

A8: A Divided Union: Civil Rights in the USA 1945-1974 - Exam Questions



Section A topics are split into four questions. The wording and pattern of the questions will always be the same so remember the four types of questions you have to deal with: a) Chronology b) the effects of an event c) causation d) an essay where you need to write more on either causation, changes or effects. Possible topics include:

McCarthyism and the Red Scare

Reasons for the Red Scare (Cold War 1945-50), Hiss and Rosenberg cases, the FBI, HUAC and the Hollywood Ten. Methods used by McCarthy and growth of opposition. Reasons for his downfall. Overall impact of McCarthyism on the USA.

Civil Rights in the 1950s

Reasons for segregation and discrimination, work of the Supreme Court, Importance of Brown v Topeka (1954), Montgomery Bus Boycott (1955) and Little Rock (1957).

Civil Rights in the 1960s (Impact of Martin Luther King and Black Power)

Freedom Riders and Anniston fire bombing, Greensboro Sit-ins, Methods and Activities of Martin Luther King, Birmingham and Washington Marches, Civil Rights Act (1964), Selma-Montgomery March, Voting Rights Act, James Meredith March, Malcolm X and Nation of Islam, Reasons for growth of Black Power, Stokely Carmichael, Bobby Seale and Huey Newton, Race riots in the 1960s, Black Panther Movement, Assassination of MLK.

Protest movements: Students, Women, Anti-Vietnam

General reasons for growth in protest, Student Movement, Berkeley Free Speech Movement, Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), Hippies, Kent State Shootings, Betty Friedan, Feminine Mystique, Eleanor Roosevelt, NOW, Women's Liberation Movement, Abortion, Phyllis Schlafly, Opposition to Women's Movement

Nixon and Watergate

Reasons for Scandal, Key Features, Impact on Nixon and US politics, New laws including Election Campaign Act (1964), the War Powers Act (1973), the Privacy Act (1974), and the Congressional Budget Control Act (1974).

You only have about 30-45 minutes to answer all four sub-questions. The amount of marks for each questions should help you judge how much to write. For Question a) give 3 minutes, Question b) 5 minutes, Question c) 10 minutes and Question d) 15 minutes. Grade boundaries are at end of document.

Question A (3 marks)

Question A requires you to place **five events** in their correct **chronological order**. It's only worth 3 marks so complete it as quick as you can! Obviously you need good chronological knowledge. Revision exercises using timelines to test yourself on dates is a good idea.

Study these events which occurred in the USA in the years 19xx - 19xx. Write these events in the correct chronological sequence:

1. The formation of the National Organisation for Women (NOW), The assassination of Martin Luther King, The Hollywood Ten, Brown v Topeka, The Selma Voting Rights marches.
2. The Watergate Break-in, King's 'I have a dream' speech, The Kent State University deaths, The Voting Rights Act, The Freedom Riders.
3. Little Rock High School, The Rosenberg Case, Nixon Resigns as President, Assassination of Malcom X, The Freedom Riders.
4. Nixon Resigns, Montgomery Bus Boycott, Senate censures McCarthy, SDS Setup, Assassination of MLK.
5. The Montgomery Bus Boycott, Nixon re-elected as President, The Hiss Case, The Brown v Topeka Case, The assassination of Martin Luther King.

Mark Scheme

| | |
|-------------------------|---------|
| 2 in correct sequence | 1 mark |
| 3 in correct sequence | 2 marks |
| 4/5 in correct sequence | 3 marks |

Exam Questions - Question B (4 marks)

Question B will always pick two events from Question A. You will need to use your knowledge to **describe one effect of that event**. An effect means the **results or consequences** of an event - what did the event lead to?

- Choose one event and stick to that choice
- Signpost your answer and focus on the question. i.e. begin your answer with 'One effect was...'
- Give the effect and then describe. Using the word because will help you give developed descriptions.
- One paragraph is enough. Use link words like as a result, as a consequence, furthermore etc...

1. Choose **either** The foration of the National Organization for Women (NOW) **or** the assassination of Martin Luther King. Describe **one effect** on the USA of the event you have chosen.
2. Choose **either** The Watergate Break-in **or** the Voting Rights Act. Describe **one effect** on the USA of the event you have chosen.

3. Choose **either** Little Rock High School **or** The Rosenberg Case. Describe **one effect** on the USA of the event you have chosen.
4. Choose **either** the Watergate Scandal **or** the integration of Little Rock. Describe **one effect** on the USA of the event you have chosen.
5. Choose **either** The Montgomery Bus Boycott **or** The Brown v Topeka Case. Describe **one effect** on the USA of the event you have chosen.
6. Choose **either** The Hiss Case **or** The Rosenberg Case. Describe **one effect** on the USA of the event you have chosen.
7. Choose **either** Dean's revelations of Nixon's involvement **or** Nixon's refusal to testify or hand over documents. Describe **one effect** on the Watergate scandal of the event you have chosen.
8. Describe **one effect** of The Feminine Mystique on women in the 1960s.

Mark Scheme

| Level | Descriptor | Mark |
|---------|---|------|
| Level 1 | <u>Simple or generalised statements of consequence</u> - The candidate makes statements which lack any supporting contextual knowledge or makes unsupported generalisations. <i>e.g. This was to get better rights for women. MLK was assassinated probably by a hired killer.</i> | 1-2 |
| Level 2 | <u>Developed statements of consequence</u> - The candidate supports their statements with relevant contextual knowledge. <i>e.g. This raised the status of women and campaigned for an end to discrimination. This led to the end of an era in the civil rights movement as more and more young black Americans looked to more extreme methods.</i> | 3-4 |

Exam Questions - Question C (8 marks)

Question C will always test your knowledge of Causation - **why did something happen?** You will need to explain the reasons why an event happened in detail. You will have to **explain at least two reasons and link them** for full marks. Spend about 10 minutes on this question.

- Focus! It's about causation so only write about the reasons why something happened!
- Write a separate paragraph for each reason. First give the reason then explain/develop it.
- Linking your reasons means explaining how one reason led to the next. Use words such as: *this led to, as a result, moreover, furthermore. As a consequence, in addition.*
 - Confirm the link between the reasons in your conclusion.

1. Why did McCarthyism lose support in the mid-1950s? Explain your answer.
2. Why did opposition to McCarthy grow to a point where he was censured by the Senate? Explain your answer.

3. Why did the black people of Montgomery boycott the buses for 381 days in 1955-56? Explain your answer.
4. Why did the women's movement develop in the USA in the 1960s and early 1970s? Explain your answer.
5. Why did a student movement develop in the USA in the 1960s? Explain your answer.
6. Why was there a growing fear of communism in the USA in the late 1940s and early 1950s? Explain your answer.
7. Why was the assassination of Martin Luther King such a blow to the civil rights movement? Explain your answer.
8. Why were events at Little Rock High School in 1957 important in the campaigns for civil rights? Explain your answer.
9. Why did a student movement begin in the USA in the 1960s? Explain your answer.

Mark Scheme

| Level | Descriptor | Mark |
|---------|--|--|
| Level 1 | Simple or generalised statements of causation - The candidate makes statements which lack any supporting contextual knowledge or makes unsupported generalisations. <i>e.g. because McCarthy was thought to have lied.</i> | 1-2 1 mark for one simple statement 2 marks for two or more |
| Level 2 | Developed statements of causation - The candidate supports their statement with relevant contextual knowledge. <i>e.g. McCarthy exposed by his public attacks on the army. Importance of Ed Murrow documentary 'See it now'.</i> | 3-5 3 marks for one developed statement 4/5 marks for two or more |
| Level 3 | Developed explanation of causation - An explanation of more than one factor supported by selected knowledge. One explained factor should be marked at the top of Level 2. <i>e.g. As Level 2. Could link image of McCarthyism given by Murrow to humiliation of televised hearings against the army.</i> | 6-8 6/7 marks for two or more explained factors 8 marks for answers which show links between factors |

Exam Questions - Question D (10 marks)

Question D will ask you to write an extended response. You must use the source AND your own knowledge to describe or explain the causes, effects or a period of change. If the question is about change then obviously try to write about change by comparing the situation before and after the period. Allow 12 minutes at least.

- Ensure you use the source! Directly refer to the source i.e. 'as suggested in Source A'
- Underline and explain key events, names and dates in the source. If you then explain these in more detail, you are using your own knowledge.
- Two paragraphs based on two factors linked together and explained well is enough to get full marks.
- Don't forget a conclusion! Re-affirm the link between the facts or make a judgement on the extent of change.

1. Use the source and your own knowledge to explain why there was a scandal over Watergate:

"On 17th June 1972, five members of CREEP were arrested for breaking into the offices of the Democratic Party in the Watergate Building in Washington D.C. President Nixon regularly denied all knowledge of the break-in. However, taped conversations in the White House revealed otherwise." Source: From a modern text book

2. Use the source and your own knowledge to explain why there was progress in the Civil Rights Movement in the 1950s:

"The success of the Brown v Topeka Case of 1954 encouraged the Civil Rights Movement. This was followed by the successful Montgomery Bus Boycott. In 1957, events at Little Rock High School brought further progress for the Civil Rights Movement." Source: From a modern text book

3. Use the source and your own knowledge to explain the part played by Martin Luther King in the Civil Rights campaign of the 1950s and 1960s:

"Martin Luther King was a Baptist minister who believed in using non-violent protest. He was a leader of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and organised the Montgomery Bus Boycott. By 1961 he was the most important figure in the Civil Rights Movement and was able to influence President Kennedy." Source: From a modern text book

4. Use the source and your own knowledge to explain why the campaign for black civil rights in the USA changed in the 1960s:

"A number of mainly young black Americans lost patience with the peaceful methods used by Martin Luther King. Malcom X, for example, wanted to see black Americans create their own state, by force if necessary. Stokely Carmichael was the leader of the Black Power Movement, which also encouraged greater violence." Source: From a modern text book

5. Use the source and your own knowledge to explain the main effects of the non-violent direct action tactics used in the civil rights campaigns of the 1960s:

"The Freedom Riders' victory set the tone for the great civil rights campaigns that followed. Not for the first time during these climactic years, a free press forced Americans to take a cold, hard look at the reality of racial oppression." Source: From a modern text book

6. Use the source and your own knowledge to explain why there were race riots in the late 1960s:

"President Lyndon Johnson appointed a Commission of Enquiry headed by Governor Kerner of Illinois to find out what was causing the riots. The resulting report found that the riots were brought on by a sense of frustration among black people at the way they were being treated and concluded: 'The nation is rapidly moving towards two increasingly separate Americas.'" Source: From a modern text book

7. Use the source and your own knowledge to explain why protest movements were so active in the 1960s:

"The war that dominated the USA in the 1960s was the anti-communist war in Vietnam. The US government could call up men as young as 17 years to fight in Vietnam for two years. Those same young men were not seen as responsible enough to vote until they were 21." **Source: From a modern text book**

8. Use the source and your own knowledge to explain why President Nixon was forced to resign as a result of the Watergate Scandal:

"It was revealed that all conversations in the White House since 1971 had been recorded on tape. The Senate demanded the tapes, but at first Nixon refused to hand them over. Some tapes were eventually handed over in November 1973 and the US public was shocked by the attitudes and the language of Nixon. But it was then discovered that the tapes had been edited." **Source: From a modern text book**

9. Use the source and your own knowledge to explain the effects of the civil rights legislation of the 1960s on the USA:

"An important Civil Rights Act was passed in 1964 by Kennedy's successor, President Johnson. Johnson had been a schoolteacher who had seen the effects of segregation. The Civil Rights Act made segregation in education and housing illegal and stated that all US citizens were entitled to equal employment opportunities. This was followed by other acts such as the Voting Rights Act of 1965." **Source: From a modern text book**

10. Use the source and your own knowledge to explain how the Red Scare developed in the late 1940s and early 1950s:

"Spy cases and the progress of communism in Europe and Asia created anti-communist hysteria in the USA. People claimed that there were communists everywhere. President Truman had not helped by using this as an excuse to send aid to Europe. Senator Joe McCarthy made a name for himself by exploiting these fears to a ridiculous extent." **Source: From a modern text book**

11. Use the source and your own knowledge to explain how the Women's Movement developed in the 1960s:

"The big changes in the role of women in the USA began to take place in the 1960s. One reason for this was that women saw a parallel between themselves and the civil rights movement. In fact, much of the civil rights legislation also applied to women. A second reason was that the birth control pill became available in the 1960s." **Source: From a modern text book**

12. Use the source and your own knowledge to explain why there was a student protest movement in the 1960s and early 1970s:

"Protests reached a peak in 1968, when 'Flower Power', with its slogan 'make love not war', became extremely popular. Large numbers of young people began to 'drop out' of mainstream society and head for California. Others staged protests against the war in Vietnam. In 1970, four students at Kent State University were shot dead by National Guardsmen during an anti-war demonstration." **Source: From a modern text book**

13. Use the source and your own knowledge to explain how the methods used by Senator Joseph McCarthy changed during the 'Red Scare':

"McCarthy first began to make use of anti-communist hysteria because he wanted to be re-elected to the Senate, but in 1950 he claimed to have a list of many known communists in the US government. Many of the people he attacked were blacklisted and could not find work for years." **Source: From a modern text book**

14. Use the source and your own knowledge to explain why the Women's Movement developed in the USA:

"World War II gave women the opportunity to broaden their employment horizons and many went to work in the heavy industries. After the war, there were improved educational opportunities and some women became involved in the civil rights movement. Women began to demand improved rights and formed their own protest organisation." **Source: From a modern text book**

Mark Scheme

| Level | Descriptor | Mark |
|---------|---|---|
| Level 1 | Simple or generalised statements using the source supported by some own knowledge - The candidate makes statements which lack any supporting contextual knowledge or makes unsupported generalisations. <i>e.g. because of the break-in by members of CREEP</i> | 1-3 1 marks for one simple statement 2/3 marks for two or more Max 3 marks for only using the source |
| Level 2 | Developed Statements using the source and relevant own knowledge - The candidate supports their statement with relevant contextual knowledge. <i>e.g. Work of two reporters who exposed link between CREEP, President and break-in. Impact of tapes.</i> | 4-7 4/5 marks for one developed statement 6/7 marks for two or more |
| Level 3 | Developed explanation using the source and precise own knowledge - An explanation of more than one factor supported by selected knowledge. One explained factor should be marked at the top of Level 2. <i>e.g. As Level 2 - link work of reporters to the battle for the tapes...</i> | 8-10 8-9 marks for two or more explained factors 10 marks for answers which show links between factors |

Grade Boundaries for June 2012

Please use these grade boundaries only as a rough estimate of working at grade.

Boundaries are subject to change by Edexcel. If you are working at Level 2 then that is equivalent to a C. If you are achieving high level 3 consistently, you are working at A/A* level.

| Grade | Total Marks from Exam | Average Marks Needed per Topic |
|--------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| A* | 78 | 19.5 |
| A | 68 | 17 |
| B | 58 | 14.5 |
| C | 48 | 12 |
| D | 38 | 9.5 |
| E | 29 | 7.25 |
| F | 20 | 5 |
| G | 11 | 2.75 |
| U | 0+ | 0+ |