

Candidate Style Answers

GCSE History A (Schools History Project)

OCR GCSE in History: J415

Unit: A951/13 (The American West Depth Study)

These candidate style answers are designed to accompany the OCR GCSE History specification for teaching from September 2009.

GCSE History A

A951/11 (The American West Depth Study)

OCR has produced these candidate style answers to support teachers in interpreting the assessment criteria for the new GCSE specifications and to bridge the gap between new specification release and availability of exemplar candidate work.

This content has been produced by senior OCR examiners, with the support of the Qualification Manager, to illustrate how the sample assessment questions might be answered and provide some commentary on what factors contribute to an overall grading. The candidate style answers are not written in a way that is intended to replicate student work but to demonstrate what a “good” or “excellent” response might include, supported by examiner commentary and conclusions.

As these responses have not been through full moderation and do not replicate student work, they have not been graded and are instead, banded “medium” or “high” to give an indication of the level of each response.

Please note that this resource is provided for advice and guidance only and does not in any way constitute an indication of grade boundaries or endorsed answers.

<p>5(a) Study Sources A and B.</p> <p>Why do these sources show such different attitudes towards the Plains? Use the sources and your knowledge to explain your answer. [7]</p>	
<i>Candidate style answer</i>	<i>Examiner's commentary</i>
<p><i>Attitudes have changed because the two sources are from different dates. At the time of the first source they did not know much about the Plains and regarded them as useless. They had good land to live on the east coast. But later a new impression was created of the Plains. The government wanted people to settle there and so advertisements appeared showing the Plains to be wonderful.</i></p>	<p>High level response</p> <p>This is a very good answer. Its focus is impressive. It directly answers the question - not a word is wasted. The candidate concentrates on the different dates of the two sources and explains why there would have been different attitudes towards the Plains at these two dates. The answer is supported throughout by using the details and attitudes in the two sources.</p>

5(a) Study Sources A and B.

Why do these sources show such different attitudes towards the Plains? Use the sources and your knowledge to explain your answer.

[7]

Candidate style answer

Source A says that the Plains would be uninhabitable. It claims that there was no wood or water and so farming would be impossible. Source B, however, shows that the Plains can be lived on. There is a lake in the background, surrounded by trees. People have obviously settled there because there are houses and it looks like some of the people might be farming. It is obvious that Source A is against the Plains, whereas Source B is in their favour.

Examiner's commentary

Medium level response

The candidate has managed to infer different attitudes towards the Plains from the two sources. There is also detailed use of the sources. However, this answer explains **how** the sources differ in their attitude towards the Plains, but not **why**. To score high marks on this question, you must address the question directly.

5(b) Study Source C.

How useful is this source in telling you about how the Indians managed to survive on the Plains? Use the source and your knowledge to explain your answer. [6]

Candidate style answer

This source is very useful for telling how the Indians survived on the Plains because it shows how they have taken down their tepees and loaded them on sledges to be pulled behind the horses. This meant that they could move around easily which was important because they needed to keep up with the buffalo herds. However, this source is not very useful for telling us about other things. It does not tell you about the importance of the buffalo to the Indians. They got everything from the buffalo and would not have survived without it. They made their tepees from its skin and used it for food and clothing.

Examiner's commentary

High level response

This is a very good because it deals with the 'how useful' part of the question. Notice how the candidate begins by using details from the source ('It shows how they have taken down their tepees...'). It goes on to use knowledge to explain why this is useful in helping us to understand why the Indians were able to survive on the Plains. However, the candidate recognises the limitations of the source and provides evidence of other features of Plains Indian lifestyle which were part of their survival techniques. These other features are not mentioned in the source and come directly from the candidate's own knowledge. This is impressive.

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Examiner's commentary

Medium level response

This is a very encouraging start. The candidate has looked closely at the picture and has spotted the sledges that are being pulled by the horses. The answer correctly explains that the Indians used these sledges to carry their dismantled tepees. This helped them to survive on the Plains. To improve this answer, the candidate needs to go on and tackle the 'how useful' part of the question. This will involve explaining that the source is only of limited value because it does not show other features of Indian lifestyle that were important to their survival on the Plains.

5(c) Study Source D.

**Were the Indians glad to be living on reservations like the one shown in Source D?
Use the source and your knowledge to explain your answer. [7]**

Candidate style answer

They don't look like they're happy do they? They have to queue to get their rations from the white men who are in charge of the reservation. This would not have gone down well with these Indians. They were used to living an independent lifestyle. They were nomadic people who were used to hunting the buffalo to provide for their every need. Their whole lifestyle had been built around the need to hunt the buffalo. Even their home (the tepee) had been designed to ensure they could move on quickly when the buffalo herds moved. It seems like the Indians are being forced to live more like the white men wanted them to live.

Examiner's commentary

High level response

This is a good answer. Notice how the candidate has **made inferences** from this source about how the Indians were being made to live and how this contrasts with their traditional lifestyle. The answer explains several reasons why these Indians would have disliked this lifestyle. It talks about their inability to hunt; their dependence on the white man, and the way in which their whole lifestyle is being changed to suit the white man. Contextual knowledge has been used and blended with details inferred from the source to produce a high quality answer.

5(c) Study Source D.

**Were the Indians glad to be living on reservations like the one shown in Source D?
Use the source and your knowledge to explain your answer. [7]**

<i>Candidate style answer</i>	<i>Examiner's commentary</i>
<p><i>No, the Indians hated living on the reservations because they were forced to live like white people. They were made to be farmers which they did not want to be and they were not allowed to live their normal way of life. They were against farming because it meant digging into the ground and hurting mother nature.</i></p>	<p>Medium level response</p> <p>This is a well-explained answer which gives one reason why the Indians disliked living on the reservations. The answer concentrates on the Indian dislike of farming. The candidate uses some impressive contextual knowledge to support the answer. To improve this answer, the candidate also needs to make use of details in the source. The answer could be more detailed, with explanations extending to other reasons why the Indians disliked living on the reservations.</p>

<p>6 Both Joseph Smith and Brigham Young made important contributions to the development of the Mormons.</p> <p>(a) Briefly describe the main beliefs of the Mormons. [5]</p>	
<i>Candidate style answer</i>	<i>Examiner's commentary</i>
<p><i>The Mormons believed that they were chosen by God. Joseph Smith, the founder of the Mormons, claimed that an angel called Moroni had led him to discover some gold plates in 1823. The finder of the plates would prepare God's kingdom on earth for Christ's second coming. The Mormons believed this kingdom should be run by the church. Church leaders should be given political power and should hold all property. There were to be no rights to individual ownership.</i></p>	<p>High level response</p> <p>This is a good answer. Several beliefs are identified and some of them have been developed a little. Examiners award up to 3 marks for each belief explained so it is not necessary to write down everything you know about Mormon beliefs. Just do enough to get the 5 marks - as this candidate has done.</p>

<p>6 Both Joseph Smith and Brigham Young made important contributions to the development of the Mormons.</p> <p>(a) Briefly describe the main beliefs of the Mormons. [5]</p>	
<i>Candidate style answer</i>	<i>Examiner's commentary</i>
<p><i>The Mormons believed that they were chosen by God. They believed in polygamy. They thought they were superior to everyone else.</i></p>	<p>Medium level response</p> <p>This is quite a good answer. On a question like this you will normally be awarded one mark for each valid point you make. Here, the candidate has made three valid points about Mormon beliefs. To improve this answer, the candidate could have listed more Mormon beliefs, or given more details about those already listed. For example, the answer could have explained why the Mormons believed they were God's chosen people.</p>

<p>6 Both Joseph Smith and Brigham Young made important contributions to the development of the Mormons.</p> <p>(b) Explain why the Mormons faced many difficulties under Joseph Smith's leadership.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[7]</p>	
<i>Candidate style answer</i>	<i>Examiner's commentary</i>
<p><i>The Mormons faced difficulties because they were so successful wherever they went and this caused resentment among everyone else. When they were in Kirtland they worked hard and soon owned most of the businesses in the town like the bank and the shops. They soon outnumbered the gentiles. This made the gentiles afraid the Mormons were taking over and caused violence against the Mormons. When they moved to Missouri they soon became successful again. The Mormon church was able to buy more and more land. Non-Mormons resented their success and felt threatened by their increasing numbers. They were also highly suspicious of the Danites (the Mormon secret police). Many Mormons were arrested and the others had to leave Missouri for Illinois.</i></p>	<p>High level response</p> <p>This is a very impressive answer. The candidate has explained several reasons why the Mormons faced difficulties under Joseph Smith's leadership. The answer explains the resentment of Mormon successes in Kirtland and Missouri, and how this led to violence towards the Mormons to the extent that they were forced out of these settlements. It also mentions the resentment caused by the Mormon secret police. To get into the highest level on this question, you need to explain more than one reason why the Mormons faced difficulties under Joseph Smith's leadership. The candidate has achieved this here.</p>

<p>6 Both Joseph Smith and Brigham Young made important contributions to the development of the Mormons.</p> <p>(b) Explain why the Mormons faced many difficulties under Joseph Smith's leadership.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[7]</p>	
<i>Candidate style answer</i>	<i>Examiner's commentary</i>
<p><i>The Mormons faced difficulties because they owned all the banks. They believed in polygamy which people did not like. They also set up the Danites which made people afraid.</i></p>	<p>Medium level response</p> <p>This response has the beginnings of a good answer. The candidate knows three reasons why the Mormons faced difficulties but has failed to explain any of them. For example, just saying the people did not like polygamy is not enough. You need to explain why people did not like it.</p>

<p>6 Both Joseph Smith and Brigham Young made important contributions to the development of the Mormons.</p> <p>(c) Which was Brigham Young's most important contribution to the Mormons: deciding to go west and organising the journey, or organising the community at Salt Lake? Explain your answer. [8]</p>	
<i>Candidate style answer</i>	<i>Examiner's commentary</i>
<p><i>I think Brigham Young's decision to take the Mormons west to the Great Salt Lake was important. The Mormons had suffered very badly in the east and in Nauvoo, Smith was murdered and the Mormons were being hunted down and killed. It was obvious that they could not live alongside other Americans; they had to be by themselves. This is why the decision to go to the Great Salt Lake was crucial. It was the most isolated area in the west. Nobody else wanted to live there and it was part of Mexico not the USA. All this meant that the Mormons would be left alone there to live as they wanted and nobody would interfere with them. However, once they had arrived at Salt Lake, there was still much to be done. Without good leadership the Mormons would have failed. Young divided the land into equal sections and said it belonged to everyone. It was run by the church and this prevented arguments. Water was shared out and irrigation ditches were dug so that the land could become sufficiently fertile for farming to be successful. He was quick to realize that the Mormons needed more skilled workers if they were to survive, so he set up the Perpetual Emigration Fund to bring in Mormons from elsewhere. Both these factors were important. Without the decision to move to the Great Salt Lake, the Mormons would not have survived. Even so, their arrival in the Great Salt Lake was not in itself, a guarantee that survival was certain. Both factors were equally important for the survival of the Mormons.</i></p>	<p>High level response</p> <p>This is an outstanding answer. Notice how the candidate has explained several specific reasons why both these factors were important. The answer is packed with impressive contextual knowledge to support the arguments. The candidate does not just tell a story. The answer analyses Young's leadership and even considers an overall conclusion. Note that the candidate has decided to keep an open mind about which factor was most important and as argued reasons why they were both essential for the survival of the Mormons. The important thing to note here is that the candidate has argued, not just asserted, this point of view.</p>

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<i>Candidate style answer</i>	<i>Examiner's commentary</i>
<p><i>I think Brigham Young's decision to take the Mormons west to the Great Salt Lake was the most important thing he did. The Mormons had suffered very badly in the east and in Nauvoo, Smith was murdered and the Mormons were being hunted down and killed. It was obvious that they could not live alongside other Americans; they had to be by themselves. This is why the decision to go to the Great Salt Lake was crucial. It was the most isolated area in the west. Nobody else wanted to live there and the Mormons would be left alone to live as they wanted.</i></p>	<p>Medium level response</p> <p>This is a good answer. The candidate clearly knows this topic well and has revised effectively! The answer gives several reasons why the decision to move to the Great Salt Lake was crucial. However, there are always two sides to every story! Some would argue that it was what Young did when they arrive at the Great Salt Lake that was crucial. To get higher marks, the candidate ought to have given consideration to this view.</p>