
A-LEVEL

History

Component 1K The making of a Superpower: USA, 1865–1975

Mark scheme

7042

June 2017

Version: 1.0 Final

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June 2017

A-level

Component 1K The making of a Superpower: USA, 1865–1975

Section A

- 01** Using your understanding of the historical context, assess how convincing the arguments in these three extracts are in relation to the American economy in the second half of the nineteenth century. **[30 marks]**

Target: AO3

Analyse and evaluate, in relation to the historical context, different ways in which aspects of the past have been interpreted.

Generic Mark Scheme

- L5:** Shows a very good understanding of the interpretations put forward in all three extracts and combines this with a strong awareness of the historical context to analyse and evaluate the interpretations given in the extracts. Evaluation of the arguments will be well-supported and convincing. The response demonstrates a very good understanding of context. **25-30**
- L4:** Shows a good understanding of the interpretations given in all three extracts and combines this with knowledge of the historical context to analyse and evaluate the interpretations given in the extracts. The evaluation of the arguments will be mostly well-supported, and convincing, but may have minor limitations of depth and breadth. The response demonstrates a good understanding of context. **19-24**
- L3:** Provides some supported comment on the interpretations given in all three extracts and comments on the strength of these arguments in relation to their historical context. There is some analysis and evaluation but there may be an imbalance in the degree and depth of comments offered on the strength of the arguments. The response demonstrates an understanding of context. **13-18**
- L2:** Provides some accurate comment on the interpretations given in at least two of the extracts, with reference to the historical context. The answer may contain some analysis, but there is little, if any, evaluation. Some of the comments on the strength of the arguments may contain some generalisation, inaccuracy or irrelevance. The response demonstrates some understanding of context. **7-12**
- L1:** **Either** shows an accurate understanding of the interpretation given in one extract only **or** addresses two/three extracts, but in a generalist way, showing limited accurate understanding of the arguments they contain, although there may be some general awareness of the historical context. Any comments on the strength of the arguments are likely to be generalist and contain some inaccuracy and/or irrelevance. The response demonstrates limited understanding of context. **1-6**
- Nothing worthy of credit. **0**

Indicative content

Note: This content is not prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels scheme.

Students must assess the extent to which the interpretations are convincing by drawing on contextual knowledge to corroborate and challenge the interpretation/arguments/views.

Extract A: In their identification of Brogan’s argument, students may refer to the following:

- that the USA was by 1900, the world’s leading industrial nation
- that it was catching up other countries in areas where it lagged behind, such as merchant shipping and, although a debtor nation, it was beginning to invest abroad
- that the success was due to its active population and vast resources more than to big business.

In their assessment of the extent to which the arguments are convincing, students may refer to the following:

- the USA’s abundance of natural resources, especially oil, was an integral reason for rapid growth
- the importance of mass immigration and rapid population growth, provided cheap, eager labour, many of whom were skilled with both technological and managerial experience
- students’ own knowledge might be used to challenge the claim that big business was less significant. The creation of corporations and business organisations, e.g. Rockefeller’s Standard Oil Company, enabled the US economy to expand efficiently
- contextual knowledge might be used to suggest that the extract is limited in that it does not refer to other key reasons for the growth of the economy, e.g. imperialism.

Extract B: In their identification of Morison, Commager and Leuchtenburg’s argument, students may refer to the following:

- that the creation of trusts and vast business organisations had been developing for half a century and reached its climax at the beginning of the twentieth century
- that the creation of trusts grew out of what were seen as the adverse effects of unrestricted competition leading to falling profits and prices
- that the movement began informally (‘gentlemen’s agreement’) but became increasingly formal with boards of trustees
- that the organisation of trusts, such as Standard Oil, led to huge fortunes.

In their assessment of the extent to which the arguments are convincing, students may refer to the following:

- the claim that the US economy came to be dominated by wealthy industrialists who were described as ‘robber barons’ is valid. Many of these companies merged to make vast combined enterprises linking manufacturing, railroads and shipping. One of the first trusts established in 1882 was John D Rockefeller’s Standard Oil Company. Rockefeller controlled 85% of all American oil production becoming the world’s first billionaire by 1913
- contextual knowledge might be used to explain precise methods used to eliminate competition, such as price fixing, which were used to force competitors out of business.

Others however, such as Carnegie, preferred to concentrate on production of good steel at lower cost than others

- contextual knowledge might also be used to argue the impact ‘robber barons’ had politically. Men such as Rockefeller were able to gain direct political influence, especially within the Republican Party, at the same time creating a backlash that led to the spread of socialist ideas and the organisation of labour into trades unions
- it should not be assumed that trusts were necessarily a bad thing. Some may argue that the creation of a monopoly of the oil industry through the setting up of the Standard Oil Company saved the industry from ruin.

Extract C: In their identification of Allen’s argument, students may refer to the following:

- that whilst industrial growth was indeed impressive, US farmers did not prosper to the same extent despite increases in output
- that the main causes of the depression in farm incomes were foreign competition and domestic over production
- that the fall in international prices increased the difficulties for farmers planning more complex technological methods of agriculture
- that high tariffs introduced by the US government had the effect of making goods dearer for farmers.

In their assessment of the extent to which the arguments are convincing, students may refer to the following:

- students’ own knowledge can be used to validate the claim that the average condition of the Plains’ farmer was such that many were barely able to feed themselves and their families
- contextual knowledge should be used to corroborate the reasons for foreign competition and over production
- it was also the case that in the decades after the Civil War the Republicans used tariffs to protect businesses from foreign competition. The McKinley Tariff Act (1890) may have protected American businesses from foreign competition but hurt American farmers who had to pay the increased price of imported farm equipment at the same time failing to address descending agricultural prices
- in these bust years of the late 1880s and early 1890, many hard working Plains’ farmers were almost in open revolt against big business and state and federal governments from which the Populist Party was formed in 1892.

- 02** To what extent had any progress made by African-Americans during Radical Reconstruction been lost by 1890? **[25 marks]**

Target: AO1

Demonstrate, organise and communicate knowledge and understanding to analyse and evaluate the key features related to the periods studied, making substantiated judgements and exploring concepts, as relevant, of cause, consequence, change, continuity, similarity, difference and significance.

Generic Mark Scheme

- L5:** Answers will display a very good understanding of the full demands of the question. They will be well-organised and effectively delivered. The supporting information will be well-selected, specific and precise. It will show a very good understanding of key features, issues and concepts. The answer will be fully analytical with a balanced argument and well-substantiated judgement. **21-25**
- L4:** Answers will display a good understanding of the demands of the question. It will be well-organised and effectively communicated. There will be a range of clear and specific supporting information showing a good understanding of key features and issues, together with some conceptual awareness. The answer will be analytical in style with a range of direct comment relating to the question. The answer will be well-balanced with some judgement, which may, however, be only partially substantiated. **16-20**
- L3:** Answers will show an understanding of the question and will supply a range of largely accurate information, which will show an awareness of some of the key issues and features, but may, however, be unspecific or lack precision of detail. The answer will be effectively organised and show adequate communication skills. There will be a good deal of comment in relation to the question and the answer will display some balance, but a number of statements may be inadequately supported and generalist. **11-15**
- L2:** The answer is descriptive or partial, showing some awareness of the question but a failure to grasp its full demands. There will be some attempt to convey material in an organised way, although communication skills may be limited. There will be some appropriate information showing understanding of some key features and/or issues, but the answer may be very limited in scope and/or contain inaccuracy and irrelevance. There will be some, but limited, comment in relation to the question and statements will, for the most part, be unsupported and generalist. **6-10**
- L1:** The question has not been properly understood and the response shows limited organisational and communication skills. The information conveyed is irrelevant or extremely limited. There may be some unsupported, vague or generalist comment. **1-5**
- Nothing worthy of credit. **0**

Indicative content

Note: This content is not prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels scheme.

Arguments supporting the view that any progress made by African-Americans during Radical Reconstruction had been lost by 1890 might include:

- the majority of African-Americans, whether in the North or the South, still lived in poverty by 1890
- Southern states were determined that African-Americans did not exercise their right to vote. Georgia for example introduced a tax of \$2 on citizens wanting to vote which most African-Americans simply could not afford
- the total domination of politics and government by the Democrats meant there was no prospect of opposing or changing segregation in the future
- many African-Americans continued to suffer violence at the hands of 'White Terror' groups in the South and the Jim Crow Laws which continued to make them second-class citizens.

Arguments challenging the view that any progress made by African-Americans during Radical Reconstruction had been lost by 1890 might include:

- legally, slavery was ended and the rights of African-Americans were guaranteed by the Constitution
- African-Americans formed their own churches, banks and insurance mutuals which continued to grow beyond 1890
- many African-Americans now owned their own land
- notable advances were made in schools and education. For example, a number of African-Americans became doctors and lawyers, and teachers who taught at black colleges continued to increase after the Reconstruction era.

Students may conclude that there were examples of progress made but that the situation for the majority of African-Americans was one of discrimination, especially in the South.

03 ‘US foreign policy in the years 1919 to 1941 was based on isolationism.’

Assess the validity of this view.

[25 marks]

Target: AO1

Demonstrate, organise and communicate knowledge and understanding to analyse and evaluate the key features related to the periods studied, making substantiated judgements and exploring concepts, as relevant, of cause, consequence, change, continuity, similarity, difference and significance.

Generic Mark Scheme

- L5:** Answers will display a very good understanding of the full demands of the question. They will be well-organised and effectively delivered. The supporting information will be well-selected, specific and precise. It will show a very good understanding of key features, issues and concepts. The answer will be fully analytical with a balanced argument and well-substantiated judgement. **21-25**
- L4:** Answers will display a good understanding of the demands of the question. It will be well-organised and effectively communicated. There will be a range of clear and specific supporting information showing a good understanding of key features and issues, together with some conceptual awareness. The answer will be analytical in style with a range of direct comment relating to the question. The answer will be well-balanced with some judgement, which may, however, be only partially substantiated. **16-20**
- L3:** Answers will show an understanding of the question and will supply a range of largely accurate information, which will show an awareness of some of the key issues and features, but may, however, be unspecific or lack precision of detail. The answer will be effectively organised and show adequate communication skills. There will be a good deal of comment in relation to the question and the answer will display some balance, but a number of statements may be inadequately supported and generalist. **11-15**
- L2:** The answer is descriptive or partial, showing some awareness of the question but a failure to grasp its full demands. There will be some attempt to convey material in an organised way, although communication skills may be limited. There will be some appropriate information showing understanding of some key features and/or issues, but the answer may be very limited in scope and/or contain inaccuracy and irrelevance. There will be some, but limited, comment in relation to the question and statements will, for the most part, be unsupported and generalist. **6-10**
- L1:** The question has not been properly understood and the response shows limited organisational and communication skills. The information conveyed is irrelevant or extremely limited. There may be some unsupported, vague or generalist comment. **1-5**
- Nothing worthy of credit. **0**

Indicative content

Note: This content is not prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels scheme.

Arguments supporting the view that US foreign policy in the years 1919 to 1941 was based on isolationism might include:

- isolationist feeling was strong in Congress, such as Senator Borah. Many politicians had been disillusioned by the First World War and wanted to make sure America did not get dragged into another European war reflected especially in the Neutrality Acts of the 1930s
- post-war isolationism was closely linked with American fears both about a communist revolution and that, 'America should be kept American'
- the clearest example of isolationism was the US rejection of Versailles and the League of Nations. This meant that the US did not involve itself in attempts made by the League to deter aggressors, such as Manchuria, Abyssinia and other developments on the 1930s
- Roosevelt had campaigned in the 1936 Presidential election, partly, on a platform of non-intervention in foreign wars. This was a popular political focus and a vote winner.

Arguments challenging the view that US foreign policy in the years 1919 to 1941 was based on isolationism might include:

- the Republican Party and its immediate post-war Presidents, Harding and Coolidge, did engage in foreign affairs to protect US economic issues, e.g. the continuation of the Open Door policy which favoured US trading interests
- there was significant US involvement in Latin America. US investment in Latin America doubled in the years 1924–29 from \$1.5 billion to \$3 billion. Military intervention also increased to protect these economic interests
- the USA saw the importance of ensuring stability in the Pacific dealing with the possibility that Japan may develop as a Pacific power. This necessitated US participation in naval controls. The Washington Naval Conferences clearly indicated that 'Normalcy' was not the sole motive in US foreign policy
- FDR skilfully moved the US from its isolationist position in the late 1930s. Fears that a Nazi controlled Europe would be bad for American trade, as well as a strategic threat, became increasingly important. In 1940 Roosevelt managed to persuade Congress to help Britain with 50 old First World War destroyers in return for naval bases in British colonies and to inaugurate Lend-Lease.

- 04** To what extent can the US policy of containment in Asia in the years 1945 to 1975 be described as a success? **[25 marks]**

Target: AO1

Demonstrate, organise and communicate knowledge and understanding to analyse and evaluate the key features related to the periods studied, making substantiated judgements and exploring concepts, as relevant, of cause, consequence, change, continuity, similarity, difference and significance.

Generic Mark Scheme

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- L4:** Answers will display a good understanding of the demands of the question. It will be well-organised and effectively communicated. There will be a range of clear and specific supporting information showing a good understanding of key features and issues, together with some conceptual awareness. The answer will be analytical in style with a range of direct comment relating to the question. The answer will be well-balanced with some judgement, which may, however, be only partially substantiated. **16-20**
- L3:** Answers will show an understanding of the question and will supply a range of largely accurate information, which will show an awareness of some of the key issues and features, but may, however, be unspecific or lack precision of detail. The answer will be effectively organised and show adequate communication skills. There will be a good deal of comment in relation to the question and the answer will display some balance, but a number of statements may be inadequately supported and generalist. **11-15**
- L2:** The answer is descriptive or partial, showing some awareness of the question but a failure to grasp its full demands. There will be some attempt to convey material in an organised way, although communication skills may be limited. There will be some appropriate information showing understanding of some key features and/or issues, but the answer may be very limited in scope and/or contain inaccuracy and irrelevance. There will be some, but limited, comment in relation to the question and statements will, for the most part, be unsupported and generalist. **6-10**
- L1:** The question has not been properly understood and the response shows limited organisational and communication skills. The information conveyed is irrelevant or extremely limited. There may be some unsupported, vague or generalist comment. **1-5**
- Nothing worthy of credit. **0**

Indicative content

Note: This content is not prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels scheme.

Arguments supporting the view that the US policy of containment in Asia proved to be a success in the years 1945 to 1975 might include:

- Truman's dispatch of the Seventh Fleet to the Taiwan Straits prevented a communist takeover in June 1950. Eisenhower's threat to use nuclear weapons during the First Taiwan Strait Crisis in 1954–55 led to a major climb down from the Chinese and ensured Taiwanese independence
- military domination of Japan by the USA and \$2.44 billion in Marshall aid helped remove the conditions in which communism could thrive. Japan emerged from the 1950s as a powerful economic partner with a political class that was naturally conservative
- America (with the help of their allies) 'rolled back' North Korean forces from South Korea
- communism failing to take hold in other Southeast Asian countries. Many communist movements such as the Malayan Emergency attempted to take over Southeast Asian countries which only stalled as the communist forces focused more in Vietnam.

Arguments challenging the view that US policy of containment in Asia proved to be a success in the years 1945 to 1975 might include:

- American aid to Kai-Shek's nationalists in the Chinese Civil War failed to prevent a communist victory in 1949. Mao subsequently declared the establishment of the People's Republic of China bringing the Cold War to Asia and increasing fears of further expansion in the region
- US forces may have saved South Korea from a communist takeover but at a cost of over 120,000 casualties and \$67 billion
- Eisenhower's financial support failed to prevent the French defeat at Dien Bien Phu. The following Geneva Accords established communist rule in the north of Vietnam under Ho Chi Minh
- two years after the ceasefire between the US and North Vietnam, Communists defeated the South Vietnamese armed forces and re-united Vietnam. Within months both Laos and Cambodia were also lost to communism.

Overall, the US policy of containment had varied results. With Mao Zedong's victory in 1949, it was clear the United States could not contain the spread of communism with military supplies and financial loans. In the case of Korea, direct military involvement had only limited success but the effort to contain the spread of communism in Vietnam was not only not successful, but a miserable, catastrophic failure.