



General Certificate of Education

History 1041

Specification

Unit HIS1M

Report on the Examination

2010 examination – June series

Further copies of this Report are available to download from the AQA Website: www.aqa.org.uk

Copyright © 2010 AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved.

COPYRIGHT

AQA retains the copyright on all its publications. However, registered centres for AQA are permitted to copy material from this booklet for their own internal use, with the following important exception: AQA cannot give permission to centres to photocopy any material that is acknowledged to a third party even for internal use within the centre.

Set and published by the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance.

Unit HIS1M

Unit 1M: USA, 1890–1945

General Comments

There were few rubric errors this year. A number of candidates only attempted one question which impacted on their overall result. It is important that candidates answer two questions rather than one to give them a reasonable opportunity to show what they can do.

There was a full range of answers on all questions. The best answers were clearly focused on the question and were analytical.

Some answers on Questions 1, 3 and 5 were of equal length with the even numbered questions which obviously carry double the marks. Candidates need to leave space between answers so that if they want to come back and extend their answer they can do so with ease. It will be helpful if candidates write clearly on the lines and do not go over on to the pink parts. Some candidates wasted time by repeatedly writing the question numbers down the side of the answers.

Some candidates still refer to ‘Historians’ or make vague assertions about ‘some historians’ or even text book writers which are not needed.

Question 1

01 This was done quite well by some candidates. They were able to produce a range of reasons which related to the 1890s. However many did not explain or develop their reasons. There was a lack of technique. It is important to stay focused on the period in this case the 1890s and then create an introduction re moving away from isolation to show they understand the question. List three explained reasons with factual support and then provide linkage and/or a conclusion prioritising the reasons. Description of events like the Spanish American War is not sufficient to get them out of Level 2.

02 Imperialism was not particularly well-understood. Few made the connection with Roosevelt and his actions over the Panama Canal. Furthermore candidates tended to ignore the 1900–1914 dates. If there is a lot of information that is irrelevant to the period it is difficult to award any higher than Level 3. The best answers stayed focused on Roosevelt and then were able to compare his actions with other Presidents including Taft and Wilson. Some candidates were confused about whether this was a question on domestic or foreign policy. Candidates are too ready to write an answer that throws in anything relating to the period 1890 to 1920 regarding big business and immigrants, which shows a lack of discrimination and wasted their time.

Question 2

03 This was a very popular question. Sometimes it was done extremely well. However too often candidates did not pick up that it was about ‘organised crime’ rather than crime in general. Also some candidates missed the word ‘increase’ in the question. Better answers realised that prohibition was very important and then linked this to profits, increased corruption, Al Capone’s influence and gang rivalry. Some tried to turn this into

a question on immigrants. This was only rewarded if it was linked to organised crime. Some candidates also wrote about the KKK which was not rewarded as organised crime. The main issue was the lack of reasons that were given. Many answers were a description of events which were not rewarded above Level 2.

- 04** There were some reasonable answers here. Candidates scored highly were they widened out the answer to balance the impact of organised crime with other impacts such as the economic boom, red scare and other events which affected society. Although a very popular question many candidates struggled to say what an impact was. Again there was description of events such as the St Valentine Day's Massacre but this was not explicitly connected to the question of impact. Also many struggled to balance by saying how little an impact there was. Some candidates were able to show there was less of an impact in some geographical areas within the USA. There were a lot of generalised assertions made which should be avoided. Not everyone was impacted nor were all American citizens in Speakeasies. Weaker answers did not seem to understand that the question related to the 1920s and wrote about the Depression era.

Question 3

- 05** This was not a popular question. There seemed to be a fair amount of confusion. Some candidates thought that the Neutrality Acts meant Lend Lease, others wrote about helping immigrants. The better answers were able to write about the clauses of the Acts and relate them to reasons for staying neutral and out of the war. The very best answers displayed good understanding of the relationship between Congress and Roosevelt. Some candidates brought in long term reasons connected to the First World War which were well-developed. Weaker answers tried to turn this into a question on the New Deal
- 06** This was a popular question and often done very well. The best answers explained how public opinion changed and why it changed. They then brought in the importance of the relationship between President and public opinion in the period 1939–1941. Further balancing factors were brought in such as the problems with Japan and the relationship between the USA and Great Britain. Some excellent answers analysed the role of Roosevelt and his concerns over Hitler. Weaker answers missed out Pearl Harbor and the very weakest wrote about the First World War and the sinking of the Lusitania. Some candidates described events and did not link to the question. A few answers wrote only about debatable assertions such as the USA went into the war to cure its economic problems. Then they tried to turn this into a question on the New Deal.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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