

# Examiners' Report

## June 2012

### GCSE History 5HB02 2B

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## **Introduction**

This was the sixth examination of this unit. At the high end there were some outstanding examples of student work. These responses showed high levels of analysis and were supported with accurate, detailed and relevant historical knowledge. The responses were sharply focused on the set question.

As this is the sixth examination paper (as well as there being two specimen papers), it is obvious that many students will have used past examination papers. This is clearly a valuable teaching and learning activity. However, teachers and students might note that it was more apparent in this examination than before that many students were trying to "fit" a learnt response to questions on this particular paper. This will invariably deflate the student's overall score.

It was pleasing to see very few blank pages and few rubric offences on questions 5 and 6 showing that in the vast majority of cases the entire specification is being taught and learnt.

## Question 1

The majority of students were able to make at least one valid inference which was then explicitly supported from the source. Typically students focused on the source showing the nomadic lifestyle of Plains Indians as proven by the travois and the limited possessions. Some also acknowledged the weapons suggesting that they were hunters and that the Plains were sometimes dangerous. Students were confident in their understanding of the source itself which was seldom misinterpreted. Low scoring students lapsed into describing their own knowledge of the Plains' Indian lifestyle with no reference at all to the source. The occasional answer focused on issues such as the provenance, value or reliability of the source.

1 What can you learn from Source A about the lives of Plains Indians?

(4)

Source A can tell us about the lives of Plains Indians. ~~and that~~ For example, how they had a nomadic lifestyle. In the picture, they are moving their possessions from one place to another. It seems like quite a difficult journey especially during when horses had not yet been introduced to them.  
Also,



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**Examiner Comments**

This response was awarded Level 2, 4 marks.  
It makes a valid inference which is then clearly supported from the source provided.

## Question 2

For the Manifest Destiny option, Level 3 candidates offered a clear definition of Manifest Destiny and linked this explicitly to why it encouraged people to move West. However, there were far fewer candidates who were able to link explicitly the belief in Manifest Destiny to why people moved West.

These answers also explained how US government acts led to the fulfilment of Manifest Destiny.

Level 2 answers were generally descriptions of Manifest Destiny but without linking the concept to how it encouraged movement West.

For the Economic Depression option, Level 3 answers gave specific and accurate knowledge with details on the banking crisis and the fall in wheat prices; whereas Level 2 answers were more general comments on economic depressions, such as people losing jobs or needing more money. Some candidates began to turn it into a question solely on the Californian Gold rush or reasons for the Mormons moving West.

Level 1 responses were often simple comments on why people moved West without reference at all to either of the options in the set question.

2 The boxes below show two reasons for migrating West.

Choose **one** and explain why it encouraged people to migrate West.

(9)

Belief in Manifest Destiny

Economic depression in the East

The Economic depression in the East was a major reason why people would migrate West

~~because~~ it encouraged people to move West because the job opportunity was lost whereas in the West they could start again and generate money.

It encouraged people to move West also because many of the major banks collapsed resulting in people losing their life savings.

The West offered jobs so this was a 'pull' factor of heading West.

The economic depression also resulted in the loss of cattle and crops as they could not afford to keep them or feed them.

The land on the west was fertile so this already gave them an advantage of wanting to head west.

Due to many people losing their money,

they couldn't afford to keep their land.

This encouraged them to head west as the land was being sold cheaply.

All these reasons are due to the economic depression in the East.



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**Examiner Comments**

This response is typical of Level 2 and was awarded 5 marks. It is a basic description and does not have sufficient detail for Level 3.

### Question 3

Level 3 answers offered and supported a range of reasons to explain the links between the rapid development of mining towns and problems of law and order, such as vigilantism, the mix of different nationalities, claim-jumping, saloons, single men and the remoteness of the mining towns.

Level 2 answers tended to describe life in mining towns or described problems of law and order without any explicit links being made to the set question.

Level 1 answers were general comments that were often a simple addition to one of the points provided in the stimulus material. The occasional student showed confusion between mining towns and cow towns.

Discoveries of gold lead to many problems of law and order in mining towns in the American West. People of many different nationalities flooded into remote areas where gold was discovered. This meant that order was extremely hard to be restored as many people were in the same area at the same time. The aspect of law was also hard to be kept under control because people from different nationalities had flooded in together, and it was against the law to "mix" with people who are not the same nationality as you. Claims had to be registered with the District Recorder, meaning that law and order would have faced problems due to the discovery of gold. Saloons where people dug for gold, were an important part of life in mining towns.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

This is an example of a Level 1 response and was awarded 2 marks. The vast majority of the answer is from the stimulus material provided. The only point to credit is the statement about many people in the same area.

## Question 4

Level 3 responses were specific about how the use of reservations' policy drastically altered the Plains Indians' traditional way of life. These answers were specific to the date frame given in the question and were aware that US government policy intensified during this period. Many recalled the Battle of Little Big Horn and the Battle of Wounded Knee as being significant events within the dates 1876-90. These responses showed specific understanding such as the impact of the Dawes Act and linked it to the undermining of tribal chiefs and the tribal structure. Many also discussed the impact that boarding schools would have had on the children's relationship with their parents and the dying out of Indian traditions.

Many Level 2 answers were a combination of descriptions of life on reservations, lengthy accounts on the buffalo dying out, or how the Plains Indians could no longer live a nomadic lifestyle.

Level 1 answers were generally simple statements added to one or more of the bullet points provided.

Life on the reservations was difficult for the Plains <sup>Indians</sup> in the year 1876-90 for many reasons. The first being the Plains Indians were a nomadic group which meant they had a life of continual wandering, so life became extremely difficult for them on reservations as they were being enclosed and trapped this meant they could not hunt for buffalo. And the Plains Indians ~~lives~~ lives revolved around buffalo, they got their clothes, shelters and food from buffalo so life on the reservation was difficult for the Plains Indians as they ~~were~~ it was extremely hard to hunt buffalo which of course they couldn't live ~~whi~~ without. People would also kill buffalo for fun, the US army killed ~~most~~ nearly every buffalo so the Indians would die as they knew how important they were to the Plain Indians. Also life on reservations was difficult for the Plains Indians in the year 1876-90 because when trapped in the reservations it was easy for the US army to attack them, which they did. They killed of thousands of Indians from attacks on reservations and because of lack of food and starvation were weak and unable to fight. Also the US army would take children while attacking the reservation as families felt upset, sad and grew weak and tired of continuing the fight. By 1887 over 2,000 Indian children



were taken and put in boarding schools. Furthermore life was made difficult for the Plains Indians in the years 1876-90 by reservation because when they couldn't hunt the buffalo the US government appointed agents to look after them the reservation. They would supply Indians with food, however they were ~~deceitful~~ deceitful and gave poor quality food to the Indians. This made life difficult for the Plains Indians as they were becoming weak, hungry and starving and had no food. Life was made difficult for the Plains Indians in the years 1876-90 for many reasons their inability to hunt buffalo, lack of buffalo, US government attacks, and deceitful agents all of these were factors into making the Plains Indians' lives extremely difficult on reservations.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

This response is high Level 3. It focuses on the set question and is supported with specific and accurate details.

## Question 5 (a)

Level 3 answers often used specific details of the Donner party as an example of poor organisation contrasted with Brigham Young to show how good organisation of wagon trains helped in the journey west.

Students in Level 2 often described the problems faced by wagon trains such as terrain, weather, attacks from Indians and problems of supplies but then failed to explain any attempts or solutions to the various problems faced. Some failed to understand the question at all and used the word 'train' to write about transcontinental railroads. Some wrote about other issues such as problems in construction, the transport of beef using the railroad, whilst others referred to cowboys and cattlemen.

## Question 5 (b)

Level 4 answers offered analysis of the proposition and reached a valid judgement on the factors which contributed towards conflict such as broken treaties, the role of the US government in general, or discoveries of gold.

Level 3 answers tended to explain why land was such an issue but did not go far into a consideration of other factors. Most of these answers gave detailed explanations of the significance of the Fort Laramie Treaties and the importance of the Black Hills.

Level 2 answers generally described differences between the cultures as well as general descriptions of the different views held on land.

At Level 1 most responses were a brief addition to one or more of the bullet points provided. There was also the occasional misunderstanding of the discovery of gold in the Black Hills with California; and there were some students who turned the entire question into one on discoveries of gold in general.

(a) The journey West provided a lot of problems such as attacks from Indians, harsh weather, rough terrain (rivers etc) and mountain ranges to cross. One example of wagon trains overcoming these problems was the Stevens party. They were very efficient in the way they ~~were~~ moved west, they had no mini-groups that they would travel in. They packed a lot of water, and travelled with hunters and mountain men. Every single person travelling with the Stevens party arrived in the West successfully, showing that organised wagon trains helped to overcome the problems journeying west West. Another example to show how organised wagon trains were helpful is the Mormons when they were led by Brigham Young. When they left the ~~to~~ East after being rejected from most of the major states/cities, he ~~to~~ planned

planned the trip carefully, ensuring that each wagon ~~to~~ train had a thought-out route and a clear task. ~~This made sure that~~ he made sure that the well-organised wagon trains could overcome all the problems of travelling west.

Finally, wagon ~~to~~ trains were organised so that they left at the right time of year. This meant they could overcome the seasons that were difficult in the plains. Organised wagon ~~to~~ trains would leave in the spring so

((a) continued) that 6 months later, they would arrive at their destination, having to make the journey over the summer. Migrants/settlers did not want to travel through the winter as winter on the plains was ~~proceeding~~ cold. The Donner party ~~did~~ not have an organised wagon trail, which ~~lead~~ <sup>was</sup> to them being trapped in the snow at the foothills of the Sierra Nevada. ~~This~~ This shows how they weren't able to overcome the problems of journeying ~~to~~ west due to an un-organised wagon ~~to~~ train.

(b) I think that one reason why there was so much conflict between the Indians and white Americans was their different ~~attitudes~~ attitudes towards land, but I do believe there were other factors as well.

Land did cause problems between the Indians and the Whites because their beliefs were so different, for example the Indians believed that the land had a spirit and they didn't want to use it but the Whites exploited the plains for their resources such as timber and gold. For example

The government kept on making treaties with the Indians but then kept to broke them like the both the Fort Laramie treaties and the permanent Indian frontier. When the government broke the treaties, the Indians attacked them and that lead to conflict.

Another reason that land caused conflict was because of the discovery of gold in the black hills in 1874. Unfortunately, the Indians claimed ownership of the hills due to the Fort Laramie treaty of 1851, John boyemen plotted a trail to the gold straight through the Indian land. When miners followed the trail, they were attacked by the Indians. This lead to ~~the~~ Red Cloud's war, and therefore, ~~offid~~ attitudes over land lead to conflict.

((b) continued) However, I do think that there were other things that contributed to conflict between the whites and the Indians such as religion. The two groups of people had very different beliefs, the Indians believed that the land should be conserved and that everything had a spirit but the whites believed in Christianity. This lead to conflict when the Indians were forced into reservations and made to follow Christianity. When the ghost dance came about, the whites did not like it and used violence to stop the Indians and this lead to conflict.

The whites and the Indians also conflicted more because of their ~~for~~ ideas about warfare. On one hand, the Indians saw it as a sport, and when they defeated an enemy, they would seal scalp him so they would be forced to roam the plains as a spirit forever. On the other hand, only white American soldiers fought the

battles for the whites and the citizens fought out of it. When the white public heard the news of the death of General Custer after the Battle of Little Bighorn, they were disgusted at the behaviour of the Indians and that made them want to destroy their lifestyle, thus, causing conflict.

Overall I believe that the land was the main reason for conflict because it caused so many wars & deaths. Disagreements and control over the land lead to

((b) continued) conflict every time, because the white Americans had such different opinions to the Indians.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

Part (a) was awarded full marks. The response gives three clear examples of specific groups. The details are accurate and relevant to the focus of the set question. Part (b) was awarded mid Level 4. It is a sustained response but the final judgement could show more evaluation for the full 16 marks.

## Question 6 (a)

Level 3 answers focused clearly on a range of problems of constructing the railroads and showed specific and accurate knowledge on issues such as the distances involved, the weather, terrain, the use of explosives, conflict with the Indians, labour relations and the poor working conditions.

Level 2 answers were often a description of the building of the railroads but lacked focus on how issues such as the terrain or the weather impacted on construction. Other answers had misread the question and instead wrote about the problems caused by the coming of the railroads or how the railroads overcame problems of living in the American West.

Level 1 answers were general comments that could have applied to the building of almost anything at any time such as "it was a long way to go" or "it was expensive."

## Question 6 (b)

Level 4 responses maintained a sustained focus on the question and reached a clear judgement about the extent to which the government was a factor in the improvements to homesteaders' lives in the 1870s and 1880s. They used language such as "to a greater extent" and phrases such as "more/less important because....." Most students argued that the government was an important factor but that it needed to be linked to other factors such as technology or new farming methods.

Some students were able to single out those improvements which were due to the inventiveness, determination and resilience of the homesteaders and had relatively little to do with government.

Level 3 answers often had an argument that was not sustained throughout the response or which suddenly changed midway.

Level 2 answers normally described one factor or gave lengthy narrative accounts or descriptions of homesteaders' lives which often fell outside the date frame of the question.

Level 1 responses were invariably a comment about, or added to, one or two of the bullet points provided.

(a) There were problems with constructing railroads on the Great Plains for various reasons. One of these reasons was the terrain. The difficult terrain and long distance caused the making of the railroads take a long ~~time~~ time.

There was also an issue with weather. The Great Plains had various weather conditions sometimes there would be drought and famine other times ~~it would be~~ there could be snowstorms. These conditions would have been difficult to work ~~it~~ and <sup>could</sup> cause ~~and~~ the railroad workers to fall ill. They would therefore need places to stay and time to recover.

The railroads were built from both ends of the line. This would cause the problem of getting the workers to the Great Plains (and the end of the line) in the first place.

(a) continued Finding workers was also difficult but many immigrants from China and Ireland were brought in to help with construction. However more workers also meant more issues with supporting them in extreme weather (e.g. getting food during a famine).

(b) Plan -

- | Government                     | Other                                  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| - Timber + Culture Act         | - Wind pumps, barbed wire, dry farming |
| - Reservations - Stop conflict | - Turkey <del>and</del> red wheat      |
| - Railroads -                  |  |

The role of the government was not the most important reason for the improvements ~~to the~~ improvements to the homesteaders' lives in the 1880's and 1870's. Technology <sup>and the railroads</sup> seemed to be the most important factors.

The government did aid the homesteaders ~~after~~ through the Timber and Culture Act. This Act was passed so that the homesteaders would have more land to farm on as 160 acres (as offered by the Homesteader Act) was not enough to earn a living off. Therefore the Timber and Culture Act offered a further 160 acres. The reservations also managed to stop ~~the~~ some the conflict faced between homesteaders and



((b) continued) Plains Indians. The Plains Indians would attack ~~the~~ <sup>them</sup> ~~them~~ as the homesteaders took up their hunting land but the government found a way to reduce these attacks through reservations.

The railroads allowed new technology to be introduced to the Plains. Homesteaders had the problem of getting water but the introduction of the wind pump changed this. They also had an issue with their animals wandering off but this could be prevented using barbed wire. The railroads also allowed communities to build up which helped prevent the issue of loneliness. ~~the~~ The railroads also allowed new belongings to be brought (as before homesteaders always had to make their own belongings). It also allowed shops ~~and~~ <sup>and</sup> services (e.g. hospitals) to come.

There were other developments that improved the ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> lives of homesteaders such as the introduction of dry

((b) continued) farming which made farming easier with the hard soil. Turkey Red wheat also began to be used as it grew well on the Plains.

Although there were those improvements nothing could improve the extreme weather.

Overall it seems that the railroads and technology were the most important factors for improving the lives of homesteaders in the 1870s and 1880s. This is because, although the government did come up with some solutions such as the Timber and Culture Act, the railroads allowed many solutions (e.g. possessions) to get to the homesteaders including new technology that could have saved lives (e.g. wind pumps saved people in droughts).



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**Examiner Comments**

Part (a) deals with various problems of constructing the railroads. The issues of climate and workers are dealt with strongly. The response was awarded mid Level 3.

Part (b) was awarded mid Level 4. It has a sustained focus on the role of the government weighed up against other factors. The argument is sustained throughout the answer.

## Paper Summary

There was clearly outstanding performance by some students who gave impressive analytical responses with well-selected and very accurate subject knowledge.

Both teachers and students should be careful of not producing pre-prepared answers to questions which may require **similar** content to previous examination questions but have a **different** focus. Students' responses need to recognise the thrust of the set question to reach the higher marks. Students should also make sure that they have a firm grasp of the chronology to ensure that the material they offer is within any date frame set in particular questions.

## **Grade Boundaries**

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