

Examiners' Report  
June 2012

GCSE History 5HA02 2C

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## Introduction

The improvement in examination technique noted in previous reports was once again apparent this year. There were very few examples of candidates adopting an incorrect approach to tackling individual questions and a particularly pleasing improvement in the responses to the essay-based Question 3's. It continues to be the case that some candidates still write 'the story' in Questions 1(c) and 1(d), instead of concentrating on effects and causes. It is evident, however, that centres have worked hard on exam technique and candidates are responding well to such teaching.

In terms of the topics covered by the questions in the exam, it is apparent that candidates were very comfortable with what might be called 'mainstream topics' and they had no difficulty in answering questions on the New Deal, advertising and the causes of the Great Depression. However, they were much more challenged in explaining farming problems in the 1920s, the measures taken to oppose Roosevelt's New Deal and the impact of recovery measures in the latter part of the 1930s. It is difficult to see quite what centres can do to alleviate these difficulties, but candidates must be aware that in a specification covering just 20 years of American history, **any** area of that specification could be the subject of a specific question and they should not rely on being able to succeed by having knowledge of only the major topics.

### **Question 1 (a)**

Most candidates were able to reach Level 3 by providing a supported inference about gangsterism in the United States. A common approach was to suggest that it was influential or corrupted US society and this could be readily supported from the source. Inferences about Al Capone were also accepted, though some candidates remained at Level 1 by paraphrasing the source, rather than making an inference e.g. 'I can learn that gangsters had armed gangs'.

An example of a candidate 'hedging his bets'. There are numerous inferences in this answer and, pleasingly, a lack of irrelevant discussion of provenance.

### The USA, 1919–41

Answer Questions 1(a) to (d), then Question 2(a) OR 2(b) and then Question 3(a) OR 3(b).

Question 1 – you must answer all parts of this question.

Study Source A.

Source A: From a history of the modern world, published in 2001.

Al Capone had 700 men armed with shotguns and sub-machine guns. He bribed police, judges and politicians in Chicago. Capone's photograph appeared on the front cover of *Time*, America's leading weekly magazine. He mixed with businessmen, politicians and movie stars. The only charge the authorities could make stick against him was tax evasion.

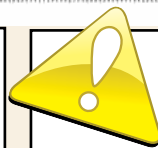
(a) What can you learn from Source A about gangsterism in the USA?

(4)  
I can learn that gangsterism corrupted the American law system in the 1920s, as shown by "he bribed police, judges and politicians". I can also learn that <sup>some</sup> gangsters were quite (in)famous, and well-known to celebrities and media, shown by "he mixed with businessmen, politicians and movie stars", and "Capone's photograph appeared on the front cover of *Time*". Gangsterism was also hard to crack down on possibly, shown by "the only charge the authorities could make stick against him was tax evasion".



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Examiner Comments

Examiners can take their pick of which supported inference to reward! The candidate has achieved full marks by the end of line 3.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

There is no need to describe the source or its provenance and certainly no need to discuss reliability. Equally, using a large amount of contextual information is unnecessary and won't be rewarded as support must come from the source.

There should be no need to use an extension sheet to answer this question.

### **Question 1 (b)**

This question proved very accessible for candidates. The majority of answers revolved around the Ku Klux Klan and the Jim Crow Laws with some detailed and informed descriptions of the problems faced by the Black or immigrant communities in the USA at the time. Some candidates extended their answer to address the type of prejudice shown in, for example, the Sacco and Vanzetti case. This was a valid approach and reward was given for such detail.

This answer shows a poor technique in that the whole response is written in one paragraph. It does, however, move from a discussion on the Ku Klux Klan by suggesting 'Another feature', so that the examiner can clearly see that two features are being discussed.

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

(6)

There were many features of racism in the USA in the 1920's. One of these was the KKK (Ku Klux Klan); the KKK was an organisation set up by the people who discriminated against anyone who wasn't a WASP (White Anglo Saxon Protestant). The hate gang would wear white sheets over their heads as to protect their identity, although almost every town would be familiar to contain a couple of members and everyone almost everyone knew who they were, and were ~~the~~ mostly ~~is~~ situated in the South. The KKK would beat up the people they were discriminating against and usually lynch them as well (~~an~~ a legal hanging, mostly done by mobs). It was hard to stop the KKK because most of the time, the majority of the countries' authority figures would be members as well. Another feature was the quality of life most black people had in the USA in the 1920's; All public facilities such as toilets, schools, beaches, benches, buses were all separate for the black and white people and the black people's facilities

were always worse than the white people's.



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Comments**

The response covers two features which are supported. There is good information on the Ku Klux Klan and some support for general discrimination in the use of public facilities. This answer achieves a high Level 2.



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Tip**

Candidates need to support two statements to reach a high mark in Level 2. They should, therefore, look to write two separate paragraphs showing how they have organised their answer into separate features

### **Question 1 (c)**

Advertising is obviously a topic which candidates know well, though it was disappointing to read about its use on television from a minority of candidates. Most candidates presented a discussion of the Ford Motor Company and the philosophy of 'keeping up with the Joneses' into their answer to show how advertising created a demand for the goods being produced in the USA at the time. There were many such responses which were rewarded at Level 2. Where candidates could make links between advertising, mass production and hire purchase to demonstrate that advertising played a role in changing the US into a commercial world leader, Level 3 could be awarded.

This answer goes straight into the question with no time wasted on unnecessary introductions. There is an understanding of the immediate impact and some evidence of the understanding of the 'Big picture'



(c) Explain the effects of advertising on the USA in the 1920s.

(8)

Advertising The use of advertising skyrocketed during the 1920's. Before the 1920's many people had to go to the local store in order to see what was available. However, soon adverts could be heard on the radio, seen on bill boards and read in magazines. All of this was due to the ~~new~~ values of consumerism.

Advertising brought products to the nation, which massively increased the sales of many products, such as ~~new~~ radios, cars and refrigerators. This contributed to the boom cycle. With more products being sold, more people could be employed, more products could be made and ~~sales~~ sales increased. This boosted the US economy and employed many people who previously had no jobs.

Advertising also led to the massive increase in consumer values. People were constantly ~~for~~ being told to buy things and now more than ever, they were ~~for~~ buying things, that they did not need, by 1926, over 4 million

people had a radio. Quickly, car ownership became much more common and this led to a new freedom for americans.

Advertising created sales for businesses all over the USA. The massive ~~sales~~ sales led to more employment and enhanced the economy. Advertising ~~also~~ linked to the ideals of consumerism and ~~was~~ the new levels of employment.



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Comments**

The answer shows how an increase in ownership of consumer goods was brought about by advertising (e.g. radios, cars and refrigerators), but it also tries to show a change in the USA in general. Comments such as 'massive increase in consumer values' and 'advertising linked to the ideals of consumerism' take the answer into Level 3. However, further explanation would be needed for this answer to score highly in that Level.



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Tip**

Candidates need to avoid wasting time by describing the issue itself, rather than its impact. A good way to start an answer to this type of question is to say 'One effect of ..... was'

### **Question 1 (d)**

Many candidates were much less secure in answering this question. Examiners saw a lot of answers which centred on 'telling the story' of how farming went into decline after the First World War. That was true and such an approach usually involved a discussion of the reason for this being drop in demand. A lot of answers, however, then moved into a discussion on the impact of the Depression and were clearly talking about the 1930s. They often reinforced this with detail of problems created by the Dust Bowls of the 1930s, again outside the time framework of the question.

Candidates who did answer well explained the impact of falling production on farmers who had taken out loans to expand during the First World War, the impact of Prohibition and decreasing decline brought about by the advent of the motor car.

Generally, however, this was not a high scoring question.

This answer generally comments on one area (the impact of the end of the war), although it does also look at why farm workers had a difficult time.

(d) Explain why the 1920s was a difficult time for some farmers and farm workers in the USA.

(8)

During 1919, many farmers had still prospered from the effects of WWI. The European market still needed American goods, and this meant that American farmers could be sure to sell anything they made. However, when the European countries recovered, during the 1920's, they no longer needed American goods. Demand dropped and farmers found themselves with goods they could not sell. Prices dropped, the price of the wheat bushel fell from over ~~the~~ \$1.30 to less than nearly 30 cents in this period.

Farmers had ~~ought~~ bought new land and machines with loans from banks, as they were sure they could make it back. They couldn't, when the European countries recovered, they could not pay the loans and banks repossessed what the farmers had bought.

Many farm workers also suffered. The mechanisation of farms led to many farm workers being fired, and those who were not saw their wages plummet.

In 1919 the average wage for a farm worker was \$13.50, in 1925 it was only \$11.50 and by 1930 it had dropped to just \$7.50.

The recovery of Europe led to the drop in prices and profits for farms, and in turn the repossession of farmers' land and equipment. It also led to the wages of farmers dropping enormously.



### ResultsPlus

#### Examiner Comments

Two reasons are given. The answer shows that mechanisation made life harder for farm workers and this alone would be rewarded at Level 2. The discussion on the impact of the war is more analytical and better explained, and meant that the response reached Level 3.



### ResultsPlus

#### Examiner Tip

It is a good idea on questions about causation to try to prioritise between the causes. A consideration of whether one cause was more important than others will help you to analyse why a particular cause was important and you will be more likely to score high marks for in-depth explanation

## **Question 2 (a)**

Most candidates at some stage in their studies have written an essay on why there was opposition to Roosevelt's New Deal. It was *that* essay which many of them tried to reproduce here. However, candidates must be aware that the Question 2 alternatives are not causation questions, but instead are questions about process or change. So this question did not want to know why people opposed the New Deal, but what they actually *did* to oppose it. Fortunately, the line between reasons and actions is a narrow one and many answers did talk of action, though sometimes 'en passant'. The best answers were able to explain how opponents took Roosevelt to the Supreme Court, or declared some of his measures unconstitutional, and campaigned to have greater government involvement (Huey Long) or less government involvement (the Republicans)

This answer shows how candidates can confuse reasons for opposition to steps taken. After a paragraph on why the Republicans opposed the measures (not shown) the candidate explains why radicals disliked it. However the next paragraph does then consider actual steps taken.

Radicalists were also opposing Roosevelt's

New Deal as they believed he was not doing enough to help the USA and he was regarded as a 'do-nothing president'.

Huey Long was a radicalist that strongly disagreed with Roosevelt's New Deal. ~~the~~ the radicalists were also very significant.

However, the most significant event that took place against Roosevelt was the Supreme Court. A case that was named 'the sick chicken case' was brought to the Supreme Court. A poultry company that broke the rules of the NRA sold diseased chicken for human consumption and was brought to the Supreme Court to try and oppose Roosevelt's New Deal. The opposition believed Roosevelt's Alphabet agencies were 'unconstitutional' and that they were not helping the USA. Roosevelt



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

The most significant part of this answer is that on the decision to take Roosevelt to the Supreme Court. There is supporting detail and the answer was marked at high Level 2



### ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Candidates must remember that this type of question is not about reasons, but instead will ask them to demonstrate their knowledge of actions or changes.

## **Question 2 (b)**

In responding to this question many candidates had difficulty organising their knowledge into a coherent and sustained answer. What examiners were hoping to see was an assessment of the USA's economic position in 1935 (showing that the New Deal had had a significant impact on the economy, but that unemployment was beginning to rise), a discussion on the impact on the economy of the Second New Deal and how the outbreak of war in Europe provided a stimulus to the American economy which finally brought the country out of the Depression. It was disappointing to note that so few candidates had knowledge of the Second New Deal and that most chose to ignore the impact of war. Perhaps because it was what they knew best, a minority chose to write about Roosevelt's First New Deal measures, for which they usually could not be rewarded.

Where candidates were able to explain the change in the economy from a somewhat precarious position in 1935 to one of security in 1941 Level 3 was awarded. Such answers, however, were rare.

## **Question 3 (a)**

This question was the less popular of the two alternatives in Question 3, though those who chose to answer it generally found few problems. Candidates are well-versed on the causes of the collapse of the economy in the USA at this time and there was much informed discussion on over-production, speculation by individuals and banks and the over-extension of credit. Perhaps the events of the last few years in the UK have helped candidates to gain an understanding of economic matters. Less well discussed was the impact of loss of confidence. Most candidates understood how this reduced spending, but few could explain how matters on Wall St. helped to reinforce a growing belief amongst financiers and industrialists that the time for significant investment had now passed.

As is usually the case, the very best answers were able to show that it is difficult to prioritise the reasons in isolation as they all impact on each other.

## **Question 3 (b)**

This question proved very much to the liking of the candidates. Many of them were obviously well-prepared to answer on the New Deal measures and there were long and informed discussions on the CCC, AAA and TVA (though much less so the Social Security Act). What cost some candidates marks was that in an enthusiasm to show what they knew about the topic they sometimes forgot to consider how effective it was dealing with the problems of the Depression. Such answers often touched upon an explanation because in giving detail they mentioned impact, but the lack of explanation meant that only a top Level 2 mark could be awarded. However, where candidates did explain the degree of effectiveness, Level 3 was awarded. Where such analysis led to prioritisation (often in terms of geographical spread, longevity or different aspects of the impact of the Depression) top Level 3 or Level 4 marks were awarded.



The example represents a common approach to this question with each feature discussed and its impact evaluated before an attempt at prioritisation is made in the final paragraph. (Not all features are shown).

The Tennessee valley Authority was alot more effective than both the CCC and AAA as it dealt with flooding from the Tennessee river and also the dust bowl which was caused by lack of irrigation of the land causing it to dry out. The TVA's aims were to stop the flooding building a series of dams as well as generating electricity by Hydro-electric power. In order to build these dams <sup>it</sup> meant the government had to employ a large workforce therefore causing unemployment levels to fall. This was probably one of Roosevelt's most effective measures to deal with the great depression as it caused unemployment to fall and also helped farmers.

The social security act was also an effective measure to deal with the great depression as it tried to help the people secure their money. One thing Roosevelt did was to solve the banking crisis by closing all banks during the crisis and investigating how financially secure ones there were then reopening only these so the people would no their money was safe and the crisis was over. It was things like dealing with <sup>problems that</sup> ~~crisis that~~ rose up that gave the general public confidence

is the government making this a successful measure.

Overall I think the TVA was the most effective measure taken on by Roosevelt as it tackled more than 1 problem helping give jobs back to people as well as helping the farming industry and it was agencies like the TVA that helped the USA to recover over the coming years.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

The candidate has explained the effectiveness of each measure in the main body of the essay and clearly reached Level 3. There is an attempt to prioritise but unfortunately the analysis is linked to the effectiveness of the individual measures rather than a comparison between them (i.e. 'The CCC was more effective than the AAA because the CCC's impact was... whereas the AAA had a lesser impact because...')

The answer therefore scored at Level 3 - 11 marks



### ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Candidates must compare factors in order to prioritise, not just say 'this is the most important because it was very important'.

## Paper Summary

The following notes may be helpful to centres in preparation for future exam series:

- The improvement in answers to Question 3 continues, but candidates still need to keep working on how to prioritise factors.
- Candidates must be sure to explain effects 1(c) or causes 1(d), rather than 'telling the story'.
- Candidates should pay particular attention to the dates in questions to avoid producing irrelevant material.
- In a specification covering just 20 years, it is important that candidates prepare themselves for questions on all aspects of the specification.

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