

A Level History A

Unit Y315

The Changing Nature of Warfare 1792–1945

Sample Question Paper

Version 0.15

Date – Morning/Afternoon

Time allowed: 2 hours 30 minutes



OCR supplied materials:

- 12 page Answer Booklet

Other materials required:

- None



First name											
Last name											
Centre number							Candidate number				

INSTRUCTIONS

- Use black ink.
- Complete the boxes above with your name, centre number and candidate number.
- Answer Question 1 in Section A and any 2 questions in Section B.
- Write your answer to each question on the Answer Booklet.
- Do **not** write in the bar codes.

INFORMATION

- The total mark for this paper is **80**.
- The marks for each question are shown in brackets [].
- Quality of extended responses will be assessed in questions marked with an asterisk (*).
- This document consists of **4** pages.

Section A

Read the two passages and then answer Question 1.

- 1 Evaluate the interpretations in both of the two passages and explain which you think is more convincing as an explanation of British generalship in the First World War.

[30]

Passage A

Douglas Haig was 'brilliant to the top of his Army boots'. David Lloyd George's view sums up the attitude of many people towards Haig and other British generals of World War One. They were, supposedly, 'donkeys': moustachioed incompetents. However, an undeniable fact is that Britain and its allies, not Germany, won the First World War. Moreover, Haig's army played the leading role in defeating the German forces in the crucial battles of 1918. In terms of the numbers of German divisions engaged, the numbers of prisoners and guns captured, the importance of the stakes and the toughness of the enemy, the 1918 'Hundred Days' campaign rates as the greatest series of victories in British history. Even the Somme (1916) and Passchendaele (1917), battles that have become by-words for murderous futility, not only had sensible strategic rationales but qualified as British strategic successes, not least in the amount of attritional damage they inflicted on the Germans. No one denies that the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) had a bloody learning curve, or that generals made mistakes that had catastrophic consequences. However, before dismissing the generals as mere incompetent buffoons, we must establish the context.

Adapted from: G. Sheffield, *The Western Front: Lions Led by Donkeys?*, published in 2011

Passage B

In the months following the Battle of the Aisne, and consequently right up until the winter of 1917, the British commanders were to make every effort, spending the lives of their men recklessly, to reproduce the sort of conditions of open warfare and cavalry country that had confronted them on the Aisne in the autumn of 1914. But their handling of operations at this time gives no confidence that they would have been any more efficient or imaginative, had their wish been granted, than they were in coping with siege-like condition that set in. So it was that, as the leaves fell and the ground turned to mud and the German howitzers with their twelve-horse teams plodded patiently up to the line, the British army was poised on the abyss. It could be saved only by a reckless squandering of the virtues which, like its delusions, sprang from a background of peace and a stable, ordered society. Bravery, perfect discipline, absolute conviction of right and wrong and the existence of God; a whole code of behaviour that is now little more than an object of derision – these were to be pitted against the largest and the most highly trained army in the world. It could only be hoped that the British officers would profit rapidly from experience. Instead, with unimaginative and poorly executed plans they achieved little at huge cost to their men and to the nation.

Adapted from: A. Clark, *The Donkeys*, published in 1991

Section B

Answer **TWO** of the following three questions.

2* 'The organisation of armies was the main factor in determining the outcome of wars.' How far do you agree with this view of warfare in the period from 1792 to 1945?

[25]

3* Assess the impact of developments in communication and transport on the conduct of war in the period from 1792 to 1945.

[25]

4* How important were manpower and resources in determining the outcome of war in the period from 1792 to 1945?

[25]

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