

NAME:

GCSE History

Exam Questions – USA

This booklet contains lots of exam questions for you to practise before your exams.

After you have revised a topic, you need to answer some of the questions in this booklet. You can identify the relevant ones as they have been split up by the Key Questions (KQ) on the specification and in the revision guides. You need to make sure you answer the questions in timed conditions (remember 1 mark per minute). You can then check your answers against your notes to see if you got them right.

After you have marked some of the questions yourself, you can give them to your teacher to mark. This will help you to see which questions you are better at and which need more practise.

It is really important that you complete the essay questions as many times as possible as these are worth the most marks on the exam paper.

This approach will help you achieve the best grades possible in the exam. Good luck!



Question 1 – Describe ... (5 marks)

You need to write 3 developed points about the issue in the question. Try and include an example / fact / statistic to show your knowledge. You need to do this in 5 minutes maximum.

KQ1

1. Describe the economic problems of the 1930s
2. Describe the impact of the Wall St Crash on the US economy
3. Describe the Bonus March
4. Describe Hoover's attempts to deal with the Great Depression
5. Describe the New Deal
6. Describe Roosevelt's first 100 Days
7. Describe the opposition to the New Deal

KQ2

8. Describe how World War Two affected the American economy
9. Describe the main features of the affluent society
10. Describe the main features of life in suburbia
11. Describe life for those who didn't benefit from the affluent society

KQ3

12. Describe the contribution of black Americans to World War Two
13. Describe the changes black American's experienced in the 1940s
14. Describe the Brown vs Topeka case
15. Describe the events at Little Rock High School
16. Describe the Montgomery Bus Boycott
17. Describe the freedom rides
18. Describe the Birmingham March
19. Describe the March on Washington
20. Describe the Selma March
21. Describe the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s
22. Describe Martin Luther King's career up to the early 1960s
23. Describe the role of Martin Luther King in the Civil Rights Movement
24. Describe the role of Malcolm X in the Civil Rights Movement
25. Describe the work of Malcolm X in the 1950s
26. Describe the Race Riots of the 1960s
27. Describe the Black Power Movement
28. Describe the Black Panther Movement

KQ4

29. Describe the domestic policies of President Kennedy
30. Describe the aims of Kennedy's New Frontier
31. Describe the Great Society
32. Describe the Watergate Scandal
33. Describe the policy of Reaganomics
34. Describe President Reagan's domestic policies
35. Describe the policies of President George Bush Snr
36. Describe the policies of President Clinton

KQ5

37. Describe the changes to music between 1950-2000
38. Describe the changes to the cinema between 1950-2000

39. Describe the changes to television between 1950-2000
40. Describe the developments in information technology between 1970-2000
41. Describe the developments in literature between 1950-2000
42. Describe the youth counter-culture in the 1950s and 1960s
43. Describe the changes in youth culture between 1950-2000
44. Describe the student protest movement
45. Describe how the role of women changed between 1950-1970
46. Describe the feminist movement

KQ6

47. Describe what was agreed at the Yalta and Potsdam Conferences
48. Describe the Truman Doctrine and the policy of containment
49. Describe the Marshall Plan
50. Describe the Berlin Crisis 1948-49
51. Describe the Berlin Crisis of 1961
52. Describe the Cuban Missile Crisis
53. Describe the US involvement in Vietnam
54. Describe the methods used by the Communist forces in Vietnam

KQ7

55. Describe the Helsinki Agreements
56. Describe the policy of Détente
57. Describe the changing relationship between the USA and China
58. Describe the relationship between the USA and the USSR changed
59. Describe Gorbachev's policies
60. Describe the end of the Cold War
61. Describe the events of the siege of the US embassy in Tehran
62. Describe the events of the Gulf War

Question 2 – How far ... (6 marks)

You need to evaluate how much something changed and provide a judgement (conclusion). You need to give examples to prove how much change there was. You need to end with a concluding sentence which directly answers the question. You should spend 6 minutes on this question

KQ1

1. How far did Hoover's economic policy change the American economy in the early 1930s?
2. How far did President Roosevelt's policies change the economic situation in the USA between 1933 and 1939?
3. How far did the rulings of the Supreme Court limit the New Deal?

KQ2

4. How far did World War Two change the American economy?
5. How far did the affluence of the 1950s change the lives of the American people?

KQ3

6. How far did the Brown vs Topeka decision change the lives of black Americans?
7. How far did the Montgomery Bus Boycott change the lives of black Americans?
8. How far did the civil rights legislation of the early 1960s change the lives of black Americans by 1970?
9. How far did Martin Luther King help to change the lives of black Americans in the 1950s and 1960s?
10. How far did the work of Martin Luther King contribute to the securing of civil rights for black Americans?
11. How far had Martin Luther King's dream of equal treatment for black Americans come true by the end of 1968?

KQ4

12. How far did the New Frontier improve the lives of black Americans?
13. How far did Johnson's policies improve the lives of the American people during the 1960s?
14. How far did the Watergate Scandal change American politics?
15. How far did President Regan's reform policies deal with the social and economic problems facing America during the late 1980s?
16. How far did President Reagan's economic policies change the economic situation in the 1980s?
17. How far did President Bush Snr's policies change the economic situation in the USA during the 1990s?
18. How far did President Clinton's policies change the economic situation in the USA during the 1990s?

KQ5

19. How did developments in music change the lives of young people in America during the 1950s and 1960s?
20. How far did literature influence life in America between 1950-2000?
21. How far did the lives of young people change between 1950-2000?
22. How far did student protest change American policy?

23. How far was student protest responsible for the development of an anti-war movement in America?
24. How far had attitudes towards the role and status of women changed by the 1960s?
25. How far had the lives of women changed by the 1970s?

KQ6

26. How far had relations between the USA and the USSR changed between 1945 and 1948?
27. How far did the Cuban missile crisis change the relationship between the USA and the USSR?
28. How far did the relations between the USA and the USSR change in the 1970s?

KQ7

29. How far did the policy of détente change relations between the USA and the USSR?
30. How far did Gorbachev change relations between the USA and the USSR?
31. How far did the relationship between the USA and the USSR change in the 1980s?

Question 3 – Arrange the developments in order of their significance (9 marks)

You need to rank them in order, remember there is no correct order, the examiner is only interested in how well you justify your reasons. You need to explain why each factor is significant – consider how it changed events / people's lives/ laws etc. You also need to compare the relative significance – this means explain why one factor was more significant (important) than another. You must have a concluding sentence at the end of each paragraph which links back to the question. You will have 9 minutes for this question.

KQ1

1. The lives of many Americans changed after 1929 due to the influence of such developments as:
 - a. The sharp fall in share prices
 - b. The policies of the Republican President
 - c. The policies of the Democratic President

Arrange the developments in order of their significance in changing the lives of many Americans after 1929. Explain your choices

2. The American economy improved in the 1930s due to factors such as;
 - a. President Hoover's Policies
 - b. The New Deal
 - c. World War Two

Arrange the factors in order of their significance. Explain your choices

KQ2

3. The lives of many Americans changed between 1945 and the late 1960s due to the influence of developments such as;
 - a. Post-war affluence
 - b. Consumerism
 - c. Suburbanisation

Arrange the developments in order of their significance in changing the lives of many Americans between 1945-1960. Explain your choices

KQ3

4. The fight for Civil Rights during the 1950s was influenced by developments such as;
 - a. The experience of black Americans during WW2
 - b. The work of the NAACP
 - c. The Brown vs Topeka case

Arrange the developments in order of their significance in influencing the campaign for Civil Rights. Explain your choices

5. The campaign for Civil Rights in the 1950s and 1960s was influenced by events such as;
 - a. The Montgomery Bus Boycott
 - b. The sit-in protests
 - c. The freedom rides

Arrange these events in order of their significance in helping the campaign to achieve Civil Rights. Explain your choices

6. The campaign for Civil Rights in the 1960s was influenced by events such as;
 - a. Montgomery Bus Boycott (1955-56)
 - b. Martin Luther King's March to Birmingham (1963)
 - c. The Selma March (1964)

Arrange these events in order of their significance in helping the campaign to achieve Civil Rights. Explain your choices

7. The campaign for Civil Rights during the 1960s was influenced by the leadership of the following individuals;
 - a. Martin Luther King
 - b. Malcolm X
 - c. Bull Connor

Arrange these individuals in order of their significance in influencing the campaign for Civil Rights. Explain your choices

8. Black Americans had to campaign for equal access to education. They achieved this due to a number of factors;
 - a. Brown vs Topeka case
 - b. Events at Little Rock
 - c. James Meredith

Arrange the factors in order of their significance in helping black Americans get equal access to education. Explain your choices.

9. The campaign for securing equality for black Americans during the 1960s was influenced by developments such as;
 - a. The Black Panther Movement
 - b. The leadership of Malcolm X
 - c. The Black Panther Movement

Arrange these developments in order of their significance in influencing the campaign for securing equality for black Americans. Explain your choices

KQ4

10. The lives of many Americans were influenced by the actions of the following Presidents;
 - a. President Kennedy
 - b. President Johnson
 - c. President Nixon

Arrange these presidents in order of their significance. Explain your choices.

11. American politics was influenced by a number of Presidents in the 1980s and 1990s.
 - a. President Reagan
 - b. President Bush snr
 - c. President Clinton

Arrange these Presidents in order of their significance in influencing American politics. Explain your choices

KQ5

12. The lives of many Americans during the period 1960-2000 were influenced by developments such as;
- The cinema
 - Television
 - Information technology

Arrange these developments in order of their significance in influencing the lives of Americans during this period. Explain your choices

13. The lives of many young Americans in the 1950s and 1960s were influenced by developments such as:
- Films and the media
 - New musical styles
 - Literature

Arrange the developments in order of their significance in influencing the lives of young Americans. Explain your choices.

14. The lives of many women in the 1950s and 1960s were influenced by the following;
- The impact of the Second World War
 - The work of the National Organisation for Women (NOW)
 - The works of the Women's Liberation Movement

Arrange these factors in order of their significance in influencing the lives of women. Explain your choices

KQ6

15. Relations between the USA and USSR deteriorated between 1945 and 1963 due to events such as:
- The Truman Doctrine
 - The Berlin Blockade and airlift
 - The Cuban Missile Crisis

Arrange the developments in order of their significance in bringing about a deterioration in relations between the USA and USSR during this period. Explain your choices.

KQ7

16. US foreign policy during the period 1970 to 1990 was influenced by developments such as:
- Détente during the 1970s
 - The Russian invasion of Afghanistan in 1979
 - The friendship between Reagan and Gorbachev

Arrange these events in order of their significance in influencing US foreign policy during this period. Explain your choices

Question 4 – Explain why ... (8 marks)

You need to explain 2 or 3 reasons why the event / issue happened. Remember you need PEE paragraphs. You will have 8 minutes for this question.

KQ1

1. Explain why the USA was affected by the Great Depression
2. Explain why the lives of many farmers changed during the Great Depression
3. Explain why the number of Hoovervilles grew during the early 1930s
4. Explain why Roosevelt won the 1932 election
5. Explain why Roosevelt's first Hundred Days were so important
6. Explain why Roosevelt's 'fireside' chats were so important
7. Explain why the New Deal was needed
8. Explain why many republicans opposed the New Deal
9. Explain why some people opposed the New Deal
10. Explain why unemployment fell during the 1930s

KQ2

11. Explain why unemployment fell during the war years
12. Explain why US society became more affluent during the 1950s and 1960s
13. Explain why people moved to live in the suburbs
14. Explain why some Americans did not experience the new-found affluence of the 1950s

KQ3

15. Explain why the position of black Americans changed in the armed forces between 1942 and 1947
16. Explain why the Second World War was a turning point for many black Americans
17. Explain why education was desegregated in the 1950s
18. Explain why the events at Little Rock were important in the Civil Rights Movement
19. Explain why the James Meredith case was important for the Civil Rights Movement
20. Explain why transport was desegregated in the early 1960s
21. Explain why events in Birmingham were important in the campaign for Civil Rights
22. Explain why the Montgomery Bus Boycott was a turning point in the Civil Rights Movement
23. Explain why the Brown vs Topeka was significant to the Civil Rights Movement
24. Explain why Martin Luther King was important to the Civil Rights Movement
25. Explain why the Civil Rights Act was passed
26. Explain why Malcolm X was important in the fight for civil rights during the 1960s
27. Explain why the assassination of Martin Luther King resulted in a wave of rioting across the USA
28. Explain why some black and white Americans criticised the Civil Rights Act 1964
29. Explain why the Voting Rights Act was passed in 1965
30. Explain why the Race Riots took place in the 1960s
31. Explain why the Mexico Olympics were important for the Civil Rights Movement
32. Explain why there were different views on how to bring about change for black Americans in the 1950s and 1960s

KQ4

33. Explain why the New Frontier was needed
34. Explain why there was opposition to the New Frontier
35. Explain why some people opposed Johnson's Great Society
36. Explain why Nixon resigned as President
37. Explain why the Watergate Scandal was a turning point in American politics in the 1970s
38. Explain why Reagan was a popular President

KQ5

39. Explain why television had so much influence on American society in the 1950s and 1960s
40. Explain why music had so much influence on young people between 1950-2000
41. Explain why cinema had so much influence on Americans between 1950 and 1970
42. Explain why youth culture changed between the 1950s and 1960s
43. Explain why the lifestyle of some young Americans changed between the 1930s and the 1960s
44. Explain why teenagers rebelled against society in the 1950s
45. Explain why students protested in the 1960s and 1970s
46. Explain why the Second World War was a turning point for women
47. Explain why women's lives changed by the end of the 1960s
48. Explain why the role of women changed by the end of the 1960s
49. Explain why the feminist movement grew during the 1960s
50. Explain why the attitudes of some American women had changed by the 1960s

KQ6

51. Explain why America had a fear of communism
52. Explain why relations between the USA and the USSR changed between 1945 and 1948
53. Explain why Truman followed a policy of containment
54. Explain why the Berlin Crisis of 1948-49 was important in the development of the Cold War
55. Explain why the Cuban Missile Crisis was important in the history of the Cold war
56. Explain why America became involved in the Vietnam war
57. Explain why American troops withdrew from Vietnam
58. Explain why relations between the USA and the USSR changed during the 1970s

KQ7

59. Explain why the USA followed a policy of détente
60. Explain why relations between the USA and China changed during the 1970s
61. Explain why President Carter and Reagan adopted a hard-line policy towards the USSR
62. Explain why the relationship between the USA and the USSR improved during the 1980s
63. Explain why the Cold war ended
64. Explain why relations between the USA and Iran changed after 1979
65. Explain why the US became involved in the Gulf War

Question 5 – How important was ... (12 marks)

This question requires you to evaluate the issue. You need to explain why it was important and why it wasn't. You must have a conclusion at the end of your answer. You must complete this question in 12 minutes. (You might find it best to start with this question as it is worth the most marks on the paper).

KQ1

1. How important was President Hoover to the American economy?
2. How important were the first hundred days in helping America recover from the effects of the Depression?
3. How important was the New Deal in helping the American economy recover from the effects of the Great Depression?
4. How important was President Roosevelt to the lives of the American people?

KQ2

5. How important was the Second World War in improving the US economy?
6. How important was the rise of consumerism to the American economy and people?
7. How important was the affluent society?
8. How important was suburbanisation in improving the lives of all Americans?

KQ3

9. How important was the Second World War in the fight for civil rights?
10. How important was Martin Luther King in the campaign for Civil Rights for Black Americans?
11. How important was the issue of education in the Civil Rights Movement?
12. How important were the events at Little Rock in the civil rights movement?
13. How important was the Montgomery Bus Boycott in the Civil Rights Movement?
14. How important were the freedom rides in the struggle for civil rights?
15. How important was Malcolm X in the campaign for civil rights?
16. How important was the Civil Rights Act 1964?
17. How important was the Selma campaign in the fight to secure equal voting rights for black Americans?
18. How important was Stokely Carmichael in the struggle for civil rights?

KQ4

19. How important was the New Frontier?
20. How important was the Great society in improving social and economic conditions for all Americans in the 1960s?
21. How important was the Watergate Scandal in American politics in the 1970s?
22. How important were Clinton's policies in dealing with the economic problems created by Reagan?

KQ5

23. How important were the new musical styles of the 1950s and 1960s in influencing the lives of young Americans?
24. How important was the cinema in influencing the lives of Americans between 1950-2000?
25. How important were the computer and internet in bringing change to the US society in the late twentieth century?

26. How important was the student protest movement between 1950-1980?
27. How important was World War Two in changing the lives of women?
28. How important was the feminist movement in changing the lives of women in the 1950s and 1960s?
29. How important was the National Organisation for Women in the 1950s and 1960s?

KQ6

30. How important was the Truman Doctrine to American foreign policy?
31. How important was the Berlin Crisis in changing the relationship between the USA and the USSR?
32. How important was the Cuban Missile Crisis in the history of the Cold War?
33. How important was the Vietnam War to American foreign policy?

KQ7

34. How important was ping pong diplomacy in changing the relationship between the USA and China in the 1970s?
35. How important was the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in changing the relationship between the USA and the USSR?
36. How important was the policy of détente?
37. How important was Reagan's Star Wars programme in bringing about an end to the Cold War?
38. How important was the relationship between Reagan and Gorbachev in bringing about an end to the Cold War?