



A-level HISTORY

Component 1K The making of a Superpower: USA, 1865–1975

Friday 23 May 2025 Morning Time allowed: 2 hours 30 minutes

Materials

For this paper you must have:

- an AQA 16-page answer book.

Instructions

- Use black ink or black ball-point pen.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer book. The **Paper Reference** is 7042/1K.
- Answer **three** questions.
In **Section A** answer Question 01.
In **Section B** answer **two** questions.

Information

- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- The maximum mark for this paper is 80.
- You will be marked on your ability to:
 - use good English
 - organise information clearly
 - use specialist vocabulary where appropriate.

Advice

- You are advised to spend about:
 - 1 hour on Question 01 from **Section A**
 - 45 minutes on each of the **two** questions answered from **Section B**.

Section A

Answer Question 01.

Extract A

By 1975, the impact of Watergate, divisions over race and gender, and economic distress, caused many Americans to become pessimistic. They feared the passing of what they had imagined as the Golden Age of American history since World War II. The cherished American Dream of upward social mobility as a result of vigorous economic growth seemed in danger. Americans who felt such fears as these were a bit too quick to dwell on the troubles of the country; America remained immensely powerful in international affairs and was still the world's most affluent society. America's national wealth was considerably higher than its nearest rivals. The official poverty rate was half what it had been in 1960. But many Americans chose to forget problems they did not like. They blotted from their memory the troubles that had afflicted the nation since the 1950s – among them racial segregation, a Red Scare that attacked civil liberties, blatant religious intolerance and systematic discrimination against women.

5

10

Adapted from JT Patterson, *Restless Giant: the United States from Watergate to Bush v. Gore*, 2007

Extract B

Extract B not reproduced here due to third-party copyright restrictions.

The extract is adapted from pages 814, 699, 729 and 764 of *A History of the American People* by Paul Johnson, printed by Weidenfeld & Nicolson in 1997, ISBN 9780297815693.

Adapted from P Johnson, *A History of the American People*, 1997

Extract C

The years from 1953 to 1975 were years of rapidly growing prosperity, despite the disillusionment and protests. The post-war economic boom surpassed all expectations. The standard of living improved nearly every year. Americans became citizens of an affluent society – at least most of them did. Millions moved to a better life in the Sunbelt from Texas to California. However, in 1962 one in four Americans was still living in dire poverty. That included nearly half the African-American population, single parents, the old, the sick and the poor. Even so, the conditions for the poor improved dramatically from 1964, when President Johnson declared 'unconditional war on poverty'. The Federal Government pumped billions of dollars into welfare and anti-poverty projects. Johnson's Great Society programmes worked. By 1973, the number of poor was reduced by half. The anti-liberal Nixon, after he became president in 1968, did not seriously cut back on welfare. His administration increased social security benefits. Federal housing subsidies were also continued.

5

10

JAS Grenville, *The Collins History of the World in the Twentieth Century*, 1994

0	1
---	---

Using your understanding of the historical context, assess how convincing the arguments in these three extracts are in relation to American society in the years 1953 to 1975.

[30 marks]

Turn over for Section B

Section B

Answer **two** questions.

- 0 2** To what extent was the failure to establish full civil rights for African-Americans in the years 1865 to 1890 due to the weaknesses of the Federal Government? **[25 marks]**
- 0 3** 'In the years 1890 to 1917, the United States turned away from isolationism.'
Assess the validity of this view. **[25 marks]**
- 0 4** 'The Democrats' dominance of the US presidency, in the years 1932 to 1952, was due to Franklin Roosevelt and his legacy.'
Assess the validity of this view. **[25 marks]**

END OF QUESTIONS

Copyright information

For confidentiality purposes, all acknowledgements of third-party copyright material are published in a separate booklet. This booklet is published after each live examination series and is available for free download from www.aqa.org.uk

Permission to reproduce all copyright material has been applied for. In some cases, efforts to contact copyright-holders may have been unsuccessful and AQA will be happy to rectify any omissions of acknowledgements. If you have any queries please contact the Copyright Team.

Copyright © 2025 AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved.



2 5 6 A 7 0 4 2 / 1 K