

A-level HISTORY

Component 1K The making of a Superpower: USA, 1865–1975

Wednesday 6 June 2018 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 7042/1K.
- 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:
 - 60 minutes on Question 01
 - 45 minutes on each of the other questions answered.

Section AAnswer Question 01.

Extract A

The general level of political morality during the Gilded Age was low, fraud and corruption in office rampant. A succession of dignified mediocrities occupied the Presidency, the blandness of their administrations unrelieved even by scandal. Small wonder that the period has been described as 'poor in purpose and barren in achievement'. An equally striking characteristic of the politics of the period was the slump in the power and prestige of the Presidency. The chief reason was that the executive branch was still suffering from the Congressional assault on Andrew Johnson and from Grant's implied abdication of presidential authority. Grant's successors, undistinguished as they were, courageously resisted Congressional ambition, but could do little to shift the balance of power back to the White House. Grover Cleveland has been described as the outstanding President between Lincoln and Theodore Roosevelt. But this is not claiming much. There was the prevailing belief that the President should confine himself to executing the laws, leaving the making of them to Congress. 5 10

Adapted from Maldwyn A Jones, *The Limits of Liberty 1607–1980*, 1986**Extract B**

Although some historians have taken a more favourable view of the Gilded Age, the era and its political leaders have been largely misrepresented. As a result, the Gilded Age presidents have not fared well over the years. They have been referred to as 'dud presidents', with descriptions such as 'Hayes, a president defied; Garfield, a president defunct; Arthur, a president dismissed; Cleveland, a president denied; and Harrison, a president derided'. Such criticism is overstated. For the most part, Gilded Age presidents were honest and capable administrators. No major political scandal occurred on their watches, nor did they abuse the power of their office. Their actions in office were in keeping with the times. They governed in an era of divided government when neither party held an advantage among the electorate. Political stalemate made the enactment of legislative agendas impossible. The economic downturn that gripped the nation under Cleveland's presidency was beyond any president's control. 5 10

Adapted from Stan Haynes, *President-Making in the Gilded Age*, 2016

Extract C

In the aftermath of Johnson's impeachment and the subsequent failure to remove him from office, relations between Congress and the President deteriorated further. The primary impact of the impeachment on presidential power was immediately felt in the political realm. Presidential power substantially declined in the years after the impeachment. The result was deadlock and ineffectiveness in dealing with Reconstruction, racial issues, and economic conflict. Throughout the South during the Reconstruction era, violence escalated against the freedmen, as many white Southerners assumed that the federal government was incapable of controlling the situation. During Grant's administration, a string of presidential scandals rocked the White House. To a certain degree, the power of the presidency to shape social policy and act as a political power broker had withered after 1881. After the incompetence of Grant, the following executives were incapable of fostering any type of social and economic development. Known as the Gilded Age Presidents, these men lacked the political strength to challenge the political power of the Congress.

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Adapted from Carlisle and Golson, *A House Divided during the Civil War Era*, 2007

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Using your understanding of the historical context, assess how convincing the arguments in these three extracts are in relation to the presidents of the Gilded Age.

[30 marks]

Turn over for Section B

Section B

Answer **two** questions.

0 2 To what extent was American imperialism motivated by issues of national security in the years 1890 to 1920?
[25 marks]

0 3 'Women made little progress towards achieving equality from 1920 to 1945.'
Assess the validity of this view.
[25 marks]

0 4 'The years 1945 to 1964 were a time of strong economic growth and prosperity for all Americans.'
Assess the validity of this view.
[25 marks]

END OF QUESTIONS

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