

A-level HISTORY

Component 2Q The American Dream: reality and illusion, 1945–1980

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 7042/2Q.
- 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 A

Answer Question 01.

Source A

From an address to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), by President Truman, 29 June 1947.

As Americans, we believe that every man should be free to live his life as he wishes. He should be limited only by his responsibility to his fellow countrymen and each man should be guaranteed equality of opportunity. The only limit to an American's achievement should be his ability, his industry, and his character. Our task is to remove the final barriers which stand between millions of citizens and their birthright. There is no justifiable reason for discrimination because of ancestry, or religion, or race, or color. We must not tolerate such limitations on the freedom of any of our people and on their enjoyment of the basic rights which every citizen in a truly democratic society must possess. Every man should have the right to a decent home, the right to education, the right to adequate medical care, the right to a worthwhile job, the right to an equal share in making the public decisions through the ballot, and the right to a fair trial in a fair court.

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Source B

From the testimony of General Eisenhower to the Senate Armed Services Committee, 24 April 1948. Eisenhower opposed President Truman's ambition to desegregate the army.

Now, if you are going to go further with desegregating the army, here is the problem you run into. In general, the black man is less well educated than his white counterpart. If you completely integrate, what you are going to get in every company is blacks relegated to the minor jobs. The black man is never going to get a promotion because the competition is too tough. If, on the other hand, he is in smaller units of his own, he can move up and I believe he is entitled to show his own abilities. I do not mean to say that I have a final answer to the problem, and I believe that the problem of racism will disappear through education, through mutual respect, and so on. But I do believe that if we attempt merely by passing a lot of laws to force someone to like someone else, we are just going to get into trouble.

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Source C

From the verdict in the *McLaurin v Oklahoma* case by Chief Justice Vinson, 5 June 1950. McLaurin attended the University of Oklahoma but was segregated from white students.

It may be argued that Mr McLaurin will be in no better position when these restrictions are removed, for he may still be rejected by his fellow students. We think this is irrelevant. There is a vast difference – a constitutional difference – between restrictions imposed by the state which prohibit the intellectual mixing of students, and the refusal of individuals to mix. The removal of the state restrictions will not necessarily stop individual and group prejudices but, at the very least, the state will not be depriving Mr McLaurin of the opportunity to secure acceptance by his fellow students on his own merits. We conclude that the current conditions of Mr McLaurin's education deprive him of his right to the equal protection of the laws. We hold that the Fourteenth Amendment prevents differences in treatment by the state, based upon race. McLaurin, having been admitted to a state-supported graduate school, must receive the same treatment at the hands of the state as students of other races.

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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 responses to the campaign for African-American Civil Rights in the years 1945 to 1950.

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

Section B

Answer **two** questions.

0	2
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How successful was Eisenhower's handling of the Cold War?

[25 marks]

0	3
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'Nixon's victory in the 1968 Presidential election was a result of divisions within the Democratic Party.'

Assess the validity of this view.

[25 marks]

0	4
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'In the years 1974 to 1980 the USA was a united country.'

Assess the validity of this view.

[25 marks]

END OF QUESTIONS

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