

Mark Scheme (Results)

Summer 2026

Pearson Edexcel International Advanced Level
in History (WHI03/1A)

Paper 3: Thematic Study with Source Evaluation

Option 1A: The USA, Independence to Civil War,
1763–1865

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General Marking Guidance

- All candidates must receive the same treatment. Examiners must mark the first candidate in exactly the same way as they mark the last.
- Mark schemes should be applied positively. Candidates must be rewarded for what they have shown they can do rather than penalised for omissions.
- Examiners should mark according to the mark scheme not according to their perception of where the grade boundaries may lie.
- There is no ceiling on achievement. All marks on the mark scheme should be used appropriately.
- All the marks on the mark scheme are designed to be awarded. Examiners should always award full marks if deserved, i.e. if the answer matches the mark scheme. Examiners should also be prepared to award zero marks if the candidate's response is not worthy of credit according to the mark scheme.
- Where some judgement is required, mark schemes will provide the principles by which marks will be awarded and exemplification may be limited.
- When examiners are in doubt regarding the application of the mark scheme to a candidate's response, the team leader must be consulted.
- Crossed out work should be marked UNLESS the candidate has replaced it with an alternative response.

Generic Level Descriptors for Paper 3

Section A

Target: AO2 (25 marks): Analyse and evaluate appropriate source material, primary and/or contemporary to the period, within its historical context.

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material
1	1–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrates surface level comprehension of the source material without analysis, selecting some material relevant to the question, but in the form of direct quotations or paraphrases.• Some relevant contextual knowledge is included, but presented as information rather than applied to the source material.• Evaluation of the source material is assertive with little or no supporting evidence. Concepts of reliability or utility may be addressed, but by making stereotypical judgements.
2	5–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrates some understanding of the source material and attempts analysis by selecting and summarising information and making inferences relevant to the question.• Contextual knowledge is added to information from the source material, but mainly to expand, confirm or challenge matters of detail.• Evaluation of the source material is related to the specified enquiry but with limited support for judgement. Concepts of reliability or utility are addressed mainly by noting aspects of source provenance and some judgements may be based on questionable assumptions.
3	9–14	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrates understanding of the source material and shows some analysis by selecting key points relevant to the question, explaining their meaning and selecting material to support valid developed inferences.• Detailed knowledge of the historical context is deployed to explain or support inferences as well as to expand, confirm or challenge matters of detail.• Evaluation of the source material is related to the specified enquiry and explanation of utility takes into account relevant considerations such as nature or purpose of the source material or the position of the author. Judgements are based on valid criteria with some justification.
4	15–20	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analyses the source material, interrogating the evidence to make reasoned inferences and to show a range of ways the material can be used, for example by distinguishing between information and claim or opinion, although treatment of the two sources may be uneven.• Deploys well-selected knowledge of the historical context, but mainly to illuminate or discuss the limitations of what can be gained from the content of the source material. Displays some understanding of the need to interpret source material in the context of the values and concerns of the society from which it is drawn.• Evaluation of the source material uses valid criteria which are justified and applied, although some of the evaluation may not be fully substantiated. Evaluation takes into account the weight the evidence will bear as part of coming to a judgement.

Level	Mark	Descriptor
5	21–25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interrogates the evidence of both sources with confidence and discrimination, making reasoned inferences and showing a range of ways the material can be used, for example by distinguishing between information and claim or opinion. • Deploys knowledge of the historical context with precision to illuminate and discuss the limitations of what can be gained from the content of the source material, displaying secure understanding of the need to interpret source material in the context of the values and concerns of the society from which it is drawn. • Evaluation of the source material uses valid criteria which are justified and fully applied. Evaluation takes into account the weight the evidence will bear as part of coming to a judgement and, where appropriate, distinguishes between the degree of certainty with which aspects of it can be used as the basis for claims.

Section B

Target: AO1 (25 marks): Demonstrate, organise and communicate knowledge and understanding to analyse and evaluate the key features related to the periods studied, making substantiated judgements and exploring concepts, as relevant, of cause, consequence, change, continuity, similarity, difference and significance.

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material
1	1–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Simple or generalised statements are made about the topic.• Some accurate and relevant knowledge is included, but it lacks range and depth and does not directly address the question.• The overall judgement is missing or asserted.• There is little, if any, evidence of attempts to structure the answer, and the answer overall lacks coherence and precision.
2	5–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There is some analysis of some key features of the period relevant to the question, but descriptive passages are included that are not clearly shown to relate to the focus of the question.• Mostly accurate and relevant knowledge is included, but lacks range or depth and has only implicit links to the demands and conceptual focus of the question.• An overall judgement is given but with limited support and the criteria for judgement are left implicit.• The answer shows some attempts at organisation, but most of the answer is lacking in coherence, clarity and precision.
3	9–14	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There is some analysis of, and attempt to explain links between, the relevant key features of the period and the question, although some mainly descriptive passages may be included.• Mostly accurate and relevant knowledge is included to demonstrate some understanding of the demands and conceptual focus of the question, but material lacks range or depth.• Attempts are made to establish criteria for judgement and to relate the overall judgement to them, although with weak substantiation.• The answer shows some organisation. The general trend of the argument is clear, but parts of it lack logic, coherence or precision.
4	15–20	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Key issues relevant to the question are explored by an analysis of the relationships between key features of the period.• Sufficient knowledge is deployed to demonstrate understanding of the demands and conceptual focus of the question and to meet most of its demands.• Valid criteria by which the question can be judged are established and applied in the process of coming to a judgement. Although some of the evaluations may be only partly substantiated, the overall judgement is supported.• The answer is generally well organised. The argument is logical and is communicated with clarity, although in a few places it may lack coherence or precision.

Level	Mark	Descriptor
5	21–25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key issues relevant to the question are explored by a sustained analysis and discussion of the relationships between key features of the period. • Sufficient knowledge is precisely selected and deployed to demonstrate understanding of the demands and conceptual focus of the question, and to respond fully to its demands. • Valid criteria by which the question can be judged are established and applied and their relative significance evaluated in the process of reaching and substantiating the overall judgement. • The answer is well organised. The argument is logical and coherent throughout and is communicated with clarity and precision.

Section A: indicative content

Option 1A: The USA, Independence to Civil War, 1763–1865

Question	Indicative content
1	<p>Answers will be credited according to their deployment of material in relation to the qualities outlined in the generic mark scheme.</p> <p>The indicative content below is not prescriptive and candidates are not required to include all the material which is indicated as relevant. Other relevant material not suggested below must also be credited.</p> <p>Candidates must analyse and evaluate the sources to investigate the reasons for opposition to the principle of nullification in the years 1830-32.</p> <p>Source 1</p> <p>1. The following points could be made about the origin and nature of the source and applied when evaluating the use of selected information and inferences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Being a personal letter, it probably would be candid in the views being presented, and being from an ex-President authoritative• The date of the letter is during the early stages of the discussions over nullification and so might not be able to gauge the full reasoning behind the movement in South Carolina demanding it• The tone of the letter is troubled as to the reasons given because of the implications they have for the Constitution and Union of America. <p>2. The evidence could be assessed here in terms of giving weight to the following points of information and inferences about the reasons for opposition to the principle of nullification in the years 1830-32.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• It indicates that this issue was conceived to undermine the whole authority of Federal Government within the USA ('in practice would ultimately overturn the Government itself.')• It implies that misunderstanding the basis on which the US Constitution was founded fuelled the nullification cause ('It is wrong to believe that disputes', 'complicated constitutional questions in a damaging way.')• It suggests that desire to promote challenges to the US Constitution, by minority opinions, was behind nullification ('was unanimously adopted as a whole.', 'neither... can rightfully break any of its terms.'). <p>3. Knowledge of historical context should be deployed to support and develop inferences and to confirm the accuracy/usefulness of information or to note limitations or to challenge aspects of content. Relevant points may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Madison was a constitutional expert having been one of the 'Founding Fathers' and playing a key role in the drafting and promotion of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights• Hayne, by 1832, was Governor of South Carolina and played a key role in driving the issue of nullification in his state• South Carolina had been badly hit by economic decline in the 1820s and blamed it on introduction of a national tariff in 1828. Hayne had long opposed tariffs and voted against the 1828 introduction.

Question	Indicative content
	<p>Source 2</p> <p>1. The following points could be made about the origin and nature of the source and applied when evaluating the use of selected information and inferences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was published in Philadelphia, which was of symbolic importance as it was where the US Constitution had been signed • It was published in 1832 when political support for the principle of nullification was gaining traction in South Carolina • The tone and language used is rather despairing of what it sees as the stupidity of those involved to put their own self-interest before that of the Union. <p>2. The evidence could be assessed here in terms of giving weight to the following points of information and inferences about the reasons for opposition to the principle of nullification in the years 1830-32.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It implies that the economic arguments to support nullification are deceitful ('deliberately incorrect and exaggerated statements', 'real reason arose from the damaging effects of SLAVERY.') • It indicates that individuals driving the idea of nullification forward are only interested in themselves and not the USA ('the complete disregard... of anything other than their own financial interests.') • It implies a certain wilfulness behind nullification by impugning the rationale of nullifiers ('NOBLEST EXAMPLE', 'contributed to the calamitous result', 'closed our eyes and our ears', 'stupidity,'). <p>3. Knowledge of historical context should be deployed to support and develop inferences and to confirm the accuracy/usefulness of information or to note limitations or to challenge aspects of content. Relevant points may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By 1832, the crisis over nullification was deepening with South Carolina establishing a state convention which adopted the Ordinance of Nullification and declared the national tariffs unconstitutional • President Jackson was keen to avoid disagreement over the issue and supported attempts to devise a compromise tariff in 1832 • In March 1833, following the threat of using military force by the Federal Government, the South Carolina Nullification Convention met again and repealed the Nullification Ordinance passed earlier. <p>Sources 1 and 2</p> <p>The following points could be made about the sources in combination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both sources agree that the actions of the nullifiers threaten the Union • Both sources agree that the arguments presented by the nullifiers are essentially fallacious and, in Source 2's opinion, stupid • Source 1 takes a very academic and legal approach to the issue whereas Source 2 uses language that is more populist in tone.

Section B: Indicative content

Option 1A: The USA, Independence to Civil War, 1763–1865

Question	Indicative content
2	<p>Answers will be credited according to their deployment of material in relation to the qualities outlined in the generic mark scheme. The indicative content below is not prescriptive and candidates are not required to include all the material which is indicated as relevant.</p> <p>Candidates are expected to reach a judgement on how accurate it is to say that, in the years 1763-91, it was economic issues that were central to both the creation of and the stabilisation of the new American nation.</p> <p>Arguments and evidence supporting the statement that in the years 1763-91, it was economic issues that were central to both the creation of and the stabilisation of the new American nation should be analysed and evaluated. Relevant points may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Britain's defeat of France in 1763 left her with a large war debt which it partly looked to finance by reforming the inefficient American customs service. This caused great resentment from the colonists• Grenville's reforms, such as the Stamp Act 1765, were ill timed as the colonial economy was suffering from economic depression. This attempt to directly tax the colonists inflamed anti-British sentiment• The various attempts to tax the colonies between 1765 and 1775 encouraged the notion of 'no taxation without representation'. This blossomed into demands for independence• Resolving the contrasting economic ideas of Hamilton, Madison and others to dealing with the problems of debts and funding was essential to creating a more stable new nation• The establishment, in February 1791, of the First Bank of the United States was both financially and symbolically important in the stabilisation of the new American nation <p>Arguments and evidence opposing the statement should be analysed and evaluated. Relevant points may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Economic issues often led to instability for the American nation, sparking violent protests e.g. Shays' rebellion• Growing political discontent, against the British, was stirred by organisations such as the Sons of Liberty and pamphlets such as 'Common Sense' by Tom Paine which gave an ideological rationale for independence• New political organisations such as the First Continental Congress, which met to debate the colonies relationship to Britain, increased calls for the creation of an Independent America• Colonial victory in the War of Independence was central to the creation of a new American nation by helping to create a sense of national identity• The political drive and influence of those like Washington, who thought 'a more perfect union' beneficial, was instrumental in both the creation and stabilisation of a new nation• Other issues were more important destabilising factors for the new American nation e.g. the moral issue of slavery or the ongoing disagreements about states' rights. <p>Other relevant material must be credited.</p>

Question	Indicative content
3	<p>Answers will be credited according to their deployment of material in relation to the qualities outlined in the generic mark scheme. The indicative content below is not prescriptive and candidates are not required to include all the material which is indicated as relevant.</p> <p>Candidates are expected to reach a judgement on whether, in the years 1850-65, it was the election of Lincoln in 1860 that turned America from an essentially politically stable nation to a politically unstable nation.</p> <p>Arguments and evidence supporting the statement should be analysed and evaluated. Relevant points may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lincoln's campaign, whilst starting off as centrist, became rather bitter when referring to slavery as the 'peculiar institution' and encouraged vehement opposition to his views Lincoln won less than 40% of the popular vote, thereby undermining his Republican mandate, and allowing opponents to question his legitimacy Fear of Lincoln's political viewpoint, especially the belief that he was an abolitionist, led to immediate moves towards secession, starting with South Carolina on 20 December 1860 Within six months of Lincoln's election, America had descended into civil war Lincoln's support for the Emancipation Proclamation further divided the nation by, it was believed in the Southern States, undermining the enslavement based economic system America remained a relatively stable federal union, with a functioning constitution and elected presidents, throughout the period up to Lincoln's election. <p>Arguments and evidence opposing the statement should be analysed and evaluated. Relevant points may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Despite his opponents, Lincoln made it clear that stability and saving the union was his key priority. His rhetoric throughout was designed to promote compromise America lacked stability before 1860 because the issue of slavery, morally, economically and politically was a fractious one throughout The violence of 'Bleeding Kansas' brought instability by showing how impassioned the issue of states rights and its intertwining with slavery had become in the 1850s The lack of effective and unifying leadership in the 1850s destabilised as it challenged trust in politicians and the Union, e.g. the ineffective compromise of 1850 and indecisiveness over the Fugitive Slave Act The intransigence or ambition of other politicians such as Jefferson Davis also promoted political instability at this time Great military conflict as seen at bloody battles, such as Gettysburg and Vicksburg, were evidence of, and contributed to, severe instability. <p>Other relevant material must be credited.</p>