

Examiners' Report

June 2016

GCSE History 5HB02 2B

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Introduction

The majority of candidates that take this examination have been well-prepared both in terms of historical knowledge but also in planning extended written answers, timing of length of responses and on the layout of the actual test. The levels of analysis and depth of detail achieved by some candidates in such short time is very impressive. From the optional questions, there was a fairly even split between questions 3 and 4 whereas approximately 75% of candidates chose question 5.

There were however two issues that were more noticeable this year and both were apparent across all the three Depth Studies that make up this Unit. Although as a total across examination scripts there were very few blank pages, the statistical breakdown at the end of this summer's marking shows that question 2 had by far the highest proportion of candidates receiving zero marks compared to all the other questions. This does demonstrate however that on the one question where there is no source, stimulus or choice of content, a significant number of candidates could not be rewarded at all on a 9 mark question. The second issue was an increase in the number of responses which examiners found impossible to read. It is worth considering these issues especially with the move to a new specification with new-style question papers as well as the end of internal assessment as part of GCSE History.

Question 1

The most common valid inferences made by candidates about migrating West is that the journey was often 'isolated' and 'difficult terrain'. The size of the group was also drawn upon to make inferences about the need to travel together linked to possible dangers, isolation, and difficult terrain. These inferences were then supported with an explicit reference to the source. Such responses were awarded Level 2 and the full 4 marks.

Level 1 responses tended to be statements about what could be seen in the source such as 'they used horses'.

There were also candidates who wrote extensively about migrating West using accurate and relevant knowledge but without reference to the source. Level 2 cannot be awarded as this question focuses on Assessment Objective 3 (understand, analyse and evaluate sources).

Question 2

The majority of candidates chose to focus on Local Communities. Very few responses were kept at Level 1 as most candidates could offer more than general statements. Most were able to gain a Level 2 mark by at least describing vigilante groups. A number of responses also became long descriptive accounts of famous lawbreakers such as Billy the Kid. Those who were able to explain the need for local communities to take law into their own hands because there was little or no official law in place due to the distances involved frequently gained at least a low Level 3 mark. Mid to high level 3 marks explained that communities were forced to develop their own systems in the absence of government.

Many of the responses to the US Government option included marshals and sheriffs being appointed. Those in Level 3 made reference to the distances needed and to factors hampering their ability to maintain law and order.

Most candidates explained the impact of the railroad in aiding law enforcement and showed a real understanding of the context. Some candidates explored treaties with Native Americans as a way in which the US government was attempting to deal with conflict and 'lawlessness' which was credited.

- 2 The boxes below show two groups.

Choose **one** and explain how the group attempted to deal with lawlessness.

(9)

The US government

Local communities

Local communities formed vigilante groups which weren't approved by authority. These groups would go and find any person accused of a crime and usually hang them. ~~This was~~ These crimes included cattle rustling and claim jumping. Quite often, these groups killed innocent people or, if you didn't like someone, you could falsely accuse them of a crime and have them killed. ~~One man~~ People would also take law into their own hands. If someone stole their cow or stole their claim or a gold mine, they would be ~~shot~~ by the original owner. Some people would go to local authority for help but the process took so long that ~~many~~ by the time the criminal would be punished, he would have

already been murdered in an attempt to deal with lawlessness on the Plains.



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Examiner Comments

This response is low Level 3. It has a sense of how local communities were attempting to deal with lawlessness by 'taking the law into their own hands'. The comment 'but the process took so long' also shows the ways in which dealing with law and order were hampered.

Question 3

This was generally well answered although it was clear a significant number of candidates were writing extensively about Brigham Young's leadership and recalling work on the previously set question in 2013. There were very few Level 1 answers and these were mainly simple comments which could apply to any successful settlement such as 'they got water' and 'they grew food'. There was also some confusion with the 'Irrigation' where some candidates got this confused with immigration. Many students remained in Level 2 for writing lengthy narrative accounts of the journey to Salt Lake and a few gave accounts of Joseph Smith. Level 2 responses gave descriptions of the settlement at Salt Lake and some of the problems faced without explicit links to solutions leading to a successful settlement.

Level 2 responses often gave a description of the journey to Salt Lake City but were aware of Brigham Young and his organizational skills. Level 3 responses had an explicit focus on set question. These responses showed a good understanding of the problems and solutions needed to make Salt Lake City successful. There were a wide range of factors used including explicitly linking the Perpetual Emigration Fund to bring in skilled workers, Brigham Young's leadership , the sharing out of land, and making boundaries secure.

Question 4

Answers in Level 1 were very general and limited such as 'the weather was bad' and 'people ate less beef' although some candidates wrote that the main problem was the price of beef had increased so much that it had become too expensive to buy. Level 2 responses narrated change rather than identifying factors and how they contributed to the decline of the cattle industry in the early 1880s. In Level 3 candidates showed the role of various factors to explain the decline. As well as the stimulus bullet points leading to less demand for beef and the harsh winters, other factors identified included new breeding techniques (with Iliff's role often explained), and the effects of changes in ranching.

Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross in the box . If you change your mind, put a line through the box and then indicate your new question with a cross .

Chosen question number: Question 3 Question 4

In 1880, beef demand started falling possibly because how much it was available to the ~~West~~ East. When the demand fell, the prices did too, hurting the cattle industry as a whole. So much beef was available to the East due to intercontinental railroad that was finished in 1859, transport of beef was much faster and you could transport as many ~~as~~ cows. Cow towns such as Abilene were near railroad. Transporting beef with railroads was also safer against the rustlers. When the cooling trains were introduced in 1880's, that meant that you could kill the cattle before transporting them, saving space and lesser needs for water.

The severe drought in 1883 killed a lot of cows due to lack of grass which did not grow because of not enough water. There were too many cows for the grass to be eaten as well.

In 1885, there was a really cold winter, with lots of blizzards which killed 15% of the cattle, that was the final blow to the cattle industry. Prices kept falling so did the demand.



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Examiner Comments

This is a clear example of a mid-Level 2 answer. The candidate narrates and describes changes to the cattle industry and has some accurate details.

Question 5

In part (a) there were a significant number of candidates who believed that the concept was a traditional belief held by the Plains Indians and the right to roam and hunt. At Level 1 candidates normally gave a simple piece of information or described the content of the Gash painting. Those that drew upon the symbolism of the Gash painting invariably moved into Level 2 and most of the responses in the mid-mark range described the religious aspects of the concept and the belief in white American superiority. Most of the responses that linked the concept with US government justification of its actions gained a Level 3 mark and included the belief that it would lead to national prosperity and liberty.

In part (b) a lot of responses were descriptions of the various ways in which the Plains Indians used buffalo. In Level 2, many candidates described how the shooting expeditions negatively impacted on the lives of Plains Indians and contributed to the end of nomadic way of life when there were 'no buffalo left'. At Level 2, many candidates also described the children being sent away to boarding school and also referred to the coming of the railroads and how these went through Indian hunting grounds.

At Level 3, factors in addition to the stimulus tended to include primarily the coming of the railroads, but also the role of the wars, the clashes between Indians and homesteaders and the impact of house building on the plains. Many also mentioned the broken promises made in various treaties and particularly noted the importance of the Black Hills to the Indians. Some candidates argued that conflicts between the US Army and the natives led to an intensification of persecution and negative behaviour towards the Plains Indians. Many candidates used the reservations to include other areas of traditional life ending such as religious rituals, and the lack of authority of previous heads of the tribes and medicine men. The strongest answers showed how this all led to increasing dependence on the US government and cemented the end of the traditional way of life. Level 4 answers from the outset stated the extent to which they believed the extermination of the buffalo was the main reason why the traditional way of life of the Plains ended and weighed up the role of other stated factors (normally the use of reservations, the coming of the railroads, or the US government) and sustained their analysis to reach their final judgement.

Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross in the box . If you change your mind, put a line through the box and then indicate your new question with a cross .

Chosen question number: **Question 5** **Question 6**

Manifest Destiny means that it is a god given right to fulfill your own ^{fulfill} destiny which pushed people West cause they believed it that they would have a better life in the West than the East.

The extermination of the buffalo was a big reason why the life of the Indians ^{ended} I ~~was~~ a ~~disagree~~

in saying that it is the main reason. I think
The extermination of the buffalo meant that
they couldn't eat it but I think the main reason
why the life of Indians ended is because of
reservations because one thing lead to another.
For example when they were in reservations they
had to wear the clothes that normal Americans
would wear also the Native Americans had
to change their religion to Christian which
meant they had to do things a Christian
^{would do.} Next, the Indian children had to go to
school which before reservations they would be
learning to hunt down buffalo.

Overall, I think that the extermination of
the ~~big~~ buffalo played a big part to the
end of the Indians but I think the reservations
was the main reason to the destruction of the
Indians because one bad thing lead to another.



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Examiner Comments

Part (a) is mid-Level 1 and 2 marks for 'God given' and 'pulled people'. Part (b) mid-Level 2, 6 marks. It is mainly a description of life on reservations. The support is accurate but it does not have the focus on the set question or sufficient development for Level 3.

Question 6

In part (a) there were very few Level 1 responses to the question. At Level 2 most candidates described the actual actions in counting coup or scalping and not wanting to take land or die in battle. There were however many responses at Level 3 where candidates had clearly seen the question's emphasis on attitudes and so explained why the Plains Indians took such actions such as the honour gained from counting coup or that losing your scalp would mean no life after death.

In part (b), Level 1 answers were very general comments about the lives of homesteaders and the difficulties they faced. Level 2 responses were descriptive accounts of homesteading and a list-like approach of the problems of ploughing, sowing, access to water, sod houses and the weather. Often the response described the changes to farming such as increasing use of machinery and the introduction of wind pumps but without an explanation of the improvements this made to the lives of homesteaders. At Level 3, there were explanations about other improvements to the lives of homesteaders such as the coming of the railroads. At Level 4, there were some excellent sustained analyses which weighed up the improvements made to the lives of homesteaders with new farming methods with the coming of railroads and the widespread benefits that brought to living on the Plains such as less isolation, more education and increasing trade.

Paper Summary

Observations based on the performance on this paper:

- Candidates need to be familiar with the entire specification in order to ensure that they can access question 2 which has no source or stimulus material.
- In order to achieve higher than Level 2, candidates' responses need to move beyond narrative and descriptive accounts with explanations which will, depending on the question, show awareness of causation, consequence, change, significance or key characteristics of what is identified in the question.
- Responses need to keep to any time frame given in the question and be focused on the actual question in the examination rather than a set response to a previously set question on the same topic area.

Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:

<http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx>

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