

AMERICAN HISTORY (US)

Paper 0409/01

The Making of a Nation 1754–2000

Key Messages

- To gain full marks in part (a) questions candidates should provide description containing relevant factual material. Broad generalisations can only be rewarded in the lowest level.
- Part (b) questions demand that candidates explain their ideas in some depth. They should be able to make a pertinent point, develop it and support it with carefully chosen evidence.
- Top marks for part (c) responses are obtained by providing balanced ('for' and 'against') and developed arguments. Comments should be supported with a reasonable range of detailed material, otherwise they will produce mere assertion.
- Candidates must observe the examination rubric. This states that candidates must 'Answer **three** questions, each from a **different** section. Each question has several parts. For each question you choose, answer every part, (a), (b) and (c).' These instructions are stated at the beginning of the paper, and while many adhered to them, a substantial number did not. Some candidates answered only one part (a), (b), and (c), each taken from three different questions. Others answered only one question and a minority answered all eight questions.

General Comments

- A number of scripts showed that candidates were well prepared for the examination and could use useful factual knowledge with some precision. This was shown particularly in the part (a) questions where many candidates received full marks for sticking to the question and the dates, events or figures included.
- With part (b) questions some responses showed an awareness of the need to *explain* rather than just describe and this was shown in the way answers were structured into reasons/factors/causes and used language such as 'this showed that' or 'this meant that'. A significant minority of responses struggled with these questions because they did not possess the requisite knowledge to link general comments to the particular question and were not focussed on explaining. Many answers were placed in the lower part of the Level 2 mark scheme because they did not move beyond simply description of some relevant knowledge.
- The majority of candidates were aware of the need to offer balanced comments in response to part (c) questions. Some very good answers revealed clear exposition, structure, organisation and a good range of supporting material before arriving at a consistent judgement in a conclusion. Such responses invariably started with a clear introduction before moving on to a 'point per paragraph' approach. The balance in such responses was often sign-posted by the second half of the answer starting with 'However...' or 'Although I agree to some extent with the statement I am not totally convinced by it for the following reasons...'. It is acceptable, especially with part (c) responses, for candidates to write in the first person (i.e. informally) but slang and colloquialism should be kept to a minimum.
- Many responses would have benefitted from closer attention to the dates of the question and the particular figures or events included. Where questions offer a date range (i.e. **Question 4(c)**) this invites the candidates to look at trends and events over the full time period, in this case the women's movement from 1919–2000. It was rare for the date ranges in these questions to be fully used by candidates and many ignored entirely the dates offered to include material from outside the period. This suggests that many candidates need more practice in looking at questions which span large sections of a theme and more substantial knowledge of many of the topics.
- The best responses showed a keen sense of period and contextual knowledge but basic chronological errors or confusion were too common.
- The best overall responses showed a strong approach to learning specific historical material and were well prepared for the sort of questions they might expect to see in the exam. They moved beyond the over-generalised and poorly informed responses to show awareness of organisation, structure, explanation and specific detail.

Comments on Specific Questions

Section A: Government of the People 1754–2000

Question 1

- (a) A number of responses demonstrated some idea of the policies surrounding Populism and the links to farming groups in the period. Others displayed much weaker knowledge of the movement and lacked any specific policies or knowledge of aims.
- (b) Some candidates were able to comment on broad changes that occurred after the end of the Civil War and how these had an impact on political groupings and trends. However, many were unable to move beyond broad generalisations to name specific groups or campaigns and how they were inspired by the issues and events of the period.
- (c) A number of candidates were able to display basic knowledge of events in this period and make some link to political movements. However, only the very best were able to make real reference to and use of the word 'turbulence' in testing what they knew about the period. Many lower level answers were characterised by a lack of any detailed knowledge of the period.

Question 2

- (a) Most answers showed a good awareness of the events surrounding the Watergate Scandal, whilst the best were able to describe it in detail. A minority of candidates were confused over which parties were involved and how.
- (b) The best answers to this question were able to link the events of the Iran-Contra scandal with the undermining of presidential authority during the Reagan era. Unfortunately, many candidates who attempted this question lacked any real knowledge of the affair and so struggled to gain marks. A minority of candidates wrote about Iraq and Saddam Hussein rather than Iran.
- (c) Better responses were able to select relevant examples from the time period given to test how well the Federal Government had responded to challenges. Material dealing with Kennedy's New Frontier; Johnson's Great Society and Reaganomics was used by some of the highest scoring responses. Others chose to look at the challenges faced as a result of international conflict, i.e. the Vietnam War or the Cold War conflict, and when linked to domestic impact, these were credited accordingly. Quite a few responses referred to material outside of the given time period or were unable to provide specific material to test the statement.

Section B: Who are Americans?

Question 3

- (a) Most candidates were aware of the work of the Freedman's Bureau and were able to include sufficient factual detail to answer the question. A minority of answers confused the Freedman's Bureau with the Fugitive Slave Act of the 1850s.
- (b) Successful answers to this question were able to use contextual knowledge of the period to explain why the relevant amendments were passed. The best answers were able to do this in some detail and make links between factors. A number of candidates confused this period with the period of change from the Articles of Confederation to the Constitution.
- (c) Many answers displayed a good degree of knowledge and were able to test the assertion by looking at both sides of the argument. The best were able to use precise knowledge and make a distinction between the economic and social fortunes of ex-slaves.

Question 4

- (a) The best answers to this question displayed a knowledge of the specific organisation (the NAWSA) and their work in the time period given. Many answers struggled to move beyond general knowledge of the women's movement and provided material which concerned other groups or figures, or was from an earlier date, i.e. the Seneca Falls Convention.

- (b) Many candidates were able to describe, and sometimes explain, the external difficulties that the women's movement had prior to 1919, i.e. the opposition of many men or the impact of the First World War. Only a minority of candidates were able to use more in depth knowledge to comment on the splits and personalities within the movement which played such a big part in their difficulties.
- (c) Many candidates were able to describe the short term impact of the 19th amendment and look at other factors influencing gender equality during the period, the most common of these being women's work in the Second World War and Rosie the Riveter. Only a small minority of candidates were able include other relevant material from across the period to test the assertion, i.e. Roe vs. Wade or the Equal Pay Act.

Section C: Economic and Social Change 1754–2000

Question 5

- (a) There were many solid answers to this question where candidates were able to offer detailed knowledge about the development of the railways. The best were able to link this knowledge to the transformation of the U.S. economy.
- (b) Many answers demonstrated good knowledge of the inventions of Eli Whitney and were able to go into some detail regarding the operation of the Cotton Gin. Whilst some answers struggled to explain how this helped to industrialise the United States, the best candidates were able to make strong and sustained links.
- (c) This question was often answered well with clear knowledge and explanation which enabled candidates to form an argument and test the validity of the assertion. The best answers were able to use precise knowledge of working conditions and growing labour movements to build arguments of high quality. A minority of answers were over generalised and confused about the period, using examples from the 20th century.

Question 6

- (a) Many answers showed some awareness of the various movements which might be considered to be part of the counter-culture, but only the best answers were able to offer specific detail of events or aims within these movements. A significant minority had little idea what the term meant and confused it with other movements of this period from McCarthyism to the Civil Rights Movement.
- (b) There were some excellent answers to this question which were able to offer specific knowledge linked to the ideas of the Jazz age. This often moved beyond the influence of music into art and social movement. Weaker answers struggled to move beyond simple descriptions of jazz music and could not explain the links to other factors.
- (c) Many responses to this question attempted to use the ideas of the counter-culture or other movements they were aware of to argue against the question, although most candidates found it difficult to argue in favour of the assertion. In a significant majority of responses there was too little precise factual knowledge displayed and the chronological span of the question was not taken into account.

Section D: The U.S.A. and the World 1754–2000

Question 7

- (a) This question often provoked clear and well informed responses with a good knowledge of the various diplomatic movements between Great Britain and the United States shown. Weaker answers often had little real knowledge of what happened or confused the question with one about the American War of Independence.
- (b) Some candidates wrote convincingly about the Monroe Doctrine and its impact on foreign policy throughout the 19th century as well as the direct causes of Monroe's statement. However, many responses were unable to provide any relevant knowledge, some as a result of confusing the word 'Doctrine' with Doctor and suggesting that there were medical links.

- (c) Better responses were able to select 2–3 foreign policy issues within the defined period to test the assertion given; the best were also able to deploy precise knowledge of the issues to form an argument. Less successful answers struggled to focus on the issue of foreign policy and selected any event from the time period including the Civil War and Westward Expansion.

Question 8

- (a) A number of answers were able to successfully link the Dawes Plan with Germany and describe events within the context of international relations during the 1920s. A significant minority of the answers contained limited knowledge required for the question, some confusing it with the Dawes Act of 1887.
- (b) There were some good responses to this question where candidates were able to explain in some detail the factors surrounding FDR's adoption of the 'Good Neighbour' policy in Latin America. Other answers struggled to move beyond vague notions of 'neighbourliness' and so were unable to move out of the lower levels.
- (c) This question provoked some thoughtful and considered responses, where candidates were able to use clear knowledge to test the assertion, including many who successfully argued 'how far' they agreed with the statement. Good knowledge of Japanese aggression before 1941 and American involvement in the Second World War prior to Pearl Harbour helped to look at both sides of the question.

AMERICAN HISTORY (US)

Paper 0409/02
Defining Moments

Key Messages

- This is a source-based examination and the essential task of the candidates is to use the evidence provided in the sources. Candidates should avoid referring loosely to the content of the sources and using them as prompts to write an answer based only on knowledge. Answers confined to the just the content will be awarded a mark within the Level 2 band.
- Candidates should apply knowledge to answer all questions, but only to support the evidence provided in the sources. As such the knowledge applied should be selected carefully so it is relevant and pertinent to the sources and the question linked to them. Answers that are based on content and knowledge may access levels above Level 2 in the mark scheme.
- To access the highest marks candidates need to evaluate the sources. In evaluating the evidence candidates should comment on the quality of the source and, specifically, its value in relation to the question. This can be done by an examination of the provenance of the source(s): the interests or motives of the author, the person or groups to whom the source is intended, the significance of the location and/or timing, the type of source, the language used, the angle or weight of the content and so on. It is not expected that candidates should attempt to consider all these things; it is enough for candidates to show that they have tried to test the quality of the sources by considering some of the criteria listed above. Only by doing so, will candidates be able to assess fully the reliability, usefulness, significance, accuracy or value of a source(s) or reach a judgement about the source(s). Too many candidates are inclined to accept the evidence in the source(s) at face value. The information provided in the attributions to the source(s) is provided to give further opportunities for evaluation. It should be stressed that evaluation is not required for **Question 1** or **Question 6**.
- Centres are advised to study the mark scheme to see how this was applied for each question. The content is examples of how a candidate might answer the question. They should not be seen as a check-list that candidates had to provide. Instead, candidates are at liberty to interpret a source as they see it, to apply knowledge they think is suitable and to make their own judgements about the quality of the evidence. There is no set answer.

General Comments

- As in previous years, the quality of the answers varied hugely. Most candidates showed some knowledge and understanding about the topics. Some produced outstanding answers demonstrating their ability to use the sources effectively and apply relevant knowledge.
- The candidature appeared to be fairly evenly divided between the two topics though Section A on Native Americans may have been slightly more popular than Section B on The Presidency of Truman and answers on the former tended to be stronger than those on the latter.
- In using the sources many candidates simply described or paraphrased what was in the sources rather than identifying specific points that were important to answer the question. Candidates might be encouraged to actually quote particular clauses or phrases directly from the sources (and to insert inverted commas around the quotation) to make it clear that they are trying to dissect the content rather than merely describe it. **Question 1** and **Question 6** especially lend themselves to this approach as they ask specifically for a number of points and candidates will score well on these questions if they effectively list these points. However, it would be helpful for candidates to do the same in answering other questions if only as a basis for further analysis. Candidates may find it helpful to highlight specific points on the source Insert as way of preparing their answer before they construct their response.
- A few candidates attempted all ten questions but they were fewer than previously. Candidates need to be prepared for a specific topic, to use the time as advised and to tackle each question in turn and carefully. It seems that virtually every candidate answered the questions chronologically and this approach is, definitely, the best.

Comments on Specific Questions

Question 1

All candidates were able to identify at least one reason for the slaughter of the buffalo and most focused on the objective of reducing the Native Americans' food supplies. Few candidates identified all four reasons given in the source. Many answers could have been improved with the addition of relevant knowledge.

Question 2

Most answers were descriptive, though few were exhaustive on the points of content available. Some candidates appreciated that the views of the author were questionable and some assessed the value of the specific terms of the treaty to people whose values and interests were different to those of the whites. For example, Native American attitudes to money were considered and the significance of the sum involved was assessed by some. A number of answers emphasised how US governments failed to keep their promises though no supporting evidence for this was provided.

Question 3

Most candidates were able to make something of the painting, though some were unable to identify specific aspects of how force was used against Native Americans. Some candidates were of the view that the soldiers suffered more than the Native Americans. This was a question which prompted more evaluation than most as candidates questioned the reliability of the painting given the details provided in the attribution.

Question 4

The majority of candidates did not distinguish between the sources and focused on how Native Americans gained 'US citizenship', became 'independent farmers' and acquired 'land' without assessing the details about the size of holdings that were distributed, though some were aware of the importance of the quality of the land, and the fact that many Native Americans were nomadic. Some referred to the IRA but often used the details in the attribution as if it was part of the content of the source itself, for example, quoting the aims of the IRA, which were stated in the attribution, as if they were part of the source. A few commented on the point that the Dawes Act was introduced without consultation with the Native Americans and that this shows the weakness of the Native Americans at that time. Even if candidates only referred to both sources they were likely to gain at least half the marks available.

Question 5

Many candidates found this question quite difficult. Source F was hard for some candidates to unpack and there was some doubt about when it was that Red Cloud lost hope. The counter argument that hope was lost earlier was recognisable even if many candidates missed it. Most answers that did present an argument provided an imbalanced response. Use of Sources A–E in answering this question constitutes evaluation and this was the main way it was provided. Few examined the details in the attributions to both sources or commented on the tone of the sources, especially that of Source G in which Black Elk talks of 'butchered women and children ... died there in the bloody mud'. A small number of answers simply made assertions without reference to the sources and some alluded to one but not both sources. Candidates might be encouraged to identify the points in the two sources that could be used in developing an argument as their first task.

Question 6

Those candidates who grasped the message provided very solid answers. Modest answers focused on the phrase, used three times, to explain the concern of the USSR to defend their interests whilst those with full understanding appreciated the significance of the phrase 'and so on without end'. Some candidates misunderstood the cartoon, suggesting that it was about the US wanting to expand or the policy of containment. Knowledge was provided by some and, given the dates, events in 1945 and 1946 were particularly apt, though credit was given if reference was made to the Berlin Blockade or other events in the years before 1953 so long as this was explained convincingly.

Question 7

This question proved to be testing for many candidates. Few were able to identify strengths and limitations of Source I. Most answers were descriptions of the scene or a reiteration of the details in the attribution. It seems few were aware of the HUAC and there were many surprising remarks about movie stars and communism. As a result there was little evaluation or knowledge provided.

Question 8

The majority of candidates understood the content of Source J or, at least, were able to make a reasonable paraphrase of it. However, some candidates were confused by the source and seemed to think that a dictatorship had been established in the US. There was little appreciation of the wider historical context of events by September 1950; for instance, developments in China and Korea. Yet, some candidates made reference to the Rosenberg Affair. There was some evaluation of the 'voice vote' in Congress.

Question 9

The majority of candidates struggled with this question. Candidates either concentrated on the points of agreement or difference, and rarely both. Few seemed to appreciate that Lattimore and Truman were clearly anti-communist and not just McCarthy, so the scope for discussion about anti-communist attitudes was wider than many may have thought. As knowledge and evaluation were attempted by only a limited number of candidates most candidates were confined to either four or six marks depending on their approach as indicated above.

Question 10

Although most answers tended to be one-sided (agreeing that the 'defence of freedom' was the main aim of US foreign policy) this question did allow a clear argument for those prepared to study the sources closely. The best responses highlighted Truman's view that 'freedom' was only 'one of the primary aims of the US' (M) and that economic and social interests were the key aim even if the source (N) makes it clear that these were entwined with the aim of defending freedom. Only a few had good knowledge of Truman's foreign policy. Credit was given to candidates who argued that defence of freedom was an aim and anti-communism another, even though they were, largely, the same thing. Similarly, some leeway was allowed to those who argued that resisting communism at home was a key aim, even though this was clearly not a foreign affair.

AMERICAN HISTORY (US)

Paper 0409/03
History Around US

In this third year in which coursework has been submitted, there was much to commend, with significant progress having been made in many Centres. The administration was much improved, with almost all Centres submitting the correct paperwork with the scripts.

The annotation and comments on the Individual Candidate Record Cards was of more varied quality. In some cases the Moderator was unable to identify where the teachers thought the candidate had displayed understanding and so was effectively marking rather than moderating the coursework. This can lead to significant alterations between the marks awarded by the Centre and the externally moderated marks. Some Centres did not submit the correct range of scripts. The top and bottom script should always be included in the sample. Centres are reminded that the correct procedures to follow is outlined in the Coursework Training Handbook.

Most Centres have now refined the materials given to candidates to support their coursework. Centres should aim to review the way in which coursework was delivered by assessing the suitability of the site, the key question and the source material provided for the learners. In some Centres this has led to a new site being used, while in others the question now invites responses that are more likely to demonstrate the understanding required.

In most Centres it is clear that there is a well-established understanding of the concept of historical significance.

The provision of source material is the aspect of coursework most in need of attention. It is evident that in some Centres the supply of sources is inadequate in that candidates find it too difficult to attain the highest marks in Assessment Objective 4. In some instances there is over-reliance on historians' accounts of the site which contain interpretations of the kind that the candidates should be reaching from their use of first-hand accounts. Without access to these first-hand accounts, candidates have no means of judging the acceptability of the historians' interpretations. Where historians refer to source material, the original source should be provided for learners to use. This will also enable candidates to reach their own judgements about the significance of the site.

In other cases the source material is too focused on factual material. Where this is the case it is far harder for candidates to identify ways of evaluating the source.

Where sources evaluation was successful it was because learners were invited to use sources that had a clear point of view, or where a second source gave a contrasting viewpoint or one confirming the first view.

The following two extracts from scripts illustrate successful evaluation of sources. Both concern the Indian School at Phoenix.

"All primary sources showed obvious bias. As most of the literate people at the time were white, the white people wrote all the primary sources. In turn most of the primary sources represented the opinion that originally, Native Americans knew close to nothing. This bias takes away the credibility in research."

"This quotation (not included here) makes it clear that Morgan believes white Americans are working towards assimilation for the Indians' benefit. Morgan also writes "under a wise system of education, carefully administered, the condition of this whole people can be radically improved by a single generation." (FN) Morgan suggests the instilment of white culture in the Indian people will radically improve their condition as a whole. Source C, a book written by Robert Trennert published in 1998, offers that "Phoenix did not have a particularly good record in dealing with Indians. Those natives who came to town to sell their handicrafts, to deliver wheat to millers, or to purchase necessities such as calico and thread, were treated with scorn or ridicule." (FN) With this it becomes clear that Morgan's proposition, that assimilation is in the Indian people's benefit, is invalid. However it should be noted that Source C, a book titled *The Phoenix Indian School*:

Forced Assimilation in Arizona, 1891-1935, should be considered biased as it is written under the premise that assimilation was forced upon the Indians through the Phoenix Indian School.”

Generals on both sides in the Civil War claimed that Corinth, MS, was of strategic importance, and the military efforts made to capture it could also be used to strengthen this interpretation of the site. On the other hand, while most sources concerning the significance of the Hoover Dam stressed its positive impact on the economy, this could be set against sources showing the environmental damage done.

In conclusion, much progress has been made but it is important that Centres continue to refine their understanding of the requirements of the coursework. The individual Centre reports indicate specific areas for improvement where relevant.