in Germany immediately after the War. Students might imagine themselves to be returning soldiers from the Front that comes home to news of the Kaiser's abdication and the disorder in Berlin. Students write the soldiers' accounts, perhaps in the form of a letter or diary, detailing their impression of the Germany they had fought for.

- Students might be presented with cards detailing the terms of the Treaty of Versailles. They are tasked with identifying why each of these would have been unpopular with the German people. Class debate might include discussion of which term would have caused the greatest anger and why.
- Present students with contemporary German accounts of the Treaty of Versailles. What do these accounts have in common and is there a unifying message that can be established? What do the Germans seem to believe was the reason for the harsh terms?
- Students might design recruitment posters for the Spartacists or for the Freikorps for class display. These posters should detail why each group feels the need to resort to violence and what they hope to achieve.
- Students might be encouraged to think about the economic impact of war on Germany. Students may have already seen contemporary German accounts of why they could not pay the reparations. Here is an opportunity for students to produce a speech or display work of their own arguing that the reparation demands were too harsh.
- Students might establish a clear chronology of the events surrounding the invasion of the Ruhr, beginning with the failure to pay the second instalment of reparations and finishing with the onset of hyperinflation. Students are tasked with linking the events as a sequencing exercise explaining how one event led to the next. This might also be done as a card sort exercise in which students are given the individual events and are tasked with placing them in the correct order, explaining how one event led to the next.
- A study of hyperinflation provides the opportunity for a variety of exercises. This might be the first occasion on which students are encouraged to think about the relative impact on a variety of different groups. Possibly establishing which group of people were most badly affected and if there were any groups that benefitted from hyperinflation.
- Alternatively, students could be allocated different social groups and asked to write empathetic accounts of their group's experiences of hyperinflation. Class discussion might then bring these together to ask the question: 'What was the impact of hyperinflation on the people of Germany?'
- Students might write a report of the Munich Beer Hall Putsch from the perspective of the Nazi Party, detailing what they hoped to achieve and the reasons for its failure. Alternatively, draft a speech by Hitler to members of the Party advocating the resort to violence and attempted coup.
- Students might write a journalist's account of the trial of Hitler, detailing what Hitler said and reaction of the verdict.
- Students could be encouraged to write an evaluative response to the question 'To what extent did the Munich Putsch fail?' An alternative, equally evaluative question might ask, 'Why was there a rise in extremism in Germany in the years immediately after the First World War?'
- To draw their learning together, students could make notes on the impact of the events of 1919-1923 on the groups mentioned in the specification: women, workers, farmers, big business, landowners, the elderly and unemployed.

Recovery under Stresemann

Suggested timing

3 hours

Specification content

Recovery under Stresemann: the Rentenmark; the Dawes and Young Plans; the extent of recovery; political, economic and cultural changes for different groups, including women, Jewish people, workers, and farmers; the development of the Nazi Party 1924-1929.

Teaching guidance

This is an opportunity to explore the social, economic and cultural changes that took place during the 1920s, exploring the impact on a variety of named groups.

Possible teaching and learning activities

- Centres could organise their teaching around the enquiry question: 'How did life for Germans change in the years 1924 to 1929?'
- Students research Stresemann, considering his political and economic background and try to establish what level of expertise he brought to his appointed positions.
- Building upon knowledge from the previous topic, students consider how hyperinflation ended. Students add to their previous chronological narrative of the causes of hyperinflation. Add to it the steps taken to reverse hyperinflation. Students should be able to articulate which social groups benefited from the end of hyperinflation as a simple reverse of those that suffered.
- When considering the Dawes and the Young plans, it is possible to bring in a broader economic awareness perhaps of the boom years of the 1920s that affected not just Germany. Students might be encouraged to research what social changes were occurring in other countries and attempt to arrive at a conclusion about how far the experience of Germany was unique.
- In studying the Golden Years of the Weimar Republic, divide the class into groups, each tasked with looking at a different cultural aspect. For example, art, music, architecture, film. Within each category, find as many different groups of people affected.
- Class debate: 'Were there some cultural categories that affected only a few social groups?', 'Were there some that affected a greater number?' For some identified groups (such as women), were the cultural changes more significant – why? Were there some social groups that did not feature at all in any cultural category?
- Students might build upon this work on cultural change to answer the question 'To what extent was there significant cultural and social change in Germany in the years 1924 to 1929?'
- Students might produce a bar graph showing cultural and social change for each social group, including women, Jewish people, workers, and farmers; the development of the Nazi Party 1924-29. Students debate why some groups saw more change than others.

- Opposition to social change. Write a letter to a newspaper in Germany in which you complain about the social changes that you see occurring. Ensure that you include specific details of exactly what you oppose and why.
- Chart changes to the Nazi Party during the years 1924 to 1929 by writing out a timeline in which the events are labelled. For each event, give a brief description and explain why it is worthy of mention.

The impact of the Depression on Weimar democracy

Suggested timing

4 hours

Specification content

The impact of the Depression on Weimar democracy: the rise of extremism; the activities of the SA; the appeal of Hitler to different groups in society, such as workers, farmers, the unemployed, Nationalists, rich industrialists, women and the young; opposition to Weimar culture; the failure of democracy; Hitler becomes Chancellor, 1933.

Teaching guidance

- The focus should be on how the Depression changed Weimar Germany, focusing on notions of change and continuity from the Golden Age of Weimar 1924 to 1929.
- Students should consider how these elements contributed to the rise of extremist parties and what effect this extremism had on the different social groups identified in the previous section.
- Develop your students' understanding of how different groups in Germany were affected by exploring each in depth and by making relative judgments.
- The emphasis should be on the reasons for the increasing popularity of the Nazi Party within and across social groups and how far the Depression can therefore explain the increasing popularity of extremism in the period.

Possible teaching and learning activities

- Centres could organise their teaching around the enquiry question: 'What impact did the Depression have on Weimar Germany?'
- Students research the economic consequences of the Depression, being sure to differentiate from the problems of Hyperinflation in 1924. Students might be given multiple cards detailing various economic impacts of depression. For each identified social group, they need to match as many cards as possible to it.
- Class debate: 'Were all social groups affected by the Depression?', 'Were some social groups affected more than others?'
- Looking back to the previous section where opposition to cultural change was examined, students research the aims of the Nazi Party and explain why it appealed to those concerned by the social change of the 1920s.
- Students might also be asked to reflect on the weaknesses of the Weimar Constitution considered in the first section and explain why the system of Proportional Representation added to the appeal of anyone promising firm leadership.
- Students might be shown various Nazi propaganda posters from the election years in the early 1930s. Students examine what they had in common and how they addressed the concerns of particular groups, including workers, farmers, the unemployed, Nationalists, rich industrialists, women and the young.

- Students draw up a table for each of the elections from 1929 to 1932. The table might indicate the results of each election, the change in the distribution of the vote from the previous election, and try to indicate reasons why this might be the case.
- Class debate: 'Did Hitler's policy of using the ballot box rather than the violence of a putsch bring any success?'
- Students might research the SA and indicate a list of reasons why people might have wished to join. Here is an opportunity to prioritise a range of factors and indicate if there was one factor that was more significant than any other.
- Students might consider the more radical credentials of the SA and debate why such social radicalism appealed to different sections of German society. Rohm's criticism of Hitler becoming too friendly to the elites might be utilised here for some empathetic work in which students wrote a letter from Rohm to Hitler in 1932 explaining why he thinks the SA is a vital part of the Nazi drive for power and listing disappointments with the achievements of Hitler to date.
- The back stairs diplomacy of Von Papen and Von Schleicher presents further opportunity for display work or written empathetic work. For example, students might write a letter from Von Schleicher to Hindenburg in which he sets out the failures of Von Papen and why he could do a better job in preventing Hitler gaining power. This might also be set up as a scripted debate between von Papen and von Schleicher in the presence of Hindenburg with each advocating that they had the solution to the problem of Hitler.
- To draw their learning together, students could make notes why Hitler may have appealed to each different group named in the specification: including workers, farmers, the unemployed, Nationalists, rich industrialists, women and the young.
- Students might debate the broad question: explain why Hitler became Chancellor in January 1933. Students might be divided according to a variety of argued positions. For example, some might advocate it was predominantly the result of the tactics of the Nazi party, others that it was the personal appeal of Hitler, others it was the failure of Weimar democracy.
- An alternative class debate might be: 'How far was it the actions of individuals that explains Hitler becoming Chancellor in January 1933?' This allows for a broader discussion about the role of individuals in history and how far they determine the course of events.

Review and assessment of Part 1

Suggested timing

1 hour

Specification content

Review and assessment of Part 1: Weimar Germany 1919-1933.

Assessment guidance

- This is the opportunity to develop your students' exam technique and to test their learning so far.
- You can use exam-style questions based on the content of Part 1.
- For second order concept questions, analyse students' effectiveness when writing Point/Evidence/Explanation paragraphs in answer to an 'explain' style question.

Resources

Specimen papers and Activities sections of the OUP textbook.

Part 2: Hitler's Germany, 1933-45

The impact of Hitler's dictatorship:

Suggested timing

5 hours

Specification content

The impact of Hitler's dictatorship: the elimination of opposition, including communists and socialists; the Enabling Act; the suppression of political parties and trade unions; the role of the SA; the police state, including Himmler, the SS and Gestapo; concentration camps; Goebbels and propaganda, censorship and the media; control of churches and religion; education and the impact on young people; opposition and resistance to the Third Reich, including the White Rose group, Swing Youth, the Edelweiss Pirates, and the July bomb plot, 1944.

Teaching guidance

- The focus should be on how the freedoms and liberties of different social groups were affected by Hitler's dictatorship. The political consequences of dictatorship are important to consider; the focus remains the impact that these policies had on life in Germany and how it changed in the period.
- Much of the early focus is on the means by which the Nazis consolidated power by the removal of potential groups of opposition. This requires some awareness that opposition took many forms and students should be able to recognise that different groups were dealt with differently.
- Teaching would develop students' understanding of how the use of force, propaganda, censorship and the use of the secret police combined, but encourage an awareness that a number of Germans, possibly as a result of indoctrination, actually supported the Nazis and agreed with suppression of opposition. Coverage would include some consideration of how effective Hitler was in removing opposition. This might be combined with consideration of the opposition and resistance groups and the July Bomb plot.

Possible teaching and learning activities

- Centres could organise their teaching around the enquiry question: 'What was the impact of the Nazi attempts to consolidate power on life in Germany?'
- Students might benefit from producing a chronology of events detailing the development of the dictatorship, January 1933 to August 1934. On a timeline, students identify key events and for each explain how they helped to consolidate Hitler's power. Alternatively, students might be given the list of key events of the period and asked to place them in a hierarchy of importance.
- Students might develop their awareness of the Enabling Act by embarking on an

empathetic exercise in which they write a speech encouraging members of the Reichstag to vote for the Enabling Act. Subsequent class discussion might then question how far intimidation and coercion, rather than speeches, explain the passing of the Enabling Act.

- Students might consider the Night of the Long Knives in some detail. Students might be tasked with writing a news report for a British newspaper detailing the events, but also making statements about what the action says about Hitler and his tactics.
- Students might be set the question: 'Why did the Night of the Long Knives take place?' Students should use this exercise as an opportunity to practice the skill of prioritisation. Alternatively, students might be encouraged to answer in terms of long and short term factors.
- The role of the SS and the Gestapo combined with the broader role of the Nazi state might be practiced by giving students a series of cards with different activities on them. Students sort these cards into: activities that were allowed; activities that were not allowed. Once this has been done, students can further develop their knowledge by trying to establish when each activity was banned and the reason for doing so.
- An important part of the terror state might be an awareness that, for many in Germany, it was the fear that an activity was banned that explains much of the conformism. From the list of activities used in the previous activity, students might be asked to re-examine the list of activities that were not banned and discuss if they were nevertheless activities that you would choose to do in the context of the Nazi terror state.
- This section provides plenty of opportunities to examine the role of Goebbels and state propaganda. Distribute various types of visual propaganda and discuss how many messages each conveys – for example is it militaristic, does it focus on indoctrination, does it have a message about racial or social hierarchy? After this, students could complete a profile of Goebbels using textbooks and/or materials from carefully chosen websites.
- Changes to education might be reinforced by asking students to draw up a timetable of a school prospectus for a school in Nazi Germany. Include the type of learning each subject will involve and the number of lessons each subject has per week.
- Students might examine the Hitler Youth in more detail. Membership remained voluntary up to 1939, but clearly involved a great deal of peer group pressure to join. Students might design a recruitment poster for the Hitler Youth or for the League of German Girls. Include as many reasons as possible why an individual might join.
- When considering opposition to the regime, students might be asked to research each group: the Swing Youth, the Edelweiss Pirates, the White Rose group. Students draw up a table listing who each group appealed to, the methods they deployed and how effective they were.
- Students draw up the charge sheet against the members of the July Plot. Alternatively, they might draft a letter written by a leading member of the plot to encourage a compatriot to join him in the plot. Include why he feels it necessary to take such extreme action, what the plan is, and what he hopes the outcome will be.
- Students might then practice the high tariff question: 'The greatest impact of the Nazi dictatorship 1933-1945 was on the young 'How far do you agree with this view?' Students should complete a table showing the impact on the young, and perhaps some awareness of whether this impact changed over time. This table is then completed using material about other social groups acquired in the next topic.

The impact of Nazi social, racial and economic policies on different groups:

Suggested timing

5 hours

Specification content

The impact of Nazi social, racial and economic policies on different groups: changes in culture; public work programmes and their impact; rearmament and conscription; the impact on big business, farmers and the middle class; the experience of women; Nazi policies towards Jewish people, including the 'Final Solution'; Nazi policies towards other marginalised groups, including the Roma and Sinti.

Teaching Guidance

- Develop your students' understanding of this sensitive topic by building upon the material covered in the previous topic and thinking of how different groups had different experiences the young.
- Opportunities exist here to cover the racial policies in depth and to consider the development of antisemitism culminating in the Final Solution.
- There is also the opportunity to consider the effect of Nazi rule on other marginalized groups such as the Roma, the Sinti, as well as those with disabilities. Whilst it is appropriate to consider the effect on marginalized groups as a whole, it is important to consider the effect on each individual group in some detail.
- The teaching of such emotive and sensitive topics requires careful planning. The Holocaust Education Trust has produced a set of principles for the teaching of this topic which can be found here: [Educational principles](#)

Possible teaching and learning activities

- In teaching the first part of this section, students might focus on the overall enquiry question: 'How far did Nazi rule impact the lives of the German people?'
- For each social group (women, farmers, the unemployed and the middle class), students add detail to their previous table on the effect on the young detailing what changes occurred, why they happened and the effect of these changes.
- Students might be allocated one social group to produce a class presentation on how that group was affected by Nazi Rule. Alternatively, there is opportunity here for class display work detailing the experiences of different social groups.
- An important question to help develop this theme might be to identify if any social groups benefitted from Nazi rule. This then prompts a class discussion about how change does not necessarily imply improvement. There is scope for sensitive handling of the debate 'Which of the groups studied so far benefitted most from Nazi rule and which did the worst?'
- Students might design adverts for the Strength Through Joy program encouraging workers to collect their vouchers for foreign holidays and also the Volkswagen. Ensure

that the overall message of the benefits the Nazis claimed to give to workers is covered in the presentation.

- In a similar way, presentation work might be tasked to encourage women to fulfil the traditional Nazi role of the three Ks. Again, specific reference to historical elements such as the Mother's Cross should be included.
- Students could be encouraged to think about the role of women in more depth. Did the Nazi policy to women change over time, and if so, did that mean that the original policy was flawed? Students might then be tasked with designing another presentation to complement that of the previous bullet point. Here the poster might be encouraging women into the work place to do war work but also ensure that women still fulfil their traditional homebuilding role.
- Students produce a spider diagram of the role of women in Nazi Germany identifying whether the identified factor applied only to the early part of the rule, the later, or was applicable throughout.
- Turning to the study of the events of the holocaust, students might produce a timeline of the development of anti-Jewish policy in Nazi Germany detailing each significant event between 1933-1945. Once completed, students might identify turning points and explain why they have identified the event as important in this regard.
- Students might research in detail the Einsatzgruppen possibly considering a simplified exercise looking at Brown's *Police Battalion 101*. Class debate might revolve around the concept of motivation and why people committed terrible crimes.
- Students should then research the Nazi policies towards other marginalized groups, including the Nazi genocide of the Roma and Sinti communities. Students may focus on materials relating to the Roma and Sinti Holocaust Memorial Day, which is commemorated on the 2nd August every year.
- In order to provide appropriate consideration of the experience of different communities, students could also research the Nazi T-4 program and action against those with disabilities.
- Students might consider the Wannsee Conference. While teachers must avoid any empathetic exercise in relation to this, there is plenty of debate on how significant the conference was in the context of the development of the holocaust. Students might research the attendees and produce biographies of Heydrich, and of Eichmann. Task students with finding out what was decided at Wannsee and if, therefore, it represents a turning point.
- Students might produce an account based on research on conditions in the Warsaw Ghetto, detailing with as much evidence as possible what the life of an inhabitant was like.
- Students might develop knowledge of the Final Solution by researching the many contemporary accounts of the Final Solution. If deemed appropriate, students might consider the images of the liberation of Belsen and how this evidence was used at the Nuremberg trials at the end of war.
- A more advanced study might consider the 'crooked road to Auschwitz' thesis and lead students in class debate about how far the mass murder of the Jews was as result of a conscious and deliberate plan of the Nazi regime from the very start.

The effect of war on the civilian population and the economy

Suggested timing

2 hours

Specification content

The effect of war on the civilian population and the economy: bombing, rationing and propaganda; labour shortages; refugees; the end of the Nazi regime.

Teaching guidance

- The focus should be on the impact the Second World War had on the German people and the economy.
- Looking back, there is an opportunity here to compare the impact of the Second World War with the period to 1939 and to discuss how significant any changes were.
- The focus should also be on how the war led to a gradual deterioration in the conditions of different social groups, perhaps with a continued awareness that some groups were more badly affected than others, but that certain events such as the bombing campaigns were common to most.

Possible teaching and learning activities

- Students might focus on the overall enquiry question: 'What impact did the Second World War have on the civilian population and economy of Germany?' A presentation might offer contrasting views about how far the Second World War brought about a change in people's lives.
- Students research the demands of the war economy, especially the concentration on total war. Students might explain why, when facing their enemies, Germany in particular, struggled to keep up production.
- Students might prepare a presentation on the demands of the War economy and how far those demands were met. A very detailed presentation might chart how effectively the economy responded to those demands as the war progressed. This is an opportunity to consider change over time and to re-emphasise that, in a period of considerable change, it is unlikely that themes and factors remain consistent.
- Use card sorts or similar exercises such as Diamond 9s to encourage students to compare the importance of different factors and practice reaching supported judgements.
- Students might identify the major cities hit by bombing campaigns on a map of Germany and label the number of bombs dropped and the effect for each city. This information is available through a number of websites. Alternatively, students might look at an individual city in detail, such as Hamburg or Dresden and produce a presentation on the effect of bombing campaigns there. A further development of this exercise would be to consider how far the experiences of these individual cities were typical of the experience of all.
- Students might produce a chart of foods rationed in Germany. Detail when they were

rationed from. Write a brief report on which rationed items had the greatest impact on German lives.

- On a map of Europe, students might research the movements of people at the end of the war. Alternatively, provide students with a map of showing arrows of movement – students to match the correct group with the correct arrow.
- Students might consider the experience of Germans in Berlin as the Russian forces advance. Write an account from the perspective of a Berlin citizen detailing their concerns as the Russian forces advance.
- To summarise the unit, students might write a retrospective from the perspective of a German civilian detailing their experiences during the war years. An alternative might be to write this retrospective from the viewpoint of different social groups.

Review and assessment of Part 2

Suggested timing

1 hour

Assessment guidance

- This is the opportunity to develop your students' exam technique and to test their learning on the content of Part 2.
- You could use this as an opportunity to develop their understanding of how to answer AO1/AO2 questions such as the 6 and 9 mark questions and the bullet-point 12 mark evaluative question.
- Discuss exam technique with your students. Use low tariff questions to check acquisition of knowledge.
- For second order concept questions, analyse students' effectiveness when writing Point/Evidence/Explanation paragraphs in answer to an 'explain' style question.

Part 3: Post Second World War Germany, 1945-1949

Peoples' problems at the end of the Second World War

Suggested timing

3 hours

Specification content

Peoples' problems at the end of the Second World War: refugees, living conditions and forced labour; Allied control and the division of Germany; denazification and the Nuremberg Trials; the expulsions of ethnic Germans; penalties imposed on the Soviet zone and sector, including reparations.

Teaching guidance

- The focus should be on the consequences of the war for German people in the years 1945 to 1949.
- Opportunities here to retrace the threads for groups of Germans studied throughout the course - which groups saw the most and least changes to their lives?
- Coverage would include both the effect of war and of Nazism on post war reconstruction.
- Students should have an awareness of the broader context of the experience of German people from 1919 and be able to chart how life had improved or deteriorated across the broad sweep of the period.
- The focus should also be on the key features of German life and the contrasting experiences of different groups.

Possible teaching and learning activities

- Students might focus on the overall enquiry question: 'Did the life of the Germans get worse after the end of the Second World War?'
- Students might add to the map showing refugees used at the end of the previous unit to add the movement of people up to 1949. A particular focus here might be the experience of Germany's Jewish population and how many returned to a life in Germany after 1945.
- Students might study the accounts of German people in a variety of cities in the years 1945 to 1949. 'Were there common themes/concerns raised in contemporary accounts?'
- An interesting line would be to research what happened to a number of Nazi leaders at the end of the war. For those captured, further research on the Nuremberg trials would be useful. Perhaps holding a mock trial in class or just give students the opportunity to

write the prosecution speech for the trial of named individuals or of the Nazi regime in general.

- On a map of Europe, students might illustrate the territorial changes that occurred to Germany at the end of the war. For each area or region, label how many German people now found themselves under the control of another country. Students might make comparisons with the start of the course and the territorial adjustments of the Treaty of Versailles.
- Denazification might prompt a class debate, which brings in themes addressed earlier in the course. 'How might groups indoctrinated by the Nazi regime respond to the policy of denazification?' Consider the attempts by the US and British forces to bring Nazis to trial. Develop a class debate in response to the question: 'How do you define a Nazi?' Explain the problems of using membership of the party in a totalitarian regime as the key definition.
- Students might research the 'paper clip' mission of the US forces and possibly use this information in a presentation about how the experiences of leading ex-Nazis varied after the war, with some positively rewarded for what they did in war.
- An important area perhaps to develop will be how the experiences of different Germans in the zones of Germany began to diverge. Was the experience of Germans in the British zone, for example, different to those in the Soviet zone? This then links as a line of thought to the next section.

The impact of the Cold War on Germany:

Suggested timings

2 hours

Specification content

The impact of the Cold War on Germany: the Marshall Plan and its impact; life for Berliners during the Berlin Blockade; the creation of the Federal Republic and GDR.

Teaching guidance

- The focus should be on the impact of political and geo-political events on the people of Germany.
- Some broader awareness of what the Cold War was and the reasons for the political division of Germany will be useful but the focus remains on the impact of such events within Germany.
- There are opportunities here to reinforce the notion that a change in people's lives within a country may occur because of events driven from outside.

Possible teaching and learning activities

- Students might focus on the overall enquiry question: 'How far did the development of the Cold War in the years 1945 to 1949 affect the life of people in Germany?'
- Students may be unaware of the term Cold War and so a brief overview of its causes and the notable events in the years 1945 to 1949 will help to develop understanding of its impact.
- The division of Germany should have been covered in a previous section, but an awareness of what the Soviet Union wanted to happen to the divided Germany and how that compared to US ambitions might be useful.
- Students might then develop the idea of how that political division was deepened to a social and economic one as a result of the Marshall Plan.
- In assessing the Marshall Plan, students might be tasked with writing the report of Secretary of State Marshall as he visited Europe. In addition, this report might include recommendations as to why a plan of economic aid might be beneficial to both Europe and to the USA.
- Students might be given economic statistics for the situation in the western zones and the Soviet Zone. Students are asked which zone seemed more in need of assistance and which zone received assistance.
- The Berlin Blockade provides plenty of opportunity for display work or for constructed news reports about what life was like in Berlin during the blockade. Students might make comparisons between life in Berlin under the blockade, during the final years of Nazi rule, during the years 1933 to 1939, and under the Weimar republic. Students might practice the notion of change and determine if the situation in Berlin consistently declined throughout the whole period or whether it was subject to periods of improvement and decay.

- Here is an opportunity to present history through the eyes of an individual. Encourage students to imagine they are a Berlin resident born c1900. They explain how their life changed from the end of their teenage years to middle age in 1949.
This might illicit a range of different viewpoints from students from which interesting comparisons might be made. A more advanced version of the exercise might include allocating a specific social group. For example, a woman, a businessman, someone unemployed, someone living in the east of Berlin, and ask for the account to be written from that perspective.
- Discussion might then involve tying together the period as a whole and questioning how far life for people in Germany changed in the years 1919 to 1949.

Review and assessment of Part 3

Suggested timing

1 hour

Assessment guidance

- This is the opportunity to review and assess Parts 1, 2 and 3 and to develop your students' exam techniques.
- Give your students a Section A question from one of the specimen papers.