

Question 2. Write a narrative account analysing the key events of the Berlin Crisis, 1948–49 You may use the following in your answer:

- Stalin’s fears
- the Airlift.

You must also use information of your own.

In 1948 the Soviet leader, Stalin, became worried that the Soviet-occupied sector in East Berlin was being threatened by the actions of the Western powers. He was particularly concerned that the economic help being given to western Germany such as the Marshall Plan and the founding of an economic business area in West Berlin called Bizonia would be a threat to Soviet control. Stalin felt particularly threatened by the introduction of a new currency into Bizonia in June 1948. As a direct response, on June 15 1948, the USSR sealed off land and supply routes to West Berlin in an attempt to force the West to stop their economic aid and perhaps even to handover West Berlin. This became known as the Berlin Blockade. However, in response to this the USA and Britain launched what became known as the Berlin Airlift. During the crisis planes delivering food and fuel landed in Berlin every minute to provide West Berliners with goods being blockaded. Stalin hoped that the USA and Britain might abandon the Airlift during the winter of 1947/48 but the pilots continued their dangerous mission. The Airlift continued for almost a year until June 1949 when its success led to the USSR abandoning the Blockade. As a result of the crisis West Berlin became seen as an important symbol of western power and influence and it encouraged the Western powers to consider supporting western Germany as an independent state. As a result of the Berlin Crisis, West Germany was established in May 1949 and the Soviets responded in October 1949 by establishing East Germany.

Examiner’s comment

There is a very clear sequence of events from the beginning of the crisis to its outcome as the division of post-war Germany in 1949 which fully responds to the question. Key events of the 1948-49 Crisis are linked into a coherent sequence. The evidence developed goes beyond the stimulus points to include the economic situation in 1948, the Blockade and the division of Germany. This put the response at the top of Level 3 for A02. Level 3 can also be awarded for A01 as the information is accurate and relevant as well as demonstrating a good understanding of the Berlin Crisis.

High Level 3

3	6–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A narrative is given which organises material into a clear sequence of events leading to an outcome. The account of events analyses the linkage between them and is coherent and logically structured. [A02] • Accurate and relevant information is included, showing good knowledge and understanding of the key features or characteristics of the events. [A01] <p><i>No access to Level 3 for answers which do not go beyond aspects prompted by the stimulus points.</i></p>
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