

A-level HISTORY

Component 2J America: A Nation Divided, c1845–1877

Friday 6 June 2025

Afternoon

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 7042/2J.
- 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 AAnswer Question 01.

Source A

From an article 'Annexation' in a pro-Democratic magazine by John O'Sullivan, July 1845. John O'Sullivan was an influential pro-Democratic writer.

It is time now for opposition to the admission of Texas to cease, so as not to further agitate the waters of bitterness and strife amongst Americans. Texas is now ours. If we hadn't successfully claimed it, we would have limited our potential greatness and failed in fulfilling our Manifest Destiny to take over the continent allotted by Providence for the development of our growing population and our way of government. There is no foundation in the accusation that the admission of Texas was a pro-slavery measure. 5
There are many areas in Texas where slavery cannot exist. There are complaints about Texas becoming a new slave state, but no complaints about the far more rapid growth of states in the free West, as these fine regions are overspread with European migrants settling there. Texas has been absorbed into the Union in order to accommodate our growing population and allow it to expand westwards. There can be no doubt that Texas was part of our country's Manifest Destiny. 10

Source B

From a speech to Congress by President James K Polk, May 11 1846. Congress declared war on the Republic of Mexico two days later.

The strong desire to establish peace with Mexico on honourable terms, and the readiness of our government to adjust our western boundaries on fair, just principles, which would lead to friendly relations, led me last September to seek the reopening of diplomatic relations between the two countries. Every measure adopted on our part with the intention of annexing California and New Mexico. Although our diplomatic mission went to Mexico by agreement between the two governments, with the friendliest of intentions, our mission has failed. The Mexican Government not only refused to receive our ambassador or listen to his proposals, but after a series of menaces the Mexicans have invaded our territory and shed the blood of our fellow-citizens on our own soil. 5
I recommend to Congress the immediate sending of a large and overpowering armed force to Mexico. I also declare that it is my desire not only to end hostilities speedily, but to bring all matters in dispute between this Government and Mexico to an early and friendly conclusion. 10

Source C

From a speech to the House of Representatives by Congressman David Wilmot, 8 February 1847. David Wilmot was a Democrat from Pennsylvania.

Mr Speaker. The issue is whether or not slavery shall be allowed to spread to new and distant regions, where presently the footprint of a slave cannot be found. Sir, I was in favour of the annexation of Texas. The Democratic Party, almost to a majority, was in favour of annexing Texas. However, in the case of more Mexican territory, shall further concessions be made by the North? Shall we give up free territory and the potential spread of free labour? Sir, Northern treasure is being exhausted and Northern blood poured upon Mexico. We are told that California and New Mexico are won by our armies. They are free from slavery, but shall they remain free? This is the issue. The South contend that they have the right to take and hold slaves in this acquired land. Unless the Proviso I have offered is adopted by the House, the South will do so. Shall the South be permitted to wrestle these provinces from Northern freemen? This is the issue.

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With reference to these sources and your understanding of the historical context, assess the value of these three sources to an historian studying disputes over westward expansion, in the years 1845 to 1848.

[30 marks]**Turn over for Section B**

Section B

Answer **two** questions.

0 2

'In the years 1856 to 1860, the Lincoln-Douglas debates increased sectional tension between the Northern and Southern states more than any other factor.'

Assess the validity of this view.

[25 marks]

0 3

How significant was the military leadership of Grant in bringing about Union victory in the Civil War?

[25 marks]

0 4

'The Republican Party was responsible for the failure of Radical Reconstruction in the years 1868 to 1877.'

Assess the validity of this view.

[25 marks]

END OF QUESTIONS

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