5.7 Life in Nazi Germany, 1933-1939: Employment, Living Standards and the Persecution of Minorities: 30-minute Pack

EDEXCEL 1HI0 · about 30 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions. Question 2 refers to Source A. Questions 3, 4 and 5 refer to Interpretation 1 and Interpretation 2. You are advised to spend about 30 minutes on this pack.

Source A, and Interpretations 1 and 2

Source A was written for Revision Library. It is an original text representative of a promotional leaflet for the Strength Through Joy (Kraft durch Freude) savings and leisure scheme of the 1930s. It is not a reproduction, translation or paraphrase of any surviving leaflet, and no genuine publication is reproduced. Interpretation 1 and Interpretation 2 were also written for Revision Library, in the style of history textbook extracts discussing how far ordinary Germans' living standards genuinely improved under the Nazis by 1939; they are not the work of any real, named historian.

SOURCE A: a promotional leaflet written for Revision Library, representative of material advertising the Strength Through Joy scheme during the 1930s.

Working Germans deserve to enjoy the fruits of their labour. Through Strength Through Joy, you can book affordable concerts, theatre trips and sporting events after your shift, or save a little each week towards a holiday cruise to Norway or a stay in the mountains. Save regularly and you may even join our savings plan for your own car, the KdF-Wagen, built for the ordinary family, not just the wealthy. Ask your works representative about weekly savings stamps. A healthy, contented workforce is a stronger Germany.

INTERPRETATION 1: from a history textbook written for Revision Library, discussing how far ordinary Germans' living standards genuinely improved under the Nazis by 1939.

Living standards for most non-persecuted Germans genuinely improved during the 1930s. Unemployment fell dramatically from around six million in 1933 to under one million by 1939, driven by public works such as the autobahns, the National Labour Service and, increasingly, rearmament. Schemes such as Strength Through Joy gave ordinary workers access to leisure activities, holidays and consumer goods that had previously been available only to the better off, giving many working Germans real, everyday reasons to feel their circumstances had improved under the regime.

INTERPRETATION 2: from a history textbook written for Revision Library, discussing how far ordinary Germans' living standards genuinely improved under the Nazis by 1939.

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The apparent improvement in living standards is less impressive on closer examination. Official unemployment figures excluded groups such as Jews dismissed from their jobs and women who left the workforce, making the fall in unemployment look larger than the real change in most families' security. Wages for ordinary workers rose only slowly once inflation is taken into account, working hours lengthened as rearmament accelerated after 1936, and the loss of independent trade unions in 1933 meant workers had no way to bargain for better conditions. Popular schemes such as Strength Through Joy provided real but modest benefits that masked, rather than solved, these underlying pressures.

1 Give two other groups, besides Jewish people, who were persecuted by the Nazi regime between 1933 and 1939.

(Total for Question 1 is 4 marks)

2 Give two things you can infer from Source A about how the Nazi regime tried to improve ordinary workers' lives. Support each inference with a detail from the source.

(Total for Question 2 is 4 marks)

3 What is the main difference between Interpretation 1 and Interpretation 2 about how far ordinary Germans' living standards genuinely improved under the Nazis by 1939? Explain your answer, using details from both interpretations.

(Total for Question 3 is 4 marks)

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4 Suggest two reasons why the authors of Interpretation 1 and Interpretation 2 might have different views about how far living standards genuinely improved.

(Total for Question 4 is 4 marks)

5 Which interpretation do you find more convincing about how far ordinary Germans' living standards genuinely improved under the Nazis by 1939? Explain your answer, using Interpretation 1, Interpretation 2 and your own knowledge.

(Total for Question 5 is 16 marks)

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Mark scheme · 5.7 Life in Nazi Germany, 1933-1939: Employment, Living Standards and the Persecution of Minorities: 30-minute Pack

Question 1

Roma and Sinti people (referred to at the time as 'Gypsies') were subject to increasing registration, restriction and persecution **B2**

people with disabilities were targeted by forced sterilisation under the 1933 Law for the Prevention of Hereditarily Diseased Offspring, and habitual offenders, 'asocials' and homosexual men (under Paragraph 175) were also targeted and sometimes sent to camps **B2**

Answer: Roma and Sinti people, and people with disabilities (forced sterilisation from 1933); other targeted groups included homosexual men and those labelled 'asocial'.

Question 2

inference 1, e.g. the regime wanted to give ordinary workers access to leisure activities that had previously been for wealthier people **B1**

supporting detail for inference 1 from the source, e.g. it offers 'affordable concerts, theatre trips and sporting events' and 'a holiday cruise to Norway' **B1**

inference 2, e.g. the regime encouraged workers to save gradually towards larger, longer-term goals such as owning a car **B1**

supporting detail for inference 2 from the source, e.g. it mentions saving 'a little each week' and a savings plan for 'your own car, the KdF-Wagen... ask your works representative about weekly savings stamps' **B1**

Answer: The regime wanted to give workers access to leisure once reserved for the wealthy, and encouraged gradual saving towards larger goals such as a car.

Question 3

Interpretation 1 argues living standards genuinely improved, citing the fall in unemployment from around 6 million to under 1 million and the real benefits of schemes such as Strength Through Joy **B2**

Interpretation 2 argues the improvement was overstated, because unemployment figures excluded groups such as Jews and women, wages rose only slowly, hours lengthened, and workers lost the ability to bargain after trade unions were banned **B2**

Answer: Interpretation 1 sees a genuine improvement in living standards, based on falling unemployment and schemes like Strength Through Joy; Interpretation 2 sees the improvement as overstated, pointing to excluded groups, slow wage growth and lost bargaining power.

Question 4

the authors may focus on different kinds of evidence: Interpretation 1 emphasises headline statistics and popular schemes, while Interpretation 2 emphasises how those statistics were compiled and the experience of excluded or persecuted groups **B2**

the authors may hold different views about which Germans should be considered when judging 'living standards', e.g. one focusing mainly on the majority population and the other insisting that excluded groups must be accounted for **B2**

Answer: They may focus on different evidence (headline statistics vs how they were compiled and who was excluded), and hold different views about whose living standards should count when making the judgement.

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Question 5

Level 1 States a simple preference for one interpretation, with little or no supporting reasoning or own knowledge. **1-4**

Level 2 Describes the content of one or both interpretations and gives a limited reason for a preference, with some own knowledge. **5-8**

Level 3 Explains reasons for a preference between the interpretations, using relevant own knowledge to support or challenge each one. **9-12**

Level 4 Evaluates both interpretations critically, using precise own knowledge to reach a sustained and well-supported judgement about which is more convincing, or how far each is convincing. **13-16**

Indicative content:

- Evidence supporting Interpretation 1: unemployment fell from around 6 million in 1933 to under 1 million by 1939 through the autobahns, the National Labour Service and rearmament, and Strength Through Joy genuinely gave many workers access to holidays and leisure they could not previously afford.
- Evidence supporting Interpretation 2: the ban on independent trade unions in May 1933 removed workers' ability to bargain for better pay and conditions, working hours lengthened as rearmament intensified after 1935, and the unemployment figures did not count Jewish people dismissed from work or women who left employment, groups whose exclusion is itself part of the wider persecution covered by this period.
- A convincing answer might note the two views can both be partly right for different groups: living standards for many non-persecuted German workers probably did improve in real, everyday ways, while for Jewish people and other persecuted groups, and to a lesser extent for all workers who lost union protection, conditions worsened even as headline statistics improved.
- Own knowledge that the Nuremberg Laws (September 1935) and Kristallnacht (November 1938) coincided with the same years in which unemployment was falling could be used to argue that any judgement about 'living standards' must specify which Germans are being discussed, supporting Interpretation 2's caution about taking the statistics at face value.
- A full answer reaches a supported judgement, weighing genuine improvement for much of the population against the statistical and human costs Interpretation 2 highlights, to argue for one interpretation over the other, or for a combined, more precisely qualified view.

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