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Examiners' Report January 2010

GCSE History 5HB02 2B

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General Comments

This was the first examination of the new specification and it appears to have worked very well. The new style question and answer booklet, as well as more choice available to candidates meant that there were very few blank pages at all and almost no rubric infringements. The more limited answer space for question 1 in particular meant that almost all responses were more concise and focused. Nearly all scripts showed sound time management. At the higher level there was some very impressive candidate work indeed – and it did not seem to be an issue at all for some students that they were taking the examination more than a year earlier than normal.

Centres should however make sure that they are entirely familiar with the specification content of this new examination and where there are changes from the legacy History C specification. For example, candidates on Option B The American West, seemed less confident on issues of law and order and on Option C Germany, some candidates seemed very unsure of the chronology of the Nazis' treatment of the Jews. Both of these are subject areas new to the examination, although many centres will have studied them for coursework. It would also be very useful for teachers to reinforce and reiterate the need for candidates to actually use the source in question 1. In this History specification question 1 of Unit 2 will always assess Assessment Objective 3 (understand, analyse and evaluate source material). Across all three options some candidates let themselves down because although they may have had very impressive subject knowledge they made no reference at all to the source.

It is also worth stressing the role of the bullet points. These are designed to give candidates the chronological range which can be expected in their answers and for questions 5b and 6b especially, they can also show an alternative viewpoint to that proposed in the actual question. Teachers might find it useful to remind candidates that they serve as a guide. Not using the bullet points does not penalise candidates in any way; and conversely their sole use in a response is not credited.

Option 2B – The American West

Question 1

There was good subject knowledge about the Mormons and most candidates seemed very familiar with the topic. Many reached level 2 with valid inferences about the temple and importance of religion to the Mormons or about the relative success of the city as evidenced by the building and the environment. Some candidates however wasted time by relating lengthy descriptions telling the story of the Mormons or on the role of Brigham Young rather than focusing on the actual source provided.

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Examiner Comments

This is a clear full mark answer. It clearly makes supported inferences from the source.

From source A you can see how ~~everything~~ all the buildings look perfect. The Mormons were trying to make Zylon (God's city on earth) this picture shows how much attention to detail was paid. ~~now~~ There is a very large church or cathedral showing how religion was very important when they were creating their settlement at Salt Lake City. The cathedral is the building with most detail and takes a central place. This shows how religion was the most important part of designing their Salt Lake settlement & was central to their life.

Question 2

Of the two choices, the vigilantes option was more popular. Level 3 answers displayed sound subject knowledge and candidates were very familiar with the problems of law enforcement. Responses on sheriffs also had detailed knowledge of individuals. Level 2 responses often drifted into descriptions about mining towns and cattle towns, an understanding of the pros and cons of vigilante justice. Specific examples were rare. Many asserted their importance but without support. Level 1 responses made general comments about law and order in the American West. Many candidates mistakenly believed that sheriffs were popular, well paid and respected and some were confused about the roles of sheriffs and marshals.



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Examiner Comments

This is an example of a level 3 response. The candidate has identified and explained the importance of vigilante groups in dealing with lawlessness in the American West.

The vigilante groups were people who took the law into their own hands. Because the west was such a large area of land it was hard to have any kind of control over it and the criminals could escape easily, this meant that the people who were in charge of keeping law & order in their towns had a very difficult job... This is where the vigilante groups come in. They took it upon themselves to be in control of their town and became very powerful. This was not necessarily a good thing. They were often biased and therefore "dealt" with people who were innocent instead of trying to catch real criminals. There was lots of lynchings and sometimes the vigilante groups did more harm than good.

Question 3

Many candidates answered this question well and revealed good subject knowledge. Level 3 answers explained various groups moving west and the specific reasons that motivated them to migrate. Many could give lengthy explanations of both push and pull factors – even if the terms were not used explicitly. Many were aware of the depression in the east and lack of opportunities and combined this with the appeal of California, explanations of the gold rush and the government's encouragement, as well as using the Mormons as an example of religious persecution. Lower scoring candidates included descriptions of why people moved west in the 1860s and revealed chronology to be a problem or described the journey west, told the story of the Mormons or recounted the story of the Donner Party. At level 1 there was often little development. Many mistakenly believed that the Mormons were encouraging everyone to go west and paying for them and seemed under the impression that Salt Lake City might be in California.

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Examiner Comments

This is an example of a typical level 2 response. It is a descriptive answer of reasons without the supporting or accurate details for level 3.

Many people made the difficult journey across America because there were adverts saying there was free land & to grow crops and food and they would be ~~pay~~ paid to grow these crops which must of sounded like a good idea as most of these people had very little land and were fairly poor. So they would get alot more land and more money so most of these people jumped at the idea, but they didn't realise what a trechures journey across america was.

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Examiner Tip

An explanation of the range of reasons behind the move west or reasons why specific groups moved west would have secured level 3. The following extract shows the first few lines of the type of response which would look likely to reach level 3.

Many people made the journey to go west across America in the 1840s and 1850s because of many push and pull factors. It was a very hard time for people in the east. The families and groups of people had to cope with problems of different sorts.

Question 4

There were many good secure responses to this question where candidates wrote well supported answers on the physical problems of farming, the problems faced by the women or the problems caused by weather and both the practical and emotional aspects of physical isolation. Most candidates were familiar with sod houses. Better answers chose to link the problems with hygiene, lack of resources and a need for determination to tackle the issues. Some commented on positive aspects of sod houses. Weaker candidates chose simply to state that they were dirty or uncomfortable. Many candidates simply pointed out that crops died without water and did not explain the impact by linking to digging for water or hygiene problems or dry farming or tough ploughing. Better candidates pointed out the use of the railroad in bringing in technology or the materials needed to solve the problems. Some answers spent too much time explaining the later solutions to the problems which fell outside the time period mentioned in the question. Although by explaining the solution they were able to indicate the nature of the problem they probably wasted time providing too much detail about new crops and inventions rather than explaining the problem in more detail.



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Examiner Comments

This response is high level 3. It clearly understands the focus of the question and is supported with sufficient details.

It was hard for the Homesteaders to settle on the plains because farming was very difficult. Farming on the plains was very difficult because the roots on the grass were 10cm thick, this meant that when Homesteaders tried to plough their land, the ploughs broke under the strain, this meant that ploughing and farming became increasingly difficult.

Another reason that it was hard for the Homesteaders to settle on the plains was because there was a shortage of wood. This shortage meant that Homesteaders had to build their houses out of sods of earth, which made houses more difficult to keep clean. ~~They~~ This also meant that they couldn't burn wood for a fire and had to use "cow chips" instead. This shows that it was difficult for Homesteaders to settle because they had to find different materials to build their houses for from, ~~and~~ and they also had to find a way of keeping warm in the severe winter without using wood.

Another reason that it was hard for Homesteaders to settle was because there was a lot of devastation to their crops. For instance, cattles let their cattle roam all over the land, and because there was no way of fencing off ~~the~~ crops, a lot of cattle trampled ~~on~~ on the Homesteaders crops and therefore they were ruined.

Question 5a

This question was not so popular a choice as question 6 and was not done as well. Those that did reach level 3 had good, detailed subject knowledge about friction between homesteaders and ranchers. Many candidates knew about Ella Watson and the cattle and a surprising number were able to recount the complete story in detail. Most level 2 answers were a narrative description of the Johnson County War rather than an assessment of the part played by cattle ranchers. Some candidates confused their subject knowledge by writing about the Indian Wars.



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Examiner Comments

This is a typical level 2 response. It is a description of the problems facing cattle ranchers and provides some basic details of the Johnson County War

(a) The part part played by cattle ranchers in the Johnson County War in 1892 was big very big. ~~It was~~ ~~because~~ I think this because previously cattle prices fell and the demand for cattle went down, this meant the cattle barons were not making enough money. This made them angry. So a group of cattle barons ranchers and barons got ~~together~~ together and plotted a full scale invasion of Johnson County. Although ~~the~~ the invasion was not a success as people fought at the village county circled a house they were in after they killed the sheriff and word broke out. They surrendered and went to jail but no charges were made. ~~So~~ Cattle ranchers played a big part as they were the group of people who faced problems, and they plotted this invasion which shows us that they ~~so~~ played the biggest part.

Question 5b

Successful candidates were able to assess the impact that the railroads made. Their responses were supported with specific knowledge about demand and prices in the East and balanced that against the contributions made by various individuals to the growth of the cattle industry. As well as John Illiff there were frequent references to Goodnight and Loving or McCoy. Level 2 answers were mainly descriptions and generalised accounts of the cattle industry. The weakest responses often described the railroads or showed confusion by discussing the impact of the railroads on the Indians.

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Examiner Comments

This is part of a response which is level 3. It understands the focus of the question and explains the impact of the railroads on the growth of the cattle industry, as well as explaining the role of other factors.

(b) This coming of the railroad in 1865-85 was important to the growth of cattle ranching. It meant faster and easier access to the heavily populated eastern states. This is significant because the beef could be sold where it is more in demand.

~~But~~ Also another reason of the growth of cattle ranching was the cattle trails north. Charles Goodnight came back from the Civil War to find his 180 cows had turned into 5,000 longhorns. Charles Goodnight and his assistant Oliver Loving decided to move the longhorns north. This is important because as the cattle trail north was successful ~~the~~ other ranches were influenced to do the same. ~~The~~ The cattle ranchers made profit by going north.

Another reason~~s~~ was the cow towns. Joseph McCoy was the first person to set up a cow town, Abilene. The development of the cow town meant cowboys could have somewhere to stay whilst on cattle trails. The town also provided services, socialising and cattle auctions. This is important because it is creating more money ~~to~~ for the cattle industry making it more powerful.

Question 6a

There were lots of good answers to this question and the majority of responses were confident and well informed. The highest scoring responses explained the Plains Indians' dependence on the buffalo, their nomadic lifestyle, the spiritual importance of the buffalo and how they were affected by the killing of the buffalo. Most candidates had good knowledge about how individual parts of the buffalo were used and therefore were able to access Level 2 easily. Few candidates answering this question remained in level 1.

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Examiner Comments

The following response scores full marks. It clearly focuses on the question and offers a wide range of supporting accurate material.

(a) The buffalo were key for survival of the Plains Indians for a number of reasons.

Firstly, the buffalo provided the Indians with their skin which the Indians used for their tipis. This is significant because their tipis were very portable and could be put up and taken down in minutes. This is very important as they could easily follow the buffalo with ~~their~~ portable tipis.

Another reason why the buffalo were important to the Indians was the fact that the Indians used all of the parts of the buffalo for their everyday use. The Plains Indians used their meat as food which is obviously essential for them.

They also used their fur and skin for their clothing and they used the buffalo's skull and bones in their dances and rituals. This is significant because the Plains Indians were an extremely religious group of people. They performed

many dances such as the Sun dance, rain dance, war dance and they even had a buffalo dance. The Indians were so religious that they even buried the buffalo's heart after they had killed it.

Some other things that they used the buffalo for are the tongue as a hair brush, rib cage as a sledge and also, due to the lack of resources on the Plains, the Indians used the buffalo dung as fuel.

In conclusion, the buffalo were the main reason that the Indians survived on the Plains so well. The Indians were so dependant on the buffalo that they even followed them around the Plains in order to survive.

Question 6b

Some very impressive level 4 answers placed The Battle of the Little Big Horn in its historical context. They supported their responses with an analysis of the battle with knowledge of the events following the Little Big Horn and the subsequent treatment of the Plains Indians. Most level 3 answers had details about the Battle of the Little Bighorn, the reasons for Custer's defeat and then supported their view on the results of the battle for the Indians. Most level 2 responses described the battle and the reasons for Custer's defeat. Those that remained in level 1 were often little more than the bullet points or outspoken criticisms of Custer.

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Examiner Comments

The following response is level 4. It is a sustained answer with a clear relevant focus and the student clearly offers a judgement on the proposition in the question.

(b) The battle of Little big horn in 1876 could be described as a major victory for the Indians, as it could be described as a major loss.

There are numerous reasons why it could have been described as a major triumph for the Indians.

Firstly, the reason the battle started, was because the whites found gold in the Black Hills and breaking the treaty 2nd Fort Laramie treaty of 1868 which stated that the whites wouldn't go into the black hills. This made the Indians angry so they killed 84 whites at Rosebud River. Then the army was sent in to protect the whites and kill the Indians but they foolishly split up their own army. When Colonel General Custer and his army of 250 located the Indians he charged straight in and got slaughtered. This is significant as it showed how stupid General Custer was and it showed how brave and powerful the Indians were. It also showed how disorganised the US army was.

Another reason why the Battle of Little Big Horn was a victory for the

Indians was that it united them all together. About 4,000 warriors in a population of rebellion of about 50,000 gathered to kill General Custer and his army.

The fact that the Indians had better weaponry in their army than the Americans was also significant. This is because it showed how organised the Indians were and how disorganised the US were.

However, the battle of Little Big Horn can be described as a loss for the Indians as well.

After the Indians killed Custer and his army, the US Government and army were outraged. The battle of Little Big Horn triggered the US government to order all the Indians to be put on Reservations.

Also, this made the army want to get rid of all the Indian chiefs as they were mainly responsible for the US defeats. This made the US army to capture and eventually kill the chief Crazy

Horse in 1877. This is significant because without their chiefs, the Indians were no way near as organised or powerful.

Another reason was the population ratio. Although the Indians killed Custer at Little Bighorn, they there was no way that they could defeat all the whites. They were outnumbered hugely. This is significant because it meant that the whites could easily force the Indians onto reservations.

In conclusion, many people could agree or disagree with the statement "The battle for Little Bighorn ~~was~~ in 1876 was a victory for the Plains Indians." But I have to disagree. I believe that they won the battle but they lost the war because this battle just made the US government and army take control over the Indians by forcing them onto reservations.

Statistics

5HB02 2B Grade Boundaries

Grade	Max.Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
Grade boundaries	50	46	40	34	29	24	19	14	9	0
UMS	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20	0

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