

Writing Body Paragraphs in IB History

IB History

Instructions:

Review the below sample paragraph created by a former Y12 IB History student. Attempt to highlight the components that make it an effective historical argument. It is taken from an essay on the causes of WWII.

An important long-term cause both socially and economically was the Great Depression, beginning with the Wall Street Crash of 1929. This economic downturn spiralled further out of control, with Germany and USA being the two countries that were hardest hit, respectively suffering 33% and 25% unemployment rates. Richard Overy noted that "no single factor was more important for the breakdown of diplomatic relations in the 1930s than the world economic crisis," and he may very well have been right. Not only was the Great Depression crippling the economy and industry, but socially, the psychological effects were a cruel, endless cycle of unemployment, poverty, unrest and despair. It was through the Great Depression that ~~country~~ ^{Gold} ~~country~~ avoided the Gold Standard, one that measured a nation's wealth by the amount of gold it held, leaving only France, Italy, and Poland upholding it in 1931. The Depression also led to a surge in extremism, as in an environment where the attitude was every man for himself, people looked towards totalitarianism and authoritarian figures - Stalin in Russia, Mussolini in Italy, and Hitler in Germany. This led to the rise of Hitler, which allowed him to enact his foreign policies, leading to war.

Notes:

Sample #2

The League of Nations, born of a hope for worldwide peace and internationalism, later came to earn the epithet of a paper tiger. What few successes it had are cast into shadow by the numerous more failures. When the League had formed, the defeated countries of WW1 were not permitted to join for some time, resulting in an already unbalanced 'League'. Neither did the League possess the ability to enforce its actions: it was overruled by the Conference of Ambassadors twice, once on Mussolini and Corfu in ~~1923~~ 1923, second on Polish and Lithuanian claims on Lithu. The League furthermore was undermined, time and time again, by the actions of its members. Non-aggression pacts were formed outside of the League, making any decisions the committee made and managed to have Council and Assembly unanimously agree on (another doubtful endeavour) suspect. These pacts led to the collapse of the principle of collective security: that all nations would rally around a victim nation of an aggressor state. The Anglo-German Naval Agreement ^{the breakdown of} was one such non-aggression pact, and one of the factors behind Anglo-French relationships, due to France's mistrust of Britain. Peace looked very difficult: "The European peace conference was divided between those who wanted peace revisited (Germany, Italy, Japan), those who wanted it reinstated (France, Poland) ^{and the Philippines} and those who were indifferent (Britain, USA)," commented historian Perkins. ^{Grand Illusion} And for any country who wanted war, well - "League or no League, any country determined to wage war will have it," noted Fisher. ✓

Notes