

The United States, 1919 - 1941

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HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

In this study guide, you will see a series of icons, highlighted words and page references. The key below will help you quickly establish what these mean and where to go for more information.

Icons

WHAT questions cover the key events and themes.
 WHO questions cover the key people involved.
 WHEN questions cover the timings of key events.
 WHERE questions cover the locations of key moments.
 WHY questions cover the reasons behind key events.
 HOW questions take a closer look at the way in which events, situations and trends occur.
 IMPORTANCE questions take a closer look at the significance of events, situations, and recurrent trends and themes.

DECISIONS questions take a closer look at choices made at events and situations during this era.

Highlighted words

Abdicate - occasionally, you will see certain words highlighted within an answer. This means that, if you need it, you'll find an explanation of the word or phrase in the glossary which starts on **page 16**.

Page references

Tudor (p.7) - occasionally, a certain subject within an answer is covered in more depth on a different page. If you'd like to learn more about it, you can go directly to the page indicated.

This unit focuses on the USA between the world wars, examining the economic, social and political changes that took place between 1919 and 1941.

Purpose

The purpose of this course is to investigate the American economy, and the reasons for and consequences of the boom of the 1920s, the Depression of the 1930s, and the significance of the beginning of the Second World War. It also promotes an understanding of social changes across the time period, and the political and economic impact of Roosevelt's New Deal.

Topics

The course is split into four enquiries:

- The extent to which the US economy boomed in the 1920s, including the reasons for the boom and why some industries benefitted but not others, the lack of prosperity in agriculture and the extent to which all Americans benefitted.
- American social change in the 1920s, including the 'Roaring Twenties', intolerance in society, the introduction and success of Prohibition and the changing role of women.
- The causes and consequences of the Wall Street Crash, including the nature of speculation before the Crash, the impact on the American economy, the social effects and Roosevelt's 1932 election victory.
- The New Deal, including its introduction in 1933, the extent to which it changed during the 1930s, reasons for continuing unemployment, opposition to the New Deal and its overall success.

Key Individuals

Some of the key individuals studied on this course include:

- lenry Ford.
- \rm Warren Harding.
- **Q** Calvin Coolidge.
- Alexander Palmer.
- lohnny Scopes, Clarence Darrow and William J Bryan.
- 😫 Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti.
- Al Capone.
- lerbert Hoover.
- **9** Franklin D Roosevelt.
- le Huey Long.
- \rm Pather Coughlin.

Key Events

Some of the key events you will study on this course include:

- The expansion of the US economy in the 1920s.
- Weaknesses in the US economy by the end of the 1920s.
- American society and the 'Roaring Twenties'.
- Intolerance in US society, including the Red Scare, restrictions on immigration, discrimination against black Americans and the rise of the Ku Klux Klan.
- 🚺 The Wall Street Crash and its financial, social and economic effects.
- 🔂 The presidential election of 1932.
- 🚾 Roosevelt's inauguration and the 'Hundred Days'.
- 🚺 New Deal legislation and the alphabet agencies.
- Opposition to the New Deal, including republican, business radical and Supreme Court opposition.
- **I** Strengths and weaknesses of the New Deal in dealing with unemployment and the Depression.

Assessment

The USA 1919 - 1941, is one of the specified depth studies found in Paper 1, where you have a total of 2 hours to complete 3 questions. You must answer 2 questions from the core section of the paper and one question from a choice of two questions on your chosen depth study. Therefore, you will answer one question on The USA 1919 - 1941 if this is your chosen depth study. The question is comprised of 3 sections; a), b), and c).

- Question a is worth 4 marks. This question will require you to describe key features of the time period. You will be asked to recall 2 relevant points and support them with details or provide at least four relevant points without supporting detail.
- Question b is worth 6 marks. This question will require you to explain a key event or development. You will need to identify two reasons, support those reasons with relevant factual detail and then explain how the reasons made the event occur.
- Question c is worth 10 marks. This question will require you to construct an argument to support and challenge an interpretation stated in the question. You will need to have a minimum of three explanations (two on one side and one on the other) in total, fully evaluate the argument and come to a justified conclusion. You will have the opportunity to show your ability to explain and analyse historical events using 2nd order concepts such as causation, consequence, change, continuity, similarity and difference.
- A The USA 1919 1941 may also appear on Paper 4, a one-hour paper in which you will give an extended answer to one question about this topic. Check with your teacher to find out if you will be taking this option.

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THIS IS A SAMPLE. REVISION SECTION REMOVED.

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THE USA, 1919 - 1941



THE USA, 1919 - 1941





THE USA IN 1918

'I believe in America... because we have great dreams and because we have the opportunity to make those dreams come true.' Wendell Willkie



What was America like in 1918?

At the end of the First World War, America was a large country made up of 48 states. It was rich in natural resources, experiencing rapid industrialisation, and had a young and diverse population.

How big was the USA in 1918?

In 1918, America spread across 9 million square miles. It stretched from Canada to Mexico, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean.



What was the size of the US population in 1918?

About 109 million people lived in America in 1918.



Who lived in America in 1918?

In 1918, people living in the USA came from a variety of backgrounds:

- Europeans, Latin Americans and Asians continued to emigrate to the country throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries.
- 🗹 Many African-Americans lived there because their ancestors had been brought there as slaves.
- Many of the longer-standing immigrants, whose families had lived in America for generations, were known as White Anglo-Saxon Protestants, or WASPs.
- 🗹 Native Americans, whose ancestors had lived in America before the settlers, also lived there.

Who experienced racism in America in 1918?

In the mixed cultural heritage of the USA in 1918, some groups experienced prejudice, racism and disadvantages.

- Slavery didn't end until after the end of the American Civil War, in 1865, and African-Americans continued to experience racism and inequality.
- Immigration laws were passed to reduce the number of immigrants in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, particularly from certain countries.
- Vative Americans were forced to live on reservations as their lands had been taken over by settlers.

USA

What natural resources did America have in 1918?

In 1918 the USA was rich in a number of natural resources:

- Timber.
- 🗹 Coal.
- Iron.
- 🗹 Gold and silver.
- Oil reserves.
- Farmland, which was used to grow crops such as wheat, corn, tobacco and cotton.
- Workers America had a young and growing population to work in its industries.



DID YOU KNOW?

The United States became an independent country on 4th July, 1776, with the Declaration of Independence. This is why Americans celebrate 4th July as Independence Day.



USA

THE US GOVERNMENT

'To live under the American Constitution is the greatest political privilege that was ever accorded the human race.' President Calvin Coolidge



The USA is a democracy and a republic. Its government is defined by the constitution, which sets out how it should be run.

What role does the constitution play in the American government?

The constitution is a set of laws that define how America is run. It is seen as having the highest authority in any government.



How is the constitution amended in the American government?

The American constitution is designed to be difficult to amend. There are 2 main ways it can be done.

- Congress has to pass the amendment with a two-thirds majority in both houses. It then has to be approved by three quarters of all state legislatures.
- A constitutional convention can be called to draft an amendment if desired by two thirds of all states. This method has never been used.



What does unconstitutional mean in the American government?

Anything that breaks the laws of the constitution is said to be unconstitutional and can not legally exist.



What were the powers of the American government in 1918?

Law-making powers were shared between the federal (central) and state governments in 3 main ways:

- The federal government in Washington DC was responsible for foreign policy, war, trade between states and the currency.
- The state governments were responsible for education, marriage laws, trade within the state and local government.
- The federal and state governments shared control of law and order, the courts, taxes, banks, and public welfare.

How was the American government structured?

Power in the federal government was divided between 3 branches - the executive (president), legislature (Congress) and judiciary (courts).

- The president (executive) suggested laws, ran foreign policy and the army, and appointed government ministers.
- Congress (legislature) was split into two houses: the Senate and the House of Representatives. They passed laws, agreed taxes and endorsed the president's appointments of judges and ministers.



The Supreme Court (the judiciary) interpreted laws and the constitution and was the highest court of appeal for people to question decisions by the government and courts.

What checks and balances are there in the American government?

The US government was arranged to make sure no single group could take over or have too much power over the others in 4 main ways:

- The president could veto laws by Congress, but Congress could override the veto with a two-thirds majority. Congress could also withhold taxes or stop the president from appointing judges or ministers.
- The president could appoint judges for the Supreme Court, but the Supreme Court could stop the president's actions if it decided they were unconstitutional.
- Congress could override Supreme Court judgements by passing amendments to change the constitution, but the Supreme Court could say Congress's other laws were unconstitutional.
- Congress could remove a president from office due to acts of treason, bribery or another high crime; this is known as impeachment.

Which political parties were there in the American government in 1918?

By 1918, there were 2 main political parties in America:

- The Republicans, who wanted businesses to succeed.
- The Democrats, who wanted a solution to America's social problems.

How do state governments work within the American government?

-0,

Like the federal government, state governments were divided into executive, legislature and judicial branches.

- The executive branch was headed by a governor, elected by the people.
- The legislature usually had two houses, a Senate and a House of Representatives, to vote on laws and the state budget.
- The state judicial branch was led by the state Supreme Court.



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Sany

Α

Abolish, Abolished - to stop something, or get rid of it.

Agnostic - someone who takes the philosophical and religious stance that they do not, or can not, know the truth of the existence of God.

Agricultural - relating to agriculture.

Agriculture - an umbrella term to do with farming, growing crops or raising animals.

Allies - parties working together for a common objective, such as countries involved in a war. In both world wars, 'Allies' refers to those countries on the side of Great Britain.

Anarchism - the belief all government and organisation of society should be abolished.

Anti-Semitic - to be against, or hostile to, Jews.

Assassinate - to murder someone, usually an important figure, often for religious or political reasons.

Assembly - a meeting of a group of people, often as part of a country's government, to make decisions.

В

Bankrupt - to be insolvent; to have run out of resources with which to pay existing debts.

Boycott - a way of protesting or bringing about change by refusing to buy something or use services.

Bribe, Bribery, Bribes - to dishonestly persuade someone to do something for you in return for money or other inducements.

С

Campaign - a political movement to get something changed; in military terms, it refers to a series of operations to achieve a goal.

Catholic - a Christian who belongs to the Roman Catholic Church.

Cavalry - the name given to soldiers who fight on horseback.

Claim - someone's assertion of their right to something - for example, a claim to the throne.

Communism - the belief, based on the ideas of Karl Marx, that all people should be equal in society without government, money or private property. Everything is owned by by the people, and each person receives according to need.

Communist - a believer in communism.

Conservative - someone who dislikes change and prefers traditional values. It can also refer to a member of the Conservative Party.

Constitution - rules, laws or principles that set out how a country is governed.

Constitutional - relating to the constitution.

Consumer goods - products that people buy.

Corrupt - when someone is willing to act dishonestly for their own personal gain.

Credit - the ability to borrow money, or use goods or services, on the understanding that it will be paid for later.

Culture - the ideas, customs, and social behaviour of a particular people or society.

Currency - an umbrella term for any form of legal tender, but most commonly referring to money.

D

Debt - when something, usually money, is owed by a person, organisation or institution to another.

Democracy - a political system where a population votes for its government on a regular basis. The word is Greek for 'the rule of people' or 'people power'.

Deport - to expel someone from a country and, usually, return them to their homeland.

Dictator - a ruler with absolute power over a country, often acquired by force.

Discriminate, Discrimination - to treat a person or group of people differently and in an unfair way.

E

Economic - relating to the economy; also used when justifying something in terms of profitability.

Economy - a country, state or region's position in terms of production and consumption of goods and services, and the supply of money.

Electrification - Bringing electricity to places that previously did not have it.

Empire - a group of states or countries ruled over and controlled by a single monarch.

Evolution - a theory by Charles Darwin suggesting human beings developed slowly from other animals, such as apes.

Export - to transport goods for sale to another country.

Extreme - furthest from the centre or any given point. If someone holds extreme views, they are not moderate and are considered radical.

F

Fasting - to deliberately refrain from eating, and often drinking, for a period of time.

Federal - in US politics this means 'national', referring to the whole country rather than any individual state.

Foreign policy - a government's strategy for dealing with other nations.

Ghetto - part of a city, often a slum area, occupied by a minority group.

Н

Hire purchase - a system where goods can be bought and paid for with a deposit and instalments over a period of time.

I

Illiterate - unable to read or write.

Immigrant - someone who moves to another country.

Immigration - the act of coming to a foreign country with the intention of living there permanently.

Impeach, Impeachment - to charge someone, usually a high-ranking government official, with treason or a crime against the state.

Import - to bring goods or services into a different country to sell.

Independence, **Independent** - to be free of control, often meaning by another country, allowing the people of a nation the ability to govern themselves.

Industrial - related to industry, manufacturing and/or production.

Industrialisation, Industrialise, Industrialised - the process of developing industry in a country or region where previously there was little or none.

Industry - the part of the economy concerned with turning raw materials into into manufactured goods, for example making furniture from wood.

Inferior - lower in rank, status or quality.

Innovate, Innovation - the introduction and development of new things, such as inventions, methods or ideas.

Integrate - to bring people or groups with specific characteristics or needs into equal participation with others; to merge one thing with another to form a single entity.

Interpretation, **Interpretations** - a perceived meaning or particular explanation of something.

Investor - someone who puts money into something with the expectation of future profit.

J

Juries, Jury - a group of people sworn to listen to evidence on a legal case and then deliver an impartial verdict based on what they have heard.

L

Laissez-faire - the idea a government should take a hands-off approach to matters such as public health or the free market; it translates from the French as 'let it be'.

Left wing - used to describe political groups or individuals with beliefs that are usually centered around socialism and the idea of reform.

Legislature - The organisation or set of people who have the power to create laws.

Lynch, Lynched, Lynching - the killing of someone by a group of people for an alleged offence without a legal trial, usually publicly and often by hanging.

Μ

Malnutrition - lack of proper nutrition caused by not eating enough of the right things or not having enough to eat. It can also be caused by the body not being able to use the food that is eaten.

Mass - an act of worship in the Catholic Church.

Mechanisation - Where human workers are replaced by machines or robots.

Middle class - refers to the socio-economic group which includes people who are educated and have professional jobs, such as teachers or lawyers.

Minister - a senior member of government, usually responsible for a particular area such as education or finance.

Modernise - to update something to make it suitable for modern times, often by using modern equipment or modern ideas.

Morals - a person's set of rules about what they consider right and wrong, used to guide their actions and behaviour.

N

Nationalisation - the transfer of control or ownership of a sector of industry, such as banking or rail, from the private sector to the state.

Ρ

Persecute - to treat someone unfairly because of their race, religion or political beliefs.

Population - the number of people who live in a specified place.

Poverty - the state of being extremely poor.

Prejudice - prejudgement - when you assume something about someone based on a feature like their religion or skin colour, rather than knowing it as fact.

President - the elected head of state of a republic.

Prevent, Preventative, Preventive - steps taken to stop something from happening.

Proclamation - a public or official announcement of great importance.

Production - a term used to describe how much of something is made, for example saying a factory has a high production rate.

Profit - generally refers to financial gain; the amount of money made after deducting buying, operating or production costs.

Prosecute - to institute or conduct legal proceedings against a person or organisation.

Prosperity - the state of thriving, enjoying good fortune and/or social status.

Protestant - someone belonging to the branch of the Christian Church that separated from the Roman Catholic Church in the 16th century.

R

Radical, Radicalism - people who want complete or extensive change, usually politically or socially.

Raid - a quick surprise attack on the enemy.

Reform, **Reforming** - change, usually in order to improve an institution or practice.

Relief - something that reduces pressure on people, often through financial or practical support.

Repressive - a harsh or authoritarian action; usually used to describe governmental abuse of power.

Republic - a state or country run by elected representatives and an elected/nominated president. There is no monarch.

Reservation - an area of land given to Native Americans by the US government to keep them away from settlers.

Riots - violent disturbances involving a crowd of people.

S

Segregation - when people are kept separately from each other - often used in the context of race.

Sharecropper - someone who farmed land belonging to a landowner in return for giving them a share of their crops.

Sin - in religion, an immoral act against God's laws.

Standard of living - level of wealth and goods available to an individual or group.

State, States - an area of land or a territory ruled by one government.

Strike - a refusal by employees to work as a form of protest, usually to bring about change in their working conditions. It puts pressure on their employer, who cannot run the business without workers.

Suburban - An outer area of a city, usually where houses are less tightly packed in.

Suppress, Suppression - the use of force to stop something, such as a protest.

т

Tariff, Trade tariff - a tax placed on imports, increasing their cost.

Trade unions - organised groups of workers who cooperate to make their lives better at work. For example, they might negotiate for better pay and then organise a strike if one is refused.

Treason - the crime of betraying one's country, often involving an attempt to overthrow the government or kill the monarch.

÷.

U-boat - the German name for a submarine.

Unconstitutional - not in accordance with the constitution of a country or organisation.

Upper class - a socio-economic group consisting of the richest people in a society who are wealthy because they own land or property.

V

Veto - the right to reject a decision or proposal.

W

WASP - white Anglo-Saxon Protestant.

Welfare - wellbeing; often refers to money and services given to the poorest people.

White supremacist - one who believes white people are superior to people of other ethnicities and should therefore be dominant.

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