

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 with reference to the date range and focus of the question. Broad generalisations can only be rewarded in the lowest level.
- Part **(b)** questions require that candidates **explain** their ideas in some depth. This necessarily goes beyond describing events or issues that relate to the question. They should be able to make a pertinent point, explain how it links to the question and support it with carefully chosen evidence.
- High marks for part **(c)** responses are obtained by providing balanced ('for' and 'against') and developed arguments. Candidates should attempt to build an argument in relation to the question; thinking about whether or not they agree with the statement and building a balanced base of evidence. Comments should be supported with a reasonable range of detailed material; otherwise candidates 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 some candidates adhered to them, many 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. Rubric infringements had a significant impact on the marks awarded in this examination session.

General comments

Some scripts showed that candidates were well prepared for the examination and could use factual knowledge with some precision. This was shown particularly in the part **(a)** questions, where some candidates received high marks as a result of fully addressing the question and focusing on relevant dates, events or figures.

With part **(b)** questions some responses were aware of the need to *explain* rather than just describe. This was shown in the way answers were structured into reasons/factors/causes, using language such as 'this showed that' or 'this meant that'. Many responses struggled to gain marks in the part **(b)** questions because they did not possess the requisite knowledge to link general comments to the particular question, or did not move beyond a simple description of relevant knowledge so were not focused on explaining. To be fully prepared for the examination, candidates need to concentrate on building knowledge that relates to what is outlined in the syllabus.

There were some candidates who were aware of the need to offer balanced comments in response to part **(c)** questions. Some answers revealed clear exposition, structure, organisation and a good range of supporting material before arriving at a balanced judgement in a conclusion. Such responses invariably started with a clear introduction before moving to a 'point per paragraph' approach. The balance in such responses was often sign-posted by the second half of the answer, using language which clearly indicated that an alternative argument was going to be explored. However, answers which approached the questions in this way were in the minority and many responses did not display the knowledge and skills required. It is acceptable, especially with part **(c)** responses, for candidates to write in the first person (e.g. informally), but slang and colloquialism should be kept to a minimum.

Many responses would have benefitted from paying closer attention to the dates, events and figures outlined in the questions. Where questions offer a date range (e.g. **Question 2(c)**), it invites the candidates to look at trends and events over the full time period, in this case the balance of power between the executive and the legislature between 1960 and 2000. It was rare for the date ranges in these questions to be fully used by

candidates, with many ignoring the dates entirely or including material from outside the period. Candidates would therefore benefit from developing a more substantial knowledge of the topics and answering practise questions which span large sections of a theme.

The best responses showed a keen sense of period and contextual knowledge, although basic chronological errors or confusion were common. Many candidates confused the period required in the question on patterns of immigration (4c) and offered extended evidence on the immigration of the late nineteenth century.

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 examination. They displayed an awareness of organisation, structure, explanation and specific detail.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: Government and the People 1754–2000

Question 1

- (a) A number of responses were able to offer some relevant knowledge of the Federalists and some could provide more precise details of their views on government and how the country should be run. The best answers often mentioned the role of Alexander Hamilton in this thinking. However, there were many candidates who had no firm idea of the political developments in this period and made general points on the ideas of federal government, or included material from a completely different period.
- (b) Many candidates were able to make broad descriptive references to the disagreements which took place over the issue of States' Rights before the Civil War. However, many candidates struggled to link this knowledge to particular instances or crises which exemplified these problems. Some candidates were able to make use of their knowledge of Kansas-Nebraska to begin to address the question, but many had little specific knowledge to include. This meant that much of the material was irrelevant or failed to directly answer the question set.
- (c) A number of candidates were able to take some form of stance on this question and begin to discuss the role of Lincoln in the causes of the Civil War. However, many candidates were unable to construct a clear argument that both agreed and disagreed with the question. Some candidates began to talk about other causes of the Civil War (e.g. economic differences), but could not use precise knowledge to build an explanation of why this was important.

Question 2

- (a) Most answers displayed some knowledge of Johnson's Great Society and were able to talk about the broad themes of the question, e.g. poverty and education. Some of the best answers began to discuss the particular focus on black poverty that Johnson wanted to eradicate. However, many answers struggled to move beyond generalisations and use specific knowledge to address the question.
- (b) The best answers to this question were able to relay the main events of the aftermath of the 2000 presidential election and then link them to why they caused controversy, which meant they gained marks for explanation. However, there were a significant proportion of answers which did not have the required knowledge to address this question, with some being confused about who the main protagonists were, resulting in factual errors being made.
- (c) Better responses were able to select relevant examples from the time period given to test the balance of power between Congress and the Presidency. Many used knowledge about Nixon or Reagan, although sometimes this remained descriptive rather than explanatory. A significant minority of candidates struggled to understand the ideas on balance of power between the two branches of government, so found it difficult to address the question at all. It should be noted that this is one of the focus points in the syllabus, so candidates are expected to be aware of the issues surrounding this question.

Section B: Who are Americans, 1754-2000?

Question 3

- (a) Most candidates had some awareness of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and were able to provide some descriptive details, although this often remained quite general. Even though the date (1848) was provided, a number of candidates had difficulty placing this in the wider chronology of the United States' relations with other countries, sometimes confusing the Mexican-American war with the Spanish-American war (1898).
- (b) The best answers to this question were able to use specific knowledge of Chinese and Japanese immigration (e.g. to California and Hawaii) to explain the pull factors for immigrants in the second half of the nineteenth century. However, many responses could only offer broad generalisations which struggled to fully engage with the question.
- (c) Many answers displayed a general knowledge of immigration and the experiences of Hispanic and Asian immigrants. However, only a few responses were able to use specific knowledge and precise chronological understanding. As a result, candidates struggled to build an argument which explained their ideas and so did not gain access to the higher levels of response.

Question 4

- (a) Many candidates experienced difficulty in answering this question as they did not have the required knowledge of the Newlands National Reclamation Act. This meant that responses were often confused or very generic. Those that did access higher marks were able to describe the purpose of the act and its aim of improving agricultural land in the South-Western United States.
- (b) Many candidates struggled to approach this question because they assumed that the Immigration Act of 1965 was passed primarily to restrict immigration, or stop immigrants from accessing jobs and services in the United States. This confusion meant that many candidates failed to recognise the aims of fairness and balance which were inherent in Johnson's plans for immigration and how they echoed his other plans for civil rights. Candidates would benefit from being closely prepared on specific acts which are named in the syllabus.
- (c) The best responses to this question were able to provide specific knowledge, within the time frame, that was relevant to the question on patterns of immigration. Some candidates were able to pick out information on specific movements of people or were able to talk about the broad causes of movement, e.g. refugees after the Second World War. However, many candidates lacked the specific knowledge to fully answer this question beyond a general discussion.

Section C: Economic and Social Change 1754–2000

Question 5

- (a) There were some candidates who were able to display knowledge of the work of Francis Lowell, often regarding his impact on the lives of working women by recruiting girls to work in mills. However, many candidates were unable to include any relevant knowledge and confused this period of the beginning of factory production with that of factory reform in the early twentieth century. This meant that many struggled to gain marks for this question even though it includes specified content from the syllabus.
- (b) Candidates who attempted this question found it difficult to include knowledge which was relevant to the period or the theme which the question addressed; this then prevented them from accessing higher marks.
- (c) This question was sometimes 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 technological advances in the period to show how technology helped to build the economy. It was less common to see candidates who could argue against the assertion by using knowledge of regulations or individual business acumen to argue that technology was not the most important factor. Some answers confused the period and used examples of technology from the twentieth century.

Question 6

- (a) Some answers showed an awareness of La Follette and the Wisconsin idea, often using his ideas about education to describe the notion of progressivism at a local level. However, a significant number of candidates struggled to produce any precise knowledge as they did not know who La Follette was, or how the ideas linked to those of other progressives nationally.
- (b) There were some good answers to this question which showed an awareness of the aims and policies of Roosevelt's Square Deal. The best answers were able to explain what Roosevelt aimed to achieve by pursuing particular policies. A minority of answers confused Roosevelt's domestic and foreign policy, whilst some referred to the New Deal of the 1930s rather than the Square Deal.
- (c) Many responses to this question used knowledge related to the policies of progressives including women's suffrage and factory reform. Some of the best answers were also able to show how progressivism had limitations especially when it came to the lives of African Americans. These answers were able to build a balanced explanation and come to a conclusion about their view of the statement. However, there was still a significant minority of answers which failed to include precise knowledge beyond the general idea of making peoples' lives better.

Section D: The U.S.A. and the rest of the World 1754-2000

Question 7

- (a) This question sometimes provoked clear and well informed responses with a good knowledge of the Oregon Treaty which led to good descriptions of the events surrounding it. However, many candidates were unsure of the precise details or the countries involved, so found it difficult to access high marks.
- (b) There were some good responses to this question which showed a sound recognition of how Texas became part of the United States over two decades. These answers showed a good grasp of historical knowledge and were able to clearly explain ideas. However, some responses struggled to take control of their chronological understanding, so often only offered snapshots of description rather than a coherent explanation.
- (c) Better responses were able to contrast the influence of Spain on defining borders with that of other countries by using specific examples across the broad period given by the question. However, some candidates struggled to display specific knowledge which meant that clear explanation was more difficult. These answers often remained largely descriptive, so were confined to achieving lower marks.

Question 8

- (a) Some answers were able to describe the aims and events surrounding the Kellogg Pact but these were relatively unusual. Many candidates who attempted this question did not have the required knowledge and so did not move beyond general comments.
- (b) Many candidates did not restrict their answers to the period of the 1930s, so included irrelevant material on Japanese Internment camps in the 1940s. A minority of answers did display knowledge of international relations in the 1930s to look at how the United States sought to discourage Japanese aggression in South East Asia through using economic and political methods.
- (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 both for and against the assertion. These answers included specific historical knowledge which was deployed and explained to build an argument in relation to the question. Lower achieving answers lacked quality historical knowledge and relied on generic assertions or narratives which did not really address the question asked.

AMERICAN HISTORY (US)

<p>Paper 0409/02 Defining Moments</p>

Key messages

- 1 In reports in previous years it has been stressed that this is a source-based paper. It is important to communicate this to all candidates as a significant number of responses are still not using relevant source material. Each question includes the instruction that answers need to use details from the source(s), but many answers were based on either knowledge only or unsubstantiated opinion. By failing to refer to the content of designated source(s) candidates are restricted to lower marks. No matter how extensive the answer might be, if it did not use the source, the maximum mark that could be accessed was very limited. In using the source(s) candidates should be encouraged to quote directly from a written source, or ensure that the detail referred to in a visual source is clearly identified.
- 2 Knowledge is certainly required and the command in each question makes this clear. However, this knowledge should be applied to illustrate details in the source(s) and demonstrate the candidate's interpretation of it. As such, candidates should be encouraged to select relevant knowledge which relates directly to the content of the source(s) rather than write a descriptive narrative.
- 3 Evaluation is necessary to access the highest levels except when answering **Question 1** or **Question 6**. This means that the quality of the source and, specifically, its value in relation to the question, should be assessed. The source(s) need to be tested by assessing **some** of the following considerations: 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, the angle or weight of the content and so on. In doing this, candidates are likely to apply knowledge as a way of determining the quality of the source and, in doing so, satisfy that part of the demands of the question. Candidates would therefore benefit from being encouraged to **not accept** sources without criticism. The information provided in the attributions to the sources is intended to help the candidate evaluate the content of them.
- 4 Examiners are happy to accept all interpretations which are based on the sources and where a degree of rigour has been applied to test the sources. The mark scheme is only a guide as to how a candidate might answer the question. Candidates are free 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.**
- 5 The majority of candidates opted for **Section B** on 'The New Deal', although the range in the quality of responses was considerable in the answers provided to questions in both sections. Some answers were limited to a sentence or two at one extreme whilst others were developed extensively.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

A careful summary of this source might enable the candidate to score five marks with an extra mark for a point of supporting detail. Lower scoring answers tended to provide a partial description of the source and others struggled to add any significant knowledge about the battle. However, there were informed candidates who either identified the generals involved, or supplied details about the size of the armies, for example.

Question 2

This question required an appreciation of the hardships faced by the Continental Army and many are revealed in the picture. Knowledge about the circumstances of the army in Valley Forge was limited in a significant number of responses. This source provided considerable information in the attribution to help facilitate an evaluation, but many did not take advantage of this. Better answers were able to build on their knowledge of French support to explain the impression given of Washington and Lafayette.

Question 3

This proved to be a difficult question for many candidates as they did not seem to understand the cartoon. Some confused the encircled armies as rebel/patriot armies and few seemed to appreciate the concept of being 'Burgoyne'd': only a minority were aware of Saratoga. Indeed, it proved difficult to address the question of the accuracy of the cartoon for candidates who seemed to have limited knowledge of the events of the war by 1782. Some attempted to evaluate the cartoon by commenting on the fact that it was drawn by a British artist but often confused themselves by claiming it was, by virtue of its authorship, a misrepresentation of the war when, in fact, the artist was being critical of the British.

Question 4

Most candidates were able to highlight the differences between the two sources by arguing that Source D portrays the British as brutal but Source E says the patriots behaved well. A number of candidates highlighted the difference in the type of warfare of both sides. Most confined their answers to these points with only a minority providing supporting knowledge or evaluation. A few identified a similarity by emphasising the determination of both sides.

Question 5

A significant proportion of candidates failed to consider the two sources at the heart of the question and, if so, their answer would have scored a maximum of two marks. It is important not to bypass Sources F and G as they provide considerable scope for an argument and counter-argument. For those who did use the sources there was a tendency to write an imbalanced answer, but it is encouraging that many candidates recognised the need to present a case for the assertion in the question as well as a counter-view. Information from Sources A–E was used but often with little development and the evaluation of Sources F and G was often limited.

Question 6

Most managed to make something of this photograph and present a plausible message. Better answers also expanded on the racial divide in the USA at the time with knowledge of ways in which it was reflected, both in the application of the New Deal or in the social attitudes of the day. Lower scoring answers merely described the photograph.

Question 7

Many struggled to identify specific problems contained in the source. This was partly because the percentages proved difficult for some to understand. The dates also confused some candidates who did not separate the dates 1929 to 1933 from 1933 and 1935, when the speech was delivered. The evaluation attempted by a few was undermined by writing about Teddy Roosevelt.

Question 8

The majority of candidates did not appreciate that the question was focused on the workforce rather than dams as such. As a result, points about the physical health of those in the picture, the team work involved, the sense of determination visible and so on were ignored by most. Some commented on the African American in the picture and were able to place this in the context of labour opportunities and workers' rights at that time. Some candidates tried to assess the significance of the artist as an employee of the WPA but most candidates who referred to him did so as merely an example of one of the jobs provided by the WPA.

Question 9

Some candidates merely paraphrased the sources with a statement about how they differed. Many attempted to explain the difference but did not develop this with knowledge or evaluation. Few saw any similarity between the sources. In a comparison question such as this the difference might, indeed, be more obvious but candidates should be encouraged to assume there will be some similarity and by attempting both they will give themselves much more scope to access higher marks. Any evaluation tended to be rather speculative.

Question 10

The two sources at the heart of the question – Sources M and N – lent themselves well to an argument and counter-argument, yet a number of candidates ignored them altogether. In some cases, candidates appeared to be drawing from the sources but in the absence of any specific identification with either source, it was difficult to credit the implied link. Knowledge of the New Deal was evident in many answers but it was not always engaged with the sources in question. Those who attempted to evaluate the sources were inclined to focus on the motive and interest of the authors.

AMERICAN HISTORY (US)

Paper 0409/03
History Around Us

General comments

The coursework submitted covered a variety of sites all of which appeared to engage the learners. In some cases personal or family connections with the sites further enhanced the work. Centres should note that from 2018 the range of local topics permitted has been extended.

The tasks set are generally appropriate. Where they are not there are two issues. One relates to the question. This should be phrased to direct candidates but not over-prescribe. Candidates should be allowed to write about the period before the site was developed in order to aid their assessment of its significance. The sources must include examples of first-hand sources that can be evaluated in a developed way.

In some instances marks were adjusted because original marks rather than marks changed on internal moderation had been submitted. These altered marks are the definitive ones and Centres should adjust ICRCs to reflect these new marks as well as the marginal comments on the script itself.

Marks in the mid to lower range were generally accurate and therefore not adjusted. However, at the higher end of the mark range it was common to find scripts that had been over-rewarded in AO4. This was because candidates had not evaluated individual sources as required to reach the top of the higher levels. Evaluation could be of the content, considering the accuracy of the evidence, or of the purpose, typicality or reliability of the source itself. Identifying missing information does not constitute evaluation.

Historical significance is a challenging concept. Lower level responses generally equated significance with change or impact or both. In the former case, they made no attempt to differentiate between changes, instead regarding all changes as significant. In the latter case, they only considered what happened as a result of the site being created or developed, rather than the difference it made to the theme under consideration.

Higher achieving candidates identified a limited range of themes and provided supporting evidence that was clearly focused on illustrating the pattern of development and the extent to which it was affected by the site. For example, some candidates studying the Phoenix Indian School noted that there was a policy to remove Native American Indian children from their families and 'Americanize' them. They then described the treatment of the children with the focus on whether or not they reacted positively to their treatment at the school. Stronger candidates were then able to trace changes in policy towards the Native American Indian culture through changes in the school's curriculum and approach. This then led them to an assessment of the school's significance in implementing the policy.

Overall, there is much to praise while the suggestions for improvement are intended to support candidates in obtaining the best marks of which they are capable.