IB History IA Topics

The International Baccalaureate (IB) program requires its History students to undertake the Historical Investigation as their internal assessment requirement.

IB History students often find the toughest part of this extended project to be the process of selecting a topic for their investigation.

This article provides students with more than 50 topics to consider. These can be adapted, modified, combined or simply used as the basis for formulating a question or study on another topic of choice.

The topics listed here have all been used by IB History students from various schools or presented by the International Baccalaureate Organisation (IBO) as examples. Students should refer to, and follow, the current guidelines for the History Internal Assessment as published by the IBO.

**50 History Internal Assessment Topics:**

* To what extent did the successes of the Berlin Blockade and Airlift overshadow the negative outcomes for the Western Powers?
* An Investigation into Tiananmen Square discussing the heroes popularised in Western Media and Deng Xiaoping’s "martyrs."
* Was the crossing of the Luding Bridge in May 1935 a great communist victory against tremendous odds, or a minor skirmish exaggerated by the Chinese Communist Party for propaganda purposes?
* Kent State: Was it the turning point in the Vietnam War?
* What were the causes of the Boston Massacre 1776?
* An oral history study on the role of women living in post-World War II Britain.
* Why did the Special Operations Executive send aid to Tito’s communist Partisans?
* The German Occupation of the Channel Islands during World War II.
* How far were Republican divisions responsible for their loss in the Spanish Civil War?
* Was Hitler's "euthanasia" policy distinctively Nazi?
* Cinema as History: Sir Richard Attenborough's Gandhi
* An examination of the Greenham Common Peace Protesters
* *Triumph of the Will:*Art, Propaganda or documentary?
* To what extent did David Low's cartoons accurately reflect public opinion in Britain in the years before World War II?
* To what extent is the 2004 film *Finding Neverland*historically accurate in its account of the life of J M Barrie?
* To what extent did Louis XVI’s execution contribute to the "Terror" in France 1793?
* What was the cause of the Rwandan Genocide?
* To what extent does the film *I Shot Andy Warhol* faithfully portray the events of Andy Warhol’s shooting on the 3rd of June 1968?
* What were the reasons for the Allies bombing of Dresden in the Second World War and were they justified in destroying this city?
* How and why did the reports of the American newspaper *The New York Times* and the British newspaper *The Times* differ in their reports of the Soviet and American administrations during the Cuban Missile Crisis?
* How did an admiration of Italian Baroque architecture and ancient mythology become reflected in the design and construction of the Palace of Versailles?
* To what extent does the film Amadeus accurately portray the final illness and death of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart?
* Did the Bielski Otriad experience the same internal and external conflicts portrayed in the film Defiance?
* How useful is the art of George Grosz to the historian of Weimar Germany?
* Does oral testimony substantiate the view that life in East Germany got worse following the fall of Nazism?
* How successfully did Hitler promote the ideal of the family in the Third Reich?
* How did newspaper reports on the death of Kennedy vary, and how reliable were they?
* How and why did the accounts of the storming of the Winter Palace in october 1917 differ in the film *October* and in the book *A People’s Tragedy: The Russian Revolution 1891-1924?*
* How, when and why was the church/mosque/temple of [name] build and what can be learnt from the town of [name] in a defined period?
* How significant was Fidel Castro’s role in the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962?
* To what extent do the film *The Charge of the Light Brigade*and the book*The Charge: The Real Reason Why the Light Brigade was Lost*agree on the apportioning of blame for the failure of the charge of the Light Brigade?
* To what extend was the involvement in the United States government and the CIA responsible for the downfall of Salvador Allende?
* What were the real motives for the different views held by Churchill and Chamberlain during the years previous to World War II?
* A study of the Women’s Army Corps during World War II
* “Mao’s swim across the Yangtze River inspired the renewed cult of Mao and provided an image of Mao as a leader for a new revolutionary generation.”
* To what extent can Nixon’s Vietnamization policy be considered a success?
* Did the Soviet Union assemble missiles in Cuba in 1962 solely to protect Cuba from invasion?
* An investigation into the Tiananmen Square incident of 1989.
* Although the *Night of Long Knives* was characterised by the Nazis as Hitler taking a "courageous action which saved the German Volk from civil war,” he was motivated more by a desire to eliminate threats to his own supremacy within the Party and earning the loyalty of the Army.
* Was the Berlin Wall built simply to deny freedom to East Germans under Soviet rule or did it serve a greater purpose?
* An examination of the significance of British politics in the responses to the Jack the Ripper cases in the 1880s.
* How effective was the Marshall Plan was in reconstructing Europe?
* Why was Margaret Sanger a successful public advocate for birth control in the United States?
* What were the social, economic and political impacts of the launch of Sputnik on the US and USSR at that point in time of the Cold War?
* A study of why the United States became involved in Vietnam.
* Victim or aggressor: An examination of German motives in 1914.
* Who emerged on top from the Cuban Missile Crisis?
* How successful were the Soviet Five Year Plans?