IB HISTORY

Route 2: Aspects of the History of Europe and the Middle East 1750-2000

The following topics are addressed in this guide:

1. The Origins of the French revolution
2. The Unification of Italy
3. The Unification of Germany
4. Alexander II
5. The Russian revolutions 1905/1917 and the fall of Tsardom
6. The October revolution
7. The Origins of W W I
8. Kemal Attatürk
9. Fascist Italy
10. The Weimar republic and the establishment of the Nazi dictatorship
11. The Third Reich
12. Stalin
13. The League of Nations
14. The Origins of World War II
15. The background to the May 1948 war (the first Arab Israeli War)
16. The Origins of the Cold War
17. The revolution in Iran 1979
18. The fall of communism in the USSR

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How to use this study guide.

This guide provides valuable summaries of 18 key topics from the syllabus as well as essay outlines related to these topics. While primarily aimed at helping prepare students for Paper 3, the guide will also be useful in preparing for Paper 2.

To write a guide covering Paper III Europe and the Middle East is difficult due to the fact that the syllabus is extensive. No school covers all the topics in the syllabus and you will not find any textbook which covers all the topics in-depth. Consequently this guide is an attempt to show examples of topics that appear frequently on IB exams. The guide does not cover every bullet point in each question on the syllabus i.e. it is more an attempt to focus on key topics.

This is material which I have compiled after many years of IB teaching. There is a method behind the writing which I, from my experience, feel is very important to explain. I therefore recommend you to use the guide in the following way:

1. **Read** the text covering the topic (but not the essay outline which follows after).
2. Copy one essay template and try to answer the question by **writing down your main points** (not the details).
3. **Compare** your answer to the outline in the guide and assess the answers.
4. To read a guide and to write outlines does not prepare you fully for the exam. But when you think you know the main points of a topic, read your **text book** which is much more in-depth.
5. When you have done this reading it might be useful to look at the question in this guide and your answer again.

The idea is that it is of vital importance to know the main points which explain historical events. It will provide you with a basic structure for your essay and it will enable you to structure the enormous amount of facts that are connected to an historical event. Without a structure, facts will simply not make sense. So when you know the structure you can do your reading.

An essay outline can, in many ways, be seen as an “open document”. There are always different interpretations and views and ways of structuring a question. Use this guide as an introduction to the topic and how to outline a question and when you think you have done your own final reading, you are prepared to write your outline and essay.

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The main aim with this guide is to train you to structure an essay. This skill is of major importance when facing the exam situation. Facts are useless without a context.
List of essay outlines:

1. What were the reasons for the French revolution?
2. “Economic reasons played a key role in making the French revolution”. Do you agree?
3. Was Italian unification a result of Cavour’s policies?
4. How important were foreign powers in the unification process in Italy?
5. “The German empire was built more truly on coal and iron than on blood and iron”. Do you agree?
6. Was diplomacy more important than wars in the process of German unification between 1862-1871?
7. What were the consequences for Germany of the Zollverein?
8. Compare and contrast the unifications of Italy and Germany.
9. Why and with what success did Alexander II impose so many reforms?
10. What problems did Alexander II face in 1855 and how successful was he in solving them?
11. Was Russia a backward state at the end of the 19th century?
12. Were the reforms and the development in Russia by 1914, sufficient for the survival of Tsardom?
13. Why did Tsardom survive the revolution of 1905 and not the revolution of 1917?
14. To what extent did WWI cause the fall of Tsardom?
15. What were the reasons for the October Revolution?
16. How important was Lenin in the Bolshevik seizure of power?
17. “To what extent was Germany responsible for the outbreak of WWI?
18. Was WWI a result of miscalculations and misunderstandings?
19. Was WWI caused by problems in the Balkans?
20. How did Mustafa Kemal establish political control of Turkey and how did he transform the country?
21. How successful was Mustafa Kemal in reforming Turkey?
22. What were the reasons for the Fascist seizure of power in Italy?
23. Assess the successes and failures of Mussolini’s domestic policies.
24. To what extent did the Treaty of Versailles cause the fall of the Weimar Republic?
25. “The Constitution of the Weimar Republic played a major role in the fall of the republic”. Do you agree?
26. To what extent did the Wall Street Crash cause the fall of the Weimar Republic?
27. Were the policies and the development in Germany, by early 1929, sufficient for the survival of the Weimar Republic?
28. How did Hitler achieve dictatorial power?
29. Why was it Stalin, and not Trotsky, who succeeded Lenin?
30. Did Stalin’s domestic policies strengthen the USSR?
31. Why was the League of Nations set up in 1920 and what were the results?
32. “The League of Nations failed due to its own weaknesses”. Do you agree?
33. To what extent was the failure of the League of Nations responsible for the outbreak of W W II?
34. “Hitler planned and was responsible for W W II”. Do you agree?
35. Why did Britain and France follow a policy of appeasement in the 1930s.
36. (To what extent was the failure of the League of Nations responsible for the outbreak of W W II? (– also to be found in the League of Nations text).
37. Compare and contrast the reasons for W W I and W W II.
38. What were the reasons for the May 1948 War? (Arab-Israeli War)
39. To what extent did Britain contribute to the May 1948 War?
40. To what extent was the Cold War a result of W W II?
41. “The Cold War was a clash between two irreconcilable ideologies”. Do you agree?
42. How have historians explained the development of the Cold War 1945-49?
43. What were the causes for the revolution in Iran in 1979?
44. To what extent was the Shah responsible for the revolution in Iran in 1979?
45. To what extent did external pressure lead to the collapse of the Soviet system?
46. Was Gorbachev responsible for the collapse of the Soviet system?