

# Grade 9 Answer

## Reason for Differences

4/4  
Marks

### Question:

**Suggest one reason why Interpretations 1 and 2 give different views about the successes of the Great Leap Forward. You may use Sources B and C to help explain your answer. (4 marks)**

### Answer:

**The interpretations are different because they put different weight to different sources. For example, Source B, which depicts the the Great Leap Forward as very successful and positive for the economy, provides some support for Interpretation 1 which states that the Great Leap Forward increase production and had a positive impact on the Chinese economy. Whereas Source C, which shows evidence that many peasants died of starvation after the Great Leap Forward, provides some support for Interpretation 2, which emphasises the fact that the famine that was a result of the Great Leap Forward forced people to steal and turn on their family to survive.**

### Feedback:

**This answer would get 4/4 marks because the pupil has identified a reason for difference in the interpretations, explaining this reason with analysis.**

## Source B

**Source B: A propaganda poster on the Great Leap Forward from 1958. The description reads "Brave the wind and the waves, everything has remarkable abilities".**



[<https://chinese posters.net/posters/pc-1958-024>]

## Source C

**Source C: In early 1959, a year into the Great Leap Forward, the Chinese Communist Party provincial committee in Shandong was flooded with letters regarding food shortages in the villages and People's Communes.**

**Between February 1st and February 15th we received 266 letters of complaint, passed down by the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party or sent directly to the Provincial Party Committee. All the letters are concerned with food crises in the countryside... In regard to the content, most of them complained that a number of collective canteens have run out of food completely and that there is widespread fear in the countryside. Many villagers have fled or have become ill. Agricultural production has almost come to a halt...**

**On the first day of the New Year, many villagers from Zhou Yingli went to the fields to look for rotten sweet potatoes and carrots to fill their stomachs In some villages around Yucheng and Guting... a huge number of people have fled to other areas to beg for food. In Daming, owing to a lack of money, six people died of illness within eight days, without any treatment. In Xulou, six people died of starvation within ten days...**

**[<https://alphahistory.com/chineserevolution/complaints-hunger-great-leap-forward-1959/>]**

# Interpretation 1

**Interpretation 1: C N Trueman "The Great Leap Forward" from [historylearningsite.co.uk](http://historylearningsite.co.uk), 2015.**

**The figures for steel, coal, chemicals, timber, cement etc all showed huge rises though the figures started at in 1958 were low. Grain and cotton production also showed major increases in production.**

**Mao had introduced the Great Leap Forward with the phrase "it is possible to accomplish any task whatsoever." By the end of 1958, it seemed as if his claim was true.**

**[[https://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/modern-world-history-1918-to-1980/china-1900-to-1976/the-great-leap-forward/#google\\_vignette](https://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/modern-world-history-1918-to-1980/china-1900-to-1976/the-great-leap-forward/#google_vignette)]**

## Interpretation 2

### **Interpretation 2: Frank Dikötter, 'Mao's Great Famine: The History of China's Most Devastating Catastrophe', 2010.**

**As famine spread, the very survival of an ordinary person came increasingly to depend on the ability to lie, charm, hide, steal, cheat, pilfer, forage, smuggle, trick, manipulate or otherwise outwit the state. But collectivisation also forced everybody, at some point or another, to make grim moral compromises. People turned on each other, some parents stealing from their own children or selling them to strangers for a handful of grain. Routine degradations thus went hand in hand with mass destruction. Survivors were rarely heroes, as those determined to make it in a world dominated by the law of survival had to silence their moral sentiments.**