

A LEVEL

Examiners' report

HISTORY A

H505

For first teaching in 2015

Y212/01 Summer 2019 series

Version 1

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Introduction

Our examiners' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on candidates' performance in the examinations. They provide useful guidance for future candidates. The reports will include a general commentary on candidates' performance, identify technical aspects examined in the questions and highlight good performance and where performance could be improved. The reports will also explain aspects which caused difficulty and why the difficulties arose, whether through a lack of knowledge, poor examination technique, or any other identifiable and explainable reason.

Where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report. A full copy of the question paper can be downloaded from OCR.

Paper Y212/01 series overview

Y212 is one of twenty four units for the revised A Level examination for GCE History. This unit tests an extended period of History of about one hundred years through a short answer essay and a traditional essay. The paper contains two questions, each having two parts, a short answer essay and a traditional essay and candidates have to answer both parts of one question.

To do well on the short essay question (a), candidates need to consider the significance or importance both issues, factors, individuals or events mentioned in relation to the question. Having analysed or explained both they must reach a supported judgement as to which is the most important or significant.

To do well on the traditional essay, candidates need to address the issue in the question, using detailed supporting knowledge. In order to reach the higher levels candidates will need to assess the issues they discuss and reach a supported judgement, at least in the conclusion.

<i>Candidates who did well on this paper generally did the following:</i>	<i>Candidates who did less well on this paper generally did the following:</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gave equal consideration to the two issues in the short answer essay • reached a developed and supported judgement as to which issue was more significant or important • linked their knowledge of the issues to the focus of the question • in answering the essay question, discussed at least two issues in depth • gave supporting detail that was both accurate and relevant to the question set, not just the topic • reached a supported judgement about the issue in the question • made a series of interim judgements about the issues discussed in relation to the question. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • considered only one of the issues or discussed one in a superficial way • produced a judgement that was not supported and was therefore assertion or a judgement that did not follow logically from the response • were unable to use their knowledge to address the issue in the question • showed a poor understanding of the major issues relevant to the essay • were unable to support their answer with relevant or accurate material • did not focus on the precise wording of the question • made unsupported comments about issues which were no more than assertions.

Question 1 (a)

1 (a) Which of the following was of greater importance in the growth of opposition to British rule in America?

- (i) The Proclamation Act (1763)
- (ii) The Stamp Act (1765)

Explain your answer with reference to both (i) and (ii).

[10]

This question was highly accessible and was generally answered well. Most candidates were familiar with the essential details of the two pieces of legislation and better answers had good evaluation of their relative impact. Factual details such as the timing of Pontiac's rebellion relative to the Proclamation Act and the repeal of the Stamp Act occasionally went astray but, on the whole, evaluative points were well supported with appropriate detail. Exemplar 1 focuses well on both factors, doing enough in terms of appropriate, relevant detail and evaluation to reach Level 5.

Exemplar 1

While the⁷ Proclamation Act of 1763 ~~was~~ angered colonists in an ideological way, it was the Stamp Act of 1765 that affected them economically and produced greater opposition.

⁷In 1763, after the Seven Years War, ~~the~~ King George III of Britain announced the Royal Proclamation Act, which restricted the westward movement of American colonists past the Appalachian mountains. This did produce a surge of opposition ~~to~~ among Americans, as it went against the American belief in 'Manifest destiny', a phrase that was later used to describe the belief that colonists were destined to settle in more westward areas of North America. This also raised tensions

between those in the colonies and native Americans, who were already settled in these lands, such as the Ohio valley. Americans were opposed to this restriction, as with the conclusion of the Seven Years' War, many believed, having fought on the side of Britain, that victory against France should permit them to occupy French territory.

However, in ~~1765~~ 1765, in order to ~~pay~~ reduce debts from the war, and to help pay ^{for} the colonies' defense, the British government introduced the Stamp Act. This aggravated Americans to a much greater extent than the Proclamation Act, as it affected the everyday lives of all Americans who now had to pay a stamp duty on regular goods such as legal documents or playing cards. The Stamp Act was the first direct tax on the 13 colonies by Britain, and was in opposition to the pre-Seven Years' War policy of 'Salutary Neglect'. This angered Americans, resulting in the boycott of British goods, and the Stamp Act Congress of 1765.

In conclusion, the Stamp Act of 1765 had much more significance than the Proclamation Act in the growth of ~~British~~ opposition to British rule. In comparison with the Stamp Act, the Royal Proclamation Act affected relatively few people.

only those living in western border regions and those who wished to move westward. In addition, the Stamp Act was the only factor that prompted strong, unified action on the part of the Americans, providing cause for the Stamp Act Congress. Finally, it can be argued that this congress was the first real opposition to British rule in the period, whereas the Proclamation Act ~~was~~ was just an unpopular policy. Therefore, the Stamp Act was of much greater importance.

Question 1 (b)

(b)* 'The regulation of trade was the most important cause of tension between Britain and the colonists in the period before 1763.' How far do you agree? [20]

Stronger responses had a command of detail, both on trade and other matters, such as conflict with the French and embryonic political differences, producing well-developed lines of reasoning that often concluded that tensions before 1763 can easily be exaggerated. Weaker responses, short of relevant material, strayed beyond 1763 in search of material that caused tensions, for which they could get no credit. Events before the end of 1763, such as the end of the Seven Years' War and the Proclamation Act were admissible, although they were not central to the broad chronological sweep of the question. The exemplar below highlights a detailed and thoughtful Level 6 response.

Exemplar 2

'The regulation of trade was the most important cause of tension' between the colonist and Britain before 1763. This statement postulates a weakening relationship before 1763 with regulation of trade to be the most significant factor. I would argue although it may have angered middle class merchants the most important cause of tension was that the colonists

appeared to be showing signs of independence as they didn't require military dependence of Britain.

The regulation of trade singled Britain to be the only trading partner Americans had. The Mercantilist system placed American trade to be regulated and limited as in order to trade elsewhere the trading ships must be British ships with exports having first stopped off at Britain to be checked then arrive at its destination. In addition, colonial imports only arrived from Britain almost limiting the goods they received whilst further regulated trade as Britain chose what was being traded.

What further angered merchants as it limited revenue and trade was chosen to be exported merchants only sold British goods. Therefore, pirating or smuggling in and selling different goods was illegal however, very common, the combination act of 1763 placed restrictions on searches of merchant ships 12 miles out of sea.

Whilst also deeming piracy to be illegal and any merchant caught selling smuggled goods faced court and imprisonment with also a possible exile. This created tension

between merchants although only limited to them.

What I would argue caused tension was the lack of dependency America needed with economic boom within the colonies. Free trade would have uplifted America as the invasion and win over Quebec in Canada proved they weren't relevant of Britain. They wanted to be left to their own devices. Although this desire was limited to merchants and colonists as ties were still very strong. The pride of being British showed no fall before 1763.

Question 2 (a)

- 2 (a) Which of the following was of greater importance in the defeat of the British forces in America?
- (i) The Saratoga campaign
 - (ii) The siege of Yorktown

Explain your answer with reference to both (i) and (ii).

[10]

This question produced a good number of excellent, assured responses with candidates obviously familiar with the flow of the war and where these two turning points could be placed. Judgement, in terms of which was of greater importance, could be argued either way. The relatively rare weaker responses either suffered from chronological confusion or did not appreciate the importance of the colonists gaining allies as a consequence of Saratoga. Exemplar 3 is typical of competent responses to this question, having the basic details under control, combined with effective evaluation and judgement (Level 5).

Exemplar 3

The Saratoga campaign was a hugely impactful battle during the American war of independence and was instrumental to British defeat at the hands of the Americans. Occurring in October, 1777, ~~was~~ the Continental Army was able to defeat the British Army, being led by Burgoyne in what can be considered the most important turning point of the war. Burgoyne ~~was~~ had the intention of combining his forces with General Howe's, but the latter's last minute decision to capture Philadelphia meant that Burgoyne was without the reinforcement he needed to successfully move south into the USA. Saratoga can be considered the most important battle, as the number of prisoners of war ~~to~~ America were able to claim, as well as deaths were enormous, with

6000 soldiers being removed from the war effort. Moreover, it was indicative of some of the British general's weaknesses, as poor judgement and communication prevented what could have easily been a British victory. Saratoga was clearly a turning point in its consequences as well, as the continental Army had proven itself formidable and this encouraged French involvement in the war at a later date, making it clearly incredibly impactful towards the British defeat in America.

The siege of Yorktown was the final battle of the American Revolution, occurring in 1781, two years before the war was definitively ended. It was a combined force of the British, French and Americans versus the British Army, and was a big enough victory for the British to decide to surrender their forces in America and leave the colony alone. Yorktown, like Saratoga saw a capture of another British Army, and with dwindling forces, a British victory was looking less and less likely. Yorktown was impactful towards British defeat, as this was the conflict that saw that Britain surrendered, and a British victory against the French-American

might have meant an elongated war. However, however, Yorktown was the final victory in a string of American wins, meaning it was highly likely the war was coming to an end already. Moreover, the battle itself was likely to have been lost by the British considering the forces against them, making it impactful but inevitable. Therefore, it is ~~not~~ was not the most important to British defeat in America.

In conclusion, the Saratoga campaign was the most important factor contributing towards the defeat of British forces in America. The siege of Yorktown was doubtlessly important, but the British loss in both this conflict, as well as in ~~sub~~ the colonies as a whole seemed inevitable for a while after losing multiple battles in a row, which lessens its overall significance ~~as~~ in the eventual British defeat. Moreover, the French were incredibly important in the victory at Yorktown, and they only joined the war in 1780 after a hugely successful American win against the British during Saratoga in ~~the~~ 1787. Not only were huge numbers of soldiers taken out of the conflict in America, by encouraging the French to join the war, the British opposition became less formidable. In 1778, 43% of the entire British army were in America,

with 65% of the navy, but after France became another war contender, the army shrank to 13% in 1780 and 29% ~~to~~ for the navy. Therefore, it can be seen that the battle of Saratoga had consequences that contributed to British defeat at Yorktown and in America, making it the most important factor.

Question 2 (b)

(b)* Assess the reasons why it was so difficult to find a successor to Washington in 1796. [20]

Candidates who were confident of the material required for this question wrote convincing, well-reasoned and well-informed responses. Appreciation of Washington's unmatched prestige and deftness in office was combined with a good understanding of the divisive issues emerging in the 1790s and of the leading personalities that came into conflict. Exemplar 4 is a strong developed response with good discussion of the main factors, placed at the upper end of Level 5.

Exemplar 4

Washington... announcing his... ~~that~~
stepping down... from... presidency would
make a... convention... that, with
the... exception... of... Roosevelt, no
president... would... serve... more... than
two... terms... -... until... it... is... made... into
a... constitutional... amendment. Some
argue... that... the... sheer... effect... that
Washington... as... an... individual... had
on... America... that... made... it... so

had to find a successor
 in 1796, or indeed the ~~climax~~
 divisions in American society
 at the time. However, I
 argue that the bitter rivalry
 between the Federalists and
 the Republicans was the most
 important reason, the fact that
 Washington seemed irreplaceable
 definitely playing a part, but
 ultimately the political parties'
 inability to cooperate resulted in
 this difficulty.

The Founding Fathers at the
 Philadelphia Convention definitely
 did not desire political parties
 to form so quickly or even at
 all, but they stemmed from the
 initial ratification of the
 Constitution. Indeed, the Federalists
 strongly supported it and the
 anti-Federalists (later the Republicans)
 were not satisfied with its focus
 on federal government sovereignty.
 This is until Madison introduces
 a Bill of Rights that was
 ratified in 1791. However, the
 parties only grew further and
 further apart and one of

The main reason for this is the disputes between Hamilton of the Federalists and Madison and Jefferson of the Republicans. They were ~~not~~ angry at Hamilton's policies as ~~Treasurer~~ Secretary to the Treasury - for example his first report on public credit required the southern states (typical Republican strongholds) to pay the debt of northern states, as well as Madison's fury at Hamilton's use of the doctrine of 'implied powers' to create a national bank. Washington desperately did not want to take sides but saw the Federalists as reasonable and the Republicans as talking nonsense. This was only further exacerbated by the issue over Western land policy - which again saw Washington taking Hamilton's side. This resulted in Republican propaganda in 1796 depicting Washington as a senile old man who did not have the priority of the American's wellbeing in mind.

This division and era of hyperpartisanship, this, is the main reason as to why a successor cannot be chosen, as no one wanted to see their opposition win. Moreover, Hamilton actually preferred Jefferson to Aaron Burr due to their complete contrasting views on government. It is this that creates the deadlock in 1796, nothing else is nearly as significant.

Some argue that internal divisions in American society were an important factor in the difficulty of finding Washington's successor in 1796. Social tensions had been high ever since Dickinson's initial drafting of the Articles of Confederation. This led to a growth in Conservative Nationalism, a belief that power should be vested in the hands of the wealthy and well-educated and supported much of the revolution's central ideology; it is clear then why a successor would be hard to elect if this way of thinking was popular. Additionally, these high social tensions are

emphasised in rebellions such as Shays's rebellion of 1787 and the Whiskey rebellion of 1793. Although Shays's rebellion was due to the failures of the Articles of Confederation and British merchants demanding specie, it is still important as it reinforces the height of social tensions and discontent in the states at the time - a product of which would have been apathy at Washington and those surrounding him. The way he handled the 'Whiskey Boyz' also suggested that he was willing to act like a military dictator and confirmed the fears of radicals, etc, though he let off all of them with a pardon. When considering internal American decisions, the outbreak of the French Revolution also has immense value as it highlights the divide within the nation while the Republicans and their supporters sympathised with the French, reminding them

of their own revolution, the Federalists and their supporters were horrified - confirming their fears of something taking place within America. This does prove that the lack of balance in America was substantial enough to be a threat to the choice of Washington's successor; but I argue that these divisions simply reflect the political parties in government. This is why their existence is the main reason as to why it was so difficult to find a successor, as both America, and the ones representing them in government, were completely divided.

Another reason as to why it seemed the task of replacing Washington seemed impossible is due to ~~the~~ the individual effect he had on the colonies and the nation. He was instrumental in America's victory over the most formidable army in the world at the time,

and some ~~else~~ argue that without him, their independence would not have been secure. This is further reflected in the fact that ~~that~~ they named their capital city after Washington and later a new state! This underlines their gratitude towards George Washington and what he had done for the nation - no one else came close to the sheer effect that he had and thus created substantial difficulty when they have to live up to his reputation. This is not aided by the fact that he originated from Virginia, the biggest colony and state, and so had a massive support base to begin with. He was a role model to all Americans and quintessentially a national hero. Although this did contribute to the difficulty of finding a successor, it still had to be done. What I mean by this is that without the divisions of political parties, they could

have chosen a successor with
ease but because there were
so many disputes, this is
what had a massive impact
on how hard it was to
replace Washington - both as a
leader and a national treasure.

To conclude, it is clear that
the political party divide,
the lack of balance in American
society and Washington's
reputation were the reasons as to
why it was so hard to locate
an individual successor. The
vice president was the immediate
choice but the issue of
political parties is what
restricts presidential candidates
for years to come, meaning
it is the most significant
factor, with his reputation
contributing to it.

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