

World history topic 10: Authoritarian states (20th century)

This topic focuses on exploring the conditions that facilitated the rise of authoritarian states in the 20th century, as well as the methods used by parties and leaders to take and maintain power. The topic explores the emergence, consolidation and maintenance of power, including the impact of the leaders' policies, both domestic and foreign, upon the maintenance of power. Examination questions for this topic will expect students to make reference to specific authoritarian states in their responses, and some examination questions will require discussion of states from more than one region of the world. In order for students to be able to make meaningful comparisons across all aspects of the prescribed content, it is recommended that a minimum of three authoritarian states should be studied.

Topic	Prescribed content
Emergence of authoritarian states	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conditions in which authoritarian states emerged: economic factors; social division; impact of war; weakness of political system• Methods used to establish authoritarian states: persuasion and coercion; the role of leaders; ideology; the use of force; propaganda
Consolidation and maintenance of power	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use of legal methods; use of force; charismatic leadership; dissemination of propaganda• Nature, extent and treatment of opposition• The impact of the success and/or failure of foreign policy on the maintenance of power
Aims and results of policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Aims and impact of domestic economic, political, cultural and social policies• The impact of policies on women and minorities• Authoritarian control and the extent to which it was achieved

Suggested examples

Please note that the examples provided here are **suggestions only**. Teachers are free to use examples from this list or any other appropriate examples, depending on the particular needs and interests of the teacher and students.

Africa and the Middle East: Tanzania—Nyerere; Egypt—Nasser; Iraq—Saddam Hussein; Kenya—Kenyatta; Uganda—Amin

The Americas: Argentina—Perón; Cuba—Castro; Chile—Pinochet; Haiti—Duvalier; Nicaragua—Somoza

Asia and Oceania: China—Mao; Indonesia—Sukarno; Pakistan—Zia ul Haq; Cambodia—Pol Pot

Europe: Germany—Hitler; USSR—Stalin; Italy—Mussolini; Spain—Franco; Poland—Pilsudski