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About this guide

This guide explains what you need to know about your Cambridge International AS & A Level History course and examinations.

This guide will help you to:

- understand what skills you should develop by taking this AS & A Level course
- understand how you will be assessed
- understand what we are looking for in the answers you write
- plan your revision programme
- revise, by providing revision tips and an interactive revision checklist (Section 5).

Following a Cambridge International AS & A level programme will help you to develop abilities that universities value highly including: a deep understanding of your subject; higher-order thinking skills (analysis, critical thinking, problem solving); presenting ordered and coherent arguments; and independent learning and research.

Studying Cambridge International AS & A Level History will help you to develop a set of transferable skills, including the ability to: work with factual information; think logically and independently; consider accuracy; model situations historically; analyse results and reflect on findings.

Our approach in Cambridge International AS & A Level History encourages learners, you, to be:

confident, developing the ability to analyse, explain and evaluate historical issues and arguments

responsible, acquiring knowledge and skills through independent reading and enquiry

reflective, reflecting on their growing understanding of how history works and making links with new areas of study

innovative, improving their historical understanding through dealing with sources and interpretations of past events from different perspectives

engaged, developing their interest in history and broadening their knowledge and understanding of different perspectives.

This section gives you an outline of the syllabus content for this course. Talk to your teacher to make sure you know which components and topics you will be taking.

Content section	Assessment component	Topics included
Modern Europe, 1750–1921	Paper 1 and 2	Europe: France (1774–1814), The Industrial Revolution in Britain (1750–1850), Liberalism and nationalism in Germany (1815–71), The Russian Revolution (1894–1921)
The history of the USA, 1820–1941		USA: The origins of the Civil War (1820–61), Civil War and Reconstruction (1861–77), The Gilded Age and Progressive Era (1870s to 1920), The Great Crash, The Great Depression and the New Deal policies (1920–41)
International history, 1870–1945		International: Empire and the emergence of world powers (1870–1919), The League of Nations and international relations in the 1920s and in the 1930s, China and Japan (1912–45)
The origins of the First World War	Paper 3	Tension between the Great Powers including the Moroccan Crises, The alliance system, The growth of militarism, the arm race, Instability in Balkans, War plans, the assassination at Sarajevo and July crisis, Mobilisation and declarations of war
The Holocaust		The background of European and German anti-semitism and persecution of the Jews, 1933–41, The impact of war on Nazi policy towards the Jews, Ghettoisation and Jewish responses to Age]

Section 2: How you will be assessed

Cambridge International AS Level History makes up the first half of the Cambridge International A Level course in history and provides a foundation for the study of history at Cambridge International A Level.

About the examinations

For AS Level you will take Paper 1 and Paper 2.

For the full A Level you will take Paper 1 and Paper 2, as well as Paper 3 and Paper 4.

Find out from your teacher which papers you will be taking and when you will be taking them.

About the papers

The table gives you further information about the examination papers:

Component	Time and marks	Questions	Percentage of qualification
Paper 1	1 hour 15 minutes 40 marks	<u>Document question</u> Answer one two-part document question from one of the options given. You must answer both parts of the question you choose.	40% of the AS Level 20% of the A Level
Paper 2	1 hour 45 minutes 60 marks	<u>Outline study</u> Answer two two-part questions from a choice of three on one of the options given. You must answer both parts of the questions you choose.	60% of the AS Level 30% of the A Level
Paper 3	1 hour 15 minutes 40 marks	<u>Interpretations question</u> Answer one interpretations question from one of the options given.	20% of the A Level
Paper 4	1 hour 45 minutes 60 marks	<u>Depth study</u> Answer two questions on your depth study.	30% of the A Level

Below is a typical page taken from one of the papers.

The examiners take account of the following skills areas (assessment objectives) in the examinations:

Assessment objectives (AO)	What does the AO mean?
AO1 Knowledge and application: Recall, select and deploy historical knowledge appropriately and effectively.	Be able to remember and organise relevant knowledge to answer specific historical questions and organise arguments.
AO2 Understanding of the past and key concepts: Demonstrate an understanding of the past through explanation, analysis and a substantiated judgement of key concepts: causation, consequence, continuity, change and significance within an historical context, the relationships between key features and characteristics of the periods studied.	Your answers need to show you understand how to use historical knowledge to support your arguments using factors such as significance or one of the other key concepts given.
AO3 Evaluation of source material: Analyse, evaluate and interpret a range of appropriate source material.	You need to be able to read a document or source and use it to answer a question. You need to be able to consider issues such as the nature, origin and purpose of the document or source as well as how that affects your consideration of its value to you answering the question. This assessment objective does not ask you to explain historical knowledge but use your knowledge to understand the document.
AO4 Evaluation of historian's interpretation (of the past): Analyse and evaluate how aspects of the past have been interpreted and represented.	You need to show your understanding of how different factors can affect how historian's view and explain the past.

It is important that you know the different weightings (%) of the assessment objectives, as this affects how the examiner will assess your work.

Assessment objectives as a percentage of each qualification

Assessment objective	Weighting in AS Level %	Weighting in A Level %
AO1	40	45
AO2	30	30
AO3	30	15
AO4	–	10
Total	100	100

Assessment objectives as a percentage of each component

Section 4: Command words

The table below includes command words used in the assessment for this syllabus. The use of the command word will relate to the subject context.

Command word	What it means
Assess	make an informed judgement
Compare	identify/comment on similarities and/or differences
Contrast	identify/comment on differences
Discuss	write about issue(s) or topic(s) in depth in a structured way
Evaluate	judge or calculate the quality, importance, amount, or value of something
Explain	set out purposes or reasons / make the relationships between things evident / provide why and/or how and support with relevant evidence

Phrases such as 'How far do you agree...?' and 'To what extent...?' and 'Account for...' may also be seen in the assessment for this syllabus.

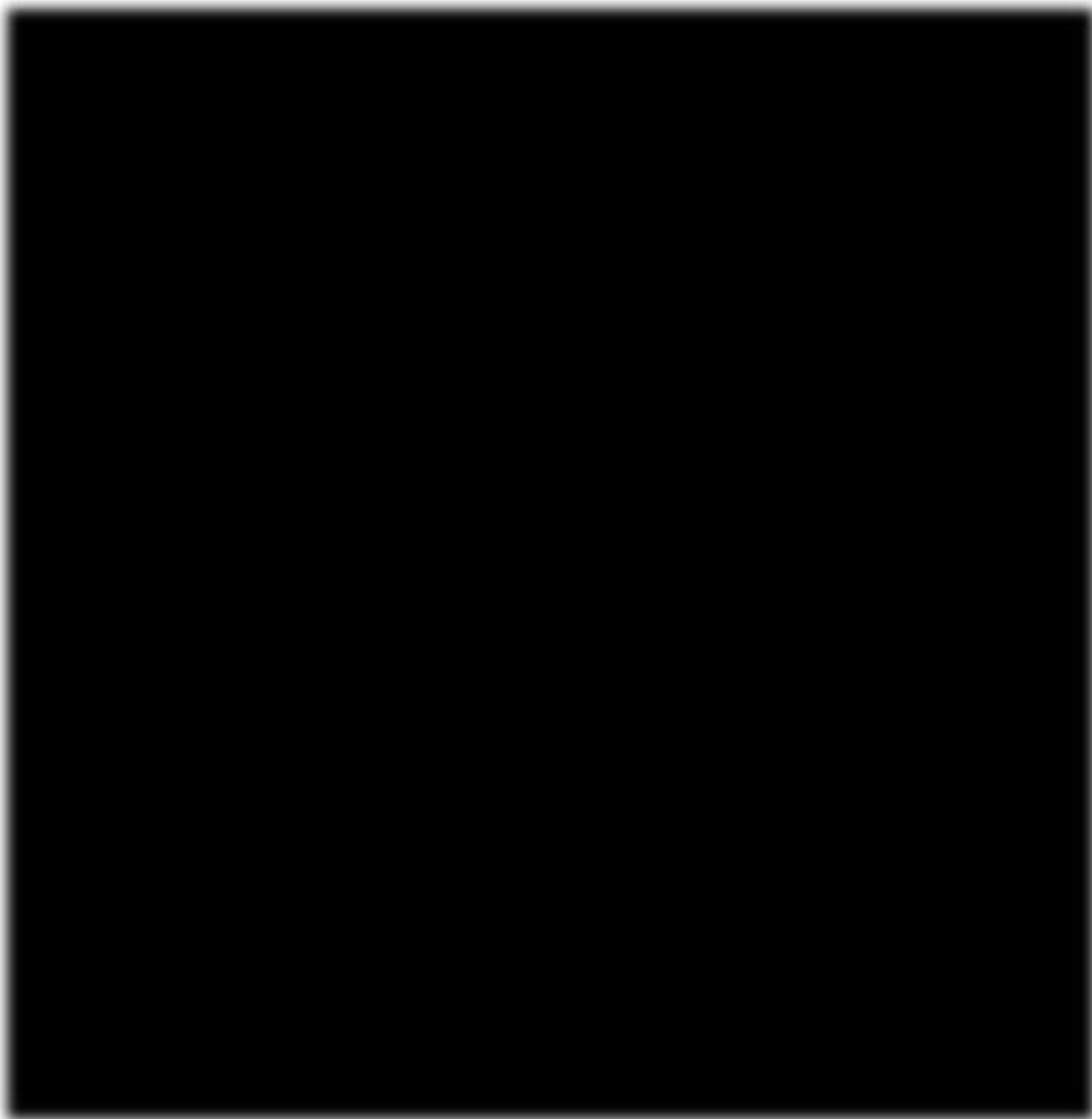
All information and advice in this section is specific to the example question and response being shown. It should give you an idea of how an examiner might view your responses but it is not a list of what to do in all questions. In your own examination, you will need to pay careful attention to what each question is asking you to do.

Question

Command words in the question have been highlighted and their meaning explained. This should help you to understand what the question requires.

Mark scheme

Paper 1 – Question 1



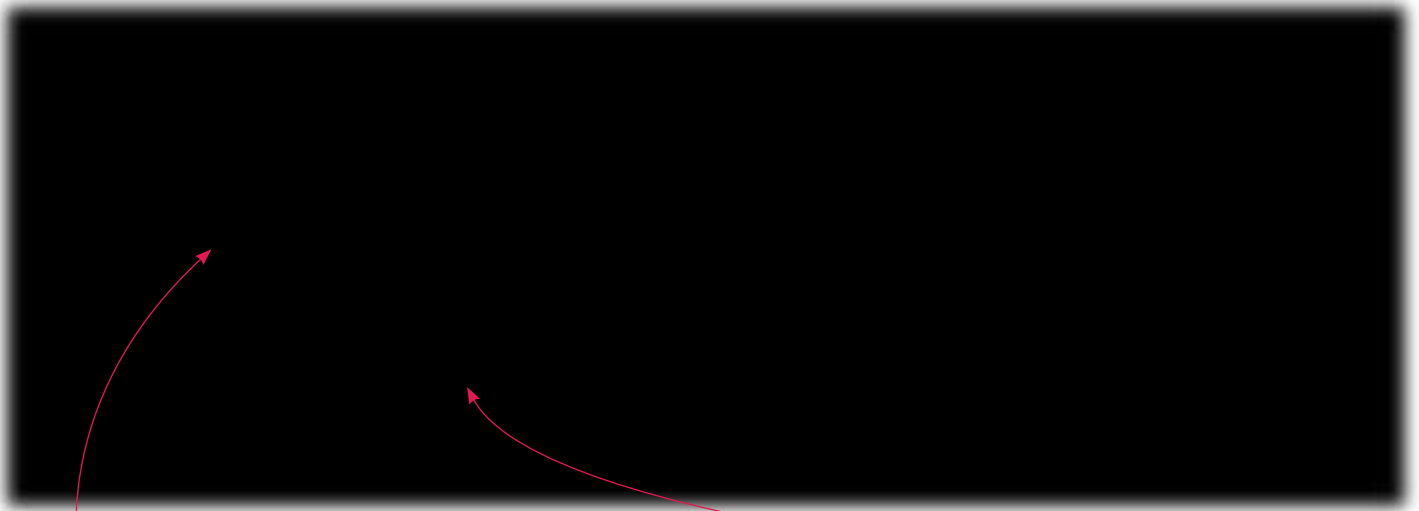
Only use the two sources and no other information unless it is explaining the difference in Bismarck's attitude. Do not describe the general context of Bismarck and France.



The question asks you to show your AO3 skills. You need to interpret and evaluate the sources to answer the question.

The question also assesses AO1 because without knowledge you can't evaluate the sources to explain the context (what was happening in 1867 to explain his different attitudes).

Paper 4 – Questions 9 – 12



You are being asked to assess using key concepts such as cause and consequence, significance and change, as well as come to a judgement. These are things asked for in AO2.

AO1 skills are important here. You need to decide what knowledge to use and make sure you keep your answer focused on the historical issues you are being asked about.

Command words:

Discuss – you need to write about both Reagan and Gorbachev and how they were responsible for ending the Cold War. This way you will give a balanced answer. You need to provide a conclusion and that includes establishing the criteria you use to judge responsibility.

Assess – you need to make an informed decision about this issue and that will mean considering how effective Britain was or was not. It will also mean establishing criteria for your answer about key terms like effective.

Evaluate – you need to show judgement in considering the importance of the reasons why non-alignment was viewed as more idealistic than realistic. You need to consider the criteria for judging non-alignment as idealistic and as realistic in your answer.

Analyse – you need to consider the quality and importance of the reasons why Israel launched their attack. This includes considering the criteria for how you judge both quality and the importance.

Example candidate response – Paper 1 – Question 1 (a)

Example Candidate Response - high	Examiner comments
The sources are similar in that any war would be caused by France. ●	

Example Candidate Response - high	Examiner comments
The reason for the change in attitude would be because between the writing of Source C in March 1867 and the writing of D in September 1867 the North German Confederation had been set up. This strengthened Bismarck's position meaning that he can be much stronger in his attitude to France, almost warning them that Germany will only be pushed so far. This change explains the similarities and differences in the sources. In March the Confederation existed but it was not formally in existence until the summer and by September elections for a Reichstag had taken place. When in March Bismarck writes to the Deputy he may want to play down his 'Blood and Iron' reputation to reassure him that a stronger union would not lead to war but by September the union exists and he can send a public warning to France through the British journalist. However, Bismarck wants to make sure that in any war France was seen as the aggressor so he needs to look as though he wants to avoid war. ● This is another difference in the sources, which would explain why they might show slightly different attitudes to France. C is a letter to a countryman, a man to whom any declaration of war would directly affect and so Bismarck would emphasise his peaceful attitude. In D he is talking to an audience not likely to be involved in a war with Germany or France. Britain had made it clear it had no desire to be involved in continental squabbles. Bismarck is not discussing sending any British sons to war and so this is a good place to send a warning to France as the direct audience would not be so alarmed. ●	● At this point the candidate uses contextual knowledge. It is not necessary to state this in the answer but if it helps to structure your answers you could add in something such as, "I know, from my contextual knowledge, that..." The answer uses knowledge of the year the sources were written to explain why there are both similarities and differences. The answer would move to Level 4 but an examiner would read to the end before making an assessment about a mark. ● The differences between the sources cannot be explained by evaluating their origin because they are both by Bismarck and the nature and purpose of the sources have been considered. The evaluation is clearly considering the content rather than the medium. By the end, the answer has done all that is asked of it by the mark scheme

Common mistakes candidates made in this question

Common mistakes included explaining the context of the situation and not relating it to the question. You need to remember your 'job' is to find similarities and differences using the sources and to root any answer in the question. Contextual

This advice will help you revise and prepare for the examinations. It is divided into general advice and specific advice for each

Advice for Paper 1

Use source material to support your answer.

Make sure you are using the right sources in part (a) and that you use all the sources in part (b).

This paper is about source skills. Your knowledge is what allows you to understand the sources and evaluate them but the sources aren't there to prompt you to write about the context.

If you can't see a similarity or a difference look again. Both will be there. Just stay calm and try again.

The sources will always support or challenge the hypothesis. They might do both. If you can't see how one works look again and see which seems most likely, and use it that way. You might find a unique answer.

Read both parts of the question before starting your answer. Can you answer both parts?

Read both parts of the question before starting your answer. Think carefully about what is needed for each part. You will not need to repeat material.

Part (a) is about explaining multiple reasons, showing how they relate to one another and assessing their significance. Make sure you have done that. Write a checklist on your plan.

Revision checklists

The tables below can be used as a revision checklist: They don't contain all the detailed knowledge you need to know, just an overview. For more detail see the syllabus and talk to your teacher.

The table headings are explained below:

Topic	You should know about	R	A	G	Comments
These are the option and Depth Study topics.	Content in the syllabus you need to cover.	You can use the tick boxes to show when you have revised an item and how confident you feel about it. The 'R', 'A' and 'G' represent different levels of confidence, as follows: R = RED means you are really unsure and lack confidence; you might want to focus your revision here and possibly talk to your teacher for help A = AMBER means you are reasonably confident but need some extra practice G = GREEN means you are very confident. As your revision progresses, you can concentrate on the RED and AMBER items in order to turn them into GREEN items. You might find it helpful to highlight each topic in red, orange or green to help you prioritise.			You can use the 'Comments' column to: • add more information about the details for each point • include a reference to a useful resource • highlight areas of difficulty or things that you need to talk to your teacher about or look up in a textbook.

Paper 1 and Paper 2 – Modern Europe, 1750 1921: France 1774 1814

Topic	You should know about				
What were the causes and immediate outcomes of the 1789 Revolution?	- TheAncien Régime: problems and policies of Louis XVI - Pressures for change (social, economic and political including the Enlightenment) - The eaction of Louis XVI to attempts at reform - Responses to Louis XVI's actions, e.g. Storming of the Bastille, March of the Women, Declaration of the Rights of Man, The August Decrees				
Why were French governments unstable from 1790 to 1795?	- Revolutionary and counter-revolutionary groups: their views and aims - Changes in government from 1790 to 1795 - Economic problems - Foreign threats and the impact of war on France				
Why was Napoleon					

Paper 1 and Paper 2 – Modern Europe, 1750 1921: The Industrial Revolution in Britain, 1750 1850

Topic	You should know about				
What were the causes of the Industrial Revolution?	• The agricultural revolution • Development of capitalism: investment, trade and commerce • Early mechanisation: steam engines and spinning machines • Early developments in transport: canals and roads				
Why was there rapid growth of industrialisation after 1780?	• Development of the factory system: steam power and machines • Developments in transport: canals, railways and steam ships • Raw materials, e.g. iron and coal • Growth of markets (domestic and international) and growth of free trade				
Why, and with what consequences, did urbanisation result from industrialisation?	• Growth of towns and impact on living conditions, e.g. housing and health • Working conditions, e.g. child labour, hours, pay and safety • Impacts on different social classes				

Paper 1 and Paper 2 – Modern Europe, 1750 1921: Liberalism and nationalism in Germany, 1815 71

Paper 1 and Paper 2 – Modern Europe, 1750 1921: Russian Revolution, 1894 1921

Topic	You should know about				
What were the causes and outcomes of the 1905 Revolution up to 1914?	- The nature of the Tsarist regime: pressures for change (social, economic and political) and the reaction of Nicholas II to them - Key events of the Revolution, e.g. 'Bloody Sunday', wider risings and The October Manifesto - The reassertion of Tsarist authority: the Dumas and Stolypin's reforms - The extent of opposition to the Tsarist rule				
What were the causes and immediate outcomes of the February Revolution in 1917?	- Political, social and economic effects of the First World War, impact of military defeats - Nicholas II as a war leader: implications of personal leadership of the war effort - The Revolution of February and the abdication of Nicholas II - The formation and purpose of the Provisional Government				
How and why did the Bolsheviks gain power in October 1917?	- Crises of the Provisional Government - Lenin's leadership of the Bolsheviks - The role of Trotsky and the Military Revolutionary Committee (MRC) - The key events of the October Revolution				
How were the Bolsheviks able to consolidate their power up to 1921?					

Paper 1 and Paper 2 – The history of the USA, 1820 1941: The origins of the Civil War, 1820 61

Topic	You should know about				
How was the issue of slavery addressed between 1820 and 1850?	- Political system (practical application of the US Constitution) and the balance of sectional interests in 1820 - Impact of territorial expansion: westward expansion and absorption of Texas - Impact of population growth and movement - Attempts at compromise including the Missouri Compromise (1820) and the Compromise of 1850				
How and why did sectional divisions widen between 1850 and 1856?	- Problems arising from the implementation of the Compromise of 1850 and the application of the Fugitive Slave Act - The issue of Kansas and its impact - Changes in the party-political system: rapid decline of the Whig Party and the rise of the Republican Party - Significance of States' Rights				
Why did the Republicans win the 1860 presidential election?	- Growing strength of abolitionism, e.g. John Brown - Emerging notion of 'slave power', e.g. Dred Scott - Increasing confrontation within and between the North and the South - The Lincoln–Douglas Debates (1858) - The election campaign of 1860 and the divisions of the Democratic Party				
Why did the Civil War begin in April 1861?	- Reactions to the 1860 presidential election results - Secession of the seven Deep South States - The Battle of Fort Sumter and its impacts - The aims of Abraham Lincoln and Jefferson Davis				

Paper 1 and Paper 2 – The history of the USA, 1820 1941: Civil War and Reconstruction, 1861 77

Topic	You should know about				
Why did the Civil War last four years?	• Changing military strategies • Changing approaches of political and military leadership • Resources available • Impact of foreign influences (Britain and France)				
How significant was the immediate impact of the Civil War (1861 65)?	• Limitations on civil liberties during the War • Reasons for and responses to the Emancipation Proclamation (1863) • Life in the Confederate States including the responses of slaves • The nature of democracy in the North and the South				
What were the aims and outcomes of Reconstruction?	• Presidential Reconstruction: Lincoln and Johnson • Radical Reconstruction from Congress • Reasons for and passage of Constitutional Amendments 13th, 14th and 15th				
How successful was Reconstruction?	• Changing position of ex-slaves • Responses of the White South • Grant's Reconstruction policies • The Compromise of 1877 and the end of Reconstruction				

Paper 1 and Paper 2 – The history of the USA, 1820–1941: The Gilded Age and Progressive Era, 1870s–1920

Topic	You should know about				
Why was the late nineteenth century an age of rapid industrialisation?	• Growth of trusts, corporations and robber barons • Technological innovations, e.g. electrical power and the telephone • Growth of the railroads • Trade policies and protectionism				
How significant were the consequences of rapid economic growth in the late nineteenth century?	• New immigration from Southern and Eastern Europe • Industrial growth and periods of economic recession • Impact of urbanisation on living conditions, e.g. housing, health, safety • Rise of organised labour in industry and agriculture, e.g. Granger Movement, labor unions				
What were the main aims and policies of the Progressive Movement and how popular were they?	• Limits on party machines and bosses • Temperance and Prohibition • Female emancipation • Regulation of private corporations				
How successful was the Progressive Movement up to 1920?	• Achievements of the Progressive presidents • Constitutional reforms • State vs. federal successes • Limits of the Progressive Movement				

Paper 1 and Paper 2 – The history of the USA, 1820 1941: The Great Crash, the Great Depression and the New Deal policies, 1920 41

Topic	You should know about				
What were the causes of the Great Crash?	• Structural weaknesses in the US economy in the 1920s, e.g. disparity between agriculture, traditional and new industries • Growth of consumerism, e.g. hire purchase and buying on the margin • Mass production and oversupply • Impact of government policies				
What were the causes and impacts of the Great Depression?	• The main features of the Great Crash (October 1929) • Responses of Hoover government and industry to the Great Crash • Collapse of the financial system •				

Paper 1 and Paper 2 – International history, 1870 1945: The League of Nations and international relations in the 1920s

Paper 1 and Paper 2 – International history, 1870 1945: The League of Nations and international relations in the 1930s



Paper 1 and Paper 2 – International history, 1870 1945: China and Japan, 1912 45

Paper 3

Topic	You should know about				
The origins of First World War	Tensions between the Great Powers including the Moroccan Crises • The alliance system • The growth of militarism • The arms race • Instability in the Balkans • War plans • The assassination at Sarajevo and the July crisis • Mobilisation and declarations of war • How far was tension between the Great Powers likely to lead to war? •				

Topic	You should know about				

Topic					

Paper 4 – European history in the interwar years, 1919 41: Stalin's Russia, 1924 41

Topic	You should know about				
Why did Stalin gain power from 1924?	• Lenin's legacy and problems of leadership • Stalin's position in the Party • Stalin's relations with Trotsky and other Soviet leaders • Stalin's control and manipulation within the Party				
How was the USSR governed under Stalin?	• Stalin's aims in government and administration • 'Building socialism in one country' • Causes and impact of the Great Terror and use of purges and show trials • Aims and impact of foreign policy				
How effective were Stalin's economic policies?	• Stalin's aims for the economy • The ve-year Plans • Reasons for, and impacts of, collectivisation • Reasons for, and impacts of, industrialisation				
How far did society change because of Stalin's regime?	• Impact of policies towards women and families • Impact of policies towards non-Russian nationalities • Impact of economic changes on workers • Impact of propaganda and the personality cult				

Paper 4 – European history in the interwar years, 1919–41: Hitler's Germany, 1929–41

Topic	You should know about				
Why did Hitler gain power in 1933?	- Problems facing Weimar politicians from 1929 - Growth of support for Nazism after 1929 - Hitler's appointment as Chancellor - Consolidation of power, 1933–34				
How was Germany governed by Hitler?	- Hitler's aims in government and administration: establishing the Nazi 20 f				

Paper 4 – European history in the interwar years, 1919 41: Britain, 1919 39

Topic		You should know about			
How and why did politics change in this period?					

Paper 4 – The USA, 1944 92: The late 1940s and 1950s

[illegible]

Paper 4 – The USA, 1944–92: The 1960s and the 1970s

Topic	You should know about				
Why and how did the USA experience a deteriorating economic situation in the 1960s and 1970s?	- Economic impact of involvement in Vietnam - Failure of post-war economic doctrines - The impact of external challenges including foreign competition, oil crises of 1973 and 1979 and the Cold War - Stagflation				
How great were the social changes of the 1960s and 1970s?	- Changes in the social class system - Growth and impact of feminism - Impact of the counter-culture movement - Growth and impact of the gay rights movement, e.g. Stonewall 1969				
How far were the 1960s and 1970s a time of party political instability?	- Domestic policies of the various Presidents: Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, Ford and Carter - Impact of the Vietnam War on party politics - The rise and fall of the 'imperial presidency' including Nixon and Watergate - Revolutions of 1979–82 (e.g. Iran) and the 1980s (e.g. Central America)				
	• •				

Paper 4 – The USA, 1944–92: Foreign policy 1944–92



Paper 4 – International history, 1945 92: US Soviet relations during the Cold War, 1950 91

Topic	You should know about				
How did US Soviet relations develop between 1950 and 1980?	• Impact of the death of Stalin • Peaceful coexistence •				

Paper 4 – International history, 1945–92: Decolonisation, the Cold War and the UN in Sub-Saharan Africa, 1950–92



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Paper 4 – International history, 1945–92: Conflict in the Middle East, 1948–91

Section 7: Useful websites

The websites listed below are useful resources to help you study for your Cambridge International AS & A Level History.

www.markedbyteachers.com

Essays that can deliver information as well as an opportunity to review other learners' work. Use mark schemes to mark their essays to help learn how the mark scheme works. Share with other learners and discuss. It is a good way to really understand the mark scheme without criticising a friend's work.

www.teachithistory.com

Resources on a variety of topics that might help you review information in a new way.

www.historyplace.com

Lots of lists, timelines. You could use them to check your knowledge and add notes to timelines you've created.

www.johndclare.net

Lots of lists and information condensed clearly and comprehensively. A good way to check your revision notes are complete.

Great revision and study ideas, not specifically for history but in general.

www.ducksters.com

Basic but good coverage of some topics as a way of starting or reviewing your revision of a topic.

<https://learnodo-newtonic.com>

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