



**GCSE**  
**History**

8145/1A A/B/C/D

Report on the Examination

8145  
June 2024

Version: 1.0

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## 1AA: America, 1840–1895: Expansion and consolidation

### General

With centres now beginning to operate under conditions of post-pandemic stability, many students impressed examiners with the general quality of their work. Many indeed demonstrated a sound understanding of the key issues in this period study and most were able to show a secure knowledge along with an understanding of the main concepts through their performance against the assessment objectives. The best student responses indicated planning and thought and there was a good deal of evidence to suggest careful consideration of the interpretations provided for use with Questions 1, 2 and 3.

### Question 1

In Question 1 most students understood and were able to explain differences about the American Civil War from the interpretations provided. Those responses which drew out and explained an important valid difference were placed in Level 2. Weaker answers were characterised by an over-reliance on the interpretations with many students copying indiscriminately. The overuse of quotations hindered rather than supported students' answers. Indeed, the weakest responses were filled with quotations and little else. There was a tendency on the part of some students to write unnecessarily long answers, losing sight of the marks available for this question. Level 1 responses tended to identify the features of each interpretation without making any direct comparison. A minority of responses (or parts thereof) were not credited because they considered the provenance of the interpretations.

At Level 2 students were typically able to offer developed thoughts about the two interpretations indicating that in Interpretation A the Civil War was fought over the issue of slavery and the North had moral right on its side, whereas in Interpretation B, the war was about the right of the South to determine its own affairs and the South was defeated because of many factors including a lack of resources to mount a sustained and long-term campaign.

### Question 2

Weaker responses to this question were usually characterised by simple statements and undeveloped assertions. Ascriptions of bias were commonly attributed to one or the other author. Very often, these comments were either undeveloped or unsubstantiated. Some students attempted to base their answers on the differences in the times of writing, without extending the answer to suggest why or how that might have an impact on the nature of the interpretations. Most students focused on the authorship of the two interpretations: Interpretation A was written by a former enslaved person who had then become a leading figure in the campaign to abolish slavery. The author of Interpretation B, by contrast, was a former Confederate General. As with Question 1, a number of responses were too long in proportion to the marks available for this question. Many weaker responses focused on **how** rather than **why** the interpretations were different.

More successful responses to this question were able to relate their contextual knowledge to the authors of the interpretations and use this to explain why they might have had different interpretations about either the causes of the Civil War or the eventual defeat of the Confederate states, and some impressive contextual knowledge was to be seen such answers.

### Question 3

Some very encouraging responses were seen in answer to this question. Some chose to dwell on the provenance of the two interpretations and were usually placed in Level 1. A limited number of these responses would have been more appropriate as an answer to Question 2 or even Question 1. Answers of this type frequently relied less on any contextual knowledge about the Civil War but looked to the motives of the authors and asserted that the interpretation with the least ‘bias’ was the more convincing.

The most obvious differentiator between student answers to this question lay in the ability to identify and address the overall argument raised by each interpretation. Many adopted a line-by-line approach which was unlikely to facilitate the demonstration of any overall understanding, and in fact, often diverted the focus of the answer away from the demands of the question. There were also many references to the provenance of the interpretations intermingled with context used to test for accuracy.

On the other hand, many answers displayed sound, relevant contextual knowledge and used this effectively to consider which interpretation might be the more convincing. Some students presented a strong case for just one Interpretation being the more convincing, often with excellent contextual knowledge but, as the mark scheme states, there was a limit to the credit that could be earned by taking this approach. This was because it is necessary to provide a developed explanation, to some extent, in support of the validity of the arguments provided in both interpretations. A small number of students attempted to make links between the two interpretations, and it should be said, some very good knowledge was often deployed in doing so. Higher-level responses were characterised by reference to such features as the wealth and resources of the Northern states, the secession of the Confederate states, and an accurate chronology explaining the frustrations of the Southern states and the arguments for self-government. Examiners were not looking for any one particular Interpretation to be favoured in students’ answers, so long as a coherent and accurately supported argument was made.

### Question 4

While this question was accessible to all ability ranges, it should be stated that a number of students did not fully address the question, which asked for two problems faced by Brigham Young and the Mormons. A minority of students confused the Mormons with the Homesteaders and the Donner Party, or presented erroneous answers: at Salt Lake City, for example, the Mormons did not lack for water, but for drinkable water and so some sort of filtration system.

These issues notwithstanding, the majority of students were concise in their answers and related their descriptions to the demands of the question. There were many Level 2 responses to be seen. Many discussed problems faced on the journey itself, or on reasons for the Mormons deciding they had to make that journey in order to avoid persecution. The structure of many responses was exemplary as students clearly signposted the direction of their answers using such language as ‘firstly’ and ‘secondly’ and divided and organised their writing into two clear and distinct paragraphs.

**Question 5**

Many successful answers were seen in response to this question. A range of factors were presented including the American government's concentration policy, the assimilation of Native American children into 'White American' life through boarding schools and the systematic destruction of the buffalo on the Plains. In answering this question, a number of students chose to write about the government's support of Manifest Destiny, the railroads and the army campaigns to enforce reservation, or concentration policy. The most effective responses recognised that the American government prevented the Native Americans from living as nomadic hunters and forced the Native Americans to rely on the government for food and so their survival. Weaker responses, by contrast, had less depth and made simple, restricted points that were often accompanied by accurate, but undeveloped, knowledge.

**Question 6**

Weaker answers to this question were descriptive and narrative in tenor. Many Level 1 responses and lower Level 2 responses did not show sufficient knowledge of the reasons why the Homesteaders managed to settle on the Plains. These weaker answers were often superficial discussions of technology, inventions and/or legislation. Such responses lacked structure and often a clear line of argument. It is important in this Period study that students deploy second order concepts such as causation and consequence as well as the ability to make substantiated judgements.

Nevertheless, many students were able to exhibit some secure knowledge in formulating responses to this question. Most of these were able to develop a balanced and detailed assessment to show the impact of both new farming methods and technology, and government actions to support Homesteader settlement of the Plains.

The strongest answers were able to secure Level 3 marks by discussing both factors in detail so that supporting knowledge was accurate and clearly presented. Level 4 responses maintained a focused and appropriate reference to both factors throughout the answer and coherently argued a well-supported case. It was noticeable that the very best answers were planned and carefully structured with clearly defined paragraphs containing an often-impressive knowledge of both farming methods and technology, and the impacts of government legislation.

**1AB: Germany, 1890–1945: Democracy and dictatorship****Question 1**

Most students demonstrated a knowledge of the period and an understanding of the main concepts through the key assessment objectives. There was evidence that students had taken time to consider and plan their responses and there was some careful reading of the interpretations in Questions 1, 2 and 3. Not surprisingly, some were more confident than others in assembling their answers to these questions, although there still seems to be confusion over the different responses required for questions 1, 2 and 3.

Examiners noted in the weaker answers that students typically neglected to develop their points and merely repeated what the Interpretations said. On the one hand there were some students who made simple, abbreviated, and descriptive observations, while on the other, examiners noticed some students who wrote unnecessarily long answers. All students should be mindful of the number of marks available for this question. Some answers failed to gain any credit because they discussed the provenance of the interpretations or copied out large parts of the interpretation in some cases.

However, in answering Question 1 the majority of students successfully comprehended and explained differences, albeit briefly, with reference to ‘fun’ or ‘politics’ relating to Nazi Youth Groups from these interpretations. Some students struggled to identify differences because the interpretations were not simply positive or negative about the Nazi Youth Groups. Many responses reached a high Level 2, being able to draw out and explain an important valid difference about the Nazi Youth Groups. At Level 2 responses were typically able to make comparisons between the interpretations and particularly from interpretation B about the political motivations for joining whereas Interpretation A focused on the enjoyment aspects for the youth. There was some sensible understanding of specific words and phrases.

**Question 2**

This question continues to be answered well. Many students could identify the reasons for the differences through several different routes, but weaker responses tended to state it rather than explain it. Most students commented on the background of the two authors, with many responses frequently focusing on the author, such as interpretation B becoming an important member of Hitler Youth. Student responses were stronger about the authorship of interpretation A. Fewer than previously were writing about the date of the interpretations, although cases of this did exist when discussing interpretation B and the death of her parents affecting her view.

Examiners reported that there were fewer answers which showed that students seemed to have confused Questions 1 and 2. As in question 1, at times, considering the marks available, the answers were too lengthy.

The stronger answers were able to relate their contextual knowledge to the authors of the interpretations and use this to explain why they might have differed about their views of the Nazi Youth Groups. Some students went so far as to try to develop an argument about how the location of the authors had an impact on their views. The stronger answers on provenance were usually focused on the parents’ opinions, or the date at which they joined the Nazi Youth Group. The more successful answers relating to Interpretation A were about his opinion being influenced by the financial benefits experienced by his parents who were associated with the Nazi Party, although some students were able to discuss his younger age being a reason for his views. Students tended to be less successful in developing a motive or purpose for

Interpretation B, some failing to get beyond, ‘she was in Hitler Youth for a long time’, although many students expanded upon the impact of ‘brainwashing’ on her opinion or that she was exposed to Nazism more than the author of interpretation A because she lived in Berlin. Students who made simple assertions usually did not go on to develop their answer to explain why the authors might then possess different interpretations regarding the Nazi Youth Groups. Overall, this question was answered well by most students who understood what was expected of them and discussed the provenance of the sources in enough detail to be rewarded with a level 2 mark.

### **Question 3**

This question produced a wide range of responses, although many students failed to progress beyond Level 1 due to responses providing brief comments about the content of the interpretations. Other answers still focused generally on the provenance which impaired their ability to gain credit usually beyond level 1 as well. Examiners noted that some responses were more appropriate as an answer to Question 2 or even Question 1. Answers at this level frequently relied upon contextual knowledge but looked to the motives of the authors and stated that the interpretation with the less ‘bias’ was the more convincing.

The most obvious differentiator between student answers to this question lay in the ability to identify and address the overall argument raised by each interpretation, supported by secure knowledge. Many adopted a line-by-line approach. This was unlikely to allow the student to show any overall understanding, and often diverted the focus of the answer away from the demands of the question. There were again many references to the provenance of the interpretations intermingled with context used to test for accuracy. A notable weakness of answers was an inability to offer appropriate contextual knowledge to evaluate the interpretations, with some students using knowledge which was not relevant to the Nazi Youth Groups. Most answers which offered contextual knowledge to evaluate Interpretation A focused on the activities of Nazi Youth Groups such as the preparation for war and fitness.

There were, however, many answers which debated and judged which was the more convincing. Some students who presented a strong case for just one Interpretation even with good contextual knowledge were limited in the credit that could be earned. This was because it was necessary to provide, to some extent, a developed explanation in support of the validity of the arguments provided in each interpretation.

Higher-level responses often were achieved by reference to the specifics of the interpretations to effectively discuss the targeted methodology of brainwashing and political motivation, or girls being prepared for home life, in relation to interpretation B although some incorrectly chose to include knowledge about the Depression at length, ignoring the factor stated in the question. Some students went on to, or included on the way, substantiated judgements about the more convincing interpretation. Examiners were not looking for a particular Interpretation to be favoured in answers so long as a sensible and supported argument was made.

### **Question 4**

This question was accessible to all ability ranges, but it was noticeable that many students still confused the Great Depression and the 1923 hyperinflation crisis. Many answers partly or wholly referred to the failure of Germany to pay back American loans in general rather than linking this as a problem for the German people, meaning some students’ responses lacked a focus on the question. In terms of answers that did adhere to problems faced by the German people, a significant proportion did demonstrate

knowledge of specific problems with most students referring to unemployment and a lack of political leadership offered by the Weimar government leading to extremism.

Most answers that referred to specific events had secure but limited contextual knowledge. There were many Level 2 responses. Answers often offered a simple understanding of the impact of unemployment. Only rarely did answers refer to Brüning's leadership.

Nevertheless, many students who were concise in their answers and related their description to the demands of the question achieved Level 2 marks. The structure of the answers was exemplary in many cases as well. They were clearly signposted, such as, 'firstly' and 'secondly'.

### **Question 5**

In answering the question at level 1 and 2, a significant number of students tried to consider the lives of German people with general reference to the Weimar 'Golden Age' but were not always secure on the detail, missing specific examples. Most students were able to provide an answer which simply identified and explained the effects of the culture on German people and gain a mark at Level 2, commonly referring to entertainment or the changing lives of women. Answers that did successfully identify the impact of culture nearly always described entertainment, including cinema, music and literature in some cases, but there was confusion over the dates of the question with some students frequently mentioning the Nazi Party's 'Strength through Joy'. Several responses did, however, follow detailed arguments based on those who positively enjoyed cultural changes and those who did not. Many answers mentioned themes of the 'Golden Age' but mostly described the experiences without explaining their impact on people. Unfortunately, some students were confused by the term culture in the question and consequently failed to gain any marks or referred to a group, such as women, and did not link their response to culture.

There were few excellent answers to this question with several developed aspects. The answers, which secured Level 3 and 4, made specific reference to identified groups or themes, how the Weimar culture affected them, and gave specific details. There were strong answers that defined the various effects, and some were able to differentiate between the extent of the impact of culture on the German people.

### **Question 6**

Generally, this question was answered well by students. The weaker answers to this question were generalised or descriptive, and often overly narrative. Many Level 1 responses and lower Level 2 responses did not show sufficient knowledge of the ways in which political unrest and economic problems had an impact on Germany. Some students tried to use general statements about the Treaty of Versailles, although this was not made specifically relevant to the question. Answers at Level 1 and 2 often made simple or generalised comments about a lack of money or political rebellions which lacked links to the question or specific examples. The weaker answers did not show a clear structure or a clear line of argument. It is important in this Period study that students deploy second order concepts such as causation and consequence as well as the ability to make substantiated judgements.

Generally, the answers of weaker students lacked an understanding of how economic problems or political unrest had an impact on Germany. Many answers proceeded in an unstructured way, writing at length about the economic impact of the First World War or the Kaiser. Some also wrote about Stresemann and loans from America, losing focus on the dates of the question. Many answers offered a description, narrative or combined description and narrative of Weimar history between 1919 and 1923 rather than a focused response to the question.

Many answers addressed the question and the bullet points with the argument that economic problems had the largest impact on Germany. Such answers demonstrated an awareness of the events of the Ruhr and the impact of hyperinflation. Most answers at Level 2 could describe the political rebellions; however, relevant specific knowledge about the names of the rebellions was lacking by some students or there was a lack of focus on the idea of impact on Germany.

However, at Levels 3 and 4 most students were able to show off good knowledge in answering this question. They were able to develop a balanced assessment to show the greatest impact politically or economically. Students' answers explained why different aspects of economic problems had the greatest impact and how political unrest had impacted on the Weimar government. Stronger answers were able to secure Level 3 with both bullet points discussed in detail. The Level 4 responses often maintained relevant reference to both points throughout the answer and clearly made a well-supported judgement often, though not solely, based on how the features of economic problems created political unrest. These Level 4 responses were well structured and focused on the question throughout the answer.

**1AC: Russia, 1894–1945: Tsardom and communism****Question 1**

In this period study, the general quality of the work produced by the students was good and it was evident that they had understood the topic well. Most students demonstrated a knowledge of the period and an understanding of the main concepts through the key assessment objectives. There was evidence that students had taken time to plan and structure their answers and there was some careful reading of the interpretations in Questions 1, 2 and 3. Not surprisingly, some were more confident than others in assembling their answers to these questions. As in previous years there was a tendency for some students to write unnecessarily long answers, particularly on questions one and two, losing sight of the marks available for this question.

The majority of students successfully comprehended and explained differences about the two interpretations of Stalin's wartime leadership, and some were able to gauge the level of his influence and achievements during the Second World War from these interpretations. The majority of responses reached a high Level 1, or bottom Level 2 being able to draw out and explain an important valid difference such as his quality of planning or his ability to provide sufficient supplies for the war effort. All answers that were attempted were able to highlight that one was complimentary about Stalin's wartime leadership qualities and the other was not. At Level 2 responses were able to make comparisons between the interpretations, particularly to recognise that Interpretation A was different because in A, Stalin's actions and decisions proved vital during the war, citing him as meticulous, resourceful and attentive to detail. By contrast, in Interpretation B the focus was on his prewar actions, particularly the impact of the purges which weakened the army, making him less capable as a wartime leader. There was some good understanding shown of specific words and phrases. However, there were too many answers which remained in Level 1, due in part to the fact that there was a tendency to quote directly from the interpretations at length or to provide contextual knowledge which was unnecessary in this answer. There were a small number of answers that highlighted reasons for the differences, thereby mistakenly addressing the second question.

**Question 2**

As in question 1, at times, the answers were too lengthy for the marks available. There were too many answers that were placed in Level 1 as they merely acknowledged the potential for bias; it was suggested that as it was written by a supporter or opponent, this must therefore explain why it was positive or negative. However, the information provided about both authors afforded the opportunity to explore their purpose. There were still some weaker answers that remained focused on how rather than why the interpretations were different. Very few answers tried to develop an argument about how the time period or the country in which their work was published might influence the views they contained. There were missed opportunities to focus on the time period in which Interpretation A, in particular, was written. Too many mistakenly believed that Harriman was being interviewed when Stalin was alive, hence the reason for being so positive. There were some better answers that were able to explore the idea that even with the benefit of hindsight, Harriman was trying to justify or gain credit for American support for Russia during World War II. For interpretation B, answers explored more confidently Khrushchev's motives. There were very few answers that made any reference to the fact that Interpretation B was smuggled out of Russia and published in the west.

The stronger answers were able to relate their contextual knowledge to the authors of the interpretations to explain why they had different interpretations about Stalin's wartime leadership. The stronger answers using the provenance were usually focused on the purpose of the authors, taking into account the timing,

for example the thawing of relations between the East and West in 1980s. Level 2 answers were able to explore beyond the simple bias of Harriman having regular face to face contact with Stalin and stressed that Harriman had a vested interest in complimenting Stalin due to American support for Russia during the Second World War. Most answers were stronger on the reasoning for Interpretation B rather than interpretation A which amounted to their personal connection. However, there were several excellent answers that considered the purpose of both the authors which, in the case of Khrushchev, was to secure his own position as successor. By highlighting Stalin's negative qualities, answers claimed that he hoped to ingratiate himself with other party members at that time by signalling a change of direction, reassuring them that they will see improvements under his tenure-ship.

### Question 3

This question produced a wide range of responses. Weaker students provided narrative answers, sometimes dwelling on the provenance which this year again prevented credit usually beyond Level 1. Examiners noted that some responses were more appropriate as an answer to Question 2 or even Question 1. Frequently, students relied upon contextual knowledge but looked to the motives of the authors and stated that the interpretation with the less 'bias' was more convincing.

The most obvious differentiator between student answers to this question lay in the ability to identify and address the overall argument raised by each interpretation. Some adopted a line-by-line approach. This was unlikely to allow the student to show any overall understanding, and often diverted the focus of the answer away from the demands of the question. There were also many references to the provenance of the interpretations intermingled with context used to test for accuracy.

There were, however, a significant number of answers with sound contextual knowledge which debated and judged which was the more convincing. Some students who presented a strong case for just one Interpretation being the more convincing with good contextual knowledge were limited in the credit that they could earn. This was because it was necessary to provide, to some extent, a developed explanation in support of the validity of the arguments provided in each interpretation. There were a small number of very good answers from students who made links between the two interpretations. Students used good knowledge that referenced Stalin's qualities which proved vital such as his decision to dismantle and relocate factories beyond the Ural Mountains as well as the scorched earth policy that was adopted. In addition, there were details outlining his decision to purge the Red Army, being taken off guard by Operation Barbarossa, the use of the Gulags and Stalin's control of the media to censor and control the message regarding progress of the war. Examiners also saw, by contrast, reference to details about the defeat of the Germans at Stalingrad in 1943 as well as Russian forces reaching Berlin successfully before the USA and Britain. All were attributed to Stalin's decision making, pragmatism and meticulous planning. Some answers were particularly detailed in their consideration of the impact of Stalin's five-year plans and his collectivisation programme to ensure supplies were directed suitably to the war effort. Some students went onto, or included on the way, sustained judgement about which was the more convincing interpretation. Examiners were not looking for a particular Interpretation to be favoured in answers so long as a sensible and supported argument was made. A few answers became side tracked by the reference in Interpretation B to the media and saw this as an opportunity to explore the cult of personality. This was not always made relevant to the quality of Stalin's wartime leadership.

**Question 4**

This question was accessible at all ability ranges. However, there were a few answers that misunderstood who Stolypin was. There were many answers which referenced problems faced by other individuals instead including Stalin, Lenin and notably Sergei Witte. Nevertheless, the majority of students appeared to be concise in their answers and related their description to the demands of the question. There were many Level 2 responses for those who completed the question. The structure of the answers was exemplary in many cases as well. They were clearly signposted, such as, ‘firstly’ and ‘secondly’.

Most focused on the problems faced in the backwards methods and inefficiencies in agriculture and cited the Peasant Banks as an ideal solution by Stolypin, leading to the growth of larger and more efficient farms economic improvements and the evolution of an entrepreneurial Kulak class. There were some strong and knowledgeable answers, which referenced specific statistics involved in suppressing political opposition – “Stolypin’s necktie” – that had emerged despite the introduction of a Duma following the events of 1905. Some focused on industrial unrest as a problem that needed addressing with harsh suppression cited as the solution. There was a clear understanding demonstrated of the impact of these problems which was linked to lack of political rights. Alternatively, some referenced controlling the Dumas as a problem with Stolypin’s answer to simply close them temporarily. There were answers that tended to be less well developed and generalised, citing the problems as living and working in bad conditions with no specific detail to underpin this or link to how they were a problem for Stolypin. Examiners saw answers that incorrectly described the wrong time period and instead described problems for the people living under Witte’s industrial expansion at the turn of the century or under the Red or Great Terror.

**Question 5**

This question was especially well answered. Examiners saw a significant number of students trying to consider both the positive and negative impact of Collectivisation, albeit there inevitably tended to be a focus on the latter. Some answers made the assumption that it was either an overwhelming success or failure for the people. In some cases, there was a misunderstanding of collectivisation with a small number of students assuming collectivisation was an unmitigated success and that peasants were better off with more choice, more food, and more land. The modernisation of agriculture was deemed in many answers as necessary, albeit disastrous initially, as peasants slaughtered animals and destroyed their crops. The problems with the introduction of tractors and modern machinery were also well understood and explained. The best answers explained how collectivisation linked to and created the potential for modernisation in industry. Weaker answers provided generalised comments regarding the impact of collectivisation on the people of Russia generally. These answers were not necessarily focused on collectivisation in the 1930s specifically and could have been equally plausible comments on the impact of Lenin’s War Communism. These tended to be Level 1 responses. Some answers tried to link changes in industry being dependant on funding gained from the changes in agriculture, thereby making people better off, although this was not always convincingly explained. Better answers were able to cite achievements in the longer term in defending Russia in World War Two as evidence that collectivisation was beneficial for all people, regardless of the human cost.

Strong answers acknowledged that people were affected differently by collectivisation depending on whether they were part of agricultural production in the countryside or industrial production in the cities. For the people in the countryside the biggest impact was that it damaged their food supply and livelihood but for those in industrial centres it increased the supply of food. Better answers differentiated the impact of Collectivisation on the Kulaks as well as peasants. There was detailed consideration of the lives of Kulaks

who were badly affected when they refused to give up their privately owned land to the Collectives. Details were outlined of how the government took food off them by force, using terror tactics and many Kulaks were sent to gulag labour camps as punishment for their opposition. There was a recognition of the short-term impact on the people of Russia as the Kulaks resorted to destroying their own crops rather than handing them over to the communists. Good references were made to the statistics associated with the resultant famine and to officials who became “dizzy with success” in their drive to consolidate farms and increase efficiency and production. A few muddled references to the famine in 1921, which led to Lenin’s abandonment of the War Communism, with that due to collectivisation. Most answers acknowledged there were positives as well as negatives, including the increase in mechanisation. However, it was recognised that collectivisation, particularly the process of de-kulakisation was disastrous overall. Most answers were able to describe the impact of collectivisation as having a predominantly economic impact on many groups of people. Examiners were pleased to see many strong answers that defined the various groups, highlighted economic and social impacts and were able to differentiate between some positives as well as the obvious negatives.

### Question 6

The weaker answers to this question were descriptive and often overly narrative. It is important in this Period study that students deploy second order concepts such as change and continuity as well as the ability to make substantiated judgements. Many Level 1 responses and lower Level 2 responses did not show sufficient understanding of the difference between economic policies and force, sometimes muddling the two. Predictably the weaker answers lacked structure and did not display a clear line of argument. Some students tried to link changes in economic policy by Lenin in 1921 to the unpopular use of force, although not always convincingly. Better answers were able to recognise that the changes in economic policy were a compromise, unpopular in the Bolshevik party but necessary to keep control. There were a small number of students who did not attempt an answer.

Answers at Level 1 and 2 often made only basic and generalised comments about economic policies and the use of force, and these lacked links to the question or some specific examples. All too often they were reliant on the assumption that force was the more successful method of control. In some cases, there was a misunderstanding of the difference between War Communism and the New Economic Policy. A small number of answers had read the question incorrectly and deviated into a discussion of which was the most important bullet point that allowed Lenin to seize control in the Oct/ Nov revolution. In such instances, some credit could be awarded for acknowledging the promises that Lenin made in his April Theses and the closing of the Constituent Assembly almost straight away, but the answers were primarily focused on answering a different question.

However, many students were able to show off some pleasing knowledge in answering this question. Most were able to develop a balanced assessment to show how both changes in economic approach and the use of force were important in gaining control after the revolution. Lenin’s promises made in his April Theses of “Peace, Bread and Land” and the concessions made in the signing of the Treaty of Brest Litovsk, the various decrees that promoted economic equality, the setting up of Gosplan as well as redistributed land to the peasants were all referenced as examples of economic policies. In addition, there were details outlining his decision to abandon his economic policy of War Communism in favour of the NEP as a result of the famine and Kronstadt Rebellion 1921 which was the “flash that lit up reality”. Better answers were able to explain how this policy change was popular amongst the people thereby leading to increased support and less need for forcible tactics being needed to maintain control. Examiners also saw, by contrast, reference to details of the forcible closing of the Constituent Assembly, implementation of the

Red Terror, details of the crushing of the rebellion in 1921 and the murder of the Tsar and his family. The secret police were sometimes referred to as the Okhrana or NKVD rather than the Cheka. Many answers considered the importance of both methods in defeating the Whites in the Civil War and thereby maintaining popular support of the people of Russia. A few answers deviated into discussing the reasons for winning the Civil War rather than remaining focused on the question set.

Some inaccurately included later policies and actions under Stalin such as the propaganda involved in the story of the Stakhanov movement, targeting of the Kulaks and work projects such as the Dnieprov dam and Moscow Metro. There were often statistics used in stronger answers to underpin the arguments.

The Level 4 responses often maintained relevant reference to both factors throughout the answer and clearly made a well-supported judgement. It was noticeable that the better answers were well structured. These answers went much further with a depth of knowledge that was impressive. They also clearly connected both bullet points and demonstrated how force was used often to support the economic policies.

**1AD: America, 1920–1973: Opportunity and inequality****Question 1**

At Level 1 responses were typically able to make comparisons between the interpretations, particularly to recognise that Interpretation A suggested a positive view of the movement whereas Interpretation B expressed a potentially negative view of their work. With support from the interpretations, they were again able to reach the top of the level. Those responses that were able to make a valid inference about how they were different which went beyond the basic statement of one being positive/negative were able to access Level 2. If supported by the content of the interpretations, they were able to reach a high Level 2. For example, interpretation A suggested the movement was a ‘positive force for gender equality’ whereas B could lead women to getting ‘dangerous responsibilities’ or that B was emphasising the dangers equal rights would provide for women, opening them up to worrying consequences.

**Question 2**

There were many strong answers again to this question, although unfortunately, several answers were confused about interpretation B stating that the author was against women which obviously missed the point and nature of the message which the author intended. Many weaker answers did seem to remain focused on how rather than why the interpretations were different. This was a shame as some students simply wrote again about the content rather than the attributions. In a similar vein, another characteristic of weaker answers was simply attempting to re-write the attributions which at best would be rewarded at a low Level 1.

The stronger answers were able to relate their contextual knowledge of the authors of the interpretations and use this to explain why they had different views concerning the Feminist movement in America - referencing the more conservative white middle class background of Schlafly and the fact that Friedan helped set up campaigns for the ERA so this would explain her beliefs.

The stronger answers on provenance were usually focused on the purpose/motive of the authors; for example, the purpose of A was to praise and celebrate the achievements of the Feminist Movement or that B’s motive in her book was to emphasise her success in stopping ERA.

**Question 3**

This question produced a wide range of responses. Examiners noted again the tendency of some students to base their answers around the attributions rather than the content. These answers unfortunately remained in Level 1 unless they were able to support such arguments with knowledge, which then allowed it to progress to the bottom of Level 2.

Answers at Level 2 were able to identify an argument and support with some simple understanding using straightforward knowledge or explanations. Although there were several students that confused the experiences of feminism of the 1920s with the 1960s/1970s – references to the Suffragettes were noted in many answers unfortunately.

Where students were secure in their knowledge about feminism, they were able to produce some excellent responses. There were examples of good knowledge used on this question which allowed students to access level 3. Higher-level responses were often achieved by reference to the specifics of the interpretations. For example, in relation to Interpretation A, students wrote about the achievements of the

Feminist Movements as a way of contextualising the interpretation, referring to Roe Vs Wade in depth and the wider achievements of groups such as NOW. Of course, it is possible for students to use those and other examples of a similar nature to contextualise either interpretation, and examiners noted many examples of students doing just that. There was, it was noted by examiners, less knowledge of the wider context applied to Interpretation B; however, examiners credited as developed understanding examples of the STOP ERA campaigns successes among other supportive knowledge.

Some students went on to, or included along the way, substantiated judgements about which they considered to be the more convincing interpretation. Examiners were not looking for a particular Interpretation to be favoured in answers so long as a sensible and supported argument was made. Stronger arguments were seen where students effectively used their contextual knowledge to challenge the content within the interpretation as to which was more convincing in a way not simply to dismiss one as being not convincing. This, examiners noted, was impressive.

#### **Question 4**

This was a well answered question on the whole, examiners noted. The structure of responses has improved from last year. Unfortunately, several students wrote in depth about how Jim Crow laws affected immigrants, confusing immigrants with the treatment of African Americans. Some students did however manage to correctly link the KKK with negative treatment of immigrants, but this was rare. Amongst many problems immigrants faced, most often students wrote well about the problem of discrimination which was problematic for immigrants as it reduced their opportunities for living an equal/successful life within America. Equally, examiners noted excellent responses relating to how Immigrants suffered problems due to a fear of their bringing communism to America, the case of Sacco and Vanzetti/Quotas/Literacy tests and so on were common ways that students progressed through the two levels.

Encouragingly therefore, there were many Level 2 marks awarded for this question. It is worth noting that this answer requires two problems to be discussed to get into Level 2.

#### **Question 5**

This question appeared well received by students with many considered and supported answers seen. What was pleasing to examiners is the way in which an increasing number of students structured their responses into clear paragraphs or by signposting their different arguments. However, there were some students that confused the 1920s with the 1950s with Elvis, Sinatra, James Dean, and others being brought in to support which went uncredited. Similarly, some students veered into the realm of the economy and the development of the Assembly Line and the benefits that had, and lost focus on the question (entertainment); therefore, they were limited in the credit that could be awarded.

However, there were many excellent answers with developed explanations because they did explain the development of entertainments. At levels 3 and 4 these went beyond description of features and towards an evaluation of the impact of the changes on peoples' lives. For example, some answers showed how films and how women were portrayed in some of them, 'changed the trajectory of how they were perceived.' Similarly, how music developed the roles and experiences of women and African Americans. Examiners noted that many able students were able to achieve level 4 as they explained how American people were affected by developments in entertainment in terms of groupings and geography within America, such as the different experiences of women, African Americans, lower, middle, and upper-class Americans, amongst others.

## Question 6

Many students did show good knowledge in answering this question and it was obvious to examiners that much work had been done to prepare students well in terms of structure and evaluation. More students this year seemed to begin with the first bullet point – the New Deal. This is always a good idea as it lends to a chronological approach which allows students to develop the idea of change especially short- and longer-term impacts which was seen in the best answers.

Answers which deployed specific and relevant knowledge were able comfortably to access Level 2 and many of such responses were seen. There were some single bullet point responses, mainly on the New Deal. Some well expressed in terms of impact on America but were capped at Level 2 as the other bullet point was not addressed. Examiners noted that students did appear to know more on the New Deal than the Second World War. Those that did attempt both and were strong on one, were able to access the bottom of Level 3 accordingly.

Stronger answers were able to secure a good Level 3 with both aspects of the question discussed in detail with good variety of ways in which the American people were impacted. On the Second World War, this was often achieved by reference to the economic and social impacts the war had on America. There were some excellent answers that did this. Similarly strong knowledge of the different agencies often demonstrated impact throughout.

Level 4 responses often maintained relevant references to both aspects throughout the answer, making clear and well-supported judgements. The better answers with complex thinking were ones which signposted throughout the response the importance of the bullet point in relation to the focus of the question. Examiners saw many answers of this stature that were able to differentiate impact by grouping, the extent of change especially regarding positive and negative impact. The most popular complex arguments were made for the New Deal having the most impact. On the Second World War some were able, quite skilfully, to link the developments of the atomic bomb towards the end of the War to America's future role as a superpower which showed complex thinking.

Where students brought a judgement in at the end, the better ones were able to substantiate their argument by weighing up the nature of the impact it or both had.

Again, it is worth noting though that a summary conclusion often did not result in a Level 4 result and students would be best advised to avoid this type of concluding paragraph.

### **Mark Ranges and Award of Grades**

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.