

Humanities

History

New Year 12 Summer work 2016-17

Was Churchill the right man for the job?

Preparation:

Induction session

Further reading (articles)

- Churchill
- Churchill in the wilderness
- Churchill 1920-45

Books available in the LC / Burton Library

- Wells and Fellows - *OCR A Level History: Britain 1930-97*
- Andrew Marr - *The Making of Modern Britain*
- Paul Dowsell - *20th Century Leaders – Churchill*
- An Observer Appreciation - *Churchill by his contemporaries*

Web Links

<http://www.churchillarchiveforschools.com/>

www.winstonchurchill.org

http://news.bbc.co.uk/today/hi/today/newsid_8234000/8234106.stm

<http://www.theguardian.com/century/1960-1969/Story/0,,105637,00.html>

http://www.heraldscotland.com/opinion/13198198.Churchill_was_the_right_man_for_the_time_and_to_vilify_him_is_pointless/

SHOWBIE

These resources will be available to you via Showbie. Use the code: KFDT5 TO JOIN THE y12 History Induction group.

The Task: Understanding sources and how they relate to an issue

In the examination, you need to show key skills in approaching evidence.

- You have to interpret evidence. You need to link it to the issue in the question and decide what the evidence is saying about that issue. In the example below the issue in the question is whether Churchill became prime minister because his contemporaries believed that he had the necessary abilities to lead.
- You will need to consider how useful the evidence is. This involves thinking carefully about who wrote it, why it was written and how typical it might be.
- This really involves knowledge of the whole situation in 1940 but it is also important to look at the type of evidence. The use of knowledge is a skill that will be developed in the next two chapters. Here, it is helpful to ask ‘Was the person who produced this evidence in a position to know? Is there a reason why he or she might hold a certain view?’

Task

Look at the sources below about how Churchill became prime minister in 1940.

“Using these sources in their historical context, assess how far they support the view that Churchill became prime minister in 1940 because he was thought to be the best person for the job”.

Source A An officer in the Admiralty has an unfavourable view of Churchill.

I dread any more influence from that arch-idiot Winston. I’m quite certain that he has played the whole war of the last eight months to become prime minister, often at the expense of helping to win the war. Witness his refusal to back the demands of the navy against the Air Force. The high ups still insist on going on with the mad Narvik campaign in Norway.

Acting Director of Naval Operations, diary, 9 May 1940.

Source B A former Conservative cabinet minister who resigned in 1938 over Munich gives a view of why Churchill became prime minister.

On 10 May 1940 the Germans invaded Holland and Belgium. Chamberlain’s first reaction was that this terrible event gave him an excuse to remain as prime minister. This shows how men in very high office can acquire the belief that they cannot be replaced. He was persuaded that the events only meant he should depart urgently. The choice lay between Churchill and Lord Halifax. Churchill’s reputation had risen sharply since 1939. He had shown himself a highly competent First Lord of the Admiralty. His speeches in the Commons had been better than any of his

colleagues. Everything that he had prophesied in the past had come disastrously true. Halifax had merely remained the foreign minister of Munich. The choice was obvious.

Duff Cooper, *Old Men Forget*, 1953.

Source C A prominent Conservative politician recalls his reaction to the events preceding Churchill's appointment as prime minister.

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The news of Chamberlain's intentions to stay was given out. The Labour leaders, Attlee and Greenwood, said they were willing to serve in a new national government but not under Chamberlain. The Cabinet was left in doubt what their attitude would be and Churchill knew that the task of forming a government would certainly fall on him.

Leo Amery, *My Political Life*, 1955.

Source D Chamberlain's secretary who went on to be Churchill's secretary recalls in his diary the King's decision on 10 May. He added comments when the diaries were published.

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Friday 10 May The King has sent for Winston (fortunately because Halifax, true to form, had gone off to the dentist!). Mr Chamberlain would have liked Halifax to be prime minister. The King certainly disliked the change to Churchill and would have preferred Halifax. The feeling in Conservative circles was represented by a letter sent by Queen Mary to my mother hoping I would not go on to work with Mr Churchill. Winston told me that when he met with Chamberlain and Halifax, Chamberlain said to Halifax 'if the King asks me I should suggest sending for you to be prime minister'. Halifax said if asked he would propose Mr Churchill.

Sir John Colville, *The Fringes of Power: Downing Street Diaries, 1939-1955*, 1987.

Top Tips:

- Consider the usefulness of the source.
- Consider how the Nature, Origin and Purpose of the source influence the context.
- Do the sources share any key arguments or points?
- Focus your answer around the time period of 1940 – but be aware of the wider context.
- Ensure you answer the question – use the wording in your answer.

MARK SCHEME

	<i>AO2: Analyse and evaluate appropriate source materials, primary and/or contemporary to the period, within its historical context.</i>
	Generic mark scheme for Section A, Question 1: How far do the four sources support the view? [30]
Level 6 26–30 marks	The answer has a very good focus on the question throughout. The sources are fully evaluated, using both provenance and detailed and accurate knowledge of their historical context in a balanced way, in order to engage with the sources and reach a convincing, fully supported analysis of them in relation to the issue in the question.
Level 5 21–25 marks	The answer has a good focus on the question. The sources are evaluated, using both provenance and relevant knowledge of their historical context, in order to engage with the sources and reach a supported analysis of them in relation to the issue in the question. There may be some imbalance in the analysis between use of provenance and use of knowledge.
Level 4 16–20 marks	The answer is mostly focused on the question. The sources are evaluated, using both provenance and generally relevant knowledge of their historical context, in order to engage with the sources and produce an analysis of them in relation to the question. The use of provenance may not be developed.
Level 3 11–15 marks	The answer is partially focused on the question. There is partial evaluation of the sources, with use of some knowledge of their historical context, in order to engage with the sources and produce a partial analysis of them in relation to the question.
Level 2 6–10 marks	The answer has only limited focus on the question. Evaluation of the sources is very general. There is limited use of generalised knowledge of historical context to engage with the sources and produce a basic analysis of them in relation to the question.
Level 1 1–5 marks	This answer is on the wider topic area, but not on the detail of the question. The sources are evaluated in a very basic way, primarily being used as a source of information with understanding of them being only partial. A very generalised knowledge of historical context is used in a very limited way to engage with the sources and to attempt a very simple analysis of them in relation to the question.
0 marks	No evidence of understanding or reference to the sources.

Preparation

In order to do well answering this type of question you must ensure that your answer is focussed on the question. You need to evaluate the sources, using both their provenance¹ and relevant knowledge of their historical context. This is in order to engage with the sources and reach a supported analysis of them in relation to the issue in the question. The balance between using provenance and your own knowledge does not have to be a 50:50 split, but you must consider and use both.

Use this table to establish the basic relevance of the four sources. Source A has been done for you.

Source	View of key issue	Evidence from the source
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Does not think Churchill was best man for the job• Low view of his ability• Thinks Churchill has low intellectual ability and is an ambitious schemer who has put his own interests first	'arch-idiot' He has 'played the whole war' to become PM The Norway campaign is 'mad' and his own ambitions have come 'at the expense of winning the war'
B		
C		
D		

¹ Provenance concerns the nature origin and purpose of the source (NOP)

Provenance

Think about the usefulness of the source. This involves thinking about who wrote it, why it was written and how typical it might be. This involved using your contextual knowledge of 1940, not also the type of evidence you are using. Was the person in a position to know? Is there a reason he / she might hold a certain view?

e.g *source B*

- Was Duff Cooper in a position to know what was going on?
- What is the significance of his being a former cabinet minister, out of office since October 1938?
- Would he know more or less than the author of Source D?
- Would he be 'neutral', or might he favour Churchill?
- Do any of the other sources suggest anything different from Duff Cooper's view?
- Is there anything that might make Duff Cooper's view more or less credible?
- Do you think this view is typical of Conservative political opinion?

What questions would you ask for the other sources?

Contextual Knowledge

To get further you need to apply your own knowledge of the historical context.

For example

- What do you know that might confirm or challenge the reasons given in source B for Churchill being chosen?
- What do we know that might confirm the views about his abilities and ambition?

