

History

Answers and commentaries

GCSE (8145)

1AA America, 1840-1895: Expansion and consolidation

Marked answers from students for questions from the June 2022 exams. Supporting commentary is provided to help you understand how marks are awarded and how students can improve performance.

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Answers and commentaries

Please note that these responses have been reproduced exactly as they were written by the student.

This resource is to be used alongside the GCSE History 1AA America, 1840 – 1895: Expansion and consolidation June 2022 Question paper and inserts.

Question 1

Read Interpretation A and B in the Interpretations Booklet.

How does **Interpretation B** differ from **Interpretation A** about Homesteading on the Great Plains?

Explain your answer based on what it says in the **Interpretations A** and **B**.

[4 marks]

Mark scheme

Target	Analyse individual interpretations (AO4a) Analyse how interpretations of a key feature of a period differ (AO4b)	
Level 2:	Developed analysis of interpretations to explain differences based on their content	3–4
	Students may progress from a simple analysis of interpretations with extended reasoning to explain the differences.	
	For example, the interpretations differ about the success of the homesteaders. In Interpretation B the homesteaders were successful because they had plenty of food and they liked the sod house. However, in contrast in Interpretation A, the homesteaders had a miserable life because they didn't have enough to eat, their crops failed and the work was very hard.	
Level 1:	Simple analysis of interpretation(s) to identify differences based on their content	1–2
	Students are likely to identify relevant features in each interpretation(s).	
	For example, according to Interpretation A the wheat did not grow well whereas Interpretation B says that it was a land of orchards and rich farms.	
	Students either submit no evidence or fail to address the question	0

Student responses

Response A

Interpretation B differs from Interpretation A because Interpretation B was a success, he said it was 'beautiful' and didn't have any problems.

However, Interpretation A had nothing but problems, they had 1 room between 2 adults and 4 children.

Both Interpretations was different because B lived happy, comfortable as where as A was unhappy and decided to move east.

This is a Level 1 response

This simple response identifies relevant differences using the content of both interpretations and is credited at Level 1.

Response B

Interpretation A differs from Interpretation B because interpretation A tells us that the Plains were a struggle and it was tough to make a living on however Interpretation B tells us how beautiful the land is and how nice it is to live there.

This is a Level 2 response

This developed response uses both interpretations to explain a difference. It is specific about the way in which the interpretations differ (life for Homesteaders was a struggle vs how nice it is to live there). It is therefore credited at Level 2 though at the lower mark in the level.

Student responses

Response A

One reason the authors of interpretation A and B's views on homesteading on Plains are different is because of the decades they lived on Plains. This is because in Interpretation A they started in the 80's and had a lack of knowledge or equipment, but in Interpretation B they had more equipment and people farming when they were children, but also had technology when they inherited it.

Another reason why the authors of Interpretations A & B may be different is their health and living arrangements. This is because in Interpretation A they had two people in a one room sod house which led to their husbands health issues, however in Interpretation B they live in a two roomed sod house which was sustainable and healthy.

This is a Level 1 response

This simple response identifies or asserts relevant reasons for difference based on the provenance of both interpretations and is credited at Level 1.

Response B

Interpretation A was written by a woman who decided to move to the plains with her husband and 4 kids. They are starting from scratch and would have to care for four young children while trying to make a living from previously unkept land., which would make it harder for them. As there are 6 of them it would make the 'one - roomed sod house' too cramped to be comfortable too.

Interpretation B however, is from a man who grew up on a homestead, which had been farmed by his grandfather and father. This could mean that he did not see how difficult the start was, as his life now is easier than it would have been from scratch. This could make his view more positive, as he is only to experience the point at which a good routine has been established.

This is a Level 2 response

This developed response uses the provenance of both interpretations to explain reasons for difference. It shows extended reasoning in analysing both interpretations. This reasoning is contextually valid, and the response is credited at Level 2.

Question 3

Which interpretation gives the more convincing opinion about Homesteading on the Great Plains?

Explain your answer based on your contextual knowledge and what is says in

Interpretations A and B.

[8 marks]

Mark scheme

Target **Analyse individual interpretations (AO4a)**
Evaluate interpretations and make substantiated judgements in the context of historical events studied (AO4d)

Level 4: **Complex evaluation of interpretations with sustained judgement** **7–8**
based on contextual knowledge/understanding

Extends Level 3.

Students may progress from a developed evaluation of interpretations by analysis of the relationship between the interpretations supported by factual knowledge and understanding.

For example, Interpretation A is convincing because at the start the railroad helped the American settlers populate the Plains and Interpretation B is also right because eventually mechanical power made the Great Plains very productive. Many people were attracted by the promise of owning their own land on the Plains which the railway companies advertised. However, many people from the East had little understanding of just how difficult it was to grow crops on the Plains. There were great extremes of temperature as in Interpretation B which needed special crops like Turkey Red, and special tools like the Sod Buster plough. Homesteaders needed a big amount of luck if insects like grasshoppers or fires did not destroy their crops. But as Interpretation B says it was hard work to 'tame' the country and it was hard physical work which needed determination and labour at different times of the year but especially harvest.

Level 3: Developed evaluation of both interpretations based on contextual knowledge/understanding 5–6

Extends Level 2.

Answers may assert one interpretation is more/less convincing. Students may progress from a simple evaluation of the interpretations by extended reasoning supported by factual knowledge and understanding.

For example, Interpretation B is convincing because there were many problems in trying to homestead on the Plains. There was not enough water for the crops as Anderson says and they had to develop dry farming techniques to capture what little rain there was. The plain's soil contained thick roots which it was hard for a plough to break and they had to wait for a special steel plough called a sod buster to turn the soil. Many of the strains of wheat used in the East did not work on the Plains because they were not hardy enough and they needed Turkey Red to be used which needed less water and could withstand the cold of the Plains. The homesteaders did survive and flourish so Interpretation B is more convincing because new technology like machines such as reapers, binders and threshers helped overcome the problems.

Level 2: Simple evaluation of one interpretation based on contextual knowledge/understanding 3–4

There may be undeveloped comment about the other interpretation.

Students may progress from a basic analysis of interpretations to simple evaluation, supported with factual knowledge and understanding.

For example, Interpretation A is convincing because the railway companies were given the land by the government and used it to fund the building of the railroad. They advertised in the East about the good farming land to get people to homestead there. However, they needed a lot of land to make a go of it which is why they passed the Timber and Culture Act in 1873.

Level 1: Basic analysis of interpretation(s) based on contextual knowledge/understanding 1–2

Answers show understanding/support for one/both interpretation(s), but the case is made by assertion/recognition of agreement.

For example, answers stating that Interpretation A is convincing as homesteading was a hard life. There was not enough water and the wheat did not grow. Interpretation B is convincing because they used machinery.

Students either submit no evidence or fail to address the question 0

Student responses

Response A

Interpretation A is convincing in its account as it speaks about how their 'vegetables were killed off in the heat'. My wider knowledge shows that homesteaders did struggle to find a plant that could withstand the conditions on the Plains, ultimately ending up with a plant called the Turkey Red being one of the only plants able to withstand the environment. This shows that this source is accurate about what homesteading was like on the Great Plains.

Interpretation B is convincing as it speaks about the 'fine oxen team' which worked on the farm. My wider knowledge tells me that ox were often used on the Plains as they were stronger than horses and able to pull ploughs, such as the sod buster, through the hard dry dirt of the Plains. This shows that this interpretation is also convincing as it is accurate with the methods of farming often used on the homestead.

This is a Level 2 response

This simple response addresses both interpretations, using some knowledge to expand upon relevant content. There is an attempt to evaluate how convincing each interpretation is for the issue in the question, though this remains implicit. The response is therefore credited at Level 2.

Response B

Both interpretations appear to be convincing. Interpretation A is convincing because I know that life was particularly hard on the Plains as land was infertile, the weather conditions were severe and the lack of water was a big issue on the Plains. I also know that there was a lack of timber to build houses on the Plains or to use as fires to keep warm. This means that the source is convincing because life was hard on the Plains and arguably too unsuitable to live on.

However, Interpretation B is also convincing because despite the hard life on the Plains, homesteaders found alternative ways to live on the Plains comfortably. Homesteaders used mud and old brick to create sod houses which would remain cooler in the summer and warm in the winter alongside wind pumps and drills to extract water from the ground. To protect their crops from animals (typically the buffalo), they would use barbed wire and plant crops like Turkey red wheat so that it would survive the climate. This means life was not as difficult as perceived as the homesteaders found ways to farm, live and have homes on the Plains despite the harsh environment.

Overall, I think interpretation B is the most convincing because it describes the life as a homesteader to be much more pleasant since the homesteaders did find ways to live comfortably, grow crops, build houses and find a water source.

This is a Level 3 response

This response shows developed reasoning in relation to interpretation B, showing contextual knowledge of the building techniques used by Homesteaders to corroborate the interpretation. The treatment of Interpretation A remains simple, meaning that this imbalanced response is credited at Level 3 at the lower mark in the level.

Response C

Interpretation A is convincing because it mentions many of the problems that homesteaders faced. For example, it mentions that how difficult it was to get fuel, timber and 'the great necessity, water.' This is accurate, because the weather on the Great Plains caused droughts throughout the 1860s, which made the ground so hard and dry that nothing could grow and wildfires started. The dry land made it difficult to grow anything, and the lack of wood for fences meant that the crops that could grow were eaten by wild animals and cattle. These challenges explain why Interpretation A says that many homesteaders had to leave to go back to the East.

Interpretation B is more convincing than A because it shows how the homesteaders solved the problems on the plains through hard work and new ideas. It mentions that they lived in sod-houses, which didn't need wood to be built and meant that homesteaders could survive the cold winters and hot summers. It also mentions machinery, and from my knowledge I know that homesteaders started to use well-drillers and wind-pumps to solve the problem of getting water.

Therefore, Interpretation B is more convincing shows a broader view of homesteading. It talks about the how the homesteaders gradually came up with solutions to the problems of living on the Great Plains, rather than just talking about the problems faced by homesteaders.

This is a Level 4 response

This response addresses both interpretations in a developed manner, using knowledge and understanding to corroborate A and B. It signals a judgement about which is more convincing in the second paragraph, and provides some brief reasoning in the concluding paragraph based on how comprehensive an account B provides. It is credited at Level 4.

Student responses

Response A

The problems faced by people in crossing the Plains before 1865 was the Rocky mountains Because you can't take a Horse down there Because the cart will flip over the other problem faced by people in crossing the Plains before 1865 was the food Because a group went to the Plains and had no food so they eat each other or died the way there.

This is a Level 1 response

This response identifies knowledge of two problems faced by people crossing the Plains. It is credited at Level 1.

Response B

One problem that people faced whilst crossing the plains before 1865 was the landscape and lack of resources. This is because travellers had to pack enough resources to last them for the whole trip to prevent things such as starvation or dehydration which was a problem as if they didn't pack enough there would be no way of getting any resources like food on the plains. This would put them at risk of starvation or dehydration like the Donner party.

Another problem that people faced was tension with indigenous Americans. Settlers feared being attacked by some of these communities, which created a risk of violence or resulted in longer journeys to avoid crossing their territories.

This is a Level 2 response

This response shows knowledge and understanding of two different problems (lack of resources and tensions with indigeneous communities). This means that the response is credited at Level 2 at the top mark in the level.

Question 5

In what ways were the lives of people in the Southern states affected by the American Civil War?

Explain your answer.

[8 marks]

Mark scheme

Target Explain and analyse historical events and periods studied using second-order concepts (AO2:4)
Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the key features and characteristics of the period studied (AO1:4)

Level 4: **Complex explanation of changes** **7–8**
Answer demonstrates a range of accurate and detailed knowledge and understanding that is relevant to the question

Extends Level 3.

Students may progress from a developed explanation of changes by explanation of the complexities of change arising from differences such as time, group, social and/or economic impact, supported by knowledge and understanding.

For example, students may recognise that while women experienced a dramatic change in their circumstances during the war by taking on new roles as farmers, plantation managers and munitions workers because the men had gone off to fight, many were forced to return to their traditional roles when the war ended. Although the experience had changed the status of women to a certain extent, politically little had changed as an appeal after the war to give the vote to women received little support.

Level 3: **Developed explanation of changes** **5-6**
Answer demonstrates a range of accurate knowledge and understanding that is relevant to the question

Extends Level 2.

Students may progress from a simple explanation by developed reasoning considering **two or more** of the identified consequences, supporting them by factual knowledge and understanding.

In addition to a Level 2 response, students make additional developed point(s).

For example, impact of the war in the South was a disaster. The Union troops tore up railroad tracks and burned rolling stock. The cotton growing was badly disrupted by the Union army advances and production fell from 4 million bales in 1861 to 300,000 bales in 1865 the only industries which grew were those

traded with the North who needed cotton as a raw material, and they traded food for the cotton to keep their factories going.

For example, civilians in the South were hit hard by inflation which made them poorer. The Confederate government tried to fund the war through new taxes but was so unsuccessful that it resorted to printing more money. This led to hyperinflation with the inflation rate rising to 500% by 1865.

Level 2: Simple explanation of change 3–4
Answer demonstrates specific knowledge and understanding that is relevant to the question

Students may progress from a basic explanation of change by using simple reasoning and supporting it with factual knowledge and understanding which might be related, for example, to **one** of the identified changes.

For example, many civilians who had no thought of a military career ended up in the army. Local recruiting offices were set up and men were encouraged by propaganda which played on their patriotism to join up and support their state and country. But many people thought it would be a short war and it was not. They ran out of men and the Confederacy introduce conscription in April 1862.

Level 1: Basic explanation of change(s) 1–2
Answer demonstrates basic knowledge and understanding that is relevant to the question

Students identify change(s), which are relevant to the question. Explanation at this level is likely to be implicit or by assertion.

For example, the people in the South suffered from food shortages. There were food riots in some cities as early as 1863.

Students either submit no evidence or fail to address the question 0

Student responses

Response A

One way the lives of the people in the Southern States were affected was by lack of food resources. The American civil war was over slavery and the South used slaves to make their money and grow their crops. With the war on slaves were fighting, so they didn't have anyone to function their crops. So they didn't have any food which led to many of them hungry and also many of the, leaving to the north.

Another way they were affected was by hyperinflation. Due to no crops being grown they had nothing to sell therefore they couldn't make any money. This also meant that people couldn't buy other food as money was worth nothing, This also led many people to move to the North.

This is a Level 2 response

This simple response addresses more than one change. It uses generalised knowledge to explain how the Civil War impacted on food production in the first paragraph. It also references wider economic and migration impacts in the second paragraph. In each case, explanation requires further substantiation. It is therefore credited at Level 2.

Response B

Before the American Civil War, the South were rather rich and had a great economy. This is because they had slaves on their plantations which were not paid and were forced to work for free. The Southern States were agricultural so this meant that slaves deeply benefitted the south. However, it was the loss of the Civil War for the South which deeply impacted them. Abraham Lincoln (although a Republican) declared that slavery would be abolished in the South – the 13th Amendment. This meant that the slaves on the plantations were now free and would no longer have to work there, but the owners no longer had workers to do the farming and now had to hire and pay workers instead. This loss created a huge economic crisis in the south and led to hyperinflation whereby more money was printed yet lost value. The big economic crisis left the southern states extremely poor and individuals from the North (Carpetbaggers) profitted of the misery of the south by buying the land. The loss of the south and win for the north also now meant that a rich north had control over poor and crippled south. Some of the south (white supremacists) were angered by the freedom of African Americans and formed extremist groups like the KKK against them which caused an increase of crime and terror within the Southern states for African Americans and those who supported and aided them.

This is a Level 3 response

This response shows developed explanation of more than one change resulting from the American Civil War. The response is particularly strong when dealing with the economic impact on the South, with explanation directly focusing on the question, supported with well selected examples. It is credited at Level 3 at the top mark in the level.

Response C

Both ex-slaves and ex-confederates were affected by the Civil war. Ex-slaves were affected socially due to the war. This was due to the 13th, 14th and 15th amendments which were passed in the reconstruction of the civil war. This had a positive effect as it allowed the ex-slaves to have privileges such as voting and freedom, which they would have never gained without the civil war. 600 000 black children also gained an education, meaning they were one step closer to equality. There was also negative social effects for ex-slaves though. Although they gained freedom and more rights, Black codes and harsh literacy tests weakened the positive effect of the amendments as most black men were uneducated, so could not pass literacy tests required to vote, making the 15th amendment useless. Hate groups such as the KKK also rose in power.

Ex-confederates were also affected by the civil war. This was due to hyperinflation in 1862 in the south, which had a negative economic effect. This led to starvation in the short-term, and also food riots as southern states relied on food trading from northern states before the war as the south's economy was mainly slavery based. Ex-confederates were also affected economically due to the pardons of ex-confederate leaders. This allowed them to gain their money and land back if they surrendered after the war ended in 1865. This has a positive effect on them.

This is a Level 4 response

This response shows complex explanation of changes resulting from the American Civil War. The response is complex as it explores both the positive and negative impacts of the Civil War, also differentiating between different groups in society. It is credited at Level 4, at the top mark in the level.

Question 6

Which of the following was the more important reason for the successful way of life of the Plains Indians:

- the buffalo herds
- the Plains Indians' beliefs and society?

Explain your answer with reference to both bullet points.

[12 marks]

Mark scheme

Target **Explain and analyse historical events and periods studied using second-order concepts (AO2:6)**
Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the key features and characteristics of the period studied (AO1:6)

Examiners are reminded that AO1 and AO2 are regarded as interdependent and when deciding on a level should be considered together. When establishing a mark within a level, examiners should reward three marks for strong performance in both assessment objectives; two marks may be achieved by strong performance in either AO1 or AO2 and one mark should be rewarded for weak performance within the level in both assessment objectives.

Level 4: **Complex explanation of both bullets leading to a sustained judgement** **10–12**
Answer demonstrates a range of accurate and detailed knowledge and understanding that is relevant to the question

Extends Level 3

Students may progress from a developed explanation of causation by complex explanation of the relationship between causes supported by factual knowledge and understanding and arriving at a sustained judgement.

For example, the Plains Indians evolved to support and make more efficient a hunter gatherer community and lifestyle. The squaws of the hunters or warriors who were killed were adopted by other warriors and they helped to look after the children and cook and organise the camp. Chiefs of the tribe were usually the best hunters or fighters. Men and women each had separate roles, men hunted and defended the camp while the women prepared food and made clothes. The Plains Indians' culture and philosophy respected the spirit of the buffalo and recognised that it was the essence of their life so the heart of the buffalo was often buried to bring new life to the herd. Without the buffalo the Plains Indians would not have evolved the society and culture that they had.

Student responses

Response A

Buffalo herds meant the Plains Indians could live since they used everything from a buffalo from their skin, meat, fur and even skulls.

This meant they moved seasonally just like the buffalo so they could hunt them. Plains Indians whole lifestyle is based around the buffalo.

However, their beliefs and society was big in their culture like the more horses, more status. They had dances, believed in listening to the elders cause they will have more knowledge. Their society means if a man died well in war, or hunting would get another husband, mostly a relative of the original husband, not out of disrespect but to look after the women.

In conclusion I believe that the buffalo herds are more important because it created their way of living and meant they could live too.

This is a Level 2 response

This response addresses both bullet points. It shows simple explanation of the importance of the buffalo to nomadic lifestyles and knowledge to explain how the war impacted on food production in the first paragraph. It then shows some basic knowledge of belief and society in the second paragraph. It is therefore credited at Level 2, at a lower mark in the level.

Response B

The buffalo herds were very important to their successful way of life. Native American cultures respected the buffalo as they provided many of the raw materials that they needed. For example, as well as providing much needed food, buffalo were hunted for their hides which were dried and used to make moccasins, ropes, and saddles for horses, while their bones were shaped to make tools and weapons like knives and arrow heads. Because every part of the buffalo was used, it provided tribes with the resources that they needed to hunt, travel, keep warm and survive the harsh environment of the Great Plains.

The culture and society was also very important. Many tribes believed that the land was sacred, and most believed that land should not be owned as 'property' and that settlers who farmed or mined the land were disrespecting it. This meant that in order to get food they adopted a nomadic lifestyle, which was important for their successful way of life as it meant that they got food by following the buffalo herds to hunting grounds and living in tipis that could be easily transported and set up in new areas that had more food and resources.

Overall, the buffalo was the most important reason for their successful way of life. This is because the nomadic lifestyle of the tribes on the Plains was dependent on the food and materials that they got from hunting buffalo. Without these materials, they wouldn't have been able to make their tipis or travois to move around as much, and would have had to depend on other materials to for clothes and hunting.

This is a Level 4 response

This complex response addresses both bullet points. Each point is developed, as knowledge and understanding is used to support an explanation that directly addresses the issue in the question (the successful way of life). In the concluding paragraph, the response comes to a substantiated judgment about which was more important, showing how the bullet points are linked/interrelated. As such it is credited at Level 4.

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