

AN (ALMOST) FOOLPROOF WAY TO STRUCTURE A DP HISTORY PAPER 2 (or 3) RESPONSE

*****Planning your answer is essential – take about 5 min at the beginning to plan it out according to the examples below.*****

Using helpful vocabulary can really help illustrate how well you are engaging with historical concepts. Go [here](#) for the signposting sheet on words to help do this!

Question: To what extent was the leadership of Ronald McDonald the most significant factor leading to the establishment of a totalitarian McDonaldsland state?

- Before you proceed with a plan, you must first ensure that you understand the **key concept** and **timeframe** of the question. In this case, the key concept is **establishment**, which helps dictate the timeframe → it would be from the date that Ronald McDonald became leader of the government to the point you could say a dictatorship had been established.
 - Define any **key terms** in the question that will shape your analysis. Sometimes, there won't be any. In this case, however, it is essential for you to define **totalitarian**.
- e.g. For the purposes of this paper, a totalitarian state will be defined as a state that acts with unlimited authority and seeks to control all aspects of public and private life.
- Take a *position* on the question (**thesis**).
 - Make a clear statement about the level of importance or significance.
 - Quote from the question and then make the statement.
 - *Position* (example): With this considered, the leadership of Ronald McDonald was not a very/a very/a somewhat significant factor in the establishment of an totalitarian McDonaldsland state.
- Outline the 3-5 areas you will discuss (**scope**).
 - Example: This will be made clear through examining the leadership of Ronald McDonald, as well as: the use of the Happy Meal as a propaganda tool to appeal to the peasants; the power vacuum left by the death of the Burger King; the role of the secret police under General Hamburglar; and the cult of personality around Ronald McDonald cultivated by Grimace and the Department of Freedom Fries.
 - Be sure you spend adequate time discussing whatever is mentioned in the premise of the question and in your scope. If you disagree with the assumption of the question, DO NOT dismiss the premise of the question and move on to what you want to talk about.
 - In the case of the example above, the part of the original premise of the question is highlighted in red, and the scope you've created is highlighted in green.
- Discuss the main points each area (**development**)
 - Do it paragraph by paragraph - each topic in your scope (the red and green above) gets its own paragraph.
 - Think something along the lines of 3-4 points for each area.
 - If there are any key terms in the question that you will be developing around or linking to, be sure to define them as you go!
- Show different sides of the argument (**balance/perspectives**)
 - This should be partly achieved through having a well-considered scope.
 - It can also be done through providing (what they love to call in IGCSE) a counterpoint in each area you discuss.
 - However, counterpoints should come from the same part of the scope you are discussing.
 - This means that instead of coming up with something completely different or unrelated to the part of the scope you are discussing, you mention a reason why something you have

been arguing is significant might not be as significant (or vice versa) to the premise of the question.

o EXAMPLE OF A COMMON MISTAKE.

- Blah, blah, blah about the **role of Hamburglar and the secret police** being significant. *****Counterpoint*****However, the role of Hamburglar cannot be considered very significant in the establishment of a totalitarian McDonaldsland when compared to **the successes of Grimace in creating the cult of personality.**
- This is NOT a counterpoint. It is a transition to another part of your scope.
- Even if you changed it to be something else other than this, it would end up being something completely unrelated to the area of the scope you are discussing.

o EXAMPLE OF A BETTER 'COUNTERPOINT'

- Blah, blah, blah about the **tactics of Hamburglar** being significant. *****Counterpoint*****However, the **tactics of Hamburglar** should be considered very carefully. It can be also be argued that it was geographical conditions that allowed Hamburglar to lead his troops to victory in the Battle of McRib. Blah, Blah, Blah.
- This brings in additional considerations that are more directly related to the area of the scope itself.

- If you have some points for the other side of the argument, but they do not naturally fit as counterpoints to any of your areas, you can include a separate area to discuss their merits as a final section in your essay before the conclusion....but this might mean that it should have been an area of your scope in the first place!

- You can include **historiography** to either support your own arguments or present alternative arguments as a way to round out **perspectives** even more.

- This is a level 6/7 skill if done properly.
- It should not simply be namedropping an historian, or saying things like 'some historians say'
- For the above example of a reasonable counterpoint, it would go something like this (the link to historiography is in **blue**):

- Blah, blah, blah about the **tactics of Hamburglar** being significant. *****Counterpoint*****However, the **tactics of Hamburglar** should be considered very carefully. It can be also be argued that it was geographical conditions that allowed Hamburglar to lead his troops to victory in the Battle of McRib. Blah, Blah, Blah. **This is a view supported by historian Dave Thomas, who wrote in Wendy's magazine that...blah, blah.**

- **Link** back to the question

- At the end of EVERY paragraph, or at least at the end of EACH area of your scope, link back to the question by making a statement that includes words from the question itself. For example, using the question above, at the end of discussing **the power vacuum left by the death of the Burger King**, it could be something like: In considering X and Y, one can clearly see that the power vacuum left by the death of the Burger King had a marginal impact on **the establishment a totalitarian McDonaldsland state**. It only allowed for blah, blah, blah, and did not advance the totalitarian aims of the government.
- This shows that you are answering the question and know what the question requires.

- Conclude by restating your position, the areas examined, and your absolute key point or two.

- This will ensure your conclusion is consistent with the evidence you've presented.
- It is essential to **reach a consistent conclusion** or you will automatically preclude yourself from getting into a 6 (since the markbands now specifically mention the need for a conclusion!)
 - Failing to have a conclusion could prevent an answer that is otherwise a 7 from getting more than a 5!!!!

*****Time management is the key, and following a well-planned structure can help immensely with your timing!*****

