6.1 The American West, c1835-c1895: The Plains Indians' Way of Life: 30-minute Pack

EDEXCEL 1HI0 · about 30 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions. Write in full sentences for Questions 1, 2 and 3. You are advised to spend about 30 minutes on this pack.

1 Explain two consequences of the Plains Indians' way of life depending so closely on the buffalo herds.

(Total for Question 1 is 8 marks)

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2 Write a narrative account analysing how the horse changed the Plains Indians' way of life between its spread onto the Great Plains (from the early eighteenth century) and the 1830s.

You may use the following information in your answer:
- the spread of horses northward from Spanish territory in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries
- the effect of the horse on how Plains Indian nations hunted buffalo

You should also use information of your own.

(Total for Question 2 is 8 marks)

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3 Explain two of the following:

(a) the importance of the buffalo for the Plains Indians' way of life

(b) the importance of the horse for how Plains Indian nations hunted and fought

(c) the importance of religious belief and ceremony, such as the Sun Dance, for Plains Indian society

You must answer on TWO parts.

(Total for Question 3 is 16 marks)

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Mark scheme · 6.1 The American West, c1835-c1895: The Plains Indians' Way of Life: 30-minute Pack

Question 1

Level 1 Identifies one or two general consequences of the Plains Indians' dependence on the buffalo, with little or no supporting detail or explanation. **1-2**

Level 2 Identifies and begins to explain one consequence, supported by accurate detail. **3-4**

Level 3 Explains two consequences of the Plains Indians' dependence on the buffalo, each supported by accurate and relevant detail. **5-6**

Level 4 Explains two consequences in a well-developed, logically structured way, supported throughout by precise and accurate detail, showing how the consequences connect. **7-8**

Indicative content:

- Because so much of daily life (food, shelter materials, clothing and tools) depended on the buffalo, Plains bands organised their whole year around the herds' seasonal migration, moving camp repeatedly rather than settling permanently in one place.
- Reliance on the buffalo meant that skills such as tracking, hunting on horseback and processing a carcass quickly and efficiently were highly valued within Plains Indian society, and a hunter's skill could shape his standing within a band.
- Because the buffalo could not be stored indefinitely and herds moved unpredictably, bands needed close cooperation and shared decision-making, usually through a council, to organise large hunts and to decide when and where to move camp.
- The 'waste nothing' use of the buffalo (food, hide, bone, sinew, horn, dung for fuel) meant Plains Indian material culture, from tools to tents to clothing, was built almost entirely around a single animal, giving nations across a wide area broadly similar technology and a similar way of life.

Question 2

Level 1 Simple, generalised statements, with little organisation or sense of change over time. **1-2**

Level 2 Some accurate knowledge is deployed, with limited organisation into a sequence; the account may be more a list of events than a developed narrative. **3-4**

Level 3 The account is organised and mostly coherent, and shows some analysis of how the situation changed, with accurate supporting detail. **5-6**

Level 4 The answer demonstrates a coherent, well-organised narrative that analyses connections between events across the period, showing clearly how the situation changed, fully supported by precise and accurate detail. **7-8**

Indicative content:

- From the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, horses brought to the Americas by Spanish colonisers spread, through trade, raiding and escape, gradually northward across the Plains, reaching most Plains nations by the early-to-mid eighteenth century.
- Before the horse, hunting buffalo on foot was slow and difficult, often relying on driving small numbers of animals into an enclosure or over a cliff; the horse let hunters chase and kill buffalo far more efficiently on horseback.
- Because hunting became more productive, bands could support more people and travel and trade across greater distances, and the horse itself became a measure of wealth and status within a band.
- The horse also transformed warfare and raiding between neighbouring Plains nations, since mounted warriors could travel further and fight more effectively, making competition over hunting grounds and horses a more significant feature of relations between nations.
- By the 1830s a fully developed, horse-based nomadic culture was well established across the Great Plains, so the way of life encountered by early white travellers and traders was itself the outcome of nearly two centuries of change since the horse first arrived.

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Question 3

Level 1 For each part answered: identifies a general point of importance, with little or no supporting detail or explanation. **1-4**

Level 2 For each part answered: begins to explain importance, supported by some accurate detail. **5-8**

Level 3 For each part answered: explains importance clearly, supported by accurate and relevant detail, with some analysis of consequences. **9-12**

Level 4 For each part answered: explains importance in a well-developed, analytical way, fully supported by precise and accurate detail, showing clearly why the event or development mattered for the outcome named. **13-16**

Indicative content:

- (a) The buffalo was important because it supplied most of what a Plains Indian band needed to survive: meat for food, hide for tipis, clothing and robes, and bone, horn and sinew for tools, weapons and thread, so that the movement of buffalo herds directly shaped where and how bands lived.
- (b) The horse was important because it made buffalo hunting far quicker and more reliable than hunting on foot, allowed bands to travel greater distances between hunting grounds, and gave mounted warriors a significant advantage in raiding and defending territory, transforming both the economy and the warfare of Plains nations after its adoption.
- (c) Religious belief and ceremony were important because they gave Plains Indian society shared meaning and cohesion beyond the practical business of hunting and moving camp: ceremonies such as the Sun Dance renewed a band's sense of community, and beliefs about sacred places, such as the Black Hills for the Lakota, shaped which territory a nation considered essential to protect.
- A strong answer on any two parts explains a clear link between the feature named and the wider way of life it shaped, using specific detail (a named nation, ceremony or sacred place) rather than general description.

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