4.2 HL Paper 3: late Qing China, 1860–1912

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____ **Total: 30 marks**

KEY WORDS late Qing • Self-Strengthening Movement • Hundred Days' Reform • 1911 Revolution • Boxer Rebellion

Objective

Study **late Qing China** (1860–1912) for HL Paper 3: the Taiping Rebellion, the **Self-Strengthening Movement**, the Hundred Days' Reform, the Boxer Rebellion, the late Qing reforms and the **1911 Revolution**.

You must be able to:

- explain the internal and external challenges facing the Qing after 1850
- assess the aims and limits of the Self-Strengthening Movement
- explain why the Hundred Days' Reform failed
- explain the causes and results of the Boxer Rebellion
- evaluate the reasons for the fall of the Qing in 1911–12

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1 Key knowledge and worked examples

■ Timeline

date	event
1850–64	the Taiping Rebellion; estimates of the dead range from about 20 to 30 million
1856–60	the Second Opium War; British and French troops burn the Summer Palace (1860)
1861	the Zongli Yamen, China's first foreign office; Cixi becomes the real power at court
1861–95	the **Self-Strengthening Movement**: arsenals, shipyards, the Beiyang fleet, led by officials such as Zeng Guofan and Li Hongzhang
1894–95	defeat by Japan; the Treaty of Shimonoseki
1898	the **Hundred Days' Reform** of the Guangxu Emperor and Kang Youwei, ended by Cixi
1899–1901	the Boxer Rebellion; the Boxer Protocol (1901): an indemnity of 450 million taels
1901–11	the late Qing (New Policy) reforms: the civil service exams abolished (1905); New Army; plans for a constitution
1905	Sun Yat-sen's Tongmenghui founded
10 Oct 1911	the Wuchang Uprising
12 Feb 1912	the last emperor, Puyi, abdicates

■ Why reform failed

The Self-Strengthening leaders wanted "Chinese learning as the base, Western learning for use" (*zhong ti xi yong*): Western weapons without changing the Confucian state. Projects were run by regional officials, not a national plan; money was short and some went elsewhere; the court resisted deeper change. The 1895 defeat by Japan showed the limits.

The late Qing reforms after 1901 were real, but they came late: the New Army and new schools produced officers and students who joined the revolution, and the plan for a constitution gave more power to Manchu princes ("the princes' cabinet", 1911), which angered reformers.

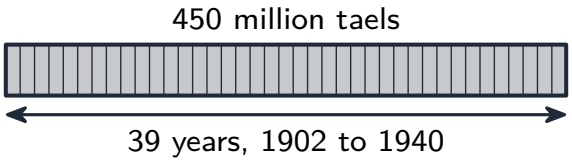
Worked causation. "The abolition of the exams in 1905 was meant to strengthen the dynasty, but it removed the main link between the gentry and the Qing, so in 1911 many gentry supported the provinces against Beijing."

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2 Practice

2.1 Explain the meaning of "Chinese learning as the base, Western learning for use". [2]

2.2 The Boxer Protocol (1901) set an indemnity of 450 million taels, to be paid over 39 years. Calculate the average payment per year without interest, and explain **one** effect of the indemnity on the Qing. [3]



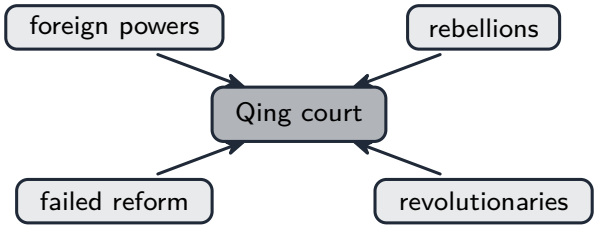
2.3 Explain **two** reasons why the Hundred Days' Reform of 1898 failed. [4]

2.4 Assess the success of the Self-Strengthening Movement, 1861–1895. [6]

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3 Exam-style questions

3.1 *(Paper 3 style.)* Evaluate the reasons for the fall of the Qing dynasty in 1911–1912. [15]



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Solutions

Marking: **M1** a correct method, **A1** the correct answer, **B1** an independent mark.

Each answer shows the steps, then the **result**.

2.1

China should keep its Confucian values and system of government and take only Western technology, e.g. weapons and ships

2.2

$450 \div 39 \approx$ **11.5** million taels per year; the payments drained money the Qing needed for reform and defence; the government raised taxes, which made it less popular and increased support for revolution

2.3

any two, explained: the Empress Dowager Cixi and conservatives at court opposed it and she ended it in September 1898, placing the emperor under arrest; too many decrees too fast with no officials ready to carry them out; the reformers had little military support; Yuan Shikai did not back them; the reforms threatened officials' jobs and privileges, e.g. changes to the exams

2.4

successes: modern arsenals and shipyards, e.g. the Jiangnan Arsenal (1865) and Fuzhou Navy Yard (1866); the Beiyang fleet built; the Zongli Yamen and translation schools; limits: change was technical, not political or social; projects were regional and run by officials such as Li Hongzhang, with no national plan; judgement linked to evidence: defeat by Japan in 1894–95 showed the movement had failed to create a modern state

3.1

Mark with the markbands: [13-15] clearly focused on the question, accurate and relevant knowledge used as evidence, well-developed critical analysis, different perspectives evaluated, a reasoned conclusion; [10-12] focused, mostly accurate knowledge, analysis with some evaluation; [7-9] some focus, relevant knowledge, mostly narrative or description with limited analysis; [4-6] little focus, limited knowledge, mostly narrative; [1-3] little understanding of the question. Points that may be included: long-term weakness: the Taiping Rebellion (1850–64) and the rise of regional armies and officials; foreign pressure: the Opium Wars, unequal treaties, defeat by Japan (1895), the scramble for concessions (1898); the Boxer Rebellion and Protocol (1901): humiliation and the indemnity; failed reform: Self-Strengthening was limited; the Hundred Days' Reform (1898) was stopped by Cixi; the late Qing reforms created new groups that turned against the dynasty: New Army officers, students, provincial assemblies (1909); the abolition of the exams (1905) cut the link with the gentry; anti-Manchu nationalism and Sun Yat-sen's Tongmenghui (1905); short-term: the railway nationalization crisis (1911) and the "princes' cabinet"; the Wuchang Uprising (10 October 1911), provinces declaring independence, and Yuan Shikai's switch to the republic; conclusion: a judgement that weighs long-term weakness against the late reforms that created the dynasty's own opponents

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