

Themes AICE American History

American option: The history of the USA, 1820–1941 **The origins of the Civil War, 1820–61**

Key questions

How was the issue of slavery addressed between 1820 and 1850?

Content

- Political system (practical application of the US Constitution) and the balance of sectional interests in 1820
- Impact of territorial expansion: westward expansion and absorption of Texas
- Impact of population growth and movement
- Attempts at compromise including the Missouri Compromise (1820) and the Compromise of 1850

How and why did sectional divisions widen between 1850 and 1856?

- Problems arising from the implementation of the Compromise of 1850 and the application of the Fugitive Slave Act
- The issue of Kansas and its impact
- Changes in the party-political system: rapid decline of the Whig Party and the rise of the Republican Party
- Significance of States' Rights

Why did the Republicans win the 1860 presidential election?

- Growing strength of abolitionism, e.g. John

Brown

- Emerging notion of 'slave power', e.g. Dred Scott
- Increasing confrontation within and between the North and the South
- The Lincoln–Douglas Debates (1858)
- The election campaign of 1860 and the divisions of the Democratic Party

Why did the Civil War begin in April 1861? •• Reactions to the 1860 presidential election results

- Secession of the seven Deep South States
- The Battle of Fort Sumter and its impacts
- The aims of Abraham Lincoln and Jefferson Davis

Cambridge International AS & A Level History 9489 syllabus for 2021, 2022 and 2023. Subject content

Civil War and Reconstruction, 1861–77

Key questions

Why did the Civil War last four years?

Content

- Changing military strategies
- Changing approaches of political and military leadership
- Resources available
- Impact of foreign influences (Britain and France)

How significant was the immediate impact of the Civil War (1861–65)?

- Limitations on civil liberties during the War
- Reasons for and responses to the Emancipation Proclamation (1863)
- Life in the Confederate States including the responses of slaves

- The nature of democracy in the North and the South

What were the aims and outcomes of Reconstruction?

- Presidential Reconstruction: Abraham Lincoln and Andrew Johnson

- Radical Reconstruction from Congress

- Reasons for and passage of Constitutional Amendments 13th, 14th and 15th

How successful was Reconstruction? •• Changing position of ex-slaves

- Responses of the White South

- Grant's Reconstruction policies

- The Compromise of 1877 and the end of Reconstruction

Cambridge International AS & A Level History 9489 syllabus for 2021, 2022 and 2023. Subject content

16 www.cambridgeinternational.org/alevel Back to contents page

The Gilded Age and Progressive Era, 1870s–1920

Key questions

Why was the late nineteenth century an age of rapid industrialisation?

Content

- Growth of trusts, corporations and robber barons

- Technological innovations, e.g. electrical power and the telephone

- Growth of the railroads

- Trade policies and protectionism

How significant were the consequences of rapid economic growth in the late nineteenth century?

- New immigration from Southern and Eastern Europe

- Industrial growth and periods of economic

recession

- Impact of urbanisation on living conditions, e.g. housing, health, safety

- Rise of organised labour in industry and agriculture, e.g. Granger Movement, labor unions

What were the main aims and policies of the Progressive Movement and how popular were they?

- Limits on party machines and bosses

- Temperance and Prohibition

- Female emancipation

- Regulation of private corporations

How successful was the Progressive Movement up to 1920?

- Achievements of the Progressive presidents

- Constitutional reforms

- State vs. federal successes

- Limits of the Progressive Movement

Cambridge International AS & A Level History 9489 syllabus for 2021, 2022 and 2023. Subject content

Back to contents page www.cambridgeinternational.org/alevel 17

The Great Crash, the Great Depression and the New Deal policies, 1920–41

Key questions

What were the causes of the Great Crash?

Content

- Structural weaknesses in the US economy in the 1920s, e.g. disparity between agriculture, traditional and new industries

- Growth of consumerism, e.g. hire purchase and buying on the margin

- Mass production and oversupply

- Impact of government policies

What were the causes and impacts of the Great Depression?

- The main features of the Great Crash (October 1929)
 - Responses of Hoover government and industry to the Great Crash
 - Collapse of the financial system
 - Mass unemployment and its social impact, e.g. Hoovervilles and employment discrimination
- How effective were Roosevelt's strategies to deal with the domestic problems facing the USA in the 1930s?

- Roosevelt's First Hundred Days
- Development of New Deal policies and the need for the Second New Deal
- Roosevelt's political strategies, e.g. the New Deal Coalition
- Reasons for the Roosevelt Depression/Recession (1937–38)

Why was there opposition to the New Deal policies and what impact did it have?

- Opposition from the liberal left
- Opposition from the conservative right
- Opposition from the Supreme Court
- Roosevelt's responses to opposition

The mark schemes used by Cambridge to score paper 1 and paper 2 are listed below:

	Mark Scheme	Syllabus	Paper
	Cambridge International AS/A Level	9389	1

Generic levels of

response Part (a)

Level 4: Makes a developed comparison [12–15]

Makes a developed comparison between the two sources, recognising points of similarity and difference. Uses knowledge to evaluate the sources and shows good contextual awareness.

Level 3: Compares views and identifies similarities *and* differences [8–11] Compares the views expressed in the sources, identifying differences and similarities. Begins to explain and evaluate the views using the sources and knowledge.

Level 2: Compares views and identifies similarities *and/or* differences [4–7] Identifies relevant similarities or differences between views/sources and the response may be one-sided with only one aspect explained. Alternatively, both similarities and differences may be mentioned but both aspects lack development.

Level 1: Describes content of each source [1–3]

Describes or paraphrases the content of the two sources. Very simple comparisons may be made (e.g. one is from a letter and the other is from a speech) but these are not developed.

Level 0: No relevant comment on the sources or the issue [0] Part (b)

Level 5: Evaluates the sources to reach a sustained judgement [21–25]

Answers are well focused, demonstrating a clear understanding of the sources and the question. Reaches a sustained judgement about the extent to which the sources support the statement and weighs the evidence in order to do this.

Level 4: Evaluates the sources [16–20]

Demonstrates a clear understanding of the sources and the question. Begins to evaluate the material in context, considering the nature, origin and purpose of the sources in relation to the statement. At the top of this level candidates may begin to reach a judgement but this is not sustained.

Level 3: Uses the sources to support *and* challenge the statement [11–15]

Makes valid points from the sources to both challenge and support the statement in the question. These comments may be derived from source content or may be about the provenance/nature of the sources.

Level 2: Uses the sources to support *or* challenge the statement [6–10] Makes valid points from the sources to either support the statement in the question or to challenge it. These comments may be derived from source content or may be about the provenance/nature of the sources.

Level 1: Does not make valid use of the sources [1–5]
Describes the content of the sources with little attempt to link the material to the question. Alternatively, candidates may write an essay about the question without reference to the sources.

Level 0: No relevant comment on the sources or the issue [0]

	Mark Scheme	Syllabus	Paper
	Cambridge International AS/A Level	9389	2

Generic levels of

response Part (a)

Level 4: Evaluates factors [9–10]
Answers are well focused and identify and explain a range of factors. Answers are supported by precise evidence and demonstrate clear understanding of the connections between causes. Answers consider the relative significance of factors and reach a supported conclusion.

Level 3: Explains factors [6–8]
Answers demonstrate good understanding of the demands of the question, providing relevant explanations supported by relevant and detailed information. Answers are clearly expressed. Candidates may attempt to reach a judgement about the significance of factors but this may not be effectively supported.

Level 2: Describes factors [3–5]
Answers show some knowledge and understanding of the demands of the question. Answers are either entirely descriptive in approach with few explicit links to the question, or they provide some explanation which is supported by information which is limited in range and depth.

Level 1: Describes the topic/issue [1–2]
Answers contain some relevant material but are descriptive in nature, making little reference to causation. Answers may be assertive or generalised. The response is limited in development.

Level 0: Answers contain no relevant content [0] Part (b)

Level 5: Responses which develop a sustained judgement [18–20] Answers are well focused and closely argued. Arguments are supported by precisely selected evidence. They lead to a relevant conclusion/judgement which is developed and supported. They are fluent and well organised.

Level 4: Responses which develop a balanced argument [15–17] Answers show explicit understanding of the demands of the question. They develop a balanced argument supported by a good range of appropriately selected evidence. They begin to form a judgement in response to the question. At this level the judgement may be partial or not fully supported.

Level 3: Responses which begin to develop assessment [10–14] Answers show a developed understanding of the demands of the question. They provide some assessment, supported by relevant and appropriately selected evidence. However, these answers are likely to lack depth and/or balance. Answers are generally coherent and well organised.

Level 2: Responses which show some understanding of the question [6–9] Answers show some understanding of the focus of the question. They are either entirely descriptive with few explicit links to the question or they may contain some explicit comment with relevant but limited support.

Level 1: Descriptive or partial responses [1–5]

Answers contain descriptive material which is only loosely linked to the focus of the question. They may only address part of the question. Alternatively, there may be some explicit comment on the question which lacks detailed factual support. Answers are likely to be generalised and assertive. Answers may be fragmentary and disjointed.

Level 0: Answers contain no relevant content [0]