



SAMPLE ASSESSMENT TASKS

MODERN HISTORY

ATAR YEAR 12

**Unit 3 – Elective 2: Russia and the Soviet Union 1914–45
(World War I to the end of World War II)**

Acknowledgement of Country

Kaya. The School Curriculum and Standards Authority (the Authority) acknowledges that our offices are on Whadjuk Noongar boodjar and that we deliver our services on the country of many traditional custodians and language groups throughout Western Australia. The Authority acknowledges the traditional custodians throughout Western Australia and their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We offer our respect to Elders past and present.

Copyright

© School Curriculum and Standards Authority, 2024

This document – apart from any third-party copyright material contained in it – may be freely copied, or communicated on an intranet, for non-commercial purposes in educational institutions, provided that the School Curriculum and Standards Authority (the Authority) is acknowledged as the copyright owner, and that the Authority’s moral rights are not infringed.

Copying or communication for any other purpose can be done only within the terms of the *Copyright Act 1968* or with prior written permission of the Authority. Copying or communication of any third-party copyright material can be done only within the terms of the *Copyright Act 1968* or with permission of the copyright owners.

Any content in this document that has been derived from the Australian Curriculum may be used under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International licence](#).

Disclaimer

Any resources such as texts, websites and so on that may be referred to in this document are provided as examples of resources that teachers can use to support their learning programs. Their inclusion does not imply that they are mandatory or that they are the only resources relevant to the course. Teachers must exercise their professional judgement as to the appropriateness of any they may wish to use.

Sample assessment task

Modern History – ATAR Year 12

Task 1 – Unit 3: Russia and the Soviet Union 1914–45 (World War I to the end of World War II)

Assessment type:	Historical inquiry – Historical inquiry process
Conditions:	<p>Part A: 2 weeks, including class time for research. You must use a research organiser which will be assessed for the inquiry process</p> <p>Part B: 35 minutes for the source analysis validation</p>
Task weighting:	10% of the total weighting for this pair of units

Part A: Historical inquiry research **(20 marks)**

Conduct an historical inquiry on the internal divisions and crises within Russian society from 1914–18, including:

- the impact of World War I
- the leadership of Tsar Nicholas II
- the causes and events of the February and October Revolutions in 1917, including the leadership of Vladimir Lenin.

Develop a plan, create a brainstorm and subsequent focus questions for your research. Follow the process outlined below to breakdown, summarise and present your research in a logical format. Use three historical sources (political cartoon, photograph, article etc.) to support your findings.

Part B: In-class validation **(20 marks)**

Complete an in-class validation in the form of a source analysis, using your three historical sources from Part A to answer a set of three unseen source analysis questions on the internal divisions and crises within Russian society.

Part A – Historical inquiry process **(20 marks)**

- Develop a plan for your inquiry process (when and how you will conduct your research).
- Conduct a preliminary investigation and create a brainstorm on key ideas, events and people related to the internal divisions and crises within Russian society.
- Develop focus questions related to internal divisions and crises within Russian society.
- Conduct research into your focus questions and develop organised and logical supporting notes in the form of graphic organisers.
- Locate at least three useful historical sources (political cartoon, photographs, articles, speeches etc) that you will be able to use during your in-class validation.

Ensure that all the sources you make use of (in compiling your notes and the three historical sources):

- include primary and secondary material
- reflect the topic of the focus question/s
- present different perspectives
- are correctly referenced in a bibliography.

You will be given two class sessions to annotate your three historical sources. You will have access to all your notes and focus questions to assist in the annotation of your sources.

Your annotations need to include:

- origin
- historical context
- message
- purpose
- perspective/interpretations of history
- usefulness and reliability.

Part B – In-class validation: Source analysis

(20 marks)

Complete an in-class validation in the form of a source analysis, using your three historical sources collected during your inquiry process (Part A) and a set of three unseen source analysis questions on the internal division and crises within Russian society. This could include the following topics:

- the impact of World War I
- the leadership of Tsar Nicholas II
- the causes and events of the February and October Revolutions in 1917, including the leadership of Vladimir Lenin.

You will have 35 minutes to complete your validation, under test conditions. Students are required to bring their own sources to complete the validation, but **no notes** are to be used.

Sample assessment task

Modern History – ATAR Year 12

Task 1 – Unit 3: Russia and the Soviet Union 1914–45 (World War I to the end of World War II)

Assessment type:	Historical inquiry validation	
Conditions:	Time allowed for the task: 10 minutes reading time, 35 minutes working time	
	Students need to provide: three (3) historical sources which have been selected during the Historical inquiry process (Part A)	
	Teacher will provide: an answer booklet for students to write their responses in	
Task weighting:	10% of the school mark for this pair of units	(20 marks)

Answer the questions (a) to (c) using the **three (3)** historical sources you collected in Part A.

(a) Outline the message and describe the purpose of **Source 1**. (4 marks)

(b) Account for how useful **Source 2** and **Source 3** are to an historian as evidence of internal division and crises in Russian society up to 1918. (6 marks)

(c) Using **Source 1**, **Source 2** and **Source 3**, evaluate the significance of internal divisions and crises within Russian society at the start of the period. (10 marks)

Marking key for sample assessment task 1 Unit 3: Russia and the Soviet Union 1914–45 (World War I to the end of World War II)

Part A – Historical inquiry process

Description	Marks
Inquiry questions	
Historical questions and inquiry	
Develops a coherent and detailed research plan and brainstorm, and frames a comprehensive set of sophisticated questions that clearly address the focus of the inquiry topic	3
Develops a clear and logical research plan and brainstorm, and frames a relevant set of questions that address the focus of the inquiry topic	2
Develops a structured research plan, shows evidence of some brainstorming, and frames a set of general questions that address the general nature of the inquiry topic	1
Subtotal	/3
Inquiry notes	
Chronology, terms and concepts	
Consistently uses appropriate historical terms and concepts throughout inquiry to demonstrate a well-developed historical knowledge and understanding, including identifying relevant links between events	3
Uses some relevant historical terms and concepts throughout inquiry to demonstrate a general historical knowledge and understanding. Minimal links between events identified	2
Uses minimal historical terms and concepts throughout inquiry demonstrating a limited historical knowledge and understanding. No identification of links between events	1
Subtotal	/3
Historical questions and inquiry	
Comprehensive set of notes making use of a wide range of relevant primary and secondary sources. Incorporates a range of synthesised evidence from the selected sources, organised logically within multiple note-taking frameworks	4
Detailed set of notes making use of a range of relevant primary and secondary sources. Incorporates synthesised evidence from the selected sources, organised logically within multiple note-taking frameworks	3
General notes making use of a range of mostly relevant primary and secondary sources. Some evidence is incorporated from the sources, organised with some structure within a note-taking framework	2
Minimal notes making use of some relevant primary and/or secondary sources. Limited evidence from the sources is incorporated in brief notes that show minimal structure	1
Subtotal	/4

Description	Marks
Acknowledge and reference sources (in text referencing and bibliography)	
Follows correct acknowledgment and reference of sources according to school protocols	2
Compiles a list of the sources used	1
Subtotal	/2
Source annotation	
Analysis and use of historical sources	
Comprehensive analysis and interpretation of all sources, including detailed annotations addressing the historical skills. Includes an accurate evaluation of the reliability and usefulness of the sources	4
Detailed analysis and interpretation of all sources, including annotations addressing the historical skills. Includes an evaluation of the reliability and usefulness of the sources	3
General interpretation of some sources, including annotations addressing most of the historical skills. Includes some analysis of the reliability and usefulness of the sources	2
Minimal interpretation of historical sources. Brief annotations addressing some of the historical skills that attempt analysis of some of the sources	1
Subtotal	/4
Perspectives and interpretations	
Comprehensive understanding of different perspectives and interpretations of history demonstrated by a detailed analysis and discussion of the different perspectives of individuals and/or groups in the past. Includes evaluation of the significance of ideas, events and people	4
Well-developed understanding of different perspectives and interpretations of history demonstrated by analysis and explanation of the different perspectives of individuals and/or groups in the past. Includes some evaluation of the significance of ideas, events and people	3
General understanding of different perspectives and/or interpretations of history demonstrated by some explanation of some of the different perspectives of individuals and/or groups in the past	2
Minimal understanding of different perspectives and/or interpretations of history demonstrated by a brief explanation of some of the different perspectives of individuals and/or groups in the past	1
Subtotal	/4
Part A total	/20

Part B – In-class validation: Source analysis(a) Outline the message and describe the purpose of **Source 1**. (4 marks)

Description	Marks
Message	
Outlines the message of Source 1, providing accurate and relevant supporting evidence	2
Identifies the message of Source 1	1
Purpose	
Describes the purpose of Source 1, providing accurate and relevant supporting evidence	2
Identifies or provides a general comment about the purpose of Source 1	1
Total	/4
Markers' notes:	
To gain full marks for this question, students need to address both the message and the purpose.	
'Outline' requires students to indicate the main features of or sketch in general terms (message).	
'Describe' requires students to provide the characteristics and features of (purpose).	
Given that the question asks students to describe the purpose (therefore only one), there are a range of potential purposes a source may have, depending on the author, audience, time and place of publication.	
Answers will depend on what sources students use to answer the question.	

(b) Account for how useful **Source 2** and **Source 3** are to an historian as evidence of internal division and crises in Russian society up to 1918. (6 marks)

Description	Marks
Accounts for the usefulness of both sources as evidence of internal division and crises in Russian society up to 1918, supported by detailed, accurate and relevant evidence	6
Accounts for the usefulness of both sources as evidence of internal division and crises in Russian society up to 1918, supported by mostly accurate and relevant evidence	5
Describes the usefulness of both sources as evidence of internal division and crises in Russian society up to 1918, supported by relevant evidence	4
Describes in detail the usefulness of one source as evidence of internal division and crises in Russian society up to 1918, supported by accurate and relevant evidence	3
Provides a general comment about the usefulness of one or both sources as evidence of internal division and crises in Russian society up to 1918, supported by some evidence	2
Provides a general comment about the usefulness of one source as evidence of internal division and crises in Russian society up to 1918, supported by limited evidence	1
Total	/6

Markers' notes:

'Account for' requires students to state the reasons for. In this context, students need to state the possible reasons for the usefulness of the sources.

'Describe' requires students to provide the characteristics and features of the usefulness of the sources.

Answers will depend on what sources students use to answer the question.

- (c) Using **Source 1**, **Source 2** and **Source 3**, evaluate the significance of internal divisions and crises within Russian society at the start of the period. (10 marks)

Description	Marks
Evaluates clearly the significance of the internal divisions and crises represented in all three sources by providing detailed, accurate and relevant evidence to reference aspects such as consequences, extent, duration and/or relevance at the start of the period, including omissions from the sources	9–10
Discusses the significance of the internal divisions and crises represented in all three sources by providing accurate and relevant evidence to reference aspects such as consequences, extent, duration and/or relevance at the start of the period, which may include some omissions from the sources	7–8
Explains the significance of the internal divisions and crises represented in at least two of the sources by providing some accurate and relevant evidence to reference aspects such as consequences, extent, duration and/or relevance at the start of the period	5–6
Outlines the significance of some of the internal divisions and crises represented in at least one of the sources by providing some relevant evidence to reference aspects such as consequences, extent and/or duration	3–4
Identifies or provides a general comment on the internal divisions and crises as represented in one or more of the sources supported by limited evidence	1–2
Total	/10

Markers' notes:

This question does not require reiteration of the messages in the sources. Students need to evaluate the importance of the internal divisions and crises within Russian society at the start of the period.

Students need to identify the internal divisions and crises presented in the sources and then evaluate the significance of those crises within Russian society at the start of the period, using evidence from the sources by referencing aspects such as consequences, extent, duration and/or relevance.

To achieve full marks, students would need to demonstrate a depth and breadth of knowledge of the start of the period as part of their explanation of why the identified crises were (or were not) significant.

If referencing omissions, students should tie those omissions to an evaluation of the significance of what is represented in the sources. Merely referencing omissions will not in itself be awarded marks.

Answers will depend on what sources students use to answer the question.

Sample assessment task

Modern History – ATAR Year 12

Task 2 – Unit 3: Russia and the Soviet Union 1914–45 (World War I to the end of World War II)

Assessment type:	Explanation
Conditions:	Time for the task: 5 minutes planning time, 55 minutes working time under test conditions
Task weighting:	10% of the total weighting for this pair of units

Choose **one** of the following questions and write an essay response:

Question 1 **(30 marks)**

Assess the impact that **one** economic change that transformed Russia/USSR to 1945 had on peasants and factory workers.

Question 2 **(30 marks)**

Debate the following proposition:

An unintended consequence of Lenin's New Economic Policy (NEP) was the rise of Josef Stalin to power.

Marking key for sample assessment Task 2 – Unit 3: Russia and the Soviet Union 1914–45 (World War I to the end of World War II)

Description	Marks
Introduction	
Provides an introduction that develops a sophisticated proposition, demonstrating a clear understanding of the focus and key terms of the question, and proposes a logical and coherent structure	4
Provides an introduction that clearly identifies a proposition, demonstrating an understanding of the focus of the question, and gives a clear sense of the direction	3
Provides an introduction that includes a simple proposition, demonstrating a general understanding of the topic	2
Provides an introduction that consists of statements outlining the 'who' or 'what' to be discussed	1
Subtotal	/4
Narrative	
Demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of the major features of the historical narrative and evaluates the impact of forces, including people, events, ideas and structures, and their significance on continuity and change	5
Demonstrates a well-developed understanding of the major features of the historical narrative and discusses the significance of forces, including people, events, ideas and structures on continuity and change	4
Demonstrates a general understanding of some of the major features of the historical narrative and outlines some relationships between forces, including people, events, ideas and structures, and/or continuity and change	3
Demonstrates some understanding of the historical narrative, and identifies minimal relationships between people, events, ideas and structures, and/or continuity and change	2
Demonstrates limited understanding of the historical narrative, and makes limited reference to people, events, ideas and/or structures	1
Subtotal	/5
Argument	
Develops a sophisticated and sustained argument that demonstrates depth of critical analysis which is logical, coherent, and demonstrates an understanding of the complexity of the topic	7–8
Develops a sustained argument that is analytical, logical and coherent, and demonstrates a clear understanding of the topic	5–6
Develops a coherent argument with some analysis, and demonstrates a general understanding of the topic	3–4
Develops a disjointed response with minimal sense of argument, containing generalisations and statements that suggests limited understanding of the topic	1–2
Subtotal	/8

Description	Marks
Supporting evidence	
Consistently uses detailed, accurate and relevant evidence including a wide range of historical examples, quotations, statistics and sources to assist critical analysis and evaluation, and where appropriate, argue for and against a view/proposition. Engages with different perspectives and interpretations of history to develop and strengthen arguments	9–10
Uses accurate and relevant evidence including a range of historical examples, quotations, statistics and sources to assist analysis Incorporates perspectives and interpretations of history to strengthen arguments	7–8
Uses mostly accurate and relevant evidence, including a range of historical examples, quotations, statistics and sources to support analysis Begins to refer to perspectives and interpretations of history to support arguments	5–6
Uses some accurate and relevant evidence which may include historical examples, quotations and/or sources to support the response	3–4
Provides minimal evidence and/or historical examples to support a limited response	1–2
Subtotal	/10
Conclusion	
Provides a conclusion that effectively draws the argument or point of view together	3
Provides a conclusion that summarises the argument or point of view	2
Provides a conclusion that generally restates the essay's point of view	1
Subtotal	/3
Total	/30
Answers may include:	
Question 1	
<p>This response must include an assessment of the impacts of the economic change on both peasants and factory workers.</p> <p>Students should explain one economic initiative and then assess its impact on the peasants and factory workers of Russian society.</p> <p>Answers should refer to one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • War Communism • the New Economic Policy • the Great Turn, Collectivisation and the Industrialisation of the Soviet Union. <p>Better answers will explain the nature of the economic change and assess their impact on society referring to evidence of the experiences of both peasants and factory workers: War Communism was unpopular and the NEP reintroduced capitalism, freedom of trade and greater wealth for peasants contributing to state control of economy, forced rural collectivisation, state created famine, and the modernisation of the Soviet Union.</p>	
Question 2	
<p>This question requires students to debate the proposition that the rise of Josef Stalin to power was an unintended consequence of the NEP. This question is asking students to consider arguments for and against the idea that the NEP implemented by Lenin unintentionally led to Stalin's rise to power. Students would be expected to explore how the NEP may have influenced the political and economic conditions that set the stage for Stalin's rise, as well as potential counterarguments that suggest other factors played a more significant role. Higher marks should be awarded to students who provide evidence for and against. The counter argument does not need to be balanced.</p> <p>Answers could include reference to the following:</p>	

Description	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence supporting the proposition: Lenin's NEP allowed for a temporary retreat from strict socialist policies seen under the policy of War Communism during the Russian Civil War. The NEP introduced elements of capitalism into Russia's struggling economy following the aftermath of World War 1 and the Russian Civil War. During this period, various factions within the Communist Party vied for control. Stalin, as General Secretary, skilfully used the NEP to consolidate power by aligning himself with key individuals and securing strategic positions within the party. Furthermore, Stalin, through his control of party bureaucracy, was able to manipulate the system to his advantage. The NEP created an environment where individuals with administrative skills, rather than ideological purity, became crucial. Stalin's handling of the party apparatus during this time helped him sideline rivals and build a loyal support base. He formed a tactical alliance with Nikolai Bukharin, a proponent of the NEP, and by aligning himself with someone popular and influential within the party, Stalin gained additional leverage. Once in power, he later turned against Bukharin, demonstrating the ruthless political manoeuvring. Counter argument: While the NEP was a significant ideological and policy shift, Stalin's rise to power cannot be solely attributed to it. Other factors such as Lenin's death and power struggles within the Politburo played crucial roles. Lenin's endorsement of Stalin as General Secretary before his death was a key factor. Even though the NEP provided an opportunity for Stalin, it was Lenin's influence and support that helped legitimise Stalin's leadership. Additionally, the delayed release of Lenin's Last Will and Testament added to this political climate. Moreover, the Soviet Union was characterised by intense factionalism within the Communist Party. Stalin's ascent to power involved exploiting these internal divisions and outmanoeuvring rivals. The NEP alone did not determine the power struggle; rather, it was Stalin's political manoeuvring within the broader context of party dynamics. Students may also refer to: external factors contributing towards Stalin's rise to power, such as the need for a strong and decisive leader rather than shared leadership (democratic centralism). 	

Sample assessment task

Modern History – ATAR Year 12

Task 3 – Unit 3: Russia and the Soviet Union 1914–45 (World War I to the end of World War II)

Assessment type:	Source analysis
Conditions:	Time allowed for the task: 10 minutes reading time, 35 minutes working time Provided: a source booklet consisting of three (3) sources which have been selected by the teacher and an answer booklet for students to write their responses in
Task weighting:	10% of the school mark for this pair of units (20 marks)

Source 1

(Two photographs that depict the same scene. In the original photograph, Nikolai Yezhov can be seen standing alongside Stalin and Molotov next to the Volga Dam on the Moscow Canal, 15 April 1937. In the doctored version, Yezhov has been removed and the faces brightened. At the time the photograph was originally taken, Yezhov was the Head of the NKVD.)



Original photograph



Doctored photograph

Source 2

(Extract from Leon Trotsky's article titled 'Stalinism and Bolshevism', first published in the Socialist Appeal, 25 September 1937. Trotsky wrote this when he was in exile, mounting strong defence against Stalin and the accusations labelled against him.)

To be sure, in a formal sense Stalinism did issue from Bolshevism. Even today the Moscow bureaucracy¹ continues to call itself the Bolshevik party. It is simply using the old label of Bolshevism the better to fool the masses. So much the more pitiful are those theoreticians who take the shell for the kernel and appearance for reality ...

In view of the elimination of all other parties from the political field the ... political centre of gravity has shifted from the proletarian vanguard to the bureaucracy, the party has changed its social structure as well as its ideology. Owing to the tempestuous² course of development, it has suffered in the last 15 years a far more radical degeneration than did the social democracy in half a century. The present purge draws between Bolshevism and Stalinism not simply a bloody line but a whole river of blood. The annihilation of all the older generation of Bolsheviks, an important part of the middle generation which participated in the civil war, and that part of the youth that took up most seriously the Bolshevik traditions, shows not only a political but a thoroughly physical incompatibility between Bolshevism and Stalinism. How can this not be seen?

¹ bureaucracy - the ruling administrative body in Moscow led by Stalin

² tempestuous - turbulent and stormy

Source 3

(Extract from Alex Schmid's chapter titled, 'Stalin's 1936 Show Trial against the 'Trotzkyite-Zinovievite Terrorist Centre' from a text titled Terrorists on Trial: A Performative Perspective, published by the University of Leiden in the Netherlands. Schmid is a scholar on terrorism studies and a political scientist who edits a quarterly, peer reviewed, open access academic journal on terrorism.)

The murder of Kirov marks the beginning of a chain of events that cost the lives of hundreds of thousands of people and affected countless others who were exiled to Siberia or placed in camps.

The Great Terror of 1936–1938 was mainly a purge of the Bolshevik Party. The Party had grown considerably during the First Five-Year plan, more than doubling between 1929 and 1933 to 3.5 million members. Communist Party insiders enjoyed privileges and protection from persecution, so membership was sought not only by true believers, but by opportunists and careerists of all hues.

... By the mid-1930s the Communist Party was the new elite, far removed from the proletariat it was supposed to represent.

... With his show trials, Stalin managed to frighten his enemies, punish his former opponents in the Party, mobilise the public to be 'vigilant' and expose and denounce 'enemies of the people', while at the same time shifting the blame for the crimes he committed to others. Perhaps that was also the deeper purpose of the 'confessions'—if he was at all capable of feelings of guilt, the confessions of others to *his* crimes could serve to take away that guilt.

... The 'show' trial was, if we follow this line of interpretation, perhaps first of all a show for himself ... Of his opponents, only Trotzky [Trotsky] stood up to challenge him from abroad, for which he paid the same price as those who had 'crawled on their bellies' during the trial in an attempt to save their lives.

Not only are the ruthlessness and vindictiveness of Stalin reflected in the crimes he attributed to his enemies in the show trial. The trials also became the model for the kind of society the Soviet Union became under Stalin after he seized on the Kirov murder to shape Russia in his own image.

As Nikolaus Werth¹ has observed, 'The Great Terror ended as it had begun, with an order of Stalin.' He had never lost control of the 'show'. Stalin's compelling performative power has been unmatched to this day—as has his moral depravity.

¹ Nikolaus Werth – French historian, a scholar of communism who has devoted his studies to the Soviet Union.

End of sources

- Source 1** Original photograph: *Nikolai Yezhov with Stalin and Molotov along the Volga–Don Canal, Original* [Photograph]. (1937). Retrieved November, 2024, from https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?title=File:Nikolai_Yezhov_with_Stalin_and_Molotov_along_the_Volga%E2%80%93Don_Canal,_original.jpg&oldid=747266912
- Doctored photograph: *Stalin and Molotov along the Volga-Don Canal, Nikolai Yzhov Removed* [Photograph]. Retrieved November, 2024, from https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Stalin_and_Molotov_along_the_Volga%E2%80%93Don_Canal,_Nikolai_Yezhov_removed.jpg
- Source 2** Adapted from: Trotsky, L. (1937). *Stalinism and Bolshevism*. Retrieved November, 2024, from <https://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1937/08/stalinism.htm#pt1>
- Source 3** Adapted from: Schmid, A. P., de Graff, B. (2016). *Terrorists on Trial: A Performative Perspective*. Leiden University Press, pp. 100–101 & 148–149. Retrieved November, 2024, from <https://muse.jhu.edu/book/46327>
- Used under [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International licence](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/).

Sample assessment task

Modern History – ATAR Year 12

Task 3 – Unit 3: Russia and the Soviet Union 1914–45 (World War I to the end of World War II)

Assessment type:	Source analysis
Conditions:	Time allowed for the task: 10 minutes reading time, 35 minutes working time Provided: a source booklet consisting of three (3) sources which have been selected by the teacher and an answer booklet for students to write their responses in
Task weighting:	10% of the school mark for this pair of units (20 marks)

Answer the questions (a) to (c) using the **three (3)** sources provided in the source booklet.

- (a) Explain the historical context of **Source 1**. Include the relevant events, people and ideas depicted or represented in the source. (4 marks)

(b) Compare and contrast the message/s of **Source 2** and **Source 3**.

(6 marks)

(c) Identify the author’s perspective and account for the historical interpretations of Stalinism as represented in **Source 1**, **Source 2** and **Source 3**.

(10 marks)

Marking key for sample assessment Task 3 – Unit 3: Russia and the Soviet Union 1914–45 (World War I to the end of World War II)

- (a) Explain the historical context of **Source 1**. Include the relevant events, people and ideas depicted or represented in the source. (4 marks)

Description	Marks
Explains the historical context of Source 1, providing accurate and specific details about the relevant events, people and ideas represented in the source	4
Outlines the historical context of Source 1, providing mostly accurate details about the relevant events, people and ideas represented in the source	3
Makes a general comment about some relevant events or people or ideas represented in the source	2
Identifies the focus of the source	1
Total	/4

Markers' notes:

This question is concerned with the historical context in which the source is located. The focus of the source should be identified but does not need to be explicitly stated.

The answer must concentrate on the relevant historical events / people / ideas and not rely on general statements. Accurate, specific details (causes/dates/events/people/place/ideas) need to be provided for students to achieve full marks.

Answers may include:

- The focus of Source 1 is the censorship and removal of Nikolai Yezhov, Head of the NKVD (1935–1939), from the photograph symbolising his fall from Stalin's favour (usurped and denounced by one of his own deputies).
- Yezhov was Stalin's 'right hand man' who interrogated and falsely accused thousands of Communist Party officials, eventuating in their imprisonment or execution.
- In Russian historiography, the Great Purges have become known as the '*Yezhovschina*' after the 'bloodthirsty dwarf'.
- The Great Purges of 1936–1938 were Josef Stalin's attempt to remove his political opponents and any threats to his regime, to consolidate his power, including former Bolshevik allies. He was acting out of fear that traitors and spies had infiltrated the party and were attempting to depose him.
- The Great Purges were triggered by the murder of Sergei Kirov in December 1934. His murder took place following growing opposition and a split in the Communist Party ranks over the economic state of Russia (results of the First Five Year Plan) and Stalin's loss of popularity during the elections to the 17th Central Committee at the 17th Party Congress in early 1934.
- A series of Show Trials (or Moscow Trials) were launched to remove these threats, namely against 'Trotskyists', and it would include the execution of Zinoviev, Kamenev and Bukharin.
- Yezhov was arrested in 1939 and later executed in 1940 as part of Stalin's patterns in eliminating individuals who had served their purpose.

(b) Compare and contrast the message/s of **Source 2** and **Source 3**.

(6 marks)

Description	Marks
Message/s of Source 2 and Source 3	
Identifies the message/s of Source 2	1
Identifies the message/s of Source 3	1
Subtotal	/2
Comparison of message/s	
Describes in detail, points of comparison between Source 2 and Source 3, supported by accurate and relevant evidence	2
Outlines points of comparison between Source 2 and Source 3, supported by some relevant evidence	1
Subtotal	/2
Contrast of message/s	
Describes in detail, points of contrast between Source 2 and Source 3, supported by accurate and relevant evidence	2
Outlines points of contrast between Source 2 and Source 3, supported by some relevant evidence	1
Subtotal	/2
Total	/6
<p>Markers' notes:</p> <p>Students may choose to incorporate the identification of message within their compare and contrast. Evidence should be drawn from the sources to support the comparison and contrast of the message/s. Students may choose to structure their response according to the grid above.</p> <p>Answers may include:</p> <p>Message/s of Source 2 and Source 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Source 2's message is that Stalinism has strayed from the original Bolshevik principles. Trotsky's critical view of the shift from Bolshevism to Stalinism argues that this marks a serious degeneration and has created a deep ideological divide within the party. The source focuses on Trotsky's condemnation of Stalin's leadership and the transformation of the Bolshevik ideology. The message of Source 3 is that the Great Terror had profound and far-reaching consequences on the Bolshevik Party and Soviet society. It communicates the idea that the extensive purges, executions and political persecutions during this period were not just a series of political actions but a critical phase in Soviet history. Furthermore, Source 3 emphasises that the primary target of the Great Terror was the Bolshevik Party itself. <p>Comparison/s</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both sources' messages are that Stalinism had deviated from the traditional aims of the Revolution. That is, there is an ideological rupture (or break) between Bolshevism and Stalinism. Trotsky (Source 2) speaks of a 'whole river of blood' separating Bolshevism and Stalinism and states that, 'it is simply using the old label of Bolshevism the better to fool the masses.' Similarly, Schmid advocates that '... the Communist Party was ... far removed from the proletariat that it was supposed to represent.' 	

- Both sources address the consequences of Stalin's leadership on the Bolshevik Party, albeit from different angles. Trotsky claims that the social structure of the party has changed, stating it has experienced a 'radical degeneration' and Source 3 claims that 'The Great Terror of 1936–1938 was mainly a purge of the Communist Party'.
- Both sources acknowledge oppositional elements existed, Source 3 uses the case of Trotsky fighting Stalin from abroad, whereas Source 2 demonstrates that opposition in Trotsky's own words.

Contrast/s

- Source 2 primarily concentrates on ideological differences and the radical degeneration of Bolshevism under Stalin, while Source 3 delves into the broader societal consequences of the purges.
- Source 2 is more personal, reflecting Trotsky's perspective and experiences, whereas Source 3 adopts a broader, more analytical approach. Trotsky's message is straightforward: Stalin has caused the degeneration of Bolshevism. Whereas Source 3, while also acknowledging these ideological differences, primarily focuses on the broader societal consequences of the purges. It notes, 'The Great Terror ended as it had begun, with an order of Stalin', highlighting the overarching impact on society and the continuity of control exercised by Stalin. This example illustrates how Source 3 extends beyond ideological aspects to emphasise the far-reaching consequences on the entire Soviet society. Schmid provides an academic and analytical examination of Stalin's show trial and the societal consequences.

- (c) Identify the author's perspective and account for the historical interpretations of Stalinism as represented in **Source 1**, **Source 2** and **Source 3**. (10 marks)

Description	Marks
Identification of author's perspective	
Identification of the author's perspective of Source 1	1
Identification of the author's perspective of Source 2	1
Identification of the author's perspective of Source 3	1
Subtotal	/3
Accounts for the historical interpretations represented in all three sources, by providing detailed, accurate and relevant evidence to reference motive, purpose, bias, time, place and/or reliability	6–7
Explains the historical interpretations represented in at least two of the sources, by providing accurate and relevant evidence to reference motive, purpose, bias, time, place and/or reliability	4–5
Outlines the historical interpretations represented in at least one of the sources by providing some relevant evidence to reference motive, purpose, bias, time, place or reliability	2–3
Identifies or provides a general comment on the historical interpretation of Stalinism represented in one of the sources supported by limited evidence	1
Subtotal	/7
Total	/10
<p>Markers' notes:</p> <p>'Identify' means that the students have articulated what the authors perspective is, but they do not need to provide reasons as to why.</p> <p>'Account for' requires students to state the reasons for. In this context, students need to state the possible reasons for the different historical interpretations shown in the sources.</p> <p>Additionally, students could draw on other important elements of the historical narrative that have not been included but can be considered just as significant as those represented in the source set.</p> <p>Answers may include:</p> <p>Historical interpretations presented in the sources</p> <p>Collectively, these sources show the complex nature of historical evidence in the following way:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Source 1 provides visual evidence through photographs, particularly highlighting the manipulation of images to erase Nikolai Yezhov, the Head of the NKVD, from historical records. This source sheds light on the political climate and propaganda as a tool for manipulation. Source 2 offers an excerpt from Leon Trotsky's article, written during his exile, criticising Stalin and the transformation of Bolshevism into Stalinism. Trotsky's perspective provides a glimpse into the ideological divisions within the Bolshevik movement and the impact of Stalin's leadership on the party's structure and ideology. Source 3 draws on Alex Schmid's analysis of Stalin's 1936 show trial, providing insights into the broader impact of the Great Terror on the Bolshevik Party and Soviet society. It highlights the purge's consequences, the transformation of the party into an 'elite class', and the societal shifts under Stalin's rule. 	

Accounting for the historical interpretations and source evidence

- The purges within the Bolshevik Party, as mentioned in Source 3, were instrumental in reshaping the political landscape. Stalin's ruthless campaigns targeted not only political rivals but also members of the party deemed disloyal. This internal strife and the elimination of key figures as indicated by Source 3's reference to the annihilation of the older generation of Bolsheviks had profound consequences for the ideological and leadership structure of the party. This would later include Leon Trotsky (Source 2) who had become an active opponent to Stalin from abroad. He would be assassinated by Stalinist agents in Mexico in 1940.
- Building upon Source 2, Trotsky's exile and subsequent critique of Stalinism sheds light on the ideological divisions within the Bolshevik movement, from a personal point of view. Trotsky's perspective, expressed in his article (Source 2), emphasises the significant degeneration of Bolshevism under Stalin's leadership. He not only criticises Stalin but also draws a stark contrast between the original Bolshevik ideals and the evolving Stalinist regime. This dissenting voice from a former prominent Bolshevik leader adds depth to the internal challenges faced by the party during the Great Terror. Source 2 illustrates how the purge affected even those who were once at the heart of the Bolshevik movement.
- Examining Source 1 provides a unique lens into the propaganda machinery of the Stalinist era. This visual evidence unveils a deliberate effort to control public perception by erasing individuals deemed threats to Stalin's regime. The manipulation of images, as evident in the doctored photograph, serves not only to rewrite history but also to instil fear and obedience by eliminating any trace of dissenters.
- Students could discuss other aspects of a totalitarian regime that can create counternarratives, accommodating the sources as part of their response, or historiography.

Historical knowledge

In discussing the broader historical context, students should explore the relevant information about the Great Terror of 1936–1938, shedding light on the purges within the Bolshevik Party.

- The Great Terror – characterised by widespread purges, executions, and political persecutions – was a critical phase in the Soviet Union in the period 1914–1945. It was marked by the consolidation of Stalin's power, the elimination of perceived internal and external threats, and the establishment of a totalitarian regime.
- The purge of the Bolshevik Party played a pivotal role in reshaping the political landscape in the Soviet Union. Stalin's ruthless campaigns targeted both political rivals and those within the party perceived as disloyal. Source 3 underscores the internal strife and elimination of key figures, particularly the older generation of Bolsheviks, profoundly impacting the party's ideological and leadership structure. This purge extended to figures like Leon Trotsky (Source 2), who opposed Stalin from abroad and eventually fell victim to Stalinist agents in Mexico in 1940.
- These sources lack a thorough examination of the daily experiences of individuals enduring the Great Terror. While addressing political and ideological dimensions, they provide limited insights into the impact on ordinary citizens, the pervasive fear and anxiety in society, and the human toll of the purges. A more comprehensive understanding requires an exploration of the lived experiences and emotional upheaval faced by the general population during this tumultuous period. Additionally, students could elaborate on fact that the sources do not touch on the purge of the Red Army, with many top military officials being removed.

Acknowledgements

Task 3 – Unit 3: Russia and the Soviet Union 1914–45 (World War I to the end of World War II)

- Source 1** Original photograph: *Nikolai Yezhov with Stalin and Molotov along the Volga–Don Canal, Original* [Photograph]. (1937). Retrieved November, 2024, from [https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?title=File:Nikolai Yezhov with Stalin and Molotov along the Volga%E2%80%93Don Canal, original.jpg&oldid=747266912](https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?title=File:Nikolai_Yezhov_with_Stalin_and_Molotov_along_the_Volga%E2%80%93Don_Canal,_original.jpg&oldid=747266912)
- Doctored photograph: *Stalin and Molotov along the Volga-Don Canal, Nikolai Yzhov Removed* [Photograph]. Retrieved November, 2024, from [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Stalin and Molotov along the Volga%E2%80%93Don Canal, Nikolai Yezhov removed.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Stalin_and_Molotov_along_the_Volga%E2%80%93Don_Canal,_Nikolai_Yezhov_removed.jpg)
- Source 2** Adapted from: Trotsky, L. (1937). *Stalinism and Bolshevism*. Retrieved November, 2024, from <https://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1937/08/stalinism.htm#pt1>
- Source 3** Adapted from: Schmid, A. P., de Graff, B. (2016). *Terrorists on Trial: A Performative Perspective*. Leiden University Press, pp. 100–101 & 148–149. Retrieved November, 2024, from <https://muse.jhu.edu/book/46327>
Used under [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International licence](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/).