A Model Interpretations Paragraph

***“To what extent were the decisions made by German leaders responsible for the outbreak of the First World War?”***

Progressive Fischer

Alliance and Russia & Serbia

Pre-emptive Ferguson

There is certainly evidence within the passages to support the interpretation that Germany’s leaders should be held “responsible for the outbreak of the First World War”. The idea that it was the aggression, or “will to war” (Fischer) of German leaders that caused the war is reflected in passage 1, where Hewitson states that they had “pushed for war before 1914”. Moreover, Germany’s leaders could be responsible if one accepts Porter and Armour’s argument in passage 2 that for “preventative defence” the German leaders “deliberately provoked a diplomatic crisis”. This fits in with Ferguson’s view of “a pre-emptive war” because of “Germany’s deteriorating military position”. However, there are other interpretations in the passages. For example, in passage 3 Norman Stone argued that “the chief difficulty was…a quarrel between Austria and Serbia”. This triggered the alliance system, and reflects Lloyd George’s view that Europe “slithered to war”.

Five things we liked…

1. Uses all of the passages
2. Picks and directly quotes three interpretations in the passages
3. These are tied to the historical debate
4. No flashing
   1. Of our view
   2. Of the evidence
5. Tight to the question (quotes it) and writes at pace – no wasted words

Points to consider when writing this paragraph…

1. Pick out the interpretations
2. Understand the key terms of the question
3. Understand and apply the debate
4. NO FLASHING!

Argument in the question…

1. Fischer
   1. German expansions
   2. “will to war”
2. Ferguson
   1. Pre-emptive
   2. “pre-empt a deterioration of German military position”