

Specimen Response for Study Theme 3C (Exemplar 1)

STUDY THEME 3C: THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Question

Assess the importance of the minority ethnic vote to the Democratic and Republican parties.
(15 marks)

Response

In the USA, there are only two major Political Parties for voters to choose from. While both parties gain support from all sections of the population and regions of America, they are clearly divided.

Democrats have the support of the Liberals, poor and the ethnic minority, and the Republicans, have the support of big business, the rich and rural communities.

Afro Americans make up 12% of the population and are concentrated in the southern states and cities in the North East. Many moved from the cotton and tobacco plantations to find work in the cities. Hispanics are the fastest growing population in the USA and have 12% of the population. This group is made up of Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, Cubans and those from Central and South America. Hispanics tend to be concentrated in Southern and Western states, Mexicans in New Mexico and Texas and Cubans in Florida.

The Democratic Party was the Party that gave civil rights to Afro-Americans in the 1960's and also help to poor people. Since many African-Americans are poor they strongly support the Democratic Party. As such many Democratic representatives depend for their majorities on the black vote in win the election. In fact Jesse Jackson, a famous black leader, ran for the Democratic nomination for the Presidency in the 1980's. He also set up an organisation called Push to make black adults more responsible and to register to vote No Black politician has tried to become the Republican candidate. There are far more elected Black Democratic representatives than Republican.

The Hispanic vote is made up of Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, Cubans and people from Central America. They are the fastest growing population in the USA and there will soon be more Hispanics than blacks The Hispanic vote is very important for both parties The Hispanic vote tend to support the Democrats, although some Hispanic groups support the Republican .

Unfortunately for the Democratic party having the support of the poor and ethnic minority does not lead to getting their vote. Many do not vote or even register. Many African Americans live in run down ghetto areas in inner cities which are plagued by poverty and crime. They regard voting as pointless as it will not change anything.

Some states also punish the poor by not allowing them to vote if they have a criminal record. In the 2000 elections 200,000 potential black voters were excluded because of their criminal record. If they had been allowed to vote Gore would have won Florida and would have become President. This would have increased the importance of the black vote.

Overall the black vote is very important to the Democrats but less so for the Republicans. While the Hispanic vote is more important for the Democrats, the Republicans are making an effort to win their support as they are the fastest growing population group in America. The Republicans regard the white conservative vote as being the most important vote.

Marking Instructions for Study Theme 3C (Exemplar 1)

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(15 marks)

Developed, exemplified, balanced and analytical answers may refer to:

- ◆ the significance of the minority vote at all electoral levels (local, state, federal)
- ◆ the consequences of redistricting
- ◆ Blacks vote for Democrats (circa 90%) – but turnout is low
- ◆ Hispanics also tend to vote for Democrats – higher turnout
- ◆ tactics used by Democrats to get out the minority vote – ‘love offerings’, ‘walking around money’, ‘flushing and hauling’
- ◆ Republicans accused of using ‘dirty tricks’ to stop black voters getting to the polls
- ◆ Bush’s commitment to winning the black vote one of the most consistent themes of his presidency – aim is to improve chances of Republican electoral success at all levels by making inroads into the black vote
- ◆ the Democratic Party’s identification with black causes has given it voter appeal to moderates; if its grip on the black vote can be loosened its ‘virtuous’ sheen may fade and this makes all sorts of things possible – from further inroads into the white vote (white women are a particular target) to a more sympathetic consideration for Republican market-based solutions to urban problems
- ◆ Bush’s proposals for amnesty for immigrants are aimed at gaining Hispanic vote
- ◆ Republicans have almost doubled their share of the Hispanic vote in less than a decade
- ◆ the importance of the (largely white) religious right, especially to Republicans; however Blacks are one of the most religious groups in America – the support of the black clergy in Ohio helped Bush increase his margin of victory there in 2004
- ◆ the failure of the Democrats to connect with the ‘exurbs’
- ◆ the appeal of Republicans to the ‘ownership society’
- ◆ Republicans traditionally the party of big business, and Democrats of farmers and the working class
- ◆ other relevant points.

‘Achieve’ answers must feature both knowledge and understanding and analysis.

Comments on Specimen Answer for Study Theme 3C (Exemplar 1)

There are some credit worthy points in this answer.

The opening two paragraphs are good and gives hope that the candidate knows this topic but the next paragraph fails to deliver and is largely irrelevant.

The fourth paragraph is accurate and would have been credit worthy in the distant past – but not now!

The references to Hispanic and Black voting – or resistance to voting are fine but undeveloped, and the reference to the disenfranchised voters acceptable.

The closing paragraph is a reasonable conclusion.

To pass, this candidate needs to make some effort to update the information and assess the importance of the ethnic minority vote in the 21st century. There would also need to be some sort of reference to the importance of other voting blocks so that the candidate really did ‘Assess the importance’ of the ethnic minority vote.

A fail – but not a drastic fail – it could be rescued!

6/15