America in the 1950s – Happy Days?

**Step 1**: Watch the following documentary to complete your preparation notes for the essay using the questions and table below. You will need to be able to make a judgment on whether you think the 1950s in America was a glorious, happy time for everyone, based on what you find out.

The documentary is called: ***The Century: America’s Time – 1953 – 60: Happy Daze*** and can be found at the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I6dsc5p5-3A&list=PLvGgZ5v2o_N8dDogxreL2-NbnfKHgHxqY&index=9>

1. What were President Eisenhower’s priorities for America at the end of the Korean War?
2. What signs of economic growth were there in America at this time?
3. Why could this time be considered a poor time for women in work?
4. What was life like in the suburbs of America?
5. What elements of the entertainment industry threatened the traditionalist lifestyle in this period?
6. How were black people oppressed in the 1950s?
7. What examples of attempts to improve the lives of black people are given?
8. How did the automobile industry grow in this period?
9. How did the Cold War make ordinary people feel threatened?

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| Evidence the 1950s was a glorious time for everyone | Evidence that the 1950s was not a glorious time for everyone |
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**Step 2: Complete the essay**

“The 1950s were a glorious time for everybody in America.”

How far do you agree with this statement?

Think carefully about what you would need to do in order to get the best marks in this. (Hint: Think about what you had to do in 16 mark questions at GCSE and the grid below may help too.)

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| **Level 1** | **Simplistic answer with little explanation** |
| **Level 2** | **A one-sided answer with good explanation and support** |
| **Level 3** | **A balanced argument with good explanation and support.** |
| **Level 4** | **As level 3 but includes a strong conclusion** |

**If you want any more help on this, please find/ email one of the following history teachers.**

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