

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## AQA A Level History 2020–22

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



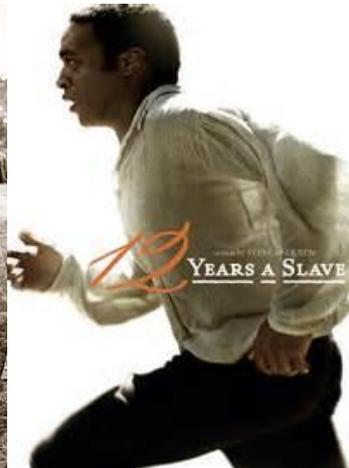
When the American declared their independence in 1776 the new Constitution stated that;

**“...all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”**

This new democracy started off so positively but tensions soon rose to the surface.

In this course you will learn how and why, by 1861 this new nation was embroiled in a Civil War that resulted in over 700,000 deaths.

Why had it all gone so wrong?



## **Welcome to A-Level History!**

We hope that you enjoy this course as much as we enjoy teaching it. Mrs Black or Mr Bond will teach you the American Civil War section of the course, which will take up half of your lessons, and is worth 40% of the whole A-Level.

Hopefully this booklet will answer some of your questions about the course, but please do contact us if you have further questions.

### **What will we study in this section?**

#### **Part One: the origins of the American Civil War, North and South in c1845**

- The American Republic: the federal government and its relationships with the states; the role of the president; the US constitution and the Supreme Court
- The Northern states: social, economic and political characteristics
- The Southern states: social, economic and political characteristics
- The legacy of the past: The Missouri compromise

#### **Part Two: Attempts to maintain the Union, c1845–1854**

- Westward expansion and its impact on North and South: the ideas of Manifest Destiny; controversy over the new territories acquired by victory over Mexico
  - Attempts at political compromise: The Wilmot Proviso; the role of personalities such as Zachary Taylor, Stephen Douglas and Henry Clay; the Compromise of 1850; Texas and California; the Fugitive Slave Law
  - The growth of abolitionist sentiment in the North: political leaders such as William Seward; activists such as John Brown; popular literature and the press; the cultural and economic influence of European immigrants arriving in the northern states
  - Reactions against abolitionism in the South; political leaders such as Jefferson Davis; popular literature and the press

#### **Part Three: The outbreak of Civil War, 1854–1861**

- ‘Bleeding Kansas’: the de-stabilisation of the balance between North and South
- The emergence of the Republican Party: the political impact of the controversy over the Kansas Nebraska Act; the spread of Republican parties across northern states; the elections of 1856; key personalities including Lincoln, Seward and Chase
- Hardening of positions: The Dred Scott decision; the Lincoln-Douglas debates; Harper’s Ferry; local conflicts; the split in the Democratic Party
- The drive for secession of the South: the presidential election of 1860; southern political leaders and proclamation of the Confederacy; outbreak of hostilities

**All of your notes from Year 12 will be relevant and important in Year 13** so it is essential that you keep your folder in an organised fashion and that each topic is covered thoroughly. If you are absent for any lesson email you teacher to get hold of the lesson notes and copy up from a friend.

## How will your work be examined?

### Year 12 Assessment (Internal)

At the end of your first year you will take an internal AS paper on the topics you have learnt so far. This paper will not count towards your final A-Level grade and will be used as a way to formally measure your progress after the first year.

### A-Level Assessment

At the end of two years you will take your A-Level paper, which will cover all the work you have completed over the entire course.

<b>The A Level exam</b>
Written exam: 2 hours 30 minutes
Three questions (one compulsory)
80 marks
40% of A-Level

#### **1. Compulsory question using primary sources**

**Sample question** *With reference to these sources and your understanding of the historical context, which of these sources is more valuable in explaining the reaction to the Dred Scott decision?*

**Mark scheme** - AO2 Analyse and evaluate appropriate source material, primary and/or contemporary to the period, within the historical context.

**A top mark answer** will display a very good understanding of the value of the sources in relation to the issue identified in the question. It will evaluate the sources thoroughly in order to provide a well-substantiated conclusion. The response will demonstrate a very good understanding of context.

#### **2. Essay question - Completing 2 from a choice of 3**

**Sample question** *'By the end of 1855 division between North and South was beyond repair.'*  
*Explain why you agree or disagree with this view.*

**Mark scheme** - AO1 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.

**A top mark answer** will display a good understanding of the demands of the question. It will be well-organised and effectively communicated. There will be a range of clear and specific supporting information showing a good understanding of key features and issues, together with some conceptual awareness. The answer will be analytical in style with a range of direct comment leading to substantiated judgement.

These two types of questions will be the format for all of your assessed work throughout the two years. So you will get PLENTY of practice.

## **Expectations**

A-Levels can be a daunting and difficult challenge if you do not approach them in the correct way. The key to success is to work regularly throughout the year both in and outside of lessons and set homework. The standard expectation is to see all of you in all lessons, working hard, getting involved and thinking critically about the information. You must also be organised, with a well-kept folder of work. We also expect you to re-read or read around areas of weaker understanding, lessons can move quickly so you must be ready to spend your study time checking your understanding of each topic. If you work hard throughout the year and plan ahead to the exams with revision as you progress you will find yourself much happier and more comfortable as time goes on.

## **Your reports**

During the year you will receive 6<sup>th</sup> form reports as to your progress. Our commitment grades in Politics are based on the following guidelines.

**Outstanding (O)** – You show consistent effort and engagement both in and outside the classroom. You complete all work required to a high standard and ensure that you are doing a wide range of independent tasks without prompting.

**Good (G)** – You show consistent effort and engagement both in the and outside the classroom. Your work shows detail and care. You also complete the expected amount of independent work though not as proactively as you could.

**Requires Improvement (R)** – You show some effort in and outside the classroom and are able to complete homework set. However, there is little evidence of further independent work being completed. You may also have had to have been chased for any missing work or shown poor attendance.

**Inadequate (I)** – You are showing little to no effort both in and outside the classroom. Homework is often incomplete or of poor quality. No independent work is being completed and you will have unexplained absences.

## **Textbook**

The course textbook covers both Years 12 and 13 and it is crucial that you have your own copy. The book has wide margins which is really useful for making notes and/or keeping a reference of what you do and don't understand and questions that you can then raise in class.

America: Civil War and Westward Expansion 1803 – 90. Alan Farmer.  
ISBN 978-1-4718-3906-1

## **How to develop your understanding of the period**

Reading around the topics is **crucial** if you are to achieve the higher grades at A2. There are lots of books in the library including;

- Battle Cry of Freedom – James Mc Pherson
- America Empire of Liberty – David Reynolds
- Penguin History of the USA - Hugh Brogan
- Team of Rivals – Doris Goodwin
- Give me Liberty – Eric Foner

In addition, there are many websites which cover our period and contain a wealth of material. A good starting point is <http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu>.

On the school shared area there are articles from periodicals such as History Today which are written for students at your stage.

Any movie set in America in the 1800s will help develop your knowledge. Movies as diverse as The Gangs of New York and Gone with the Wind will give you a feel of the period. Other good choices are Cold Mountain, 12 Years a Slave, Amistad and Glory. The 2013 movie Lincoln will be very useful about half way through the year.

Online lectures such as Professor David Blight of Yale are on You Tube and are a fantastic resource and he speaks particularly well on the pre - Civil War period. The Ken Burn's documentary on the Civil War is superb.

As this is a fairly new course the exam board have not produced many past papers, but all the information you might need, including the full exam specification, can be found in the link below. We have also come up with many past paper questions ourselves so they will also be used during the two years.

<http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/history/as-and-a-level/history-7041-7042>

### **Further Reading**

- Battle Cry of Freedom by James McPherson
- American Civil War by Adam Smith
- Team of Rivals by Doris Kearns Goodwin
- David Blight Lectures on YouTube (Type in David Blight American Civil War). Transcripts can be found at <https://oyc.yale.edu/history/hist-119>

We hope that you will enjoy this course and be inspired to carry on learning about this fascinating and important period in America's history. There will be plenty of opportunities for discussion and debate as so many of the events were and still remain controversial. Keep an eye on the news as some of the issues such as states' rights and racism are still unresolved today and a live issue for many ... after all "History doesn't repeat itself but sometimes it rhymes." Mark Twain.

Work hard!

**Mrs Black & Mr Bond**    September 2020