

GCSE HISTORY

(8145)

Marked Paper 1A/A -
America 1840-1895

Understand how to apply the mark scheme for our
sample assessment papers.

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EXAMPLE RESPONSES



Example responses plus commentaries

The following student responses are intended to illustrate how the mark scheme can be interpreted and how it is likely that students will respond to the questions, allowing the student and teacher to explore and reflect upon the mark scheme and how answers can be improved.

Additional Specimen Paper 1A/A: America 1840–1895

Question 01

How does Interpretation B differ from Interpretation A about the attack on the Indian camp at Sand Creek?

Explain your answer using Interpretations A and B.

[4 marks]

Mark scheme

Target Analyse individual interpretations (AO4a)

Analyse how interpretations of a key feature of a period differ (AO4b)

Level 2 Developed analysis of interpretations to explain differences based on their content 3–4

Students may progress from a simple analysis of interpretations with extended reasoning to explain the differences, for example, that Interpretation B says that the attack on Sand Creek was done to save Colorado from the 'red rebels' so it was done for the best of reasons and to benefit others. By contrast in Interpretation A, the emphasis is on the personal nature of the motive behind the attack because Chivington and his men wanted to gain political credit for their actions so it was a dishonourable and selfish action.

Level 1 Simple analysis of interpretation(s) to identify differences based on their content 1–2

Students are likely to identify relevant features in each interpretation(s), for example, the Indians, according to Bent (Interpretation A), were being protected by the soldiers at Fort Lyons, whereas Byers (Interpretation B) says that this was wrong because they had removed themselves from that protection.

Students either submit no evidence or fail to address the question 0

Responses

Student one

Interpretation A differs from Interpretation B because they both have very different views on what happened at the Sand Creek Massacre. Interpretation B has a very optimistic view of the issue and refers to the opinion that Chivington “saved Colorado”. This differs from Interpretation A as that interpretation has a very different view. It says things like “officers had no control”, “worst sort of frontier whites”. While interpretation B defends Chivington, A suggests that Chivington led a group of white settlers into an Indian camp with the full intention of slaughtering them all.

Commentary - Level 2

The response shows developed analysis of both interpretations. A comparison is made that explains the difference between the two interpretations about the attack at Sand Creek based on their content.

Student two

Interpretation A says that the Indians were “friendly” and under the protection of Fort Lyon. Also, it says that Chivington and his troops were “the worst sort of frontier whites” and undisciplined soldiers eager to kill. However, Interpretation B says that the Indians were “barbaric” and called “robbers”. It says that the Indians had moved away from Fort Lyon and what “Chivington did at Sand Creek saved Colorado”.

Commentary - Level 1

Simple analysis is shown. Both interpretations are described, with relevant detail identified. To progress, the student should explain how they are different about the attack at Sand Creek, for example by making a direct and relevant comparison between content of the two interpretations.

Question 02

Why might the authors of Interpretations A and B have a different interpretation of the attack on the Indian Camp at Sand Creek?

Explain your answer using interpretations A and B and your contextual knowledge.

[4 marks]

Mark scheme

Target	Analyse individual interpretations (AO4a) Analyse why interpretations differ (AO4c)	
Level 2	Developed answer analyses provenance of interpretation to explain reasons for differences Students may progress from identification to explanation of the reasons for the differences in the interpretations supported by factual knowledge and understanding related to, for example, differences in provenance, context of their time of writing, place, previous experience, knowledge, beliefs, circumstances, and access to information, purpose and audience. For example, students might argue that Bent's and Byer's beliefs, circumstances and motives were different. Bent was half Cheyenne himself so would naturally be sympathetic to the Indian cause. Living at the camp he would have known about the guarantee of 'perfect safety' given to the Indians at Denver in September 1864 and that the camp only contained old men, women and children. Chivington commanded a militia of local men who were not full time soldiers and Byers, as editor of a newspaper in nearby Denver, would not have wanted to criticise men whom he might very well have known.	3–4
Level 1	Simple answer analyses provenance to identify reasons for difference(s) Students are likely to identify relevant reasons for the differences in each interpretation(s). Related to, for example, differences in provenance, context of their time of writing, place, previous experience, knowledge, beliefs, circumstances, access to information, purpose and audience. For example, Interpretation A was by Bent who was staying at Sand Creek at the time so would have seen and described exactly what happened. Interpretation B was by Byers who was the editor of a newspaper in Denver so would have been writing for a white audience and therefore support what the soldiers did.	1–2
	Students either submit no evidence or fail to address the question	0

Responses

Student one

Interpretation A is different to B because George Bent was present at the time of the Sand Creek Massacre and was related to the Cheyenne Indians who were there. Therefore, he was furious with the soldiers who attacked because most of the Indians at Sand Creek were killed, which means that some of his relatives could have died. Interpretation B is different because he wants to defend the soldiers who attacked the camp. William Byers was from Colorado and so were Chivington's soldiers. Therefore, Byers could have known the soldiers who were involved in the attack and wants to defend their reputation in a New York newspaper.

Commentary – Level 2

The response shows developed analysis of both interpretations. Reasons for difference are identified for both interpretations and explained with reference to the purpose of each source, supported by relevant factual knowledge and understanding.

Student two

The author of interpretation A would have a different view to the author of Interpretation B as they had a Cheyenne Indian mother. This would mean that George Bent was influenced in the favour of the Indians, clearly shown in his letter. The author of Interpretation B was a news editor, so he would be trying to make Chivington look like he had control of the situation as that is most likely what the Rocky Mountain News would have wanted.

Commentary – Level 1

A simple analysis based on the provenance of both interpretations. Reasons for disagreement related to the provenance of the interpretations are identified (George Bent's background, the belief and circumstance of William Byers) but not substantiated. To progress, the reasons for difference require further explanation.

Question 03

Which interpretation do you find more convincing about the attack on the Indian Camp at Sand Creek? Explain your answer using Interpretations A and B and your contextual knowledge.

[8 marks]

Mark scheme

Target	Analyse individual interpretations (AO4a) Evaluate interpretations and make substantiated judgements in the context of historical events studied (AO4d)	
Level 4	Complex evaluation of interpretations with sustained judgement based on contextual knowledge/understanding Extends Level 3. Students may progress from a developed evaluation of interpretations by analysis of the relationship between the interpretations supported by factual knowledge and understanding. For example, makes the judgement that Interpretation A is more convincing than B, as Black Kettle flew an American flag, with a white flag tied beneath it, over his tipi, as the Fort Lyon commander had advised him to do to show that he was friendly and to prevent any attack by the Colorado soldiers; this should have made Chivington realise that Sand Creek was no 'robber's den' but was under the protection of Fort Lyon.	7–8
Level 3	Developed evaluation of both interpretations based on contextual knowledge/understanding Extends Level 2. Answers may assert one interpretation is more/less convincing. Students may progress from a simple evaluation of the interpretations by extended reasoning supported by factual knowledge and understanding. For example, supporting Interpretation B by reference to the fear of Indian attacks along the Overland Trail to Oregon by renegade bands who did not agree with the peace agreements, signed by chiefs such as Black Kettle, and/or that the 'Dog Soldiers' of the Cheyenne who had been responsible for many of the attacks and raids on whites, were not part of this encampment and remained	5-6
Level 2	Simple evaluation of one interpretation based on contextual knowledge/understanding There may be undeveloped comment about the other interpretation.	3–4

Students may progress from a basic analysis of interpretations to simple evaluation, supported with factual knowledge and understanding.

For example, Interpretation A is convincing because we know that many women, children and infants were killed and mutilated by the troops at Sand Creek, who took scalps and other body parts as battle trophies and/or that afterwards an investigation of the massacre condemned Chivington's and his soldiers' conduct in the strongest possible terms.

Level 1 Basic analysis of interpretation(s) based on contextual knowledge/understanding 1–2

Answers show understanding/support for one/both interpretation(s), but the case is made by assertion/recognition of agreement.

For example, answers stating that Interpretation A is convincing as it agrees with what we know about the peaceful nature of the Indian camp and/or that Interpretation B is convincing, as we know that Indians did attack white settlers moving across the Plains.

Students either submit no evidence or fail to address the question 0

Responses

Student one

Interpretation A is convincing about the attack because it gives a more detailed account of why the attack happened. Chivington and his men knew that an attack on the Indians would be popular with the people of Colorado because Cheyenne Indians had been attacking ranches and settlements in Colorado since 1864. Therefore, the interpretation is correct in saying that the attack on the 'red rebels' would help to win support and votes from local settlers.

Interpretation B is less convincing than interpretation A about the Sand Creek Massacre, because even though many white settlers saw the Indians as 'robbers' and barbarians, Chivington's soldiers mainly killed innocent women, children and the old at Sand Creek. Interpretation B is therefore wrong to say that the Indians killed at Sand Creek were responsible for raiding and murdering and that 'Chivington saved Colorado', because the camp was made up of innocent and defenceless people who were not a threat.

Overall, interpretation A is more convincing about the attack because the George Bent's version of events was later confirmed by Congress. On the other hand, Byer's version contradicts itself, so is less convincing.

Commentary – Level 4

The response shows complex evaluation of the interpretations. Interpretation A's account is corroborated using relevant contextual knowledge of Indian/settler relations prior to the attack. Interpretation B is challenged using knowledge of who was present at Sand Creek that day. Complex thinking is shown in the substantiated judgement that B is less convincing than A about the topic. This is sustained throughout the second paragraph and concluding paragraph.

Student two

Interpretation A is convincing about the attack at Sand Creek because some American soldiers were 'not disciplined' and were eager to kill Indians. For example, some of Chivington's soldiers took scalps as trophies, while the US Congress criticised Chivington and his soldiers for the way they attacked without being provoked and massacred innocent people.

Interpretation B is less convincing about the attack because Byers states that Chivington saved Colorado. This is not convincing because the Indians were camping in Sand Creek because they were waiting for peace talks to start. In fact, Black Kettle was flying an American flag over his tipi because he wanted to show that the village was friendly. So it is not true to say that Chivington saved Colorado because the Indians who were camping at Sand Creek were not a threat to settlers.

Overall, interpretation A is more convincing because George Bent was an eyewitness to the event. Since he had a Cheyenne mother and a white father, he is less likely to lie.

Commentary – Level 3

The response shows developed evaluation of both interpretations, showing extended reasoning supported with relevant factual knowledge and understanding. The response asserts which interpretation is more convincing about the Sand Creek Massacre, but this is based on the provenance of the interpretation which not credited for this question. To progress, the response could explain which is more convincing based on their contextual knowledge of how comprehensive each interpretation is about the issue in the question.

Question 04

Describe two problems faced by the Mormons when they settled at the Great Salt Lake.

[4 marks]

Mark scheme

Target	Demonstrate knowledge of the key features and characteristics of the periods studied (AO1a)	
	Demonstrate understanding of the key features and characteristics of the periods studied. (AO1b)	
Level 2	Answers demonstrate knowledge and understanding	3–4
	Students may progress from a simple demonstration of knowledge about the issues identified with extended reasoning supported by understanding of, for example, the ways in which events were problematic. These might include: One problem was that there was little fresh water around the Great Salt Lake – this was needed for irrigating the crops and providing drinking water for humans and livestock. Without this basic resource it would be difficult to survive. Another problem was that Brigham Young wanted to make the settlement completely self-sufficient and not reliant on non-Mormon outsiders. Although they had many different skills, there were still abilities that they needed if the community was to be truly self-sufficient.	
Level 1	Answers demonstrate knowledge	1–2
	Students demonstrate relevant knowledge about the issue(s) identified which might be related, for example, to the fact that there were no materials for building, very little fresh water, no existing land holdings.	
	Students either submit no evidence or fail to address the question	0

Responses

Student one

The Mormons faced many problems when they settled at the Great Salt Lake. The Great Salt Lake was in the middle of a desert, so they had to find water and establish a supply system to feed the people and water the crops. The second problem was how to divide the land between the settlers. The bigger farms went to people with families, so this could cause tension between the settlers.

Commentary – Level 2

Two relevant problems faced by Mormons when they settled at the Great Salt Lake are identified and described, showing knowledge and understanding that should be credited at Level 2.

Student two

One of these problems was that they had to redo everything and start from scratch. This included buildings, crops and population. They didn't have materials or the funds to really do this though, making life a lot more difficult.

Another faced by the Mormons when they settled at the Great Salt Lake was they had no fresh water supply. So, they had no drinking water to stay alive.

Commentary – Level 1

Two problems are identified (lack of building materials, no fresh water), which would place this answer at the top of level 1. To progress, the answer must show understanding of each problem. This is attempted for each answer, but requires further detail.

Specimen Paper 1A/A: America 1840-1895

Question 05

In what ways were the lives of Indians affected by the arrival of white settlers on the Great Plains?

[8 marks]

Mark scheme

Target Explain and analyse historical events and periods studied using second-order concepts (AO2:4)

Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the key features and characteristics of the period studied (AO1:4)

Level 4: Complex explanation of changes. 7-8

Answer demonstrates a range of accurate and detailed knowledge and understanding that is relevant to the question.

Extends Level 3.

Candidates may progress from a developed explanation of changes by explanation of the complexities of change arising from differences such as time, group, social and/or economic impact, supported by knowledge and understanding.

For example, candidates may explain that the consequences of the arrival of white settlers for the Plains Indians changed over time, from in the early days being able to hunt buffalo within restricted areas to by the end of the period being confined to reservations and having their whole way of life and culture destroyed.

Level 3: Developed explanation of changes. 5-6

Answer demonstrates a range of accurate knowledge and understanding that is relevant to the question.

Extends Level 2.

Candidates may progress from a simple explanation by developed reasoning considering **two or more** of the identified consequences, supporting them by factual knowledge and understanding.

In addition to a Level 2 response, candidates make additional developed point(s).

For example, the arrival of the white settlers also affected the Indians because they destroyed their way of life by not allowing them to roam freely across the Plains and made them live on reservations and stop living the nomadic hunter-gatherer lifestyle.

For example, government policy meant that the Indians were not allowed to hold their religious ceremonies as the government wanted them to give up their culture and traditions so that they became like white Christian farmers.

Level 2	Simple explanation of change	3-4
	Answer demonstrates specific knowledge and understanding that is relevant to the question.	
	Candidates may progress from a basic explanation of change by using simple reasoning and supporting it with factual knowledge and understanding which might be related, for example, to one of the identified changes.	
	For example, the white settlers hunted buffalo for sport, which meant that for the Plains Indians the stock of buffalo for food decreased.	
Level 1	Basic explanation of change(s)	1-2
	Answer demonstrates basic knowledge and understanding that is relevant to the question.	
	Candidates identify change(s), which are relevant to the question. Explanation at this Level is likely to be implicit or by assertion.	
	For example, when the settlers arrived the Plains Indians could no longer easily hunt buffalo.	
	Candidates either submit no evidence or fail to address the question	0

Responses

Student one

The lives of the Indians were affected by the arrival of the white settlers on the Great Plains because they were forced to adapt slightly to the white lifestyle by having to live side by side along with them when they never had before. If they didn't, there was often conflict between the two groups due to misunderstandings of each other.

As more white settlers moved further west, the Indians were forced out of their Indian Territory which they had been used to living in and moved even further west. If they didn't move freely they were removed by force, such as in the 'Trail of Tears', where thousands of Indians died along the way.

Also, their land was broken up into lots of smaller areas, spread out across the country. This made it difficult for the Indians to hunt buffalo because if they were hunting them and they went out of their boundary the Indians would have to give up. The smaller pieces of land had a big effect on the Indians nomadic lifestyle as they couldn't move around as much or as freely as they wanted to.

Commentary – Level 3

More than one change is identified, with a developed explanation of how the arrival of white settlers lead to territorial displacement for the Plains Indians. This is supported with historical knowledge about the 'Trail of tears'. The other explanations of changes are simple. For example, further evidence required to substantiate the first point to explain how or why conflict occurred due to misunderstandings between the two groups.

To progress, the response could show the complexity of the changes by explaining how different changes took place at different times.

Student two

One way in which the Plains Indians lives were affected by the arrival of the white settlers was that they began to build pony express and railways later on. This noise and constant bustle of people and vehicles would lead to the buffalo of the area getting frightened and not coming back to the Great Plains as they had lived a peaceful life and moved to keep it peaceful. This caused problems for the Indians because the Indians needs the buffalo to survive as they used them for food and multitude of other parts of their nomadic lives.

Another, way in which the Plains Indians life style was affected by the white settlers arrival was that the white settlers didn't understand the customs of the Indians. For example, Indian rules of warfare were very different to the white settlers wars. The Indians had coup sticks and took the scalps of their dead enemies. All of this was seen as barbaric and ridiculous to the white settlers. This misunderstanding lead to the Indians having to change their rules of war to fit with the white settlers.

Commentary – Level 2

Two simple points of analysis are shown. Relevant changes are identified, supported with simple knowledge and briefly explained. To progress, the response should seek to explain how the negative attitudes of the white settlers to Indian customs affected the lives of Indians. The final line in the second paragraph attempts to do this, but is undermined by an inaccuracy.

Question 06

Which of the following was the more important reason why white Americans travelled across the Great Plains in the 1840s and 1850s:

- religion
- economic opportunity?

Explain your answer with reference to both reasons.

[12 marks]

Mark scheme

Target Explain and analyse historical events and periods studied using second-order concepts (AO2:6)

Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the key features and characteristics of the period studied (AO1:6)

Examiners are reminded that AO1 and AO2 are regarded as interdependent and when deciding on a Level should be considered together. When establishing a mark within a Level, examiners should reward three marks for strong performance in both assessment objectives; two marks may be achieved by strong performance in either AO1 or AO2 and one mark should be rewarded for weak performance within the Level in both assessment objectives.

Level 4 Complex explanation of both bullets leading to a sustained judgement 10-12

Answer demonstrates a range of accurate and detailed knowledge and understanding that is relevant to the question.

Extends Level 3

Candidates may progress from a developed explanation of causation by complex explanation of the relationship between causes supported by factual knowledge and understanding and arriving at a sustained judgement.

For example, candidates will explain the part played by both religious persecution and economic opportunity in the movement of white Americans across the Great Plains in the 1840s and 1850s and may, for example, conclude that different groups were motivated by different reasons. However, in terms of sheer numbers, economic opportunity was the more significant driver. Alternatively, candidates may argue that the Mormons were able to achieve both religious freedom and economic self-sufficiency by travelling west, which links them to the miners and migrant farmers with their economic motivation.

Level 3	Developed explanation of both bullets	7-9
	Answer demonstrates a range of accurate knowledge and understanding that is relevant to the question	
	Extends Level 2	
	Candidates may progress from a simple explanation of causation with extended reasoning supported by developed factual knowledge and understanding.	
	For example, candidates may explain how the persecution of the Mormons (eg in Kirtland, Missouri, and Nauvoo, Illinois) and their dislike of the ways of the gentiles, led them to seek out a better life. Also how unoccupied, fertile land on the Pacific Coast combined with an economic depression and high land prices in the east provided economic incentive for the migrant farmers to travel across the Plains.	
Level 2	Simple explanation of bullet(s)	4-6
	Answer demonstrates specific knowledge and understanding that is relevant to the question.	
	Candidates may progress from a basic explanation of causation by using simple reasoning and supporting it with factual knowledge and understanding	
	For example, religious motivation was important because thousands of Mormons travelled to Utah in 1846-1847 in order to freely practice their religion.	
	Economic reasons were important because people travelled west as there was unoccupied, fertile land on the Pacific Coast, whereas in the east land prices were very high, so it was cheaper to farm out west.	
Level 1	Basic explanation of bullet(s)	1-3
	Answer demonstrates basic knowledge and understanding that is relevant to the question.	
	Candidates recognise and provide a basic explanation of one/both bullet points.	
	For example, people travelled west to practice their religion freely without being persecuted; people went west to find work as farmers.	
	Candidates either submit no evidence or fail to address the question	0

Responses

Student one

Religion was a very important reason as to why the white Americans travelled across the Great Plains in the 1840s and 50s. For example, the Mormons travelled west to get away from those who were against the Mormon religion. Polygamy was one of the practises of the Mormon religion that many other Americans didn't understand and didn't like. Also the fact that the holy book was considered blasphemy lead to many Mormons being harmed or worse if they stayed in the East. So, they left and went across the Great Plains to the Great Salt Lake to avoid discrimination against them.

Yet, economic opportunity called more groups of people across the Great Plains as the East held so much potential. The miners went through the Great Plains during the Californian gold rush because many young men thought that they could get their fortune form the gold that appeared to be in abundance in the West. Also, the pioneers travelled across the Great Plains in search of more room for them to have and more land for them to own for a cheaper price. Many mining towns opened up across the West, which enticed many young men as they had little to no law enforcement and a lot of gambling and brothels for the to explore. This was an important reason because it lead to so many people moving across the Great Plains to find their fortune.

Commentary – Level 3

Both bullets explained, showing developed explanation supported with relevant and accurate knowledge. For Level 4, a reasoned judgement supported with evidence showing is needed. A further concluding paragraph that shows a sustained judgement about which was most important would bring this to Level 4.

Student two

The white settlers moved to the Great Plains because of different reasons. The main ones were religion and economic opportunity. I believe religion was the most important factor.

White settlers believed that it was their destiny to dominate the entire continent and they believed that this was a mission from God. Religion was extremely important in the 1800s, everyone believed in it. Because the white men believed God wanted them to dominate America they felt as if they had to do it, no matter the costs. For this purpose they travelled to the West in order to achieve this Manifest Destiny and were willing to fight for it. This showed their commitment and determination to religion and God. Therefore religion was the most important factor because white travellers believed it was their destiny and purpose to fulfil God's mission.

Economic opportunity also tempted white settlers to the West. The idea of new land, which was cheap, gave them hope of being able to live there and have their own economy. It also allowed them to start a fresh and build towns and railways to make the West of the continent civilised. However, this was all in the name of Manifest Destiny which then brings it full circle and back to religion. Despite this, economic opportunity was also a very important factor for the white man. They craved money and power and would do anything for it. The promise of new land guaranteed that. Therefore, economic opportunity was also important to white settlers.

In conclusion, white settlers moved to the West for religion and economic opportunity. I believe the most important one was religion because it relates to Manifest Destiny which white settlers would do anything for.

Commentary – Level 2

The response shows simple explanation of both bullet points. The first point provides a simple explanation of the role of Manifest destiny in motivating settlers to cross the Great Plains. The second point identifies some basic contextual detail about the role of economic opportunity. A link between economic and religious reasons is asserted but not explained, and the judgement is summative.

To progress, the response should support the points made with factual knowledge and understanding, perhaps by providing detail about particular groups of White Settlers that were motivated by religion or economic opportunity.

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