

Appendix D : Sample questions for periodisation framing

To review, the periodisation framing will offer two options to students as a boundary marker for a defined historical period or colligation¹. The archetypal periodisation question suggested in Section 4.2 was:

‘It was the 1936 Moscow Trial, not the 1934 Kirov Affair, that marked the beginning of Stalin’s Great Terror.’ How far do you agree with this statement? Explain your answer.

The periodisation framing ties in directly to the historical concept of change and continuity, and specifically targets the enduring understanding of historical periodisation as elaborated by Seixas and Morton (2013), which I discussed in Section 4.1. However, it is a wholly novel framing, and history educators likely do not have a firm grasp on the questions that can be asked in each topic.

Furthermore, questions on periodisation are not all equal. Rachel Foster recommends that teachers select inquiry questions that emerge out of “genuine historical debates”: because they make for robust discussions that may mimic academic discourse, and will not demand that students manufacture arguments “regardless of whether one actually exists” (Foster, 2013, p. 13). In other words, when we select boundary options for the periodisation question, those options need to be credible, that is, grounded in existing historiographical scholarship.

¹ Drawing from William Walsh, Stéphane Lévesque defines a **colligation** as “the tracing of *intrinsic* relations of one event to others in a series” (Lévesque 2008: 70). In other words, a macro-event comprising related micro-events.