

ELVIS PRESLEY COURSEWORK ASSIGNMENTS

GCSE HISTORY COURSEWORK ASSIGNMENTS

Teacher Information

Introduction:

These assignments comprise sources, questions and mark schemes which will enable your pupils to fulfil the coursework requirements in history for Edexcel Foundation specifications for first examination in summer 2003. You may use these assignments as they stand. They have been designed to assess the full range of grades targeted by the syllabus (Grades G-A*). Assistance may be given in class to aid the comprehension of the sources.

You may also adapt these assignments if wished by:

- providing additional or replacement sources
- providing additional or replacement questions.

However, if you wish to make changes you should submit these to the Edexcel Foundation for approval to ensure that revised sources or questions give candidates appropriate opportunity to meet the targets specified at the appropriate level.

Management of the assignment:

The assignment has been designed to accommodate some flexibility of classroom practice. The following points should be borne in mind:

- Although all the questions *may* be tackled as part of a single task, this is not necessary. The timing of individual questions within an assignment may be staggered over a period of time and integrated into the programme of study.
- Candidates may use the sources provided in the pack as part of their preparation for Assignment 1 but this is not a requirement.
- Your candidates should draw upon their contextual knowledge when using the sources for Assignment 2. The historical content listed below should be familiar to candidates before they attempt to answer the questions.

Elvis Presley and Rock and Roll

This assignment should arise from a teaching programme designed to occupy approximately half a term. Before candidates begin this assignment they should have knowledge of:

- The impact of the Second World War on US society
- Youth culture: TV, popular music and advertising
- Eisenhower and Kennedy: consolidation and ‘new frontiers’
- The changing role and status of men and women.

Introduction

In the 1950s the youth of the USA discovered ‘rock and roll’. This was a new type of music which spread across the USA and Europe. The music had a strong dance beat and electric guitar. Many adults hated the new music and young people would claim it belonged entirely to them. Rock and roll was a mixture of white ‘country and western’ and black ‘rhythm and blues’. Many parents did not like the fact that ‘black’ blues music was often about what they considered to be immoral behaviour. The singer who best represented this new development in popular music was Elvis Presley. His thrusting hips and tight trousers horrified parents and delighted teenagers. Some TV companies would only film Presley from the waist up.

In this assignment you will investigate Elvis Presley’s impact on US society in the 1950s.

SOURCE A: from an article in '*Billboard*', a US music magazine on 3 March 1956

A WINNER! PRESLEY HOT AS \$1 PISTOL

The hottest artist on the RCA Victor label this week has been none other than the amazing country warbler, Elvis Presley.

Presley has six hit singles in the company's hit list of top-25 best sellers. The coupling of 'Heartbreak Hotel' and 'I Was The One' is the label's number two best seller, right behind Perry Como's 'Juke Box Baby'.

SOURCE B: Extracts from newspaper articles describing Elvis Presley's appearance on the Milton Berle Show on NBC-TV on 5 June 1956

NEW YORK TIMES

Mr Presley has no singing ability.

NEW YORK JOURNAL

The sight of the young Mr Presley caterwauling his unintelligible lyrics in an inadequate voice, during a display of primitive physical movement is difficult to describe in terms suitable to a family newspaper. It has caused the most heated reaction.

DAILY NEWS

Popular music has reached its lowest depths in the grunt and groan antics of one Elvis Presley. The TV audience had an noxious sampling of it on the Milton Berle Show the other evening. Elvis, who rotates his pelvis, was appalling musically. Also he gave an exhibition that was suggestive and vulgar. What amazes me is that Berle and NBC-TV should have let him appear on TV.

SOURCE C: from 'Variety' an American television and radio magazine, June 1956

The Milton Berle show topped Phil Silvers' Sergeant Bilko in the ratings for the first time all season. It was a relaxed and therefore more effective Milton Berle who signed off his programme for the season last week.

SOURCE D: a photograph of Elvis Presley performing on stage, 1956



SOURCE E (i) Congressman Emmanuel Celler speaking in January 1957

Rock and Roll has its place and has given great opportunity to talent, especially among the coloured people, but the music of Elvis Presley and his animal gyrations violate all that I know to be in good taste.

SOURCE E (ii) a member of the Ku Klux Klan speaking in 1956

We've set up a twenty-man committee to do away with this cannibalistic, negro-loving rock and roller.

SOURCE E(iii) Billy Graham, an evangelical preacher, speaking in 1957

I would not let my daughter cross the street to see Elvis Presley.

SOURCE F: the top five singles of the year 1955, 1956 and 1957

1955	Bill Hayes Perez Prado The Fontaine Sisters Joan Weber The Four Aces	The Ballard of Davy Crockett Cherry Pink and Apple Blossom White Hearts of Stone Let me go, lover Love is a many spendoured thing
1956	Elvis Presley Elvis Presley Elvis Presley Nelson Riddle Elvis Presley	Don't be Cruel/Hound Dog Heartbreak Hotel I want you, I need you, I love you Lisbon Antigua Love Me Tender
1957	Elvis Presley Pat Boone Elvis Presley Elvis Presley Pat Boone	All Shock Up April Love Jailhouse Rock Let me be your Teddy Bear Love Letters in the Sand

SOURCE G: from a magazine article about Elvis Presley's service in the US Army in 1958

Where else could a nobody like Presley become a somebody so quickly? In what other nation in the world would such a rich and famous man serve alongside other draftees without trying to use influence to buy his way out? This is US democracy at its best.

Assignment One: Objective 1

1. Describe popular culture in the USA in the early 1950s (15)

2. Why did Elvis Presley have such an impact upon US society in 1956 and 1957? (15)

3. In what ways did US society attempt to restrict the influence of singers like Elvis Presley? (20)

(Total: 50 marks)

Assignment Two: Objectives 2 and 3

1. Study Source A
What can you learn from Source A about Elvis Presley's impact on popular music in the USA in 1955? (6)
2. Study Sources B, C and D
Do Sources C and D support the evidence of Source B about the impact of Elvis Presley? (8)
3. Study Sources E and F
How useful are these sources as evidence of the impact of Elvis Presley in the mid 1950s? (10)
4. Study Source G
Source G suggests that attitudes to Elvis Presley were beginning to change by 1958. Use the source, and your own knowledge, to explain why this was happening. (12)
5. Study all the Sources

‘The impact of Elvis Presley on US society during the 1950s was more the result of television coverage of his performances than of his music.’
Use the sources, and your own knowledge, to explain whether you agree with this view of the career of Elvis Presley. (14)

(Total: 50 marks)

Coursework Assignments Mark Scheme

Elvis Presley

Assignment One: Objective 1

1. *Describe popular culture in the USA in the early 1950s.* (15)
- Target: Key features; recall of knowledge**
- Level 1:** Simple statement supported by some knowledge, e.g. lists of performers, Perry Como, lists of styles of music, musicals, television etc. (1-5)
- Level 2:** Developed statements supported by relevant knowledge, e.g. details of styles of performance, styles of music, television programmes, films etc. (6-10)
- Level 3:** Developed explanation supported by selected knowledge, e.g. shows understanding of the significance of youth culture, teenage affluence, James Dean etc. (11-15)
2. *Why did Elvis Presley have such an impact upon US society in 1956 and 1957?* (15)
- Target: Causation/recall of knowledge**
- Level 1:** Simple statements supported by some knowledge e.g. he was different, young, music was different he shocked people etc. (1-5)
- Level 2:** Developed statements supported by relevant knowledge e.g. details of differences, style of music, dress behaviour etc. (6-10)
- Level 3:** Developed explanation supported by selected knowledge of the effects on different groups, e.g. family life was threatened, there was a teenage movement, the young became more independent, advertising became more aimed at the young, youth culture developed etc. (11-15)

3. *In what ways did US society attempt to restrict the influence of singers like Elvis Presley?* (20)

Target: Key features / Recall of knowledge

Level 1: Simple statements supported by some knowledge, e.g. he was attacked, criticised, his performances were banned etc. (1-5)

Level 2: Developed statements supported by relevant knowledge, e.g. details of attacks, criticisms, depraved, immoral, leading the young astray etc. (6-10)

Level 3: Developed explanation supported by selected knowledge, e.g. aspects of censorship imposed upon Elvis, movement, style of singing, etc. (11-15)

Level 4: Sustained analysis supported by precisely selected knowledge, e.g. understanding of the roles of Parker and Elvis's father in attempts to tone down his act etc. (16-20)

Coursework Assignment Mark Scheme

Elvis Presley

Assignment Two: Objectives 2 and 3

1. *What can you learn from Source A about Elvis Presley's impact on popular music in the USA in 1956?* (6)

Target: Comprehension of a source in context

Level 1: Simple statements using the source as information, e.g. he was very popular, he had six hit singles, he was right behind Perry Como etc.

(1-3)

Level 2: Developed statements making inferences from the source, e.g. he had had a dramatic rise, he was regarded as the most dynamic performer at the time, he was seen as someone who was certain to succeed etc.

(3-6)

2. *Do Sources C and D support the evidence of Source B about the impact of Elvis Presley? Use your own knowledge to explain your answer.* (8)

Target: Analysis and interpretation of sources in context / recall of knowledge

Level 1: Simple statements using the sources as information OR some own knowledge and identifying points of similarity and difference, e.g. E says he gyrated, so does D, B says he attracted teenage girls, so does D, B says he should not have been on the Milton Berle Show, C says he was a success etc.

(1-3)

Level 2: Developed statements using the sources as evidence OR relevant knowledge, e.g. D does support the evidence of B and allows us to understand the reaction of the national press, D was typical of what happened at Presley concerts, C contradicts B because it is reporting the effects of Presley's appearance upon the ratings, not passing judgement upon him, from mid-1956 he was very popular etc.

(4-6)

Level 3: Developed explanation using the sources as evidence and selected knowledge, e.g. despite their differences, one is an entertainment magazine, one is a national newspaper and one is a photograph, all three sources agree that Presley has had a dramatic impact upon popular music in the USA, it is true that from mid-1956 he dominated popular music in the USA and became a 'role model' for American

youth etc.

(7-8)

3. Study Sources E and F. How useful are these sources as evidence of the impact of Elvis Presley in the mid-1950s? (10)

Target: Utility of sources

Level 1: Simple statements using the sources as information e.g. they show he was hated, very popular etc.

(1-3)

Level 2: Developed statements making inferences from the sources OR commenting on the tone of the sources e.g. they show that he was a very popular singer, that people from different backgrounds hated him intensely etc.

(4-6)

Level 3: Developed evaluation using the sources as evidence, e.g. reference to the background of each of the three, Graham a revivalist Evangelical, Celler a conservative Republican and the KKK and the reasons for their involvement in the 1950s, the significance of the information about 1955-57 etc.

(7-10)

4. Source G suggests that attitudes to Elvis Presley were beginning to change by 1958. Use the source, and your own knowledge, to explain why this was happening. (12)

Target: Explanation of change and interpretation of sources / recall of knowledge

Level 1: Simple statements using the source as information OR some own knowledge, e.g. he had joined the army, by 1958 his musical style was more middle of the road, etc.

(1-3)

Level 2: Developed statements making inferences from the source and supported by relevant knowledge, e.g. joining the army showed that Presley was doing what Americans were supposed to do, his songs had changed and he was making films, he was a much less threatening character etc.

(4-6)

Level 3: Developed explanation using the source as evidence and selected knowledge, e.g. G suggests that Presley has achieved the American dream, he is, therefore, no longer a rebel, he was now under the influence of Colonel Tom Parker and had given up live performances, his films and songs were more and more mediocre etc.

(7-10)

Level 4: Sustained argument using the source as evidence and precisely selected knowledge, e.g. explains references to American democracy, nobody and sets these in the context of the American Dream etc. (11-12)

5. *'The impact of Elvis Presley on US society during the 1950s was more the result of television coverage of his performances than of his music.'* Use the sources and your own knowledge to explain whether you agree with this view of the career of Elvis Presley. (14)

Target: Analysis of interpretation of events / recall of knowledge

Level 1: Simple statements using the sources as information OR some own knowledge, e.g. yes people saw him on television, no it was his records which made him popular etc. (1-3)

Level 2: Developed statements making inferences from the sources supported by relevant knowledge, e.g. clearly B were angry because they saw him on TV, E also refers to his stage act, A and F show how popular his records were etc. (4-6)

Level 3: Developed explanation using the sources as evidence supported by selected knowledge, e.g. Presley produced a profound reaction from the US establishment because of his behaviour and the impact which he had upon teenage girls, Sources B and E indicate the depth of the feelings which he aroused, and Source C shows how popular his appearances won TV were, also changes from 1957 onwards etc. (7-11)

Level 4: Sustained argument using the sources as evidence supported by precisely selected knowledge, e.g. B, and E show the conservative reaction to Presley, Sources A, C and F clearly indicate the extent of his popularity and Source D shows the nature of the threat which he was seen to have posed through his appearance and behaviour, when his act was 'cleaned up' attitudes to him changed. etc. (12-14)