**Weimar and Nazi Germany 20 mark Question arguments**

2

**Argument: The popularity of the Hitler Youth Movement was down to the activities that it offered the young people**

**Exemplar question:** How far do you agree with interpretation two about the attitudes of young people towards the Hitler Youth movement? Explain your answer using both interpretations and your own knowledge.

**Interpretation 2.**

Interpretation two: From Germany 1918-1990 by A Kitson (2001)

The movement became less popular towards the late 1930s as the activities became increasingly focused on preparations for war and the discipline became more strict when membership became compulsory. There was a growing resentment at the way the Hitler Youth leaders acted as if they were better than members who were barely younger than they were. Some youngsters began to kick against the restrictions of the Hitler Youth

**This interpretation suggests** that the Hitler Youth became unpopular with young Germans as they did not like the way they were treated. Some German youngsters rebelled against the movement

**Interpretation 1.**

Interpretation one: From Germany 1918-45 by J Cloake (1997)

Many young people were attracted by the exciting and interesting activities of the youth movements. There were many outdoor events such as camping and hiking as well as sports. Some enjoyed the military aspects of the youth movement, the uniforms, the marching and the discipline. Other young people liked the music that was a frequent part of cultural activities or the military parades. There was great comradeship among the Hitler Youth

**This interpretation suggests** that youngsters joined the Hitler Youth because its activities appealed to them and they formed close friendships there

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| Arguments to support  | Arguments to challenge  |
| * There were annual camps and holidays which the youngsters would go on. These were cheap and affordable for most Germans
* The aim of the HJ was to prepare boys for military service and to be strong future leaders of Germany
* Boys in the HJ would wear uniforms and march in the streets – it made them feel important
* There was an emphasis for the boys on military training and physical activities which appealed to some youngsters
* In 1933 there were 100 000 members of the HJ by 1936 there were over 4 million members of the organisation
* The Bund Deutscher Mädel (BDM) taught young girls of their future roles in society: to mother more Germans. They emphasized values of obedience, self-control, and discipline – many liked these traditional roles
* They taught women how to be “good” Nazi wives and mothers and how to raise children that will also embody these ideals.
 | * By the end of 1938 at least three million youngsters had not joined the Hitler Youth
* Alternative youth groups sprang up across Germany – e.g. The Edelweiss Pirates
* Lots of youths resented the fact that their old clubs and youth groups were banned
* Alternative youth groups ambushed Hitler Youth patrols and beat them up. Some girls resented the fact that they were ‘trained’ to be housewives and mothers at such a young age.
* Lots of youths wanted to listen to Jazz, try out new fashions and hair styles, smoke and drink alcohol. All of these activities were banned in The Hitler Youth
* 1936, it became all but compulsory to join the Hitler Youth. To make it compulsory (1939) to join suggests that it was losing its appeal
* Many parents did not like the Hitler Youth as it negatively affected family life and the young were being encouraged to challenge the authority of their parents.
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Other information:

* There could also be a question on education in Nazi Germany (as opposed to the Hitler Youth) e.g. History was based on the glory of Germany whilst the German defeat in 1918 was explained as the work of Jewish and Marxist spies who had weakened the system from within;
* There was the introduction of Race Studies and Biology was teaching why the Germans were the superior race
* Boys and girls would have a different curriculum for example girls would study Domestic Sciences and boys would do lots of boxing and marching
* When discussing anything about the youth, make sure you use the word INDOCTRINATION

The national resurgence which started was all the work of Hitler