



GCSE HISTORY

Paper 1 Section A/A: America, 1840–1895: Expansion and consolidation

Interpretations Booklet

Interpretations A and B for use in answering Questions 01, 02 and 03



2 4 6 G 8 1 4 5 / 1 A / A

Interpretation A Adapted from a speech by Frederick Douglass in 1878.

Douglass was a slave until 1838 when, aged 20, he escaped. He became a leading figure in the campaign to abolish slavery. In 1881 he published his best-selling autobiography. Douglass was speaking on 30 May – ‘Decoration Day’ – when soldiers from the North who died in the Civil War were remembered.

The American Civil War was fought over the issue of slavery. The North believed in human rights and freedom. In the South there was an illegal government based only on the rights of the strongest.

The Civil War was started by clever speech makers and traitors in the South who decided to break up the United States. The South was to blame for its own suffering in the War and the North won because it had right on its side.

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Interpretation B Adapted from an account of the American Civil War by Jubal Early, ‘An Autobiographical Account of the War between the States’, 1912.

Early was a Confederate General during the American Civil War. After the War he fled abroad but returned to America in 1869 after he was pardoned by President Andrew Johnson.

The South fought the Civil War for the right to govern itself. Slavery was just an excuse used by the North to justify the conflict.

The War was started by the government in Washington which was dominated by fanatics who stirred up the people of the North against the South. The people in the North kept a four-year conflict going against the Confederate States. The South lost because of the tremendous odds against it.

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END OF INTERPRETATIONS

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