



## The 'write an account' question



Write an account of how events in Abyssinia became an international crisis in the years 1934 to 1936.

8 marks

### Sample student answer

The situation in Abyssinia became an international crisis because Mussolini invaded the capital, Addis Ababa, and during his invasion he used chemicals to terrorise people into surrendering. The fact that Mussolini was willing to act in an inhumane way made people question what other regulations he would ignore.

Another reason events in Abyssinia became an international crisis was because Britain and France were seen to undermine the League of Nations. The Hoare-Laval Plan was leaked by the press, exposing the fact that the foreign ministers of the two most powerful members of the League were willing to give in to Mussolini, by offering him land in Abyssinia in order to end the invasion. Although the plan was never realised, it led to international crisis – the League was meant to prevent war, yet key members were willing to ignore Mussolini's act of war in order to keep him as an ally against Hitler. This undermined the League, made it look weak, and led to crisis as people felt that they could no longer put their faith in collective security – each country wanted to look after their self interests and could not be relied upon to support others to prevent war.

#### EXAMINER TIP



You must organise your answer in a sensible manner. It's a good idea to explain events in chronological order, but here the student has started with the final invasion. Always plan your answer, to make sure that your ideas are in chronological order.

#### EXAMINER TIP



The student has linked back to the question, using the same words – this helps focus their answer and to explain why Abyssinia caused international crisis.

#### EXAMINER TIP



To get into Level 3 and 4, an answer must explain more than one example. Here the student has explained a second crisis. However, to achieve a Level 4 the candidate would need to show links between the stages of the crisis, rather than talking about two events and treating them as being separate from each other.

#### OVERALL COMMENT

This answer achieves a Level 3. It is well focused on the question, by giving an explanation at the end of each point. To achieve a Level 4, the student would need to organise their answer – so that events flow in chronological order – and explain each stage of the crisis, showing how one event led to another, causing tension to grow.

#### OVER TO YOU



- 1 Have a go at answering the question yourself. Try to think about the other events that caused the crisis in Abyssinia in 1934–36: can you link the events to each other to show how one caused the next? You should spend around 10 minutes on your answer.
- 2 Review your answer. Did you...
  - explain at least two events concerning Abyssinia that caused crisis in 1934–36?
  - make sure that the events are dealt with in chronological order?
  - make sure your answer is focused on the question by using the same wording in your answer?
  - make links between each event to show how tension grew?

Go back to pages 36–39 to help refresh your knowledge of the Abyssinian crisis.



## The 'how far do you agree' question



'Appeasement was the main reason for the outbreak of the Second World War.'  
How far do you agree with this statement? Explain your answer.

16 marks SPaG 4 marks

## EXAMINER TIP

Don't forget that you can pick up more marks here for showing the examiner that you can use spelling, punctuation and grammar correctly. It is worth factoring in some time to check your answer at the end. Make sure you write in paragraphs and that you use capital letters for proper nouns. Try to use historical terms – the glossary at the back of this book can help you become familiar with terms that could be useful in your exam.

## Sample student answer

Although some historians disagree, it is my belief that appeasement was not the main reason for the outbreak of war, but it was a mistake as it allowed Hitler the time and confidence to prepare for war, so it was a contributing factor. I believe that the main cause of the Second World War was actually the Treaty of Versailles, as it was this that led to Hitler's aggressive foreign policy.

Hitler's foreign policy including taking Lebensraum or 'living space'. Germany had lost 10% of its land in the Treaty of Versailles, so Hitler and many of his supporters felt that they were entitled to reclaim it. Hitler was determined to take Lebensraum from Eastern European countries, which led to him invading places like Czechoslovakia and Poland. If it wasn't for the Treaty of Versailles taking land from Germany, Hitler may not have invaded other countries, so there would have been no need for appeasement.

However, reclaiming the land Germany lost to Poland in 1919, by invading it in 1939, was the spark that led to war. Britain and France had signed agreements saying that they would protect Poland, so when Hitler invaded they had to act and this was the main reason for the outbreak of the Second World War.

It was also the Treaty of Versailles that led to Britain following the policy of appeasement towards Hitler. For example, when Hitler remilitarised the Rhineland in 1936 the British response was that it was fine to do this, as it was reasonable for Hitler to 'march into his own back garden'. British politicians believed that the terms of the Treaty of Versailles were too harsh and so it was fine to let Hitler get away with breaking the terms of the treaty. Similarly, when Hitler achieved Anschluss with Austria in 1938, Britain did not act because it believed that the treaty had been too harsh by preventing two countries with a shared heritage from uniting. Anschluss was therefore ignored, and an opportunity to stop Hitler on his path to war was missed.

## EXAMINER TIP

Don't spend too long on an introduction as you're unlikely to pick up many marks in this section. However, in order to sustain your judgment throughout your answer, it is important to make your overall opinion clear from the start of your essay, like the student has done here. If you want to achieve a Level 4, it is important that your overall view is apparent all the way through your response.

## EXAMINER TIP

The candidate has used lots of good, detailed factual knowledge to support their ideas. They are also using historical terminology like 'Lebensraum' which may help improve their SPaG mark.

## EXAMINER TIP

Look at how the student links their ideas back to the question at the end of each paragraph. This helps them to make sure that they are explaining their answer rather than simply giving a narrative of events.





However, the statement is true in so much as appeasement contributed to the outbreak of war. Appeasement meant that Hitler grew confident and took greater risks. For example, when he remilitarised the Rhineland in 1936, Hitler's advisers warned him that if he was challenged Germany was not strong enough to win. If British or French soldiers had acted in any way to stop Hitler he would have had to withdraw. However, because they did not, Hitler was able to remilitarise and realised that he could break international law (the Treaty of Versailles) without punishment. This meant that he was able to go on to achieve Anschluss, and when he was once more appeased he went on to the Sudetenland and then Czechoslovakia. Therefore appeasement was a factor in causing the war because those who appeased Hitler missed opportunities to stop him when he was weak, which meant that he was able to grow more confident and to become more powerful.

However, my reason for questioning that appeasement was the main reason for the outbreak of war is that without the other factors like the harsh terms of the Treaty of Versailles, the Depression or Hitler's aggressive foreign policy, there would have been no need for Britain and France to have followed the policy of appeasement. Therefore, I believe that the harsh nature of the Treaty of Versailles was the only reason the policy of appeasement was followed in the first place. Without the harsh treaty, which even David Lloyd George and Woodrow Wilson had said was too harsh when they signed it, Hitler would have had no reason for developing a foreign policy which could only be achieved with aggression, invasion of other countries, and ultimately war, and it was only the British feeling that Germany should be allowed to act this way because the treaty had been unfair that prevented them from acting earlier.

**EXAMINER TIP**

It's important that you explain both the factor in the statement and others. Look at how the candidate has explained the policy of appeasement, even though they disagree with the statement overall.

**EXAMINER TIP**

If you have time, it's a good idea to try to explain more than one piece of evidence for each side of the argument. Here the candidate has only explained one reason appeasement can be seen as a cause of the war. Adding a second would strengthen the answer.

**EXAMINER TIP**

Here the candidate has come to a very clear final judgment, evaluating the weaknesses of other factors to explain why one reason is more significant than the others.

**OVERALL COMMENT**

This answer would achieve a Level 4. The student has explained why the statement is true, but has also analysed other factors, and has a clear and sustained judgment that runs all the way through the answer.

To strengthen the response the student could add further evidence explaining how appeasement led to the outbreak of war. This would achieve a higher mark within Level 4.



## OVER TO YOU

- 1 Explanation is the key to getting a good level in this type of question. Go through the answer and underline each time the student explains by linking their ideas back to the question.
- 2 Create a flashcard summarising the evidence and arguments that you could use if you were asked this question in the exam.
- 3 Now that you've read an example of a top level response, revisit one of the 'How far do you agree' essays that you've written in the past (there are lots of examples in this book) and see if you can improve it.
- 4 Review your answer. Did you...
  - include both sides of the argument
  - mention specific evidence – events, dates etc. – to support your ideas?
  - link back to the question at the end of each paragraph to help you to explain your ideas?
  - contain accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar?
  - include a clear judgement that runs all the way through your answer?

Go back to Chapters 7–9 to help refresh your knowledge of the causes of the Second World War.

## EXAMINER TIP

Be careful in the exam; read the questions carefully and make sure that you always answer what is asked, rather than a question you've revised.