

**A LEVEL**

**Examiners' report**

# **HISTORY A**

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**H505**

For first teaching in 2015

**Y212/01 Summer 2022 series**

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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. A selection of candidate answers is also provided. 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 and the mark scheme can be downloaded from OCR.

### Advance Information for Summer 2022 assessments

To support student revision, advance information was published about the focus of exams for Summer 2022 assessments. Advance information was available for most GCSE, AS and A Level subjects, Core Maths, FSMQ, and Cambridge Nationals Information Technologies. You can find more information on our [website](#).

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## 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.

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

### Key point for candidates – look at dates in questions

Think really carefully about any dates given in questions and what this means for the areas that may be under discussion.

## Question 1 (a)

1 (a) Which of the following had a greater impact on the strength of Britain's position in America?

(i) The War of Austrian Succession

(ii) The Seven Years War

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

[10]

Most candidates chose this question because of 1(b) and were not always on top of the material needed for this sub-question. There were several instances of muddling details between the two wars but stronger responses appreciated the much greater impact of (ii).

A surprisingly common omission was the fact that France was so heavily defeated in (ii) it lost Canada, although all the better responses appreciated this.

### Key point for candidates – distinguish between factors

Distinguish carefully between the two factors and know details like dates, consequences etc.

## Question 1 (b)\*

(b)\* To what extent was American unity the reason for the British defeat in the American Revolution 1774–1783?

[20]

Many candidates were able to measure American unity in various ways against the other decisive factors in 1774–83, most commonly, British deficiencies and foreign intervention.

Weaker responses were less able to link these factors or suffered from omissions or confusion regarding key events like Saratoga.

Exemplar 1 is a good example of a high level (Level 6) response; it is accurate, well organised and has a sustained judgement.

## Exemplar 1

1 b)	<p>             The American Unity undoubtedly played an important role in the defeat of the British because of the effects it had on the early stages in the war seeing many early victories. However, another contributing factor in the failure of the British was especially between generals and Parliament. Above all, the most important reason for the defeat of the British was in fact foreign involvement in the war in particular France because of sheer numbers France provided the colonists with.           </p> <p>             American Unity was an important reason for the failure of the British as it created a nationwide war effort which created a tough opposition to British forces. Firstly, as a result of Washington's capture of Fort Mifflin (first military success), spread the war outside of Massachusetts resulting in the inspiration of the colonists. This proved to be significant as this united front was encouraged over 100,000 colonists to fight for local militias at some point in the war which significantly hindered Cornwallis' campaign in the south as he was unable to maintain land that he captured. Furthermore, the unification of colonists along with victories at Trenton and Princeton, reduced loyalist support in particular in New Jersey which discouraged support of the British. However, American unity was not the most important           </p>
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and sole reason for the defeat of the British ~~because~~ because of the role of the foreign involvement for instance Von Steuben from Prussia who was more significant in training the Continental army to become a formidable fighting force.

The most important reason for the defeat of the British in the American Revolution was undoubtedly French involvement. Firstly, the victory ~~of~~ in the battle of Ushant in 1778 ensured and solidified French provision of equipment, soldiers and ships as Britain were unable to prevent them because of the naval battle in the English Channel. Furthermore, as a result of this battle, France were able to provide ~~to~~ the colonies with 11,000 soldiers along with 63 warships which ~~contribute~~ its importance was made apparent in the period leading up to Yorktown. The French navy transporting 3,000 soldiers to create a total force of 16,000 in Yorktown to fight against 7,000 of Cornwallis' men resulted in victory for the small significant battle of the conflict further suggesting that it was French intervention that was most important. Furthermore, foreign ~~with~~ involvement as a whole proved to be essential at diverting British attention elsewhere with French and Spanish attacks on the West Indies and Gibraltar. This was significant as it reduced British naval activity of 63% in 1777 down to 13% in



1781 & in the colonies. Therefore of ~~which~~ <sup>which</sup> ~~French~~ <sup>French</sup> involvement in particular French intervention was more significant in British defeat because of the impact it had on colonial victories such as Yorktown 1781 but also because it diverted attention elsewhere.

The final factor leading to the British defeat was the failure of the British an especially miscommunication between generals Burgoyne, Clinton and Howe in the Saratoga campaign. Lack of reinforcement from New York resulted in Burgoyne's surrender, 5000 British soldiers taken as prisoners, but most importantly led to French entry into the war. Furthermore early conflict in particular the Battle of Bunker Hill resulted in 1/3 of the total deaths of British commanders occurring at the beginning of the conflict along with over 1000 casualties from a force of 2000. This was escalating as it led to increased unity amongst the colonists because of victories which led to further victories in other major battles. Lastly, failure of the British parliament and lack of political will power after 1781 to continue fighting the colonists ultimately contributed to their own defeat. However, the lack of will power came about because Britain wanted to preserve other imperial interests such as colonies in West Indies which are threatened by France. So it could be argued that without French pressure elsewhere diverting Britain's attention, Britain could have maintained a significant



amount of troops and ships in the colonies. Therefore, whilst British failures were important as it led to colonial victory and unity because of heroism shown by the Continental army, it was because of the French that the British were defeated because they diverted their army and navy elsewhere to protect other imperial interests.

In conclusion, American unity was a significant reason in the defeat of the British because of the large number of patriots that fought in the army and as militiamen leading to victories in many battles and preventing significant British victories. However it wasn't the sole reason. Other factors such as British failures through miscommunication between commanders and lack of political will power led to many significant defeats. Furthermore, foreign involvement in particular from the French heavily contributed to colonial victories for instance Yorktown, but also diverted British attention elsewhere.

## Question 2 (a)

**2 (a)** Which of the following was more important in the decision of the American colonies to declare their independence?

**(i)** Economic factors

**(ii)** Ideology

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

**[10]**

For the minority that chose Question 2, part (a) was generally well done. A common approach was to associate economic factors with disputes over taxation and ideology with the ideas of John Locke, Thomas Paine and various Founding Fathers. Either factor could successfully be held to be more important depending on the candidate's perspective.

Exemplar 2 is a response marked in Level 5 that treats both factors effectively, despite one dubious statistic, and reaches a substantiated judgement. Even better responses might refer to the insignificance of economic considerations in the actual Declaration of Independence.

## Exemplar 2

2	a	<p>Economic factors such as the Tea Act of 1773 and the Stamp Act of 1765 played a significant role in the decision of the colonies to declare independence. However, new ideological ideas and trends also set about the logical basis of a revolution and independence. Overall though, while ideology was important, economic factors were more so as they started the breakdown of relations with the British.</p> <p>Firstly in regards to economic factors, key acts such as the Stamp Act introduced new taxation that potentially hindered the colonies. The Stamp Act imposed a tax duty on over 50 printed items, from playing cards to stamps. This was the first tax of its kind, and swayed from the previous laissez-faire approach that the British shared with the colonies. This was the first major source of tension between the colonies and British, playing a significant part in the journey to independence. Furthermore though, the Tea Act of 1773 played an even larger role. Following Britain's decision to trade tea from India for cheap, and <del>not just</del> on the basis of profit <del>set to</del> essentially ruin the tea industry in the colonies, the Boston Tea Party occurred where 40 tonnes of tea was thrown into the harbour. In response, Britain took away the governor and assembly of Massachusetts - evoking direct rule upon the colony. <sup>until the tax was paid for</sup> For many, this was one of the last nails in the coffin, with <del>the</del> ideas such as 'no taxation without representation' already flowing, direct rule became arguably the</p>
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greatest sticking point when the colonies declared independence in 1776.

However, ideology also played a significant role. Firstly, the liberal ideas of John Locke in 'The Two Treatises of Government' (1690) was a significant aspect of developing thought in the colonies. Locke spoke of free market economics, limited government and fair representation; none of which the colonies enjoyed. While relations were strong by 1763, these ideas weren't too strongly resonated amongst the colonies, but by 1776 with the revolution underway and after direct rule imposed by Britain, these ideas became a lot more important. Thomas Paine's 'Common Sense' (1776) was also largely significant. Published shortly before the Declaration of Independence, Paine's pamphlet had a readership of 2000,000 within 2 weeks. The pamphlet spoke of the ideals of republicanism and was said to have a huge influence on the Founding Fathers - particularly Washington and Jefferson. Thus, this book may have had a direct impact upon the signing of the Declaration in 1776.

Overall, whilst ideology set the grounds for which independence was justified, through ideas of liberalism and republicanism, without the negative impact of economic acts like the Tea and Stamp Act, the colonies would never have rebelled. Therefore, it is fairly justified that while both factors played hugely significant roles on the road to independence, economic factors were of greater importance for the damage they caused to relations.

## Question 2 (b)\*

**(b)\*** How successful were the British in achieving hegemony in America in the period from 1740 to 1765? **[20]**

This question was answered effectively by those candidates who had a clear grasp of 'hegemony' and could break this down into considering the component parts of the relationship between Britain and the colonies.

Another effective approach was to recognise a watershed in 1763 in considering the period 1740 to 1765, often suggesting that British hegemony, however convincing it might appear on a map, was seriously under threat once the war against the French and Spanish was won.

### Key point for candidates

Take stock of the dates in the question so that a nuanced view of hegemony can be reached.



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