



GCSE HISTORY

Paper 1 Section A/A: America, 1840–1895: Expansion and
consolidation

Interpretations Booklet

Interpretations **A** and **B** for use in answering Questions 01, 02 and 03



Interpretation A Adapted from the letters of George Bent, 1905.

George Bent's mother was Cheyenne and his father was a white American who started a successful trading post. Bent felt like an outsider, as neither the Cheyenne nor white communities fully accepted him. Bent survived the Sand Creek Massacre, although he was wounded by the attackers. He later lived on a reservation in Oklahoma and became an interpreter for the United States government.

Conflict on the Plains was inevitable once settlers began moving to Oregon and California in 1842. The Native Americans were furious when buffalo herds decreased rapidly because of the large numbers of migrants moving through the hunting grounds. The discovery of gold in California in 1849 attracted miners who brought deadly diseases, like cholera, to the Native Americans. The Government set up forts to protect those on the migrant trails. However the soldiers, who were meant to keep the peace, started the fighting.

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Interpretation B Adapted from an account by Bishop Henry Whipple, published in November 1880.

Whipple was a Christian priest in the large cities of New York and Chicago where he was very popular with the poor. He was promoted to the Bishop of Minnesota in 1859. Whipple had many enemies because he spoke up for Native Americans who regarded him as an honest man.

Conflict on the Plains was caused by the broken promises of the United States government. Native Americans were given the Indian Territory as compensation for what had been taken from them. Conflict could have been avoided if the promises had been kept, but the treaties were nothing more than empty words on a page. As Native Americans were not protected by the law, they had to fight the migrants.

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