

## **A LEVEL**

*Examiners' report*

# **HISTORY A**

**H505**


For first teaching in 2015

## **Y216/01 Summer 2019 series**

Version 1

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## Introduction

Our examiners' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on candidates' performance in the examinations. They provide useful guidance for future candidates. The reports will include a general commentary on candidates' performance, identify technical aspects examined in the questions and highlight good performance and where performance could be improved. The reports will also explain aspects which caused difficulty and why the difficulties arose, whether through a lack of knowledge, poor examination technique, or any other identifiable and explainable reason.

Where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report. A full copy of the question paper can be downloaded from OCR.

## Paper Y216/01 series overview

Y216 is one of twenty four units for the revised A Level examination for GCE History. This unit tests an extended period of History of about one hundred years through a short answer essay and a traditional essay. The paper contains two questions, each having two parts, a short answer essay and a traditional essay and candidates have to answer both parts of one question.

To do well on the short essay question (a), candidates need to consider the significance or importance both issues, factors, individuals or events mentioned in relation to the question. Having analysed or explained both they must reach a supported judgement as to which is the most important or significant.

To do well on the traditional essay, candidates need to address the issue in the question, using detailed supporting knowledge. In order to reach the higher levels candidates will need to assess the issues they discuss and reach a supported judgement, at least in the conclusion.

<b><i>Candidates who did well on this paper generally did the following:</i></b>	<b><i>Candidates who did less well on this paper generally did the following:</i></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• gave equal consideration to the two issues in the short answer essay</li> <li>• reached a developed and supported judgement as to which issue was more significant or important</li> <li>• linked their knowledge of the issues to the focus of the question</li> <li>• in answering the essay question, discussed at least two issues in depth</li> <li>• gave supporting detail that was both accurate and relevant to the question set, not just the topic</li> <li>• reached a supported judgement about the issue in the question</li> <li>• made a series of interim judgements about the issues discussed in relation to the question.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• considered only one of the issues or discussed one in a superficial way</li> <li>• produced a judgement that was not supported and was therefore assertion or a judgement that did not follow logically from the response</li> <li>• were unable to use their knowledge to address the issue in the question</li> <li>• showed a poor understanding of the major issues relevant to the essay</li> <li>• were unable to support their answer with relevant or accurate material</li> <li>• did not focus on the precise wording of the question</li> <li>• made unsupported comments about issues which were no more than assertions.</li> </ul>

## Option overview

There was a slight majority preference for Question 1 over Question 2, though a fairly even split overall.

### Question 1 (a)

- 1 (a) Which of the following was a more significant reason for the victory of the Union in the Civil War?
- (i) The leadership of Abraham Lincoln
  - (ii) Union resources

Explain your answer with reference to both (i) and (ii).

[10]

This question was handled well by a good number of candidates and could be answered either way in terms of the relative significance of the two factors. Stronger responses were clear on Lincoln's political skill, combined with the quality of some of his appointments, the best pointing out that he was fallible at times. Most candidates were secure on the material advantages of the Union and how this played out militarily. Exemplar 1 is a good example of a strong response with thorough evaluation; a little unevenness in the judgement precludes a top mark in Level 6.

#### Exemplar 1

<p>My overall judgement is that the <del>Union</del> leadership of Abraham Lincoln was the more significant reason for the victory of the Union, as his diplomacy and skill ensured the Union resources and inherent advantages were best utilised.</p>
<p>Additionally, Lincoln's skill as a politician enabled him to work well with former rivals, including William Seward (Secretary of State), and therefore meant he faced fewer opposition enabling him to</p>

focus on the war effort. Likewise, his eloquence and ability to articulate himself effectively, as shown by the Gettysburg Address in 1863, helped to boost his popularity among the people, earning him the nickname 'Honest Abe'. Moreover, Lincoln was also well liked by the soldiers, as demonstrated by the election results of the 1864 election in which Lincoln won 78% of the soldiers' votes and 55% of the

popular vote, along with 212 of the electoral college. As such, Lincoln's sustained popularity meant he faced little opposition when trying to pass legislation or measure, except from the Copperheads. Consequently, Lincoln was able to give the Emancipation Proclamation (1862-3) and thereby shift the aim of the war, from a 'limited war' to crush secession, to a 'revolutionary' war to end slavery. Hence,

Lincoln managed to boost Northern morale by changing the aim of the war and thus strengthen the Northern advantage. In evaluation, however, it ~~is not~~ arguably the North were bound to win, regardless of the President due to their innate advantage of being pre-established. Similarly, it may just be his assassination in 1864 which has heightened his reputation and so his leadership and its role in winning the Civil War may

have been exaggerated. Moreover, Lincoln's lack of political knowledge prior to 1860 and his inexperience in military matters, left him dependent on his cabinet, e.g. Welles, Secretary of the navy. Although, to counter-evaluate, Lincoln's clever use of cabinet members and ability to elect wisely considerably benefitted his ability to lead effectively, but should also be credited to him.

Moreover, Lincoln attempted to educate himself extensively on war matters. Hence, my judgement remains that Lincoln's leadership was the most important reason for a Union victory.

Admittedly, Union resources did ease Lincoln's task. The Union's industrial capacity was ~~2~~ ten times that of the Confederacy, its number of factories were six times more and the North had twice the

length of railway at its disposal. Likewise, the majority of ship building facilities were all in the North, making it considerably easier for the Union to form a Navy. Additionally, the Northern population was 22 million compared to the Confederacy's population of 9 million, ~~as well~~ of which 4 million were slaves and so were deemed



unable to fight. Moreover, the North held the advantage of already being established, with traditions and an Army. In evaluation, however, the weaknesses of the Confederacy are arguably more important than the Union's strengths. Davis' inability to form a stable cabinet rendered his abilities to lead effectively. Likewise, the South weren't established and so lacked the traditions and patriotism of the North. Hence, more like a loosely linked

group of states than a nation. Therefore, my judgement remains that Lincoln's leadership was important.

To conclude, Lincoln's diplomacy and tact ensured the 4 border states (e.g. Maryland) didn't also secede which would have increased Southern industry by 80%. Therefore, Lincoln's ability to

effectively use the resources and maintain a degree of peace within the North, as well as unity, enabled the Union victory.

## Question 1 (b)

(b)\* How important was the Federal Government in the westward expansion of the USA 1803–c.1890? [20]

Many candidates were essentially comfortable with this question, usually setting the role of Federal Government against factors such as settler initiative and logistical developments, such as transport. The best responses paid due attention to the dates in the question which gave them a broad palette of material. Less impressive answers could be factually insecure or fail to give much of an overview by neglecting parts of the period or not always appreciating the links between factors. Exemplar 2 shows sound knowledge, a developed line of reasoning and some judgement, consistent with Level 5.

## Exemplar 2

My overall judgement is that the Federal government were the most important reason in ensuring ~~west~~ westward expansion.

The Federal government's continued incentives to travel westward, was vital in the rapid growth

of the USA and of westward expansion. For instance, the Federal government repeatedly enabled westward expansion through the acquisition of land. In 1803, the Louisiana Purchase, led to the creation of 13 new states, including Louisiana (1812) and Missouri (1821) for \$15 million. Likewise, Jefferson's support of the Lewis and Clark expedition (1803-1806) led to the discovery of trails and opened up the west for settlement by showing the possibilities of the west. Similarly, Polk's eagerness to acquire Texas and fight the Mexicans (1846-8) resulted in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848) in which 2/3 of the US territory today was acquired. Moreover, the Federal government also introduced legislation to encourage settlement, e.g. the Homestead Act (1862) in which 160 acres could be

gained for free if settled on for more than ~~5~~ 5 years. Equally, the Desert Land Act (1871) and Timber Culture Act (1873) all provided reasons to settle and made settlement easier. Likewise, the Federal government's 'removal policy' during the 1830s (Indian Removal Act 1830) under Jackson also enabled westward expansion by physically and forcibly removing the natives who were viewed as obstacles. In evaluation, many of the government's measures were unsuccessful, hence their sheer number, in encouraging migration. Moreover, while the government facilitated westward expansion, they didn't help with the rural aspects. Moreover, the ~~settlers~~ public needed to be personally motivated in order to take advantage of the measures. To counter-evaluate, the federal government's policies were crucial

in the westward expansion as they initially gave the idea and encouraged westward expansion by highlighting the opportunities in the West.

Equally, while the Federal government ~~were~~ was the most important factor other factors also led to westward expansion, such as white attitudes. The cultural factors of Manifest Destiny (coined by O'Sullivan in 1859) and divine providence, meant that Americans believed it was their god-given duty to spread democracy and Christianity across the continent. Such beliefs consequently enabled individuals to be brave enough to settle in the rural West and effectively explore unknown territory. Moreover, such attitudes were aided by the discovery of gold in California and the subsequent Gold Rush of 1848-9, leading

Many to migrate westward. This consequently meant California received U Statehood in 1850. Hence, pull factors such as the ~~ex~~ cultural concepts and appeal of wealth led to westward expansion as, while territory was acquired, Statehood could only be achieved by a settled population U of 100,000. In evaluation, these ideas were not consistent throughout the period and so U cannot explain early westward expansion, e.g. U by 1840; 40% of population U already lived west of Appalachians, but Manifest Destiny not coined until later. Likewise, such settlement only possible due to Federal U intervention and acquisition of land. Thus, my judgement that the U government was vitally ~~key~~ important to westward expansion remains.

## Question 2 (a)

- 2 (a) Which of the following was a more significant reason for the destruction of Native American societies in the years 1803–1890?
- (i) The policies of the Federal Government
  - (ii) The actions of settlers

Explain your answer with reference to both (i) and (ii).

[10]

Most candidates answered this effectively, recognising the various ways in which the Federal Government determined the fate of Native American societies, for instance by land policies, cultural policies and direct conflict. The 'actions of settlers' usually referred to the various gold rushes, as well as land acquisition, partly inspired by the Federal Government but ultimately the result of the settlers' own initiative. Less effective answers were often characterised by generalisation or factual inaccuracy. Exemplar 3, despite being a little uneven, does enough in terms of evaluation and judgement to make the bottom of Level 5.

## Exemplar 3

The policies of the Federal government was more significant in the destruction of Native American societies rather than the actions of settlers.

The policies of the federal government consisted of various treaties and Acts in order to diminish Native American influence and lifestyle through a process of Americanisation, that is which aimed to create 'civilised' people out of the Native Americans rather than let them keep their lifestyle, therefore showing the destruction of these societies. The treaty of New Echota in 1831 saw 8 million acres of land being ceded to the US / Federal government for a price of \$5 million. This decreased Native American land and thus Native American control.

and diminishing their society. Another treaty which diminished Native American society was the Treaty of Fort Wise in 1861, this treaty saw the Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes give up more lands and power ~~to~~ ~~them~~ in exchange for resources, again showing the Federal Government taking control and decreasing Native American society. Another treaty which further decreased Native American Power and society is the Medicine Lodge

treaty of 1867 as it saw Native Americans having to be further pushed away from their lands. The Indian Removal Act of 1830 also had a significant impact on the destruction of Native American Society as it is what ~~first~~ led to the Trail of tears (significantly seen in 1838-1839). President Andrew Jackson signed this act as a way of relocating and diminishing the Native American ~~to~~ society ~~to~~ so they would be pushed to the west. This led to the trail of tears which is the Oregon trail found by Lewis, Clark and Sacajewa in 1804-1806, <sup>killing 400,000 in the process</sup> which led the Native Americans west. The 1887 Dawes Act also had an impact on the destruction of Native



American Society as it broke up reservation lands and granted citizenship to Native Americans which removed their tribal identities. Therefore, the policies of the federal government was more <sup>and very</sup> significant.

The actions of settlers did have an impact on the destruction of Native American societies, but not as significant as the policies of the federal government. The 1862 wars (Sioux War, Sand Creek

Massacre and the Red Clouds war) saw a physical depreciation of Native American people. The Sioux wars was a Native American attack on settlers which was quickly ~~shortly~~ stopped due to back up <sup>by</sup> the US soldiers with settlers. The Red Clouds War was a <sup>quite</sup> ~~very~~ significant war as it saw the Native Americans fight settlers as they built on Native land along the Bozeman's trail in an attempt to dig/mine for gold, which ~~diminished~~ led to a conflict where the Native Americans became further outnumbered as US soldiers came to defend white settlers. Additionally the 1849 California Gold Rush had a big impact on the destruction of Native

American societies as it caused settlers and gold seekers to mine on Native American land as well as kill Native Americans who tried to stop them. Roughly 29,000 white settlers and gold seekers travelled to find gold which massively outnumbered mines!

In conclusion, although the actions of settlers through fighting, killing and building on Native land had an impact, the policies of the federal government was of greater significance through

the process of Americanisation to all ~~the~~ ~~main~~ ~~ways~~ ~~through~~ (which is also implemented on <sup>Native American</sup> children through the Pennsylvania Carlisle Institute which aimed to 'Americanise' and 'civilise' Native children). Additionally through treaties and Acts to significantly decrease their lands and legal rights, causing the destruction of the Native American Societies.

## Question 2 (b)

(b)\* 'The main reason the Southern states seceded from the Union in 1861 was the election of Abraham Lincoln.' How far do you agree? [20]

This question offered plenty of scope in terms of possible material and lines of reasoning. A good number of strong responses took the view that Lincoln's election was more a catalyst for long-standing differences and disputes, rather than a critical factor in its own right. The best responses were clear on Lincoln's stance on slavery and on the process that lay behind his election. A clear explanation of the position of the secessionist states and how they felt forced to take this drastic step was also important. Less successful responses adopted a more narrative, less structured approach and suffered from generalisation or factual inaccuracy. Exemplar 4 has a sense of structure and generally accurate knowledge; judgement is not that developed, indicating Level 5.

## Exemplar 4

The election of Abraham Lincoln in November 1860 (inauguration in March 1861) was an important reason for the secession of Southern states from the Union, but it was not the main reason. Rather, other political, economic, social and cultural (particularly political) factors had a more specific impact.

The election of Abraham Lincoln was significant ~~as~~ for the secession of Southern States (Louisiana, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Texas, ~~Alabama~~, Tennessee, North Carolina and Arkansas ~~prior to it~~ in 1860-61). His election caused Southerners to feel threatened ~~as~~ due to their way of life being discouraged. Although it is not

until the 31<sup>st</sup> January in 1865 that Lincoln's 13<sup>th</sup> amendment ~~app~~ ~~en~~ is enforced which bans slavery altogether, there is still the ~~common~~ common known fact that Lincoln was anti-slavery. This was a massive threat to ~~the~~ Southern way of life as they viewed believed in the idea of predestination and that it is their right to have slaves. This caused many slave ~~at~~ Southern states to secede due to this fear.

However, political factors which saw an uprising of anti-Southern 'way of life' had a bigger impact on why ~~the~~ Southern states seceded from the Union. The 1850 compromise saw ~~North~~ California become a free state, the Columbia district was no longer a slave area whilst Texas received \$10 million in compensation for land it lost to New Mexico. This compromise saw the immediate reduction in the amount of slave states which decreased the power of ~~the~~ slave states altogether. Additionally, the failure of the Compton slave constitution in 1857 had a massive impact on why the Southern slave states seceded as

the Republicans failed to pass an act forcing <sup>allowing</sup> Kansas to have slavery back in the state after the 1854 Kansas-Nebraska Act saw slavery was banned above the  $36^{\circ} 30'$  line. Additionally, slave uprisings and a growing abolitionist movement threatened Southern way of life causing the Southern states to want to secede, as seen then through Nat Turner's Slave Revolt in 1831, ~~John Brown's~~ John Brown's Raid on Harpers Ferry Arsenal in 1859 in attempt to equip ~~an army~~ and freed slaves, also 'Bleeding Sumner' which was the abolitionist Charles Sumner speaking out in 1857 against slavery and being attacked because of this, showed a growth of slave power and resentment from Northern states against Southern way of life, causing them to want to secede even more.

Economic reasons as to why Southern states wanted to secede is for example the tariff of abomination in 1828, which although was decreased in 1832 due to the Nullification Crisis, it saw high tariffs

on goods going to Southern states which under resourced the South, making it more appealing for Southern states to want to secede to have their own economy, however this economic factor is not as significant as political factors.

Looking at cultural and societal, Harriet Beecher Stowe's 1852 *Uncle Tom's Cabin* highlighted the problems with slavery which not only caused resentment by the North, but a fear in the South as their 'way of life' was under attack. Also the Second Great Awakening which began in 1790 but continued through the period showed a religious hatred and fear for Slavery and thus Southern way of life, causing Southern states to want to secede.

Overall although the election of Abraham Lincoln was important in the secession of Southern states, it was other factors, particularly political policies and slave actions that had a greater significance for Southern secession.

↳ Also the creation of the Anti-American Slavery Society that used abolitionist propaganda to threaten Southern 'way of life' (slavery (owning slaves)).

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