

High Storrs Sixth Form

2024 Bridging Work

Subject: History - Modern

Name: _____



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Modern History Bridging Work

Write an essay discussing one of the following:

- What was the most significant moment of the 20th Century?
- When did the British Empire end?
- “Das Capital is the most important book of the past 200 years” How far do you agree?
- “The 24-hour news cycle transformed British Politics in the years 1990-2010” How far do you agree
- How far has Russia defined the landscape of modern politics?

This Essay should be between 1,000-2,000 words with 2,000 being the absolute maximum

Your essay must include;

- A clear and defined viewpoint
- An counter argument/debate
- Key detail (Names, dates, facts & Figures)
- A conclusion that reaches a definite decision (Do not sit on the fence)

You Must also make sure **not** to include;

- Arguments that are not supported by fact
- Uses of the first person or second person (I, Me, My, One, we, you) So for example do not say “From this we can see”
- Conclusions that bring in new information not previously discussed

What is the point of this?

This bridging work is not meant to judge your ability. It will give us a good baseline for your writing skills but the primary purpose is to test **your effort and commitment**. We want to see your best work right out of the gate.

On top of this History at Sixth Form is a subject that entails large debates and a lot of independent research on complex topics. This task will introduce you to some of the challenges involved with higher level history.

How do I research a brand-new topic?

Ah! Now this is a good skill to learn.

Learning a new topic is difficult and I strongly suggest you begin with very basic reading – look at **Wikipedia, Youtube and other such general sites**. However deeper dives require access to much more information – the bullet points below will take you to various sites that will aid you with accessing *academic research*;

JSTOR: <https://www.jstor.org/> - If you create a profile you can view up to 6 articles for free a month. JSTOR has a huge bank of journal articles covering a vast array of subjects – It is really useful for historians! *All Y12's at High Storrs have free access to Jstor;*

Username: HighStorrs

Password: jstor2021

Google Scholar: <https://scholar.google.com/> It's google, but for books – This site will gain you access to extracts from various books and journals. Useful if you aren't sure where to look.

National Archives: <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/?letter=&search=&research-category=online> – Primary sources galore – use this and the filters to find online primary sources from the national archives

How do I write this?

Whichever way feels best to you. However we have included a few examples of how we would like these arguments to flow – don't copy these answers but feel free to use them as inspiration.

Here are a few things that you should be including;

- Introduction – This is where you lay out your argument – Explain the viewpoint you are choosing to support and the major arguments for and against it.
- Topic sentences – The first sentence of every paragraph should inform me of what you are about to discuss. (eg. *One of the reasons that history at High Storrs is so brilliant is that they have incredible teachers*)
- Evidence – Pretty self-explanatory, make sure you support assertions with facts & detail. (eg. *High Storrs History department is the only history department in the city that offers a choice of historical topics providing avenues of study for both early modern and modern topics. Early modern covers the Wars of the Roses, Which Hunts and Spanish Empire. Alongside this they offer modern topics; Post war Britain, Revolutionary Russia and the East India Company*)
- Clear and well explained judgments – Don't sit on the fence – you don't have to completely side with one argument or the other but you do need to make a firm call (eg. *Therefore, History at High Storrs is the best subject to choose. It does not have the direct application of more vocational subjects like drama or DT but it does provide a wide range of skills and an excellent education in the history of our world.*)

Examples

Was the Cold War inevitable after World War II?

Several outcomes other than an armed, hostile stand-off could have emerged at the end of World War II. There might have been a hot war, with the vast armies of the Soviet Union pitched against the equally powerful armed might of the Western Allies. Alternatively, there could have been electoral successes and popular uprisings by communist and other radical left-wing movements across Western Europe leading to the coming to power of regimes less willing to take a hostile stance towards the USSR. Thirdly, elections in Eastern Europe might have resulted in Soviet influence stopping at her own borders and hence no Iron Curtain "stretching from Stettin to Trieste". Finally, a more cooperative, consensual and less suspicious approach to diplomacy would possibly have achieved a mutually acceptable rapprochement.

One of the biggest reasons that the cold war was indeed avoidable is that, apart from figures such as General George Patton, there was little desire to start up another war against erstwhile allies. For the politicians of the democracies, initiating a new war would have been political suicide. For Stalin, there was little to be gained since he was in control of sufficient east European territory to create a series of buffer states to protect the Soviet Union. Additionally, the USA had developed and demonstrated the use of the atomic bomb, something which the Russians had not yet mastered. Equally significantly, despite Churchill's extreme wariness about Soviet post-war intentions in Europe, President Roosevelt was less concerned with ideas of Russian expansionism and he was by far the senior Western partner. He was willing to treat with Stalin, seeing the winning of the war as much more important than manoeuvring for later anti-communist geostrategic advantage. Despite his death a month before victory in Europe, his cooperative legacy prevailed long enough to make a shooting war with the USSR a non-starter.

The prospect of a much more left-leaning political Europe was a genuine possibility as well. In Britain, the Labour Party won an overwhelming victory in the 1945 election, while in Italy there was a very real possibility of the Communist Party at the least being a participant in Italy's first post-war government. Determined that Italy must remain in the Western camp, President Truman authorised the covert transfer of vast amounts of cash to the anti-communist Christian Democrat Party which proved significant in overcoming the initial broad support for the anti-fascist parties of the left. Even more decisive was the decision to finance and arm the right-wing government in Greece during the civil war which began in 1946. Truman's support came at a crucial moment when it looked like communist forces might prevail. Significantly Stalin chose not to back the insurgents, honouring the agreements reached at Moscow in 1944 and the Yalta Conference of 1945 over spheres of influence in Europe. Similar US aid was extended to Turkey to prevent her entering into any agreement with Russia over defence and access to the Mediterranean. Had things turned out differently in those countries, it might well have strengthened the already powerful communist movements in France and Belgium.

The scenario of elections in the eastern European nations occupied by Soviet forces at the end of the war producing non-communist governments was not impossible, although neither was it likely. Western historians have largely seen the Russians imposing puppet communist governments upon unwilling populaces, but in each country there were strong indigenous communist movements. Once in power, however, each regime refused to submit itself for re-election. This was not wholly because of Russian force of arms, but also because these regimes knew that their hold upon power

depended on remaining within the Soviet bloc and thus they acquiesced in becoming client states. For Stalin they provided a buffer against what he still saw as a threat from the West to their very existence. After experiencing foreign intervention in the 1917-22 civil war, international ostracism in the subsequent interwar years, and a brutal, genocidal invasion by Germany, it is not altogether surprising that Stalin was somewhat wary.

In the immediate post-war years, Stalin was seeking rapprochement with the West. This seems persuasive since the Soviet Union was in desperate need of a period of retrenchment after the terrible depredations of the life-or-death struggle against Nazi invasion which it had just endured. There was a shield-wall of buffer states in place, Stalin was both unwilling and unable to expand any further, no attempt was made to incorporate Finland or Austria into the communist orbit despite having ample opportunity to do so, both the Western Allies and the USSR had demobilised the great bulk of their armed forces by 1948, and the West had been given free rein to impose its preferred political set-up in Italy, Greece and Turkey (Hobsbawm, 1994). Why then did there not emerge a period of international tensionless coexistence?

There seems to be two principal reasons for this: the presidency of Harry Truman, and Western (especially American) ideological intransigence. Truman was a truculent, belligerent individual who had little experience of foreign affairs when he became president upon Roosevelt's death. He had a very black-and-white, us-and-them view of the world, and despite his lack of knowledge of political belief-systems beyond the USA, was viscerally anti-communist. Alan Offner described him as "a parochial nationalist who lacked the leadership to move America away from conflict and towards détente" (1999, 150), seeing his aggressive posturing towards the USSR as a major factor causing Stalin to adopt more hard-line, domineering policies in the Russian zone of influence in eastern Europe.

It was during his speech announcing US aid to Turkey and Greece that Truman first enunciated his Policy of Containment towards the Soviet Union.

"Totalitarian regimes imposed upon free peoples, by direct or indirect aggression, undermine the foundations of international peace and hence the security of the United States... It must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or outside pressures."

Truman was setting up the USA as the world's policeman, and in the process was creating the basis of American policy towards the USSR for the next forty years. The Soviet Union was to be treated as an implacable foe, as the ideological antithesis of what America believed it stood for, and as a state intent on undermining democracy and Western civilisation. As such it was an existential threat which must be opposed and contained everywhere and at all times. Some historians have argued that "Containment" was the wrong term for American/Western aims during the Cold War – the goal was in fact "the collapse and destruction of the Soviet state and system and its displacement by liberal democratic institutions, whatever the rhetoric about co-existence." (Kimball, 2001, 352) Truman began this policy, marking a distinct break with the consensual approach of his predecessor.

Obsessive anti-communism so permeated successive high-level American thinking that almost all foreign policy was seen in terms of defeating the Russians and their evil doctrines. Joseph Siracusa described the USA developing "an increasingly rigid ideological view of the world – anti-

communist, anti-socialist, anti-leftist – that came to rival that of communism.” (Siracusa, 2001, 154) The roots of this preoccupation can be traced to the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, not so much the events or even the consequences for Russia, but rather the self-proclaimed global mission of fomenting world insurrection against the established order, the propertied classes and liberal capitalism. However, during the interwar years, the USSR was not viewed as a dangerously powerful state, and when Stalin promulgated the policy of “socialism in one country” there was even less reason to be proactively hostile. Ideological animosity was still intense, but action was confined to trade embargoes and a refusal to recognise the Soviet Union. It was only in 1933 that Roosevelt extended recognition when the threat of fascism appeared much greater than that of communism.

As well as the personality and worldview of Truman, events between 1945 and 1948 progressively and cumulatively increased the polarisation and ratcheted up hostility. Among these were the abandonment by Britain and the USA of their commitment to making the Germans pay substantial reparations, something which had been agreed at Yalta and was seen as important and necessary by Russia which had suffered far worse infrastructural and economic damage than the Western Allies. Choosing the option of rehabilitation over repression, the British and Americans merged their occupations areas into the Bizone, then created the Trizone by adding the French sector, introducing a single currency for the whole area. This established a framework for an integrated administrative economic area in the Western sectors, a development advanced greatly in 1947 by the Marshall Plan. The Marshall Plan was not the simple gesture of a generous United States unselfishly seeking to help a debilitated Europe recover. The aim was to create an Open-Door policy within a free-trade Europe where the USA could freely sell its surplus production and invest its huge capital reserves. Money which was offered as aid came with strings attached. What could be bought and from whom was carefully prescribed, the greater part being American-made goods, while the supra-national decision-making body administering the Plan was dominated by the Americans.

The Russians, initially welcoming the Plan, quickly recognised its underlying economic and political disadvantages. They saw it creating a design for Europe which would work to the benefit of the USA within an ideologically unacceptable framework, and declined to participate. The creation of the Trizone and its further binding together with Marshall Aid was only one step away from the implementation of political integration. Following the Berlin Blockade, this duly happened in May 1949 with the declaration of the Federal Republic of Germany. Five months later the German Democratic Republic was established.

The crystallisation of a bipolar Europe was mirrored in the Far East. As part of a deal struck with Stalin, the Americans were given free rein to restructure both Japan and the Philippines which they turned into compliant pro-American, pro-capitalist states. Korea was divided between the two blocs, while Vietnam was prevented from unifying as one nation under Ho Chi Minh and his nationalist-communist liberation movement by the Americans. Against all the anti-imperial promises of Roosevelt, Truman encouraged the French to return as colonial masters in the South rather than let the country be united under a left-wing regime. Effectively, the USA was engaging in an economic, ideological and military-backed expansionist policy while accusing the USSR of that self-same activity.

Post-war international relations were always going to tend towards the development of two rival camps, but that is not sufficient to explain the intense hostility which emerged. In early 1945,

cooperation was still the dominant paradigm among the Allies, not just to defeat the Axis, but for reasons of future security and peace. Ideological differences were seen more as domestic matters than major shapers of international relations. Soviet expansionism and her claim to zones of influence were regarded largely as conventional Russian nationalist ambitions, and were matched by the Western Allies' own zones of influence. However, coinciding with the advent of Truman, suspicions and misreadings of the other side's intentions emerged. Fearing the worst, both began acting upon their misconceived views of the other and started behaving in ways that confirmed their opponents preconceptions, creating self-fulfilling prophecies about what the other would do.

It is not surprising that Stalin acted out of paranoia and suspicion as his domestic record in the late 1920s and 1930s testifies, but Truman was his ideological counterpart in his misreading of Russian intentions and his doggedly anti-communist certainty. Therefore it was not inevitability which led to the Cold War, but inflexibility.

Was the First World War more important than pre-war suffrage movement in securing the 1918 Representation of the People?

The 1918 Representation of the People reformed the electoral system as it extended the vote to men over 21, but, most importantly gave women over 30 the vote, for the first time ever. This was a monumental piece of legislation as it was the first act which had legally given women suffrage, when previously they had been explicitly excluded. There are two overarching arguments as to why women were able to secure the vote; firstly, it can be said it was solely down to the suffrage movements which pushed for change, whilst the other side argues that if it had not been for the war and the changing role of women this would have not been possible. The first argues that the suffragette's movement and their violent campaigning allowed them to amass a large following which in turn meant they were able to garner the attention of parliament. This created a large following from the media which allowed the movement to become a household name. However, the latter argument is argued to be stronger. It is important to note; however, this act was not passed until after the First World War. Therefore, it has to be noted that the War was the pivotal factor in securing the vote for women. This can be due to several factors that will be discussed further in this essay. Firstly, the war had showed women's economic value and allowed men to realize that they could be seen as citizens rather than subject. Also, once women filled this role there was no way that they would 'unlearn' the financial freedom they were able to have. The war changed the relationship between the public and government, so parliament knew they needed to change the voting electorate to maintain public support. However, it is important to look at both sides of the argument.

Prior to the war the Suffragette and Suffragists movement pushed incredibly hard in order to gain the vote for women this had a huge impact on motivating people for, and against suffrage. There were several tactics used by both which allowed the movement to pick up momentum and a reason why many can argue that the Representation of the People was put into motion. The WSPU (the Suffragettes) drew on tactic used by Russian anarchists to vandalise shops, burn buildings and damaged pieces of art to gain media attention in an effort to push the government to enfranchise women. Nevertheless, this group were only a small part of the movement, as the majority of members were peaceful. Still, the motives of the group allowed for the movement to people a heard cause. Their antics were often published in the media and were able to then in turn garner a large amount of attention and following. However, this was seen by many in a negative

light and led to many politicians distancing themselves further from giving the vote to women. They felt that the actions of the women were almost terrorist therefore they should not be awarded the vote. Historian June Purvis claimed that the widely held academic and historical focus on militancy shows little understanding of what the enfranchisement movement actually meant, due to its focus on the effects of militancy, rather than the causes. She claims the causes of militancy were born from "a sense of the burning injustice of the wrongs done to [females] in a male-dominated society", and thus that militancy was an "unavoidable adaptation of the masculine justification of force". She depicts militancy as justified within its context, as a tactic previously adopted by male suffragists. This motivation, rather than action, can be seen in the NUWSS. The NUWSS, was the largest organisation for women's suffrage and had over 53,000 members by 1914 – led by Millicent Fawcett. Militant campaigning may have garnered negative attention but the work of the NUWSS were a major factor in women getting the vote. Before the start of the war women had already pushed for legislation over 20 times but had failed. This frustrated many women and it got to a point where Emmeline Pankhurst and her followers became more militant just before the start of the war. This can show how the war was the most important factor in getting women the vote, as prior to 1914 they had adopted several tactics which had all failed. The war ultimately showed that women were able to work and become breadwinners for the household. moreover, this showed they could adopt a man's role which in the eyes of parliament made them worthy of the vote and would have never taken place if the men had not gone off to war.

Ultimately the war allowed women enfranchisement as both groups were able to show themselves as being citizens. Despite the differences in campaigning, both groups agreed to back down following the start of the war. They believed that the reason for the war was due to the fact that women had been denied the vote. On the day that war was declared Millicent Fawcett was speaking at an anti-war conference and told her followers to support the impending war. The WSPU declared a truce with the government and within weeks women were realised from Holloway Prison. Fawcett also famously declared: "Let us show ourselves worthy of citizenship whether our claim to it be recognised or not." Many can see this as the end or temporary delay of the fight for female suffrage, but this is far from the truth. The women knew that they were to play a vital role in the war as the majority of the country's men went off to fight. Pankhurst was quick to appear at recruiting rallies demanding work for women during the war, as she knew this was the first step in making women more independent. This was vital in showing how women were able to play a large role in the war, whilst also be seen as being more patriotic which showed the government that they supported their country. The Suffragettes were quick to capitalise on this and in their newspaper, there was a new symbol called Britannia which was said to represent over one million women who worked in munition factories. While the NUWSS helped to run and fund field hospitals and ambulances which were run by women, to make soldiers more comfortable. Throughout the war both groups maintained their primary goal, which was to get full suffrage for women. The war did also have a negative impact on the campaign as many argued that women should not get the vote as they were not physically fighting in the war. As it was believed that should there be a future war why should women be part of a vote to start a war when they cannot fight in it. Many legislators also noted that men were losing their vote when they went to war as over forty percent of the male population were barred.

Another reason the war was vital in winning women the vote was due to the fall of the male population as many died in combat. Many MP's and legislators realised that the female vote would now be important in winning them the vote, which is why debates for women franchise arose in

1916 and 1917. This in turn led to the Representation of the People Act (1918) which stated that citizenship should be awarded to those who had served their country, which was seen by the work of many women during the war. Therefore, ultimately it was the role of Suffragettes and Suffragists which ultimately led to women gaining the vote.

To conclude, both sides of the argument hold weight however the War can be seen as the turning point in women's suffrage. The war created a medium which allowed women to be seen as citizens as they took on the roles of the men that had left. This can be seen as parliament were finally able to see that women were capable of being financially independent and carrying out the role that was previously only seen to be for men. Nevertheless, the war allowed women to see that they were not just housewives and were able to support themselves. This realisation scared many in parliament and made them realise that female support needed to be maintained, therefore, gave women the chance to vote. The change in relationship, which was previously mentioned, was vital in the extension of the vote, which would have ultimately not been possible without the war. It can be argued that had it not been for the suffrage movement there would have not been such a strong call for female vote, therefore, it would have not taken place after the war. However, the suffrage movement was not active during the War as they chose to support the war effort at home. This can be seen as a fundamental moment as once they began to co-operate women were given the vote. Therefore, the First World War was the most important factor in allowing women the vote.