

# The OIB Specimen Paper

- How will the OIB written exam paper be structured?
- What skills are we testing through our exam questions?
- What command words should we be using in our exam questions?
- What constitutes good practice when writing exam questions?
- What are the things to avoid when writing exam questions?

# How will the OIB exam be structured?

- The format of the OIB exam paper remains unchanged
- The exam paper will provide students with a choice: they can answer questions from sujet A **OR** sujet B
- Sujet A: Students will choose one of two History essays and a Geography document question (or AMQ)
- Sujet B: Students will choose one of two Geography essays and a History document question

# Essay questions and Document Questions

- The structure of OIB exam questions remains unchanged.
- Essays and Document questions will be split into two parts – worth **8 marks**  
**12 marks**

## Example from History

**Theme one: The World Crisis of the 1930s, the Threat of Totalitarianism and the Road to World War Two.**

With reference to the foreign policies of appeasement (Britain & France) and Isolationism (USA), explain why in the 1930s, the great democratic powers were reluctant to defend the liberal world order they had created at Versailles. How far do you agree that the rise of totalitarianism was the most important underlying cause of the slide towards war in 1939?

# Essay questions and Document Questions

Essays and Document questions will be split into two parts – worth **8 marks** **12 marks**

## Example from Geography

**Theme two: Unequal integration and unequal development in a globalised world.**

**Explain the key features of trade blocs** and with reference to at least the UK or France, evaluate the role of major economic powers in reducing global inequality.

# What skills are we testing through our exam questions?

- In an **8 mark question**, we are primarily testing subject knowledge and understanding.
- A **12 mark question** demands knowledge and understanding, but we are also testing the evaluative and the analytical skills of our students.

# What command words should we be using when we write 8 and 12 mark questions?

## 8 mark questions:

- Why
- Provide Reasons why
- Explain why/the main causes/the consequences/the features..

## 12 mark questions:

- How far do you agree
- To what extent do you agree
- Assess
- Evaluate

# What constitutes good practice when writing exam questions?

- It is imperative that you read the History and Geography programmes very carefully before setting questions. Use the programme to guide you.
- Make sure you are clear about which chapters of the programme can be used in a written exam and which cannot .

Examples: History theme one chapter three cannot be used for a written exam. Themes 4 of History and Geography cannot be used for a written exam

- Likewise make sure you know how the content of the programme can be used in a written exam

Example: History theme one chapter two: **It is far beyond the scope of theme one to study any totalitarian regimes in depth. Therefore, any written exam questions will focus on the nature of totalitarianism and its role in the slide towards World War Two, rather than the specific characteristics of any one regime.**

Example: Geography themes one and two: **Teachers must choose to study either France or Britain in these themes (but not the same country in each) So questions relating to these two themes must reflect this specificity and allow students to use their knowledge of either country.**

- Refer uniquely to the content of the programme and to the specific vocabulary which is used in the programme
- Structure your questions around the command words

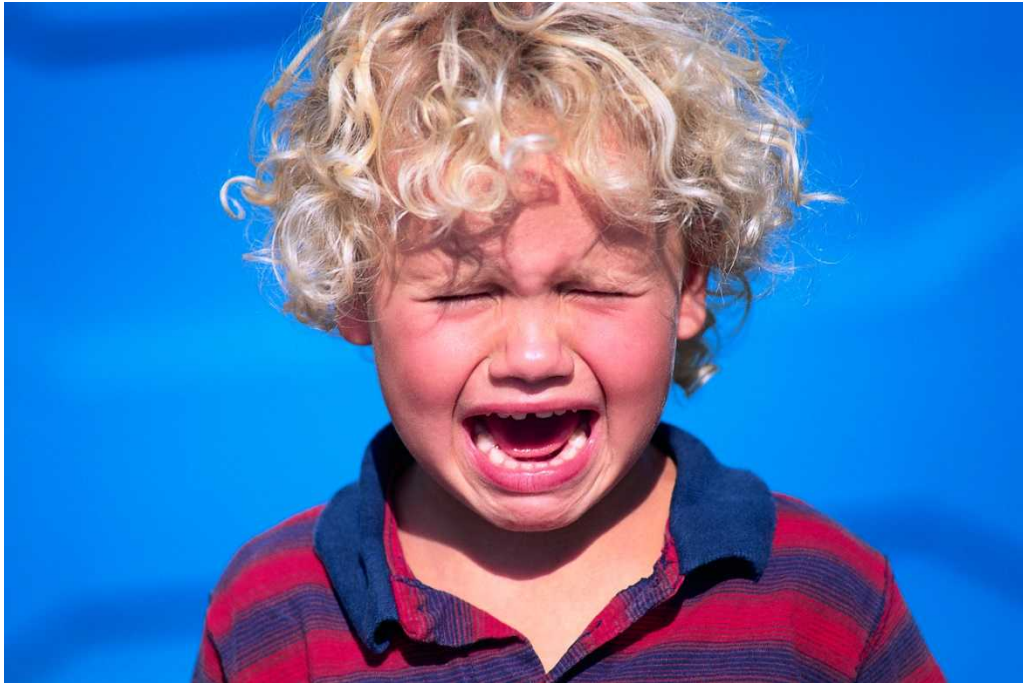
# What should I avoid when writing exam questions?

Here is a short list of questions which would make our students dissolve into a pool of tears. Can you say why? (you may need to refer to the History and Geography programmes)

- *Explain the role of France in the EU and assess the effectiveness of the EU in tackling migration issues.*
- *Is African underdevelopment caused by corruption, climactic issues or both? What role does the UK play in helping LDCs develop?*
- *Describe the New European Order. With reference to Occupied France, assess the role of Nazi Policies.*
- *What were the key features of the Bretton Woods Conference? Evaluate the United States and the USSR after 1945.*

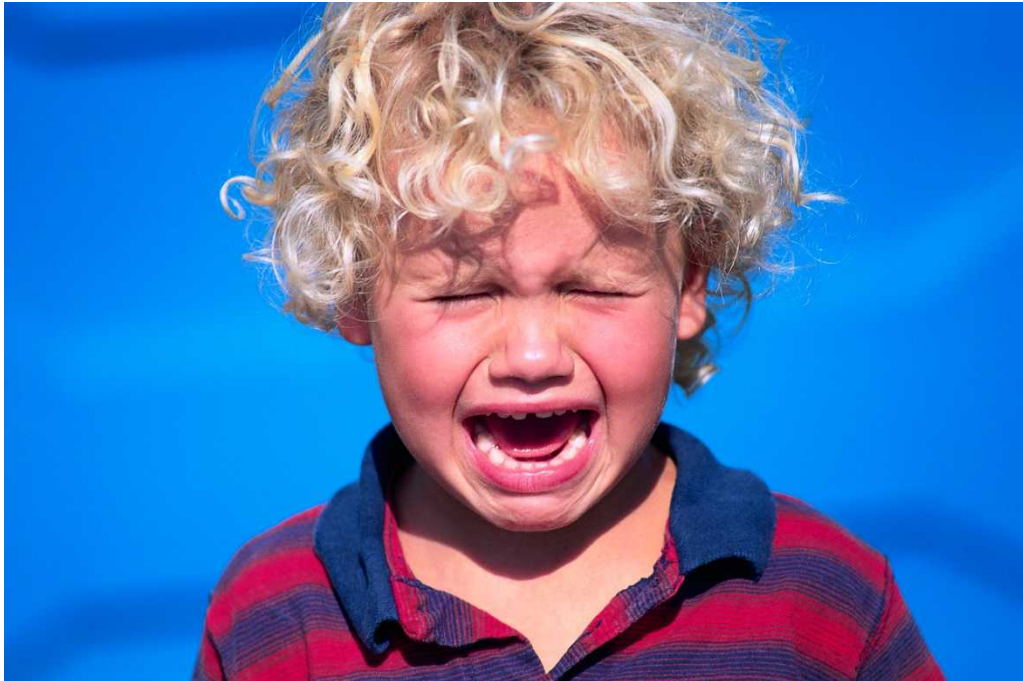


*Explain the role of France in the EU and assess the effectiveness of the EU in tackling migration issues.*



- **The 'role of France' . Although the role of France should be examined through the teaching of the core content, this is far too general a question for either 8 or 12 points.**
- **Migration issues is a suggested area for study when examining the challenges faced by the EU – but not all students will have studied this. Too narrow a question.**

*Is African underdevelopment caused by corruption, climactic issues or both? What role does the UK play in helping LDCs develop?*



- **The 8-point question here is a closed question.**
- **In addition, ‘underdevelopment’ is no longer a Key Term nor should students be restricted to examining only the African context.**

**In this Theme, teachers will have chosen to examine the role of France or the UK - but not to restrict their study to only these countries or, indeed, only one of them.**

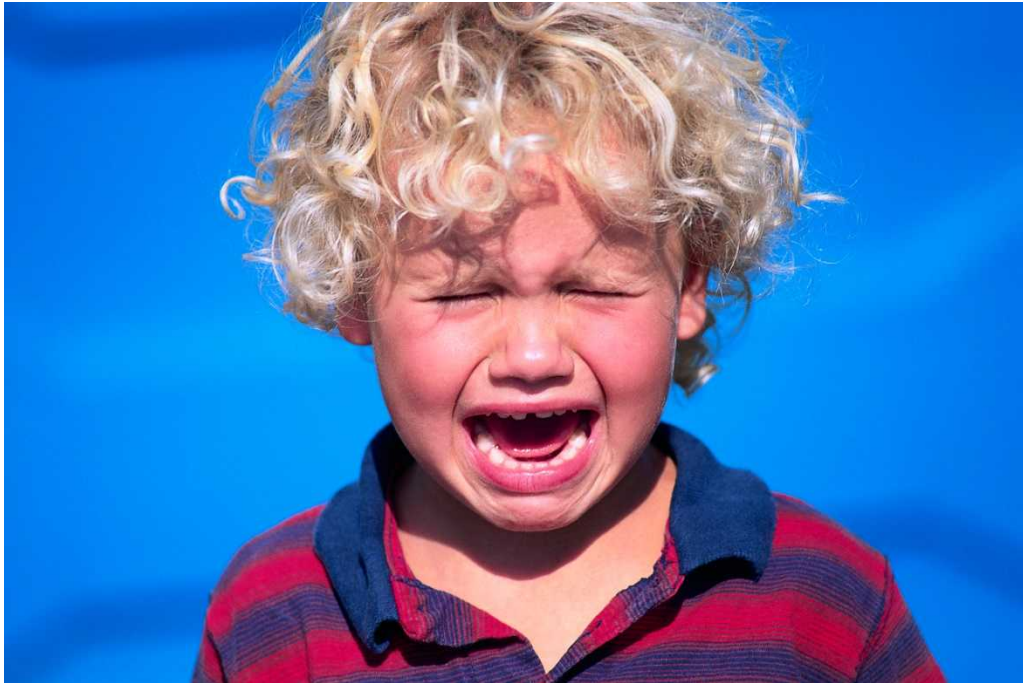
*Describe the New European Order. With reference to Occupied France, assess the role of Nazi Policies.*



- **Describe: not an appropriate command word for either 8 or 12 mark questions**
- **Assess the role of the Nazis: assess them in terms of what?? This question makes no sense**
- **This chapter (WWII) is NON-EXAMINABLE EITHER FOR WRITTEN OR ORAL EXAMS**

*What were the key features of the Bretton Woods Conference? Evaluate the United States and the USSR after 1945.*

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- **What were the key features: this command just asks for a big fat list. It is not testing understanding. It is not appropriate for either 8 or 12 mark questions**
- **Evaluate what exactly? Their relative abilities at marbles? Their favourite TV programmes? This question also makes no sense!!**

# The Specimen History questions: what am I being asked to do?

- Explain why, in the 1930s, the great democratic powers were reluctant to defend the liberal world order they had created at Versailles. How far do you agree that the rise of totalitarianism was the most important underlying cause of the slide towards war in 1939?
- With reference to the 1945-1949 period, explain the underlying causes of the Cold War. Assess the impact of China's foreign policy on the Cold War between 1949-1971.
- How useful are documents A and B to an historian examining Britain's economic problems in the 1970s?
- Using documents A and B and your own knowledge, to what extent do you agree that Britain's economic problems in the 1970s were mainly brought about by the oil crisis of 1973?



# Explain why, in the 1930s, the great democratic powers were reluctant to defend the liberal world order they had created at Versailles.

Below is a suggestion of some points, which could be covered in this question (the list is NOT exhaustive)

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of what we mean by the liberal world order created at Versailles. For example: 'making the world safe for democracy' measures taken to prevent re-armament of Germany; self-determination and the creation of new nation states after the break-up of German & Austro-Hungarian empires; role of League of Nations as the guarantor of collective security and international peace)
- Explain the factors which generated a reluctance in Britain, France and the US to keep the world safe for democracy. Impact of the world-wide economic depression. Each country was consumed by its own economic problems, and rejected military intervention as legitimate response to international crises. This manifested in a prevailing international climate of economic nationalism, foreign policies of isolationism (USA), Appeasement (Britain and France), and the decline of the League of Nations as a broker of international peace.

How far do you agree that the rise of totalitarianism was the most important underlying cause of the slide towards war in 1939?

Below is a suggestion of some points, which could be covered in this question (the list is NOT exhaustive)

- Role of totalitarianism ( impact of ideology and militarism in Germany, Japan and Italy upon international stability
- Role of other factors: impact of the Great Depression, impact of economic nationalism, impact of appeasement and isolationism

Using documents A and B and your own knowledge, to what extent do you agree that Britain's economic problems in the 1970s were mainly brought about by the oil crisis of 1973?

Below is a suggestion of some points, which could be covered in this question (the list is NOT exhaustive)

- A synthesis of document analysis and own knowledge

Students may therefore cover the following points:

- The impact of the 1973s oil crisis (stagflation)

Other factors:

- Keynesianism (long term problems with inflation)
- Mixed economy (growing uncompetitiveness)
- Trade Union Power (inability of governments to deal effectively with Trade Unions (Who Governs Britain?/ Social Contract/ Winter of Discontent)



# The Specimen Geography questions: what am I being asked to do?

- Explain the main causes of global inequality. Evaluate the success of different strategies to reduce this inequality.
- Explain the nature of **two** challenges faced by the EU since 2004. To what extent have EU policies promoted sustainable development?
- How useful are documents A and B for understanding the importance of maritime trade routes to the global economy? Using Documents A and B and your own knowledge, discuss the extent to which maritime canals and straits are a potential source of international tension.

# Explain the main causes of global inequality

*Here are some points which could be covered in this answer (the list is NOT intended to be exhaustive)*

- Demonstrate knowledge of the existence of global inequality – within countries, between countries. Use named examples and statistics to illustrate your assertions.
- Give reasons why global inequality exists. Reference here could be made to political, environmental, economic, historical reasons. Again, case study examples with relevant statistics should be used to support the answer.

## Evaluate the success of different strategies to reduce this inequality.

*Again the following covers some points which could be covered but the list is NOT exhaustive*

- **Different types of strategy:** trade, industrialisation, top-down, bottom-up, grass-roots, heavy engineering projects, appropriate technology
- **Actors involved:** state, supranational organisations, NGOs, trade blocs
- **Qualifying and quantifying 'success':**
- economic growth/economic equality - rise in GDP/GNI, unequal development within countries
- social development - reducing inequalities (gender, rural/urban...)
- sustainability – which strategies can achieve sustainable development?

# Using Documents A and B and your own knowledge, discuss the extent to which maritime canals and straits are a potential source of international tension.

*Again the following covers some points which could be covered but the list is NOT exhaustive*

- Demonstrate understanding of what is shown by the map and table, linking them where relevant
- Explain different reasons for tension – geopolitical role of canals and straits in movement of goods, people, their important role in global trade
- Give examples to illustrate these reasons – using both documents and own knowledge
- Explore other impacts of existing canals and straits, role of new routes (eg Arctic). Impact on environment