

Pearson Edexcel GCSE (9–1)

History

Paper 3: Modern depth study

Option 32: Mao's China, c1945–76

Specimen assessment materials for first teaching
September 2016

Sources/Interpretations Booklet

Paper Reference

1HI0/32

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Sources/interpretations for use with Section B.

Source B: From a speech by Zhou Enlai, in January 1959, about the Great Leap Forward. He was a leading member of the Chinese Government.

In the past year a big leap forward took place in industry and agriculture in China. This leap forward in industry and agriculture promoted the development of an ever growing movement to set up people's communes. In turn, these communes have given encouragement to a still bigger leap forward in industry and agriculture. In 1958, China's steel output reached over 11 million tonnes, double that of 1957. Grain output also more than doubled, reaching more than 375 million tonnes.

Source C: From an account about the Great Leap Forward by a scientist from the USSR, published in 1964. He was working in China during the Great Leap Forward.

The peasants were not in the fields during the spring planting season. They were carrying out the orders of the Party, working day and night at the mines and at their home-made blast furnaces. This was to fulfil the 'Drive to Produce Metals Locally' campaign. We all know the results. They did not obtain any more steel than before and there was much less bread and rice. According to the official figure, four million tonnes of steel were processed in 1958. Of this amount, only 1% could be used. The remaining 99% was unwashed ore, or, even more often, a pure invention of the government.

Interpretation 1: From *China Since 1900*, by J Brooman, published in 2001.

The 'backyard steel' campaign failed. Three million of the 11 million tonnes of steel made in backyard furnaces were too impure for industrial use and had to be thrown away as scrap. But worse was to come. Eventually, so many furnaces were built that one person in ten had to be employed in making steel. This took people away from the fields reducing the amount of food that could be grown. The furnaces also used so much of the country's coal supplies that railway locomotives had no fuel to run on.

Interpretation 2: From *The Great Leap Forward*, a GCSE history website.

By the end of 1958, 700 million people had been placed into 26,578 communes. The speed with which this was achieved was astounding. The Great Leap Forward encouraged communes to set up "backyard" steel production plants. 600,000 of these backyard furnaces produced steel for the communes. When all of these furnaces were working, they added a considerable amount of steel to China's annual total – 11 million tonnes. The figures for steel, coal, chemicals, timber and cement all showed huge rises. The production of grain and cotton production also showed major increases.

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