

**GCSE (9-1)**

**Examiners' report**

# **HISTORY B**

## **(SCHOOLS HISTORY PROJECT)**

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**J411**

For first teaching in 2016

**J411/73 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 73 series overview

Paper 73 is The Making of America, 1789–1900.

To perform well on the Period Study, candidates need to display an understanding of an 'unfolding narrative' across a broad chronological period and to select appropriate material from this in order to analyse a series of questions across the examination. These skills focus on Assessment Objectives 1 and 2, demonstrating knowledge and understanding, as well as explaining and analysing historical events.

Candidates' scripts spanned a wide range of ability. It was clear that many candidates had been well prepared and demonstrated an understanding of the 'broad sweep' of this specification. Marks were awarded across the entire mark range for all five questions.

The overwhelming majority of candidates understood the rubric of the question paper and chose either to answer Question 4 or Question 5.

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>• provided short – often one word – valid responses to Questions 1(a), (b) and (c), allowing them to spend most of the examination dealing with the higher mark tariff questions (Questions 2-5)</li> <li>• managed their time effectively, balancing their responses proportionally to the mark allocations for each of the questions (especially important for Question 4 or Question 5, depending on which of those optional question the candidate chose)</li> <li>• focused Question 2 around a clear second order concept (or concepts), opening up the higher levels of the mark scheme</li> <li>• established clear explanatory links back to the issues in the questions (Questions 3 and Questions 4 or 5)</li> <li>• paid close attention to the date ranges in Questions 2-5</li> <li>• had a clear grasp of the need to offer material that supports <i>and</i> challenges the statement in Question 4 or Question 5.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provided relatively long responses to Questions 1(a), (b) and (c) or gave more than one response to these questions (when only the first can be credited)</li> <li>• offered only a narrative response to Question 2 without any sense of analysing a second order concept</li> <li>• described material rather than analysing it by providing clear explanatory links back to the question (Questions 3 and Question 4 or 5)</li> <li>• left insufficient time to offer a fully developed response to Question 4 or Question 5</li> <li>• overlooked the date range for one or more of questions and so offered material that was not relevant to the question set.</li> </ul>

## Question 1 (a)

1 (a) Identify **one** feature of the Plains Indians' religious beliefs.

[1]

Questions 1(a), (b) and (c) are intended to give candidates an accessible 'start' to the examination, and only very short – often one word – responses are required. Only the first response from a candidate can be considered for credit (unless alternatives offered are crossed out) and while it was not common, some candidates did offer multiple responses. If the first response was incorrect, a subsequent response – even if correct – could not be credited.

For Question 1(a), most candidates could offer a valid example. These were often focused on Plains Indians' rituals or their spiritual attitudes to land. Responses that focused simply on aspects of the Plains Indians' way of life (such as the importance of the buffalo) could not be credited unless there was a spiritual element to this.

## Question 1 (b)

(b) Name **one** state that fought on the Union side in the Civil War.

[1]

Most candidates were able to offer a valid state – with New York and Maine being very frequent – though some offered examples of states that seceded or identified territories rather than states (such as Washington). These were not credited.

## Question 1 (c)

(c) Give **one** example of a cow town that grew in the 1860s and 1870s.

[1]

Although Abilene was by far the most common valid example credited, examiners approached this question with some leniency and any example of a large or small settlement that could validly be considered a 'cow town' was credited. Some candidates gave examples of US states rather than a town, city or settlement and these responses could not be credited.

## Question 2

- 2 Write a clear and organised summary that analyses the way of life of Plains Indians between 1877 and 1900.  
Support your summary with examples.

[9]

Candidates' responses to Question 2 overall demonstrated that many centres have clearly worked to develop effective techniques of approaching Question 2. It is possible to structure responses to Question 2 around a range of 'second order concepts' such as cause, change or consequence, and for this question candidates often organised their material around changes across the period. Examiners were asked to read responses in their entirety before deciding on which second order concept(s) a candidate was attempting to analyse, though many responses made this clear in their opening lines. Responses spanning two second order concepts were not uncommon. One such valid approach for this question was to offer a paragraph analysing how the Plains Indians' way of life had changed during this period, followed by a paragraph analysing the consequences of that change. Examiners looked to credit material that analysed these second order concepts in Level 2 (for the first instance) and Level 3 (for the second and any subsequent instances). Centres are encouraged to look at the indicative content in the mark scheme for a range of valid approaches.

While many strong responses were seen, some candidates could not go beyond Level 1 as their responses were merely a narrative of events in the period (commonly reservation life, the Dawes Act and the ghost dancers) without any sense of analysing a second order concept. Some responses were not rooted in the period (see 'Advice to centres' below) and it was difficult to credit these beyond the bottom mark of Level 1.

### Advice to centres

A small but notable minority of candidates provided responses which – while relevant to the specification – did not cover the time period specified in the question itself. Candidates should be encouraged to read the question carefully and take note of the date range. Responses rooted in the wrong period (for example 1861-1877) or that wrote about the Plains Indians in general terms without any sense of the period 1877-1900 were difficult to credit.

## Exemplar 1

2	<p>My focus for this summery is the change and continuity of the way of life of Plains Indians between 1877 and 1900.</p>
	<p>One way which their way of life changed was their use of resources. In 1877, plains tribes like the Lakota Sioux were heavily reliant on Buffalo for their way of life, as they used it to build tipis, as food, as clothing, to create weapons and many other things. However by 1900, the Buffalo had been hunted almost to extinction and there were only 85 Buffalo left alive. This changed the way of life of Plains Indians, as their most important resource had become virtually extinct.</p>
	<p>Another way which the way of life of Plains Indians between 1877 and 1900 was their use of land. In 1877, the Sioux tribes were nomadic, and owned a huge amount of land as a tribe, which they travelled around following the migration patterns of the Buffalo.</p>
	<p>However, by 1900, most of the Plains tribes were living in reservations, as a result of the Dawes Act passed by the friends of the Indians. This was a major change, as they now owned much less land and could not continue their nomadic lifestyle.</p>

		One more way in which the <del>the</del> way of life of Plains Indians changed between 1877 and 1900 was the <del>relationship with the</del> <del>Americans</del> the change in their culture and upbringing. In 1877, young Native Americans would learn to fight and were educated about tribal history, but due to the boarding schools opened by the friends of the Indians, Native children were now educated about European history and were taught English. This changed their way of life as now the younger Plains Indians were not involved in their culture.
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Exemplar 1 shows a candidate response based very clearly around the 'second order concept' of change. The first short opening paragraph is not strictly required but is helpful in showing the candidate's reasoning. Each subsequent paragraph provides a clear sense of the Plains Indians' way of life before the change analysed, followed by an example of what then changed. The misconception over the Dawes Act does not restrict the candidate being credited in Level 3 by the end of that paragraph. This response comfortably reaches the top of Level 3.

### Question 3

- 3 Why did many homesteaders find it difficult to make a life on the Plains in the period 1861–1877? Explain your answer. [10]

Question 3 requires candidates to offer explanations relating to the subject of the question (in this case why homesteaders' lives on the Plains were difficult between 1861 and 1877). Two such explanations are sufficient to reach the top level. Examiners were looking for explicit links back to the issue in the question in order to credit candidates for their first explanation (Level 4) and their second and subsequent ones (Level 5).

Candidates' responses need not be lengthy; credit in Level 3 can be given for identification of a precise issue that created difficulties for homesteaders, with a little development of this followed by an explicit link back to the question moving the response towards explanation. Centres are encouraged to study the indicative content in the mark scheme which demonstrates a number of ways this could be achieved.

Most candidates had a good understanding of homesteaders and the issues they faced - examiners credited anything valid. Although many candidates focused effectively on the question, some offered examples of how homesteaders overcame the challenges they faced which was not relevant to the question. Other candidates restricted themselves to describing the lives of homesteaders and the settlement of the Plains (Level 2) without a focus on the difficulties they faced in doing so. A small minority of candidates confused homesteaders with the Plains Indians, and it was difficult to credit such responses.



Exemplar 2

3	<p>Homesteaders found it difficult to make a life on the plains as the land was <del>to</del> hard to farm. The land on the plains was rocky, dry and had large <del>size</del> roots that made it hard to dig and broke their tools when they <del>tried</del> tried digging. This made it hard to farm and made life difficult as it took a lot of effort to make a life on the plains.</p>
	<p>Another reason Homesteaders found it difficult to make a living was locust swarms. locust swarms in the summer would attack some homesteaders and eat all the crops. This made it difficult to make a life on the plains as it would destroy their crops and they could starve and have nothing to eat.</p>
	<p>Another reason homesteaders found it difficult to make a living was the lack of wood and water. This made life difficult on the plains as they had to dig deep holes to find water in the ground and had to <del>find</del> build houses with blocks of mud as they didn't have enough wood.</p>

Exemplar 2 is a good example of explicit links being made to the question set in order to arrive at explanation. In each paragraph a precise issue facing homesteaders is identified (a little vaguer in the last paragraph) and the main thrust of each paragraph is an analysis of why this identified issue made life difficult for homesteaders. This response reaches the top level by the end of the second paragraph.

## Question 4\*

- 4\* How far do you agree that Reconstruction was a failure between 1865 and 1877?  
Give reasons for your answer.

[18]

Question 4 is optional; candidates can choose to answer this or Question 5. On this paper, Question 4 was by far the most popular choice. Most candidates who offered a response to it had a clear understanding of what Reconstruction was and so were able to offer at least a description of relevant events and reach Level 2.

Identifying valid reasons for the success or failure of Reconstruction was also credited in Level 2, but candidates could then develop this material with an explicit link back to the question to explain why the issue led to the success – or failure – of Reconstruction. This was the ‘test’ examiners applied to candidates’ responses; a positive or negative comment on the event being identified or described was insufficiently focused to be credited as explanation. Responses therefore had to come back to the issue of Reconstruction – the focus of the question – for explanation to be credited.

One such explanation of either success or failure allowed candidates to access Level 3, with two explanations moving the response into Level 4. At Level 5, candidates offered three explanations, providing there was some balance across success and failure, and those who offered four explanations with some balance could access Level 6. The final mark in Level 6 was reserved for those candidates who could offer a ‘clinching argument’; most likely through a comparative judgement (for example the assessment that the successes of ‘Radical Reconstruction’ were later unravelled).

Many candidates were able to construct sound explanations and so were able to reach the higher levels. Some candidates cited material that was rooted outside of the period regarding issues such as segregation or Plessy v Ferguson (which was confused with the Supreme Court decision in the Slaughterhouse Cases of 1873) - it was difficult to credit those parts of responses. A few focused their responses around general societal change encompassing Native Americans and conditions in the North and again these elements in responses were difficult to credit. Another small minority of candidates misinterpreted the question and wrote about economic issues.

As with Question 3, the key skill required to access the higher levels was that of explanation. Centres are encouraged to work with their candidates on developing this technique of providing an explicit link back to the issue in the question. The indicative content of the mark scheme provides several examples of such links across Levels 3, 4, 5 and 6.

## Question 5\*

5\* 'In the period 1830–1838 the indigenous people responded to white settlement in the east with peaceful methods.'

How far do you agree?

Give reasons for your answer.

[18]

Much of the general advice provided in the commentary to Question 4 also applies to Question 5; candidates reaching Levels 3 and higher were offering one or more explanations showing explicitly why the methods used by indigenous people were peaceful or violent (and so providing analytical links back to the question). Centres are encouraged to look at the indicative content in Levels 3 through 6 of the mark scheme, which give several examples of these explanatory links.

Question 5 was less frequently attempted by candidates, and in general less successfully so than for Question 4. Although some candidates were able to offer valid examples of the actions of indigenous people in the east and provide analytical comment showing why those actions were peaceful or violent, others offered material of less relevance to the question. Commonly, this was material that was outside of the period of the question and/or related to the Plains Indians rather than the 'Five Civilised Tribes' of the east. Some candidates confused the term 'indigenous people' with African Americans. Responses like these were difficult to credit. With this in mind, the article referred to in the 'OCR support' box below might be of some help to centres and candidates.

## Exemplar 3

Do Immediately after the Indian removal act in 1830, peaceful methods can be seen to be used to respond to the eviction that faced them. In 1831, the Cherokee were forced into taking the state of Georgia to the supreme court - arguing that their rights as an independent group were being violated. This method of response clearly shows the statement 'indigenous people responded to white settlement in the east with peaceful methods' to be correct. The use of the legal system was peaceful - no violence or physical conflict occurred and therefore it can be seen as peaceful. However, although the judge ruled in favour of the Cherokee - the judge ruled that the government could do what was best for the Native Americans. This could be seen as the trigger point to the violent methods that occurred afterwards. The rights of Native Americans would not be held peacefully, and therefore they were forced into violence.

In 1834, the Seminoles second war against the US government began. This war can be seen to be the start of the Native Americans violent methods of response - this opposes the statement peaceful methods were used. After the ruling in the supreme court in 1831 it was clear violent methods lost to the US government and were forced into moving further west as the Indian removal act said. The war, costing the US government \$4 million, showed that the indigenous people were using violence to respond to white settlement. The cost of the war - and its duration - show the war fought between the Seminoles and the government was extreme and catastrophically damaging to both sides in the war. As previously stated the Indigenous peoples method of response grew increasingly brutal as the period progressed. By the end of the second Seminole War anti-Indigenous feeling had become irreversible in the east. Peaceful methods to respond to white settlement were no longer optional amongst the Native Americans, negotiations or treaties were certain to be denied. Therefore showing the statement to be incorrect in saying they responded with just 'peaceful methods'.

This section of a response to Question 5 demonstrates two clearly explained examples; one for peaceful methods, and one for violent. In each case, a clear link back to the question is made to show why the action was peaceful (for the Cherokee) or violent (for the Seminole). These explanatory links are made long before the end of each paragraph; much of the later material in each paragraph would not be required for explanation to be credited. This candidate was ultimately awarded the top of Level 5 (for three explanations with some balance) and this portion of the response as a 'stand-alone' would have been awarded the top of Level 4 (12 marks).

### OCR support



A significant proportion of this specification examines the indigenous people of North America, their way of life and how contact with white Americans affects them. As there are a number of valid ways for candidates to reference these people, centres might wish to read a very helpful blog published on OCR's website in December 2021 – [reflections on teaching Native American History](#).

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