

Question 5

Millions of Irish people emigrated during the 1800s. Look at the sources and answer the questions which follow.

Source 1: An extract from a letter from Mary Garvey, an Irish emigrant in New Jersey, USA, to her mother in Ireland, 25 October, 1850.

I feel very uneasy about you for fear that you may be sick or dead or that you may be suffering for the want of the comforts of life. I am going to send home to you four pounds [£4] and I hope that you will not want for any necessary things.

I like to be in this country a great deal better than in Ireland, for Ireland is a poor place. I hope you will leave that starved country and come over here in the spring. I am happy now but I should be still more happy if I could have you here with me. I have been very lonesome since I have seen no one that I knew.

I live in Hightstown with R.M. Smith. He has a large family and keeps a hotel. I get five dollars a month which is two more than I got at the other place.

(a) Name the event in Irish history which caused many people to leave Ireland in the 1840s.

--

(b) What is positive about life in America for Mary Garvey, and what is negative? Support your answer with evidence from **Source 1**.

Positive:
Negative:

(d) What is meant by the term 'Irish diaspora'?

(e) Why were emigrant letters important for Irish families in the 1800s?
Support your answer with evidence from **Source 1** and/or **Source 2**.

(f) Why are emigrant letters important for historians in the 2000s?
Support your answer with evidence from **Source 1** and/or **Source 2**.
