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Examiners' Report

June 2011

GCSE History 5HA02 2C

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Introduction

This summer's paper contained questions on a number of popular topics (e.g. prohibition, the New Deal, women) and so all candidates found that they were able to write in some detail in their answers. Popular topics are well-known, which is to the candidates' advantage, but there is also the danger that answers become too descriptive at the expense of analysis. As detailed in the report on individual questions, there was an element of this in answers to Questions 1(c) and 1(d) in particular.

The problems candidates were having previously with Question 3 now seem to be behind us and it was particularly pleasing to see good explanations of the impact of various factors of the Wall Street Crash or opposition to the New Deal. For some candidates, however, comparative importance continues to be something they find very difficult. Examples are given in the report on Questions 3(a) and 3(b) which may help candidates to understand how this might be done.

Question 1 (a)

Candidates are now secure in their understanding of the requirements of this first question. There were few answers which address the nature, origin and purpose of the source, and only the weakest responses were limited to paraphrasing or copying the source. Some candidates still write much lengthier responses than is necessary, but under the stress of sitting a public examination, perhaps this is understandable. It is worth emphasising that only one supported inference is required to score full marks – and this can be achieved in just 3-4 lines.

The example shown was a common response, suggesting that the USA must have been wealthy and that there was more leisure time because of the growth of cinemas.

During the 1920s, nearly every town in the USA had its own cinema. By 1929, over 110 million Americans were going to the cinema each week. Most of the films shown were made in the USA. The new film industry was based in Hollywood, which became the film capital of the world. Movie companies, such as United Artists, MGM and Paramount, produced over 500 films each year.

(a) What can you learn from Source A about the USA in the 1920s?

(4)

From source A, I can infer that the USA was quite wealthy in the 1920s. I can see this because it says "nearly every town in the USA had its own cinema" and "The new film industry was based in Hollywood" which shows that the massive expense of ~~making fit~~ the cinemas was paid straight back to the USA through their booming film industry.

Secondly, I can learn that people in the USA in the 1920s had a lot of leisure time because the source says that "110 million Americans were going to the cinema each week". This shows that America was well developed as its people had spare time to spend at the cinema.

and had great labour saving devices,



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Examiner Comments

The answer begins with the inference that the USA was quite wealthy and is supported by a quote from the source. This is sufficient for full marks.



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Examiner Tip

To be successful in the examination you have to move crisply through the questions. This 'starter' is one where you can gain time for other questions. Find your inference, make it, support it with a quote and move on! If you are uncertain about the validity of your inference, make another – but remember that you need only one supported inference for full marks.

Question 1 (b)

This question was extremely popular with candidates. It seems that prohibition and its consequences is a topic known very well. There were many extensive and detailed answers to the question, which comfortably achieved full marks.

(b) Describe the key features of Prohibition in the USA in the 1920s.

(6)

~~Gangsters • Speakeasies • Moonshine • Corruption~~

The first key feature of Prohibition was the speakeasies and moonshine that were created as a result of it. Now that it was illegal to consume, alcohol buy or sell alcohol, pubs and taverns went out of business. Secret bars known as speakeasies were created where people went to illegally drink alcohol. Moonshine was made in people's basements because they couldn't buy alcohol so they had to make it themselves. This was very dangerous and people became very ill from it.

Another key feature of Prohibition was the corruption it caused in the policing and political fields. The agents who were employed to enforce the Prohibition laws were underpaid and overworked which made them very willing to accept bribes in return for not reporting a speakeasy. Some political leaders at the time, mainly in state governments, were actually members of the mafia.

The final key feature of Prohibition was the gangs and violence that emerged as a result. Gang leaders such as Al Capone were in charge of the illegal alcohol business and responsible for speakeasies and bribery. They

used intimidation and gang warfare to keep their trade going and were well known during the Prohibition.



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Examiner Comments

Three points are developed (speakeasies, corruption, gangsterism). Whilst more could be said on each, centres should note that this question is looking for two developed points, not lengthy essays.



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Examiner Tip

Don't leave it up to the examiner to find your developed points. It is good technique (as seen in the answer shown) to use terms such as 'one feature was...' and 'another feature was...'.

Question 1 (c)

Once again, this question addressed a topic which candidates knew well, but many candidates failed to reach the top level because their answers were descriptive. What examiners were looking for in response to this question was a discussion on the general impact of mass production, i.e. that the American economy boomed and that working practices changed. What many candidates did was to tell the story of Henry Ford and explain how mass production worked. Only where candidates could explain the more general impact (and perhaps that some of the impact was negative) was Level 3 reached.

(c) Explain the effects of mass production in America in the 1920s.

(8)

Mass production had both positive and negative effects on America in the 1920s; Mass production was beneficial to the everyday American, as it enabled goods to be produced quickly, making them less exclusive and ~~at~~ consequently, at a low price. People could afford to buy things considered as 'luxury goods', such as cars, radios and refrigerators. This helped the American economy and created jobs and public spending.

Mass production's effects on the USA, however weren't all positive. Mass production led to over production, as not everybody needed 3 refrigerators! This also caused a downfall in the economy towards the end of the 1920s, because people were no longer spending and creating jobs.

Mass production ^{had} created jobs; in the assembly line which enabled mass production to take place, people were needed to put things together and

create them. Overall mass production's effects on America were good and helped to increase standards of living but other factors (Tariffs and Government intervention - or lack of, for example) made mass production help the downfall of America in the late 1920s and early 1930s.



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Examiner Comments

The candidate clearly sees the wider impact of the mass production: 'this helped the American economy and created jobs and public spending'. It also sees some of the dangers, e.g. over-production. Consequently 7 marks were awarded.



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Examiner Tip

Remember that this question is about effects. It is not enough to say what happened. What did those events you have described cause to happen?

Question 1 (d)

This was a question which many candidates found challenging. Whilst they knew that buying shares was a common practice, they could not always find a number of reasons why Americans were able to buy shares in the 1920s. What most candidates argued was that Americans bought shares because it was easy to do so, as they could be bought 'on the margin'. This was a perfectly valid response. Other points made were that banks were involved in share buying and the economy was booming. So there was a general air of confidence which contributed to a context in which share buying was considered a 'good thing' and money was made available to buy the shares. Where the context of prosperity was linked to easy purchase, this too took answers into the top level.

It was a pity that some candidates wasted their time by explaining the consequence of the share buying craze and how buying 'on the margin' led to problems when prices dropped in 1929.

(d) Explain why so many Americans were able to buy shares on the Wall Street stock exchange in the 1920s. (8)

In the 1920's, the Wall Street stock market was booming. Share prices were at an all time high and people were making large profits.

One reason so many Americans were able to buy shares was because they were 'buying on the margin.' This meant that people were buying shares with money they didn't have in the hope to sell them off quickly and make a profit. Everyone had so much confidence. Even banks were buying shares with investors money as they were certain they would be able to pay the money back. Everyone thought prices would continue to rise.

Another reason was over speculation which is closely linked to the idea that everyone had a lot of confidence in the stock market and thought share prices would continue to rise like they were.

People were making large profits from shares in the 1920's meaning businesses and companies were doing very well and people had more money to invest into

buying shares. The 'booming twenties' meant people had more money to buy shares.

These reasons are linked because they all highlight how much confidence there was in the 1920's. Banks were confident, businesses and companies were confident and the government was confident and this reassured and encouraged people to invest money into shares on the Wall Street stock market.



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Examiner Comments

This answer shows good technique by using the approach 'one reason', 'another reason'. It explains how buying 'on the margin' and consumer confidence contributed and are linked, so was marked at Level 3.

Question 2 (a)

Whilst some candidates were drawn into long and detailed accounts of the Sacco-Vanzetti case, generally this question was well-answered. What was significant in the Sacco-Vanzetti case was not what happened, but what it told us about the growth of intolerance in the USA. Whilst weaker answers gave only details of the case or examples of racial discrimination, better answers explained the effects in terms of the growth of fear of communism, threats to the American way of life and steps taken to restrict immigration. In this context, the importance of the Sacco-Vanzetti case could more clearly be understood.

The extract shown has good detail on the growing fears and was followed by details of how the Sacco-Vanzetti case exemplified those fears, thus achieving a mark at 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)**

In the USA in the 1920's there was intolerant attitude towards immigrants especially those from Russia and Eastern Europe. ~~As~~ Capitalist Americans feared that Russian immigrants, (Russia became Communist in 1917) would bring communism with their communist views with them to America and try to spread communism. This fear of the spread of communism ~~or~~ ~~bolchevism~~ Bolchevism was known as the "red scare". This led to many race riots and led to many protest, that many Americans were afraid of. People in the USA had began to believe that many of the immigrants were un-patriotic meaning that they were not loyal to the "American way of life". This led to a lot of tension within many American communities. It also led to immigration quotas which limited the number of Russian and

East European immigrants. It also lead to many ~~non~~ non WASP (white Anglo-saxon Protestant) Protestants or racial minorities such as blacks and jews being accused of being communists or anarchists. In addition, ~~was~~ intolerant



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Examiner Tip

Look for the 'big picture' or 'overview'. Just detailing examples of prejudice will limit your answer to Level 2.

Question 2 (b)

The role of women in the USA in the 1920s is a topic which seems to appeal to many of the candidates, with an obvious fascination shown for changing fashions and social practices. Thus, many of the answers to this question wrote at length about how women attended speakeasies and 'danced and drank'. Such descriptions did address the change that occurred for a minority of women, but examiners were hoping that candidates would look beyond flappers. Many did, with some well-explained responses on how winning the vote, employment opportunities and changing social attitudes gave women a greater independence.

The following extract reached the bottom of Level 3 for explaining that women became more independent. It does not score more highly because much of the answer is not effectively linked to the idea of independence.

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)

• Flappers ~~Vote~~ • Hollywood

Firstly, women's lives changed in the 1920s because they became more independent. Due to the assembly lines and booming economy, companies began to employ women for the first time. This meant that they had their own money to spend. Also, they got the right to vote in the 1920s, increasing their independence further.

Secondly, the flappers changed women's lives in the 1920s. Many young women became flappers; wearing high heels, short dresses and make up. They also danced more suggestively, dated without chaperones and had sex before marriage. This carefree attitude was a result of their new found freedom. ~~Young~~ Young women's morals changed completely and their lifestyles did too. This

~~lastly, their independence and rebelliousness~~ was provoked

further by Hollywood and the cinema. Women saw the glamorous, romantic lives in the movies and wanted them too. Actresses such as Theda Bara became idols and women altered their appearances to look like the beautiful stars.

*

I think that ~~women's lives~~ the main change in women's lives in the 1920s was them getting the right to vote, because this showed that women were equal to men, and encouraged them to have fun and enjoy their free time. They had such a lot of free time, due to the labour saving devices, but they were only able to ~~buy~~ buy these due to the fact that they had jobs now.

* Lastly, women's lives changed in that their leisure time increased and improved. New electrical devices such as vacuums and washing machines saved them time on household chores so they had more time for themselves. The motor car also made it possible for them to travel to and from their leisure activities.



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Examiner Tip

Remember that to answer a question on 'changes', you must explain how things are different – not just what happened.

Question 3 (a)

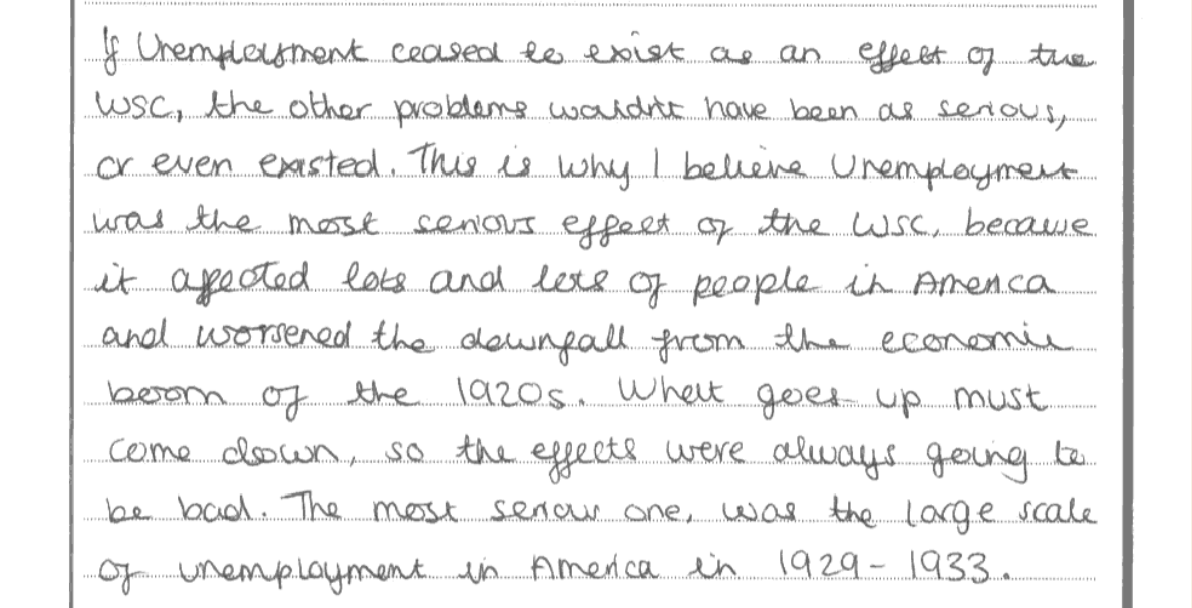
Whilst Question 3(a) proved more popular than Question 3(b), there were good responses to both questions from the majority of candidates. Perhaps the impact of the Wall Street Crash was seen as more 'mainstream' by candidates than opposition to the New Deal, but neither question seemed to cause difficulties.

As stated in the introduction, candidates seem to have mastered the technique of explaining how or why various factors contributed to the stated outcome. Where they find things more difficult is trying to prioritise between factors and to establish that one factor was more important than others (or indeed that they are all linked). What candidates sometimes end up doing is asserting that one factor was more important, but not being able to compare that factor with others to establish this.

It might perhaps be of benefit to quote from the January 2011 examiners' report on this issue. In that report centres were advised that:

To score highest marks, the answer must compare the relative importance of a number of factors. In trying to do this many candidates asserted that one factor was the most important because it was very important. Such an approach is flawed.

The example shows an approach to prioritisation and indicates how many candidates assert without providing support or explaining in sufficient depth. The candidate is arguing that unemployment was the most serious consequence of the Wall Street Crash, but does not prove this assertion.



If Unemployment ceased to exist as an effect of the WSC, the other problems wouldn't have been as serious, or even existed. This is why I believe Unemployment was the most serious effect of the WSC, because it affected lots and lots of people in America and worsened the downfall from the economic boom of the 1920s. What goes up must come down, so the effects were always going to be bad. The most serious one, was the large scale of unemployment in America in 1929-1933.

Question 3 (b)

As stated in Question 3(a), this was the less popular of the two choices, though candidates generally knew the topic well. 'Criticism from radicals such as Huey Long' was not as well-known as the other factors, though it should be noted here that top levels can still be accessed by comparing three of the four bullet points (or, indeed three or four of the candidates own factors).

The extract shows how a candidate has effectively prioritised the factors. The candidate argues effectively that the cost of the New Deal was the most important reason why people opposed Roosevelt's policies – because it affected the most people. This is an unusual, but perfectly valid approach to judging relative importance.

To conclude, I think that the main reason why some people in America opposed ~~the~~ ~~the~~ Roosevelt was because of the cost of the New Deal. This is because it affected the most people. Although radicals encouraged the opposition of Roosevelt, not that many people in America followed them. Likewise, the businessmen who felt that Roosevelt was interfering too much only made up a small proportion of the population. The Supreme Court also was not too damaging to Roosevelt's reputation as he backed down from trying to put in his own members. The cost of the New Deal, however, hurt

lots of people as they didn't see the benefits of the new laws. In 1937, when Roosevelt withdrew government spending and America fell back into depression, their concerns were verified and showed that the New Deal was more expensive than it was worth.



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Remember that you cannot prove that one factor is more important than another unless you write about both and compare them.

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