

Title: To what extent was clause 231 of the Treaty of Versailles 1919 unfair towards Germany?

Criterion A: 4 marks

An interesting question for the investigation has been stated. The candidate has identified and selected two very relevant secondary sources: one is focusing on the origin of both World Wars with an extensive historiography (*The origins of the First and Second World Wars – 1997*) by British historian Frank McDonough and the other source is written by one of the most famous WWI historians, the German History Professor Fritz Fischer (*Germany's aims in the First World War*) in 1967. As mentioned – these two sources are appropriate and relevant which the candidate explains in the text. The analysis of both sources could improve though. The reference to their value and limitations is limited.

Criterion B: 7 marks

It would be good if the candidate had clearly explained what was going to be discussed in the investigation. The reader expected a focus on paragraph 231 – what it meant, how it came into the treaty, if there had been any alternatives, etc... Instead, we get a presentation on different historians' views on the role of Germany when WWI started. The question should therefore change to something like “*To what extent was Germany the main cause of the outbreak of WWI?*” or something similar. McDonough's book is good, but the candidate should have referred more to the original sources – not the historical debate that's been presented in “*The origins of the First and Second World Wars*”. Some original sources were used (like Fritz Fischer's work) which is good. The reader also gets a fairly good idea on the WWI – war guilt debate in the 1990's. A different question; an identification of the aim of the work as well as using original sources would have improved it quite a bit.

Criterion C: 2 marks

The reflection contains some discussion about the methods historians use and some of the problems they run into. The candidate also mentions some methods used and compare this with the historian's way of working. It's a good start of a reflection, but it could be developed further.

Total: 13 marks