Cambridge Assessment International Education

Cambridge O Level

HISTORY **2147/22**

Paper 2 Document Questions **May/June 2025**

1 hour 45 minutes

You must answer on the enclosed answer booklet.

You will need: Answer booklet (enclosed)

INSTRUCTIONS

- Answer **one** question on **one** option only.
  - Option A: Nineteenth century topic
  - Option B: Twentieth century topic
- Follow the instructions on the front cover of the answer booklet. If you need additional answer paper, ask the invigilator for a continuation booklet.

INFORMATION

- The total mark for this paper is 40.
- The number of marks for each question or part question is shown in brackets [ ].

This document has **12** pages. Any blank pages are indicated.

DC (IP) 353483
© UCLES 2025

Option A: Nineteenth century topic

1 Why was there war between France and Prussia in 1870–71?

Study the Background Information and the sources carefully, and then answer **all** parts of Question 1.

Background Information

By 1870 tensions between France and Prussia had been building for some time. Napoleon III was concerned about growing Prussian power as a result of its victory over Austria in 1866. Also, the two countries disagreed over who should become the next king of Spain. During this dispute Bismarck edited a telegram to make it seem as if the Prussian king, William I, had insulted the French. On 19 July 1870 war began between the two countries.

How far was Prussia responsible for the war?

SOURCE A

The government of Napoleon III is unable to accept the proposal that a Prussian prince might become king of Spain. It would threaten the territorial security of France. Therefore, France must ask the King of Prussia for a guarantee that such an arrangement could not be carried out without the agreement of Napoleon III. Because the King of Prussia has refused to give this, the French government can only see Prussia's declaration as a threat to France and to the general balance of power in Europe. The French government has consequently decided to take steps to defend its honour. It considers itself, therefore, to be at war with Prussia.

An official statement of the French government, 19 July 1870.

SOURCE B

The proposal that a German prince should be a candidate for the throne of Spain gives the hope of finding a guarantee for the orderly and peaceful government of Spain, a country that has undergone many hardships. It has become an excuse for France to find a cause of war which ignores the rights of the people of Spain to the blessings of peace. Germany in the past centuries has suffered silently such outrages on its rights and honour. When disunited, it did not know how strong it was. Today, when the Wars of Freedom have begun to draw Germany together, when the armaments of Germany no longer leave an opening to the enemy, Germany has the will and the power to resist renewed acts of French violence. The sword has been forced into our hand. We are supported by the unanimous will of the German governments of the South, as well as of the North. Our only aim is to create a lasting peace for Europe.

The speech of William I of Prussia at the opening of the North German Parliament, 19 July 1870.

© UCLES 2025

SOURCE C

An American cartoon published in 1871. The caption read 'Who goes there?' – 'A friend'. The figure on the right is Napoleon III.

SOURCE D

A French cartoon published in 1870 entitled 'The nightmare of Bismarck – Thank you!'

SOURCE E

During dinner with Generals Moltke and Roon, I read them a telegram that had come from His Majesty at Ems. They were so distressed they refused to eat or drink. My opinion was that war could be avoided only at the cost of the honour of Prussia. Therefore, I published the contents of the telegram but first deleted some words. This made the announcement appear more decisive. Moltke said, 'Now it has a different feel. In its original form, it sounded like a discussion. Now it is like a flourish of trumpets in answer to a challenge!' I said, 'If I immediately release this text it will really anger the French. We must fight if we do not want to act the part of the defeated without a battle. However, it is most important that we should be the ones attacked. French rudeness and sensitivity will bring this about if we announce to Europe that we are bravely meeting the public threats of France.'

From Bismarck's memoirs, published in 1898.

© UCLES 2025

SOURCE F

France has declared war against Prussia. It was completely unexpected. Whatever unfavourable impression of their character has been given by the French Emperor and government, no one thought they were capable of this. In all parts of Germany there is a united determination to punish this sin. The King arrived back from Ems last night looking as majestic as ever. He was sent loyal messages. I quote from one, 'French rudeness has insulted our honour and, without any reason, the peace of Prussia and Germany. We beg your majesty not to put down the sword until French insolence has been punished.'

A report by a British journalist working in Berlin, July 1870.

SOURCE G

There is nothing in our attitude to annoy or alarm France. There is nothing to prevent peace for ten or fifteen years, by which time the French will have become accustomed to German unity. I told our generals earlier this year when they tried to prove to me that we must beat the French if we went to war then, 'I will still do all I can to prevent war; for you must remember, a war between near neighbours and old enemies, like France and Prussia, is only the first of at least six; and supposing we won all six, what should we have succeeded in doing? Why, in ruining France and most likely ourselves. Do you think a poor, starving, bankrupt neighbour is desirable? France buys largely from us, and sells many things we want. Is it in our interest to ruin it completely?'

Bismarck giving an interview to a British journalist, September 1867.

© UCLES 2025

Now answer **all** parts of Question 1. You may use any of the sources to help you answer the questions, in addition to those sources which you are told to use. In answering parts **(a)–(e)** you should use your knowledge of the topic to help you interpret and evaluate the sources.

(a) Study Sources A and B.

Why do these two sources disagree? Explain your answer using details of the sources and your knowledge. [8]

(b) Study Sources C and D.

How far would these two cartoonists have disagreed? Explain your answer using details of the sources and your knowledge. [8]

(c) Study Sources E and F.

Does Source E make Source F surprising? Explain your answer using details of the sources and your knowledge. [8]

(d) Study Source G.

Can Bismarck be trusted in this source? Explain your answer using details of the source and your knowledge. [7]

(e) Study **all** the sources.

How far do these sources provide convincing evidence that Prussia was responsible for the Franco-Prussian War? Use the sources to explain your answer. [9]

© UCLES 2025

BLANK PAGE

Option B: Twentieth century topic

2 Why did Mussolini invade Abyssinia?

Study the Background Information and the sources carefully, and then answer **all** parts of Question 2.

Background Information

One of the most serious challenges to the authority of the League of Nations was Italy's invasion of Abyssinia that began on 3 October 1935. For Mussolini, Abyssinia seemed an obvious choice. It was one of the few countries in Africa not under European control, it was located beside the Italian colonies of Somaliland and Eritrea, and its borders were not clearly defined.

Some historians have argued that Mussolini wanted to build a great Italian empire and that he saw his mission as bringing civilisation to what he regarded as a barbaric country.

Did Mussolini invade Abyssinia because he thought he was bringing civilisation to Abyssinia?

SOURCE A

One motivation for Mussolini's invasion of Abyssinia came from the state of affairs in Italy. It was far behind Britain and France economically, it was over-populated and there had been massive emigration to the United States. Italians asked, why should they not settle in Italian possessions overseas and thereby contribute to the developing and civilising of those areas? Abyssinia was suitable for settlement and economic development. These social and economic motivations were, however, superficial. The basic motivations were psychological. It was considered unfair that Italy had not been properly rewarded for its contribution to the Allied victory in 1918. The vast empires of Britain and France were expanded, while the small Italian empire was not. However, Mussolini's personal motivation was part of this. It was not that there was active opposition to him in Italy, it was rather that he wanted a triumph and glory for Italy and for himself. He wanted war not so much for the fruits of victory as for its own sake and he felt confident there would be no opposition from the League of Nations.

From an article about Mussolini.

SOURCE B

Confident that the League would do nothing, Mussolini began to plan a conquest of Abyssinia that would provide Italy with revenge. The defeat that Italy suffered at the Battle of Adowa in 1896 was a stain on the national character that needed to be destroyed. It would also mean Italy avenging the injustices of the peace treaties. Mussolini tried to win over Italians to the idea by speaking of Italy's mission to help Abyssinia progress from its primitive state. More importantly, it was no accident that Mussolini started to prepare for the invasion at the time of the Depression. Abyssinia was poor and remote and was not a source of raw materials nor a market for Italy's manufactured goods. But Mussolini did need to turn the attention of Italians away from the dreadful state of their own country. He was always anxious that a people suffering economic hardship might overthrow him. He saw he could channel internal frustration into external violence. He also thought that Abyssinia would provide living space for a population he was encouraging to expand, as well as reducing unemployment by sending men off to fight.

From a recent history book.

© UCLES 2025

SOURCE C

Twenty million Italians are at this moment gathered in town squares all over Italy. It is the greatest demonstration that human history records. Twenty million, one heart alone, one decision. It is not only an army marching towards its goal, it is millions of Italians marching in unity behind this army. Because the blackest of injustices is being attempted against them, that of taking from them their place in the sun. When in 1915 Italy threw in its fate with that of the Allies, how many promises were heard? But when peace was discussed, we gained practically no territory. We have been patient. The League of Nations dares talk of sanctions but I refuse to believe that the people of Britain will want to send Europe into a catastrophe for the sake of a barbarian country, unworthy of ranking among civilised nations.

From Mussolini's speech, 2 October 1935. It was communicated to the Italian people by radio.

SOURCE D

The problem of Italian–Abyssinian relations has very recently shifted from being a diplomatic one to one which can be solved by force only. Our aims are the complete destruction of the Abyssinian army and the total conquest of Abyssinia. In no other way can we build the Empire. The faster our action, the less likely will be the danger of diplomatic complications. There will be no need for a declaration of war and we must always emphasise the purely defensive nature of our actions. No one in Europe would raise any difficulties if we complete our operations quickly. It would be enough to declare to Britain and France that their interests would be recognised.

A memorandum from Marshal Badoglio to Mussolini, December 1934.
Badoglio was head of the Italian army and led the Italian forces in Abyssinia during 1935–36.

SOURCE E

There is no question of territorial conquests, but a natural expansion which ought to lead to a collaboration between Italy and the peoples of Africa. Italy can bring civilisation to Africa and our position in the Mediterranean gives us this right and imposes this duty on us. We do not intend to demand privileges, but we do ask that they should not block the spiritual, political and economic expansion of Fascist Italy.

Mussolini to the Grand Council of Fascism, 1 August 1935.
The Council controlled all parts of the Italian government.

SOURCE F

A cartoon published in Britain, 3 April 1936.

Now answer **all** parts of Question 2. You may use any of the sources to help you answer the questions, in addition to those sources which you are told to use. In answering parts **(a)–(e)** you should use your knowledge of the topic to help you interpret and evaluate the sources.

(a) Study Sources A and B.

How far do these two sources agree? Explain your answer using details of the sources. [7]

(b) Study Source C.

Why did Mussolini make this speech on 2 October 1935? Explain your answer using details of the source and your knowledge. [8]

(c) Study Sources D and E.

Does Source D prove that Mussolini was lying in Source E? Explain your answer using details of the sources and your knowledge. [8]

(d) Study Source F.

What is the cartoonist's message? Explain your answer using details of the source and your knowledge. [8]

(e) Study **all** the sources.

How far do these sources provide convincing evidence that Mussolini invaded Abyssinia because he thought it was uncivilised? Use the sources to explain your answer. [9]

© UCLES 2025

BLANK PAGE

Permission to reproduce items where third-party owned material protected by copyright is included has been sought and cleared where possible. Every reasonable effort has been made by the publisher (UCLES) to trace copyright holders, but if any items requiring clearance have unwittingly been included, the publisher will be pleased to make amends at the earliest possible opportunity.

To avoid the issue of disclosure of answer-related information to candidates, all copyright acknowledgements are reproduced online in the Cambridge Assessment International Education Copyright Acknowledgements Booklet. This is produced for each series of examinations and is freely available to download at www.cambridgeinternational.org after the live examination series.

Cambridge Assessment International Education is part of Cambridge Assessment. Cambridge Assessment is the brand name of the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES), which is a department of the University of Cambridge.

© UCLES 2025