

Name: .....

School: .....



WINCHESTER  
COLLEGE

## Entrance Examination

### History

2020

Total time allowed: 1 hour 15 minutes

- You may have 15 minutes to study the source documents before the examination starts.
- Answer ALL questions in Section A and ONE question from Section B.
- You are advised to spend about 40 minutes on Section A and 35 minutes on Section B.
- Please start Section B on a fresh sheet of paper.
- Total marks for Section A: **22**. Total marks for Section B: **20**.

## Section A: Alexander II and the Emancipation Act of 1861

Alexander II (1818-1881) was Emperor (or 'Tsar') of Russia from 1855 until his assassination by revolutionaries in 1881. He is most famous for undertaking one of the greatest reforms in Russian history: the emancipation of the serfs. In nineteenth-century Russia a majority of the population was made up of peasants; they farmed the land and were owned by their landowners, a system known as serfdom. Alexander II decided to grant these peasants their freedom, or emancipation, in the Emancipation Act of 1861. The sources below explore the background to this reform, the nature of the Russian state, and the reasons why Alexander wanted to free the serfs.

You are not expected to know anything about the material, but will be given marks on the strength of your analysis of the sources. The questions follow: please answer all of them.

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### **Source A:**

*This source is an extract from a speech made by Alexander II to his State Council in 1861. In it, he introduces the Emancipation Act.*

The matter of the liberation of the serfs, which has been submitted for the consideration of the State Council, I consider to be a vital question for Russia, upon which will depend the development of her strength and power. I am sure that all of you, gentlemen, are just as convinced as I am of the benefits and necessity of this measure...

For four years now it has dragged on and has been arousing various fears and anticipations among both the state owners and the peasants. Any further delay could be disastrous for the state... I have not forgotten, and shall never forget, that the approach to the matter was made on the initiative of the nobility itself, and I am happy to be a witness to this before posterity...

I hope, gentlemen, that on inspection of the drafts presented to the State Council, you will assure yourselves that all that can be done for the protection of the interests of the nobility has been done: if, on the other hand, you find it necessary in any way to alter or add to the presented work, then I am ready to receive your comments; but I ask you only not to forget that the basis of the whole work must be the improvement of the life of the peasants, and improvement not in words alone, but in actual fact.

Alexander II, 1861

**Source B:**

*A Russian army officer reflects on the differences between Russia and the rest of Europe.*

The campaigns of 1812-14 [against Napoleon] brought Europe nearer to us, made us familiar with its forms of state, its public institutions, the rights of its people. By contrast with our own state life, the laughably limited rights which our people possessed, the despotism of our regime first became truly present in our heart and understanding.

Extract from the memoirs of Prince Volkonsky, 1860

**Source C:**

*An advisor to the Tsar offers advice.*

The authority the sovereign wields over the landlords is in no way different from the power the landlord has over his peasants. I find in Russia only two estates: the slaves of the sovereign and the slaves of the landlords. The former are called free in relation to the latter, but there are no free men in Russia except beggars and philosophers.

Count Speransky, 1825

**Source D:**

*A landowner considers the significance of the proposed emancipation reforms.*

This measure is more necessary for the welfare of our class itself than the serfs. The abolition of the right to dispose of people like objects or like cattle is as much our liberation as theirs: for at present we are under the yoke of a law that destroys still more in us than in the serfs any human quality.

A landowner, writing in 1858

**Source E:**

*The head of the Secret Police reports to the Tsar.*

The whole mood of the people is concerned with one aim, emancipation. Serfdom is a powder keg under the state, and is the more dangerous because of the fact that the army itself consists of peasants. It is better to begin gradually, cautiously, than to wait until the process is started from below by the people themselves.

Benckendorff, 1840

**Source F:**

*Number of serf revolts in Russia, from official documents.*

Date	Number of serf revolts
1825-34	148
1834-44	216
1845-54	348

**Source G:**

*Cumulative number of serfs sold to the state by impoverished noblemen.*

Year	Number of serfs (millions)	% of all serfs
1820	1.8	20
1830	4.5	37
1842	5.6	50
1855	6.6	61
1859	7.1	66

**Source H:**

*A provincial noble reflects on the difference between serf-labour and free-labour.*

There is no doubt that free labour is better. It is wrong to suppose that once our peasants are free they will become even lazier. This is untrue! A free man knows that if he does not work he is not going to be fed for nothing, and as a result, he works hard. Here is my own experience... I have some unsettled land which I have worked using my own peasants, not under barshchina (serf-labour), but by hiring them under a free contract. The same peasants who idle about on barshchina work extremely hard there.

Provincial noble, 1840

## Questions

Read Source A.

1. Why, according to Tsar Alexander II, did he want to emancipate the serfs?

[4]

Read Sources B, C, and D.

2. How far do these sources agree about the nature and extent of the freedom of the Russian people under the Tsars?

[4]

Read sources E and F.

3. Using both sources, what evidence do they provide for why Alexander wanted to free the serfs?

[2]

Read sources G and H, and then consider all of the sources.

4. 'The main cause of the emancipation of the serfs was the fear of peasant unrest.' How far do the sources support this view?

[12]

**Total for Section A: 22 marks**

## **Section B: Essays**

Answer one question. Use examples from your own knowledge to support your answer. Wherever possible, anchor your arguments in your knowledge of the past. All questions are worth 20 marks.

1. Assess the reasons for the outcome of any one battle you have studied.
2. Is archaeology more or less useful than written sources in understanding the past? Explain your answer.
3. How important were economic factors in causing any one historical process, event or movement that you have studied?
4. The BBC is reviving their 2002 television show '100 Greatest Britons'. You must present on one historical figure. Who would it be and why? Consider your reasons carefully.
5. John Maynard Keynes wrote that 'ideas shape the course of history.' How far do you agree?
6. Do you think it is important to study history at school?

[20]

**Total for Section B: 20 marks**

**Total for paper: 42 marks**

**END OF PAPER**