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Examiners' Report January 2011

GCSE History 5HA02 2C

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Introduction

This paper contains a number of very popular topics, such as prohibition, gangsterism and the consequences of the Wall St Crash. Consequently, candidates are usually familiar with the material to be used in answering the questions, but they are not always effective in their examination technique.

Questions 1a and 1b present few problems, but many candidates fail to note that in Questions 1c, 2 and to some extent 1d, the key to gaining top marks is to see the 'big picture', to give an overview or to prioritise. All of these approaches are an integral part of explanation. So in 1c candidates need to show the impact of the Wall St. Crash, not explain why it happened. In 1d they should talk about which reasons were more important; in 2a they should explain how prohibition brought change, rather than how ways were found round it.

Question 3 remains an area where there is room for improvement in many scripts and some generic advice may prove of benefit.

Four bullet points are given and candidates should explain why these (or other factors) contributed to the given outcome (in this case impact on life in the 1920s or dealing with the Great Depression). But such an approach will get candidates only to the bottom of Level 3. To score highest marks, the answer must compare the relative importance of a number of factors. In trying to do this many candidates assert that one factor is the most important because it is very important. Such an approach is flawed; comparison must involve an analysis of at least two factors.

Question 1(a)

This first question proved a nice starter for most candidates, almost all of whom were able to find a valid inference. In most cases the inference was supported from the source, though some candidates tried to provide support from their own knowledge. They should be aware that such an approach does not take an answer into Level 3. There were few examples of answers being restricted to Level 1 as a result of candidates merely copying or paraphrasing the source.

The example makes the inference that farming was hard and faced many problems. Support is then given from the source. Such an answer scores full marks

Conditions worsened in the Dust Bowl in 1935–36. 'Black Blizzards' blew harder, for longer, and came more often. In 1936 rain came – heavy rain that flooded many places and swept away much of the remaining topsoil. Hundreds of thousands of people had left to become migrant workers in other states. They travelled around, by car or on foot, to work on the seasonal crops. The Farm Security Administration set up more permanent camps after 1937.

(a) What can you learn from Source A about farming in the USA in the mid-1930s?

(4)

One thing you can learn from Source A is that farming was hard and faced many problems in the mid 1930s. For example the floods in 1936 which swept away lots of top soil would have unbured the farmers crop that he had taken time planting



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Examiner Comments

The answer begins with the inference ('farming was hard') and moves from there to quote the source to support the inference. This is excellent technique.



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Examiner Tip

Be direct in your response. We don't need to have introductions or background information. Just answer the question directly.

Question 1(b)

This was a topic which certainly seemed to appeal to the candidates. Almost everyone knew about flappers (apart from the small number who confused them with hoboes). Opinions on the flappers stretched from them being at the forefront of the fight for women's liberation to them all being women of very loose morals. Fortunately most candidates concentrated only on the flappers' life style and were well-rewarded for their extensive knowledge.

The answer is packed with information on flappers and since only two well-developed points are needed to score full marks, this did so.

In the 1920's things started to change. There was a boom and so many people had money to spend on leisure activities. Women still had the role of housewife but this changed. Some women started to wear lipstick, smoke in public and wear shorter dresses. These were called flappers.

One point about the life of a flapper was that they went out partying a lot and went dancing. This was against the normal accepted role of women which was that they stay at home and clean. This was obviously frowned upon when women were flappers.

Another point about the lifestyle of a flapper was that they started to get jobs or be trained to do jobs. The jobs they got were usually only simple jobs like secretary or jobs around that area and women were usually discriminated against. This didn't stop them so views on women changed again. They it was accepted that the man was the breadwinner but now women could be too.

A third point is that women started to smoke in public and wear shorter skirts. Women were supposed to look respectable in public and not show off. Something like smoking for a woman was considered disgusting. So when women started to smoke in public it was frowned upon but accepted and when they started to wear shorter skirts, it showed women were getting more freedom.



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Examiner Comments

Three points are developed (party and dancing, working smoking and fashion) so the mark of 6 is appropriate.



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Examiner Tip

Good technique is shown in using 'one point...' , 'another point' and 'a third point'. This clearly shows that separate points are being made.

Question 1(c)

This question was challenging for many candidates. The original intention of the examiners was for candidates to write on the effects in 1929 and not beyond. However, the subtlety of the wording 'effects in 1929' was lost on many candidates and so discretion was used to reward any effects which occurred within a short time of November 1929. In effect, this was almost all the economic effects of the Crash.

It was disappointing to see so much time devoted to the causes of the Crash. Whilst this may be something to which centres and textbooks devote significant amounts of time, candidates should make sure they don't write about causes when they are asked about effects.

A significant number of candidates did give detail of the immediate impact. Those who were able to see the 'bigger picture' and argue that the boom was over and the American dream shattered, received reward at Level 3.

The answer below is from a candidate who related the detail of the effects of the Crash, but without any significant explanation and was rewarded at Level 2.

(c) Explain the effects in 1929 of the Wall Street Crash in the USA.

(8)

The first effect of the wall street crash in the USA was many people lost their jobs and homes. People were not getting paid as the banks were becoming bankrupt and people couldn't afford to look after their homes and families. People were becoming worse off and couldn't ^{even} afford food or support their families anymore.

The second effect was ^{so} people were becoming poorer and poorer there was a rise in suicide, death and divorce rates. People in America were becoming depressed. Eventually this lead America into the big depression. People in the

People from the country were in danger and wanted to move to the city, but people in the city were annoyed as they had their own problems to deal with. People were arguing.

I think that the most important effect was that people lost their jobs and homes. This meant that people were suffering and were in danger.

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Examiner Comments

The candidate understands the impact, but the answer is rather generalised with little precise detail.

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Examiner Tip

Try to see the 'big picture' in this question. So people lost jobs, became poorer etc - what impact did this have on the USA as a whole?

Question 1(d)

Whilst most candidates knew a good amount about Sacco and Vanzetti, there were those who obviously had not met the names before! That was surprising as they are mentioned in the amplification of content in the specification.

Those candidates who were familiar with Sacco and Vanzetti were able to tell the story around their trial without difficulty and thus reach a high Level 2. Where they were able to link the events to a more general anti-immigrant, anti-communist context of intolerance, Level 3 was awarded.

The extract is a good example of a candidate understanding the wider picture, but not providing the necessary support to justify the argument put forward (though the Red Scare is mentioned.) As a result the answer stayed at Level 2.

The most important reason why these two immigrants were sentenced to death was the fact that they were immigrants. This is the most important reason because at the time people didn't like immigrants (The Red Scare), they feared communists. In addition, No matter how little evidence the police provided, they judge still would have sentenced to death.



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Examiner Comments

The answer talks about 'the most important reason', but lacks depth and does not make a comparison of this reason against others. So the suggestion is really just an assertion.

Question 2(a)

This was a topic which candidates knew well, but many allowed themselves to drift away from a consideration of how prohibition changed the lives of Americans into the exciting story of bootleg, moonshine and gangsterism. Whilst the details of Al Capone may be, in themselves, interesting, they are not indicative of how prohibition changed the lives of Americans. What the examiners wanted was an explanation of how many Americans now began to indulge in practices which were outside, if not against, the law. At the highest level candidates were arguing, quite validly, that prohibition brought a disregard for law and order which previously had not existed.

This answer is an example of a Level 2 response which really does little more than tell the story of how people found a way around prohibition.

Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross in the box.
If you change your mind, put a line through the box
and then indicate your new question with a cross .

Chosen Question Number: Question 2(a) Question 2(b)

Prohibition changed the life of many people because it made alcohol illegal but this didn't stop many people. Illegal alcohol was made and secretly imported from Canada or Mexico. ~~Many~~ Many people made moonshine and bathtub gin. ~~the~~ the importing of illegal alcohol was called bootlegging ~~of bootlegging~~ which lots of people did to get money but not as much as gangsters like ~~Al Capone~~ Al Capone who turned most of Chicago through underground bars known as "speakeasies" he supplied alcohol to most of Chicago. Even though alcohol was illegal during ^{prohibition} most people could get easily. ~~the~~

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Examiner Comments

Although the answer begins by talking about how prohibition changed the lives of Americans, it does not really provide any evidence of that change

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Examiner Tip

Can you give an 'overview' here? What difference did prohibition make to the USA in general?

Question 2(b)

This question was much less popular with candidates and proved difficult for those who answered it. The question clearly asked about the period 1936-41 and examiners were expecting to see a discussion of the Second New Deal and how it had an emphasis on helping the victims of the depression through social security, low cost housing and unemployment and sickness benefit. A discussion on the impact of World War Two in Europe, or a more robust stance against the Supreme Court were also relevant.

Unfortunately, many candidates responded to the wording 'attempts to deal with America's economic problems' by writing about the first New Deal. This could not be rewarded. Even where candidates did concentrate on the Second New Deal, they often failed to talk about change, either within the period, or between it and previous years.

The example does relate to the Second New Deal and does attempt to analyse change. It was marked at low Level 3.

Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross in the box.
If you change your mind, put a line through the box
and then indicate your new question with a cross .

Chosen Question Number: **Question 2(a)** **Question 2(b)**

~~After the failure of Roosevelt's~~
 After Roosevelt's (FDR) ~~new deal~~ First New Deal hit some obstacles, for example the Supreme Court made some of FDR's alphabet agencies^{here made} illegal because they were thought un-constitutional. Because of this FDR brought in his second New Deal, this New Deal changed many aspects of the first New Deal. Firstly to replace the illegalised AAA, FDR brought in the Soil Conservation Act, this act enabled the government to keep subsidising the farmers. Secondly the Wagner act was put in place of the NRA, because the Supreme Court had made the NRA illegal. The Wagner act protected the workers rights to join trade unions without interference from businessmen. This act was ~~not~~ unpopular with many American businessmen, as was the NRA, because

it took away the businessman's authority over the workers and enabled the workers to fight the business owners over their wages and conditions. Lastly FDR changed the state of all the alphabet agencies by rolling them up into one organisation, this helped the government to control directly what ~~the~~ the new agency did. This was a very good decision by FDR in my opinion ^{because} not only did it give direct power to the government over the welfare of the unemployed and the homeless, but it also meant that the government could manage the people's welfare in ~~an~~ a very efficient way.

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Examiner Comments

The example does relate to the Second New Deal and does attempt to analyse change. It was marked at low Level 3.

Question 3(a)

By a considerable margin this was the more popular of the two options in Question 3. The topic was well known and candidates had little difficulty providing details of hire purchase, advertising, the movies and car ownership. Where they did have difficulties was discussing the impact of those features. An answer which says that the impact of car ownership is that people could travel, is not operating at Level 3. An answer which explains the consequences of greater mobility in terms of greater knowledge, more open-mindedness, changes in society etc is operating at Level 3.

Where candidates were able to reach Level 3, they were often able to score high marks by showing a link between the factors or prioritising. This was pleasing, as, many students interpret this question not as whether one of the features was more important than others, but simply as whether it was important in itself.

The example is the final two paragraphs of an essay which has looked at the impact of hire purchase, advertising and the movies before addressing car ownership and drawing the argument together in a final paragraph. Clear links are made and the answer was marked at the bottom of Level 4.

Car ownership was also a big impact on peoples lives, owning a car meant a person could travel much more easily, and many made a lot of money through the car industry, beca^e leading to increase in wages and for many workers in the car industry and more disposable income for many individuals. It was a car industry ~~which was~~ ^{Henry} Ford which created another important aspect of the 1920s, the assembly line. This allowed more of the product to be made, cheaper products (Model T Ford costing just \$350) and higher wages. Car ownership was an important ^{impact on} aspect life changing area, but I think that the accesebility of new products is more important. Without hire purchase, many people would not have been able to buy a car.

My conclusion is that Hire purchase was the ^{greatest} ~~most~~ impact on life, however Movie making, car ownership and advertising were important too, and without these areas, perhaps hire purchase wouldn't have been introduced and perhaps this is the same for these other industries. Without Hire purchase, many products wouldn't have been available, meaning harder lifestyle, lower wages and ~~also~~ un-affordable products.

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Examiner Comments

The final paragraph shows that the candidate fully understands how reasons link together to create an outcome

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Examiner Tip

Try to avoid leaving your analysis to the final paragraph. Answers are much stronger if you can demonstrate links or prioritise as you go through the answer. Then it is easier to draw the essay together in a final paragraph.

Question 3(b)

As with Question 2b, this question proved to be a real challenge for the minority of candidates who answered it. Few of them knew much about Hoover, and often confused what he did with the work of Roosevelt. Most answers, however, gave details of Roosevelt's measures in banking, the CCC and NRA, but were not able to make an effective case for the relative importance of the measures.

Chosen Question Number: Question 3(a) Question 3(b)

Firstly, Hoover believed in Rugged Individualism and laissez faire - non interference policy. This did not bring much help. He set up small shanty towns called Hoovervilles but unemployment was rising and something had to be done. Franklin Roosevelt was elected president in 1933. Firstly, Roosevelt had three aims. Spend money, rebuild and to improve the economy. Firstly, he closed all the banks and inspected them. He then gave money to the stronger banks and told the public their money was safe in the banks again. This was called The Emergency Banking Act, EBA. Roosevelt also set up the CCC, Civilian Conservation Corps. This gave people jobs and paid people to help rebuild other areas. Secondly, Roosevelt also introduced Fireside chats. This gave people a lot of new confidence and help. Roosevelt also tried to control buying and selling on the stock market. He Thirdly, he also set up the TVA.

Tennessee Tennessee valley Authority and the
AAA Agricultural Adjustment act.

The TVA brought on more jobs
for americans. The TVA built roads
bridges and dams in tennessee this
supplied local electricity and ment flooding
was stopped in those areas. The
AAA was brought on due to farmers
over producing. The AAA said farmers
to produce less food.



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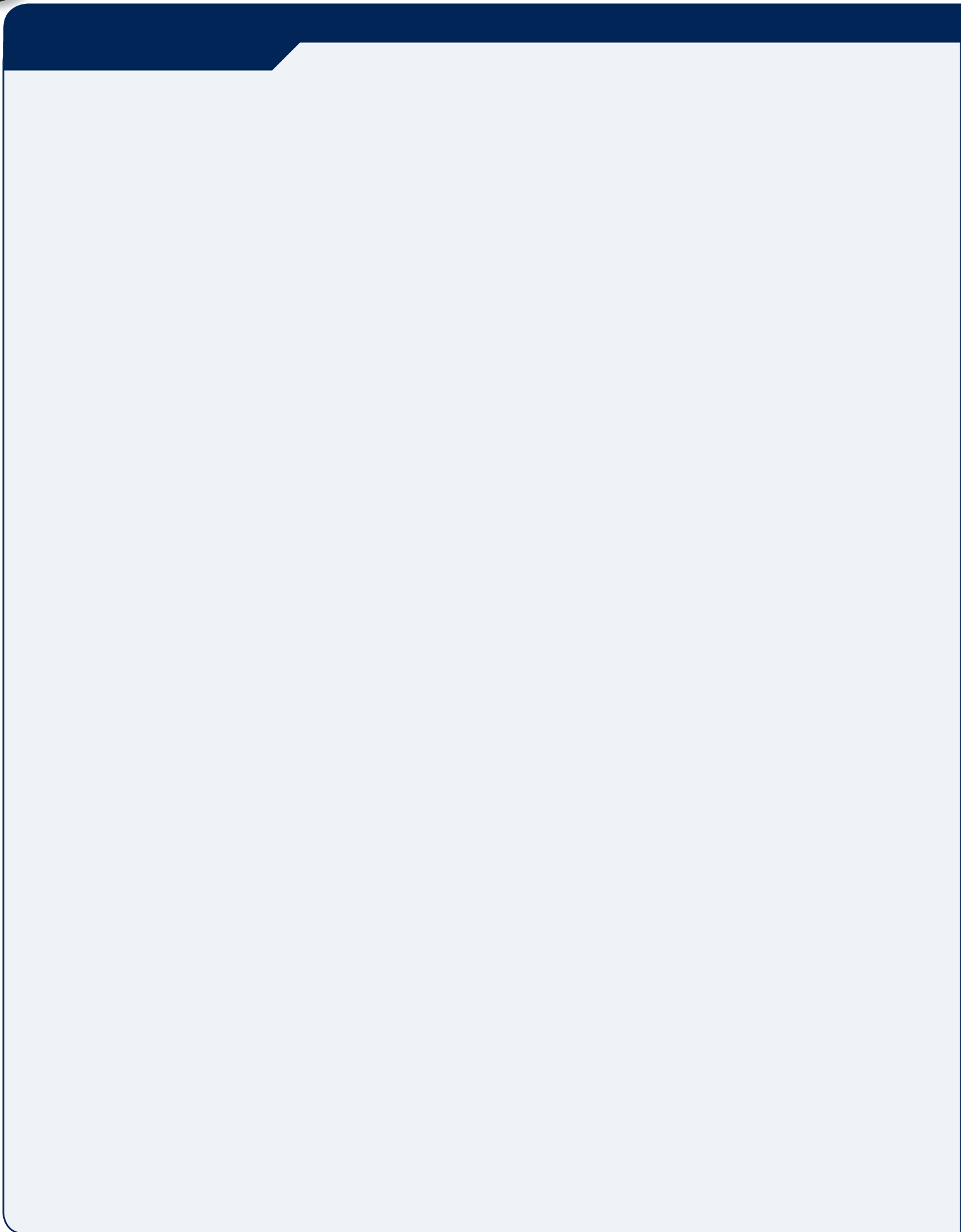
The answer is an example of a response which readily dismisses Hoover and then gives details of what Roosevelt did, largely without comment. It was marked towards the bottom end of Level 2.



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Examiner Tip

Remember that you are expected to compare the factors in this question. It is not enough just to write about them



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