



**HOUGANG SECONDARY SCHOOL
PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION 2026
SECONDARY FOUR EXPRESS /
FIVE NORMAL (ACADEMIC)**

CANDIDATE'S
NAME:

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CLASS:

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CENTRE
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INDEX
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HUMANITIES (HISTORY)

2261/02

Paper 2 The Making of the 20th Century Modern World, 1910s-1991

27 August 2026

1 hour 50 minutes

Additional Materials:

Writing Paper

String

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

Write your name, class, centre number and index number in the spaces at the top of this page.

Write in dark blue or black ballpoint pen.

Do not use staples, paper clips, glue, correction fluid/tape or highlighters.

Section A

Answer **all parts** of Question 1.

Section B

Answer **two** questions.

The number of marks is given in brackets [] at the end of each question or part question.

For Examiner's Use	
Section A	
Section B	
Total	50

Section A: Source-Based Case Study

Question 1 is for all candidates.

Study the Background Information and the sources carefully and then answer **all** the questions.

You may use any of the sources to help you answer the questions, in addition to those sources you are told to use. In answering the questions, you should use your knowledge of the topic to help you interpret and evaluate the sources.

1 (a) Study Source A.

What was the cartoonist's attitude towards US involvement in the Korean War? Explain your answer. [5]

(b) Study Sources B and C.

Why are they different about who started the Korean War? Explain your answer. [5]

(c) Study Sources D and E.

Can Source E prove that Source D is telling the truth about the Soviet Union's role in the Korean War? Explain your answer. [6]

(d) Study Source F.

Why was the poster circulated in China in 1951? Explain your answer. [6]

(e) Study all the sources.

"US involvement in the Korean War was justified". How far do the sources support this statement? Use the sources and your knowledge to explain your answer. [8]

Was US involvement in the Korean War justified?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

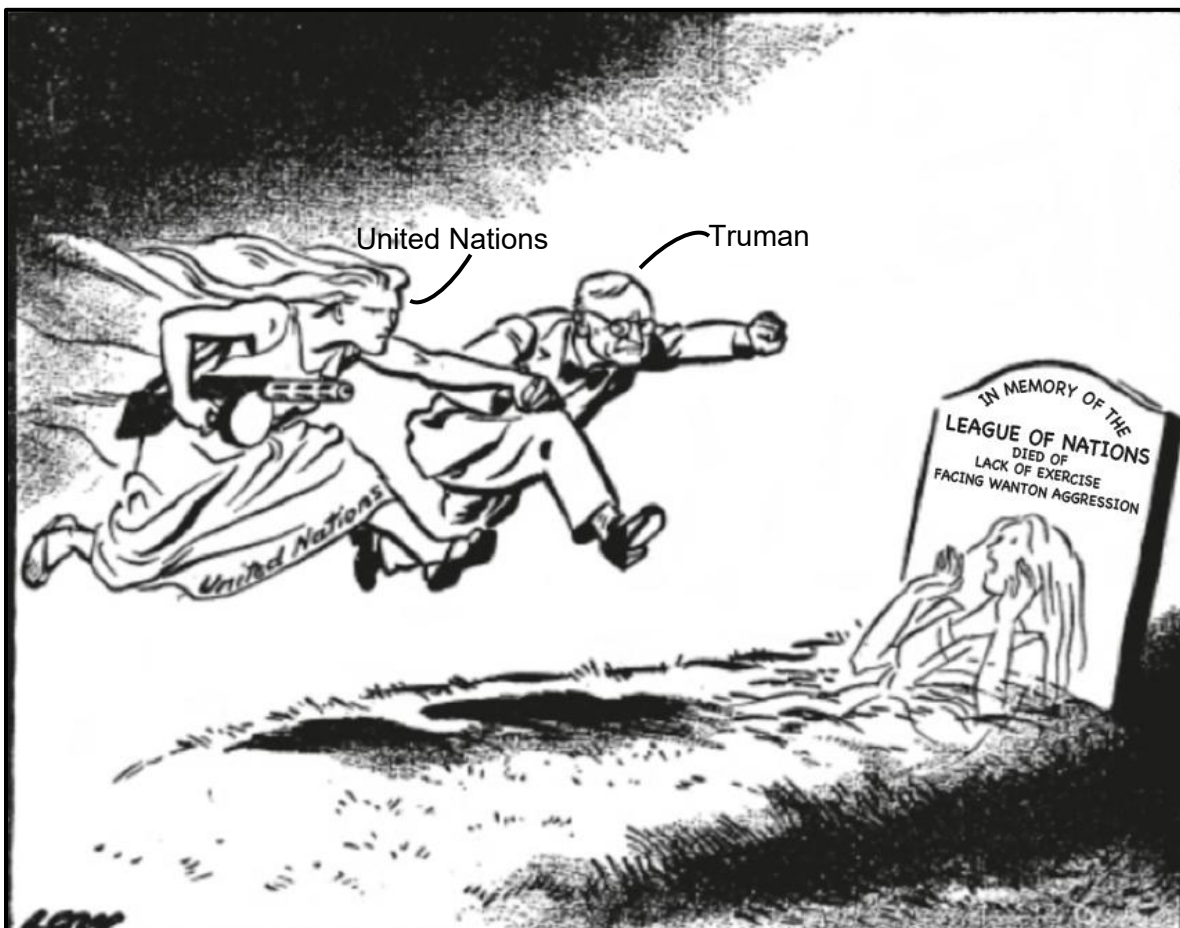
Read this carefully. It may help you answer some of the questions.

Towards the end of the Second World War, the Soviet Union occupied Korea north of the 38th parallel while the US occupied the south. After the war, two separate governments were set up. Both claimed to be the rightful government of the whole of Korea.

On 25 June 1950, war broke out between them. The United Nations (UN) condemned North Korea for invading the South and on 27 June 1950, the UN asked member states to support South Korea. On the same day, President Truman ordered the US army and navy to intervene. North Korea was supported by China and the Soviet Union.

To what extent was US involvement in the Korean War justified?

Source A: A British cartoon titled “History doesn’t repeat itself” published on 30 June 1950. The words on the League of Nations’ tombstone read “In memory of the League of Nations – died of lack of exercise facing wanton* aggression”.



*wanton means merciless and inhumane

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Source B: Truman's radio and television address to the American public on the situation in Korea on 19 July 1950.

On Sunday, June 25th, Communist forces attacked the Republic of Korea... This is a direct challenge to the efforts of the free nations to build the kind of world in which men can live in freedom and peace... The UN Security Council recommended that members of the UN help the Republic of Korea repel the attack and help restore peace and security in that area... Only a few countries have failed to endorse the efforts of the UN to stop the fighting in Korea. The most important of these is the USSR. The USSR has boycotted the meetings of the UN Security Council. It has refused to support the actions of the UN with respect to Korea. The US requested the Soviet Government, 2 days after the fighting started, to use its influence with the North Koreans to have them withdraw. The Soviet Government refused.

Source C: Kim Il Sung's radio address to all Korean people on 8 July 1950.

Early at dawn today, the puppet army of the traitor Syngman Rhee's gang launched a surprise invasion against the northern half of Korea along the entire 38th parallel. Under the direct manipulation of US imperialists, the puppet Syngman Rhee and his band had long been preparing for the aggression against the northern half of Korea... Our war against the aggressive act of the traitorous Syngman Rhee clique is a just war to safeguard the freedom and independence of the country.

Source D: Statement that the Soviet Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs conveyed to the US government on 29 June 1950.

The Soviet Government has verified that the events taking place in Korea were provoked by an attack by South Korea. Therefore the responsibility for these events rests upon the South Korean authorities and upon those who stand behind their back. As is known, the Soviet Government withdrew its troops from Korea earlier than the US and thereby confirmed its principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other states. Likewise right now, the Soviet government sticks to this same principle that foreign countries should not interfere in Korea's internal affairs.

Source E: Extract from Khrushchev's memoirs "Khrushchev remembers", published in 1970.

At the end of 1949, Kim arrived with his delegation to consult with Stalin. The North Koreans wanted to prod South Korea with the point of a knife. Stalin persuaded Kim that he should think it over. Kim went home and then returned to Moscow. He told Stalin he was absolutely certain of success. I remember Stalin had his doubts. He was worried that the Americans would jump in, but we were inclined to think that if the war were fought swiftly – and Kim Il Sung was sure that it could be won swiftly – then intervention by the USA could be avoided. I must stress that the war wasn't Stalin's idea, but Kim's. Kim was the initiator.

Source F: A Chinese poster circulated in China in 1951. The large soldier is a caricature of US President Harry Truman. The background shows what US soldiers were doing in Korea.

This caption reads "The noose of justice is waiting for them!"



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Section B: Essays

Answer **two** questions.

- 2 “It was the behaviour of member states that caused the League of Nations to fail.” How far do you agree with this statement? Explain your answer. [10]

- 3 “It was the ability to improve the economy that allowed the Nazis to maintain control over Germany.” How far do you agree with this statement? Explain your answer. [10]

- 4 “It was the use of the atomic bombs that led to Japanese defeat in World War Two.” How far do you agree with this statement? Explain your answer. [10]

Acknowledgements

Source A <https://www.facebook.com/groups/500514746808351/posts/2498661930326946/>
 Source B <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/radio-and-television-address-the-american-people-the-situation-korea>
 Source C <https://www.marxists.org/archive/kim-il-sung/cw/06.pdf>
 Source D <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1950v07/d151>
 Source E <https://archive.org/details/khrushchevrememb0000edwa/page/368/mode/1up?q=korean+wa>
 Source F <https://chineseposters.net/gallery/pc-1950-001>
 Definition of wanton <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/wanton>