

United States History Syllabus 2017 – 2018

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Text: Danzer, Gerald et al. *The Americans: Reconstruction through the 20th Century*. McDougal Littell, 2003.

Needed Materials: Three-ring binder, Dictionary (to be kept at home), colored pencils.

Course Description: This course deals with the social, political and economic history of the United States from its colonial development to the present. Major emphasis will be placed on the twentieth century. Themes indicated in the California State Social Studies Framework will be highlighted as they reoccur, including the expanding role of the federal government and the federal courts; the continuing tension between the individual and the state, and between minority rights and majority power; the emergence of a modern corporate economy; the impact of technology on American society due to immigration; the movements toward equal rights for racial minorities and women; and the role of the United States as a major world power.

Assessment: Major tests are take-home essays. Students will receive grades for in-class assignments and activities. Brief multiple choice, true/false and matching quizzes are given occasionally in class. Daily assignments (collected in a portfolio) and tests are to be graded by the parents before submitting to the instructor.

Homework assignments will be returned to you. You should keep daily assignments in a three-ring binder. These assignments will make up a portfolio that you may use to prepare for the comprehensive final.

Grading: Grades are computed using the following weighted categories:

Parent grade on Essay Tests 10%

Teacher grade on Essay Tests 35%

Parent grade on Portfolios 10%

Teacher grade on Portfolios 35%

Participation 10%

Letter grades will be computed using the school's adopted formula:

A = 93 – 100%	B+ = 87 – 89	C+ = 77 – 79	D+ = 67 – 69	F = Less than
A- = 90 – 92	B = 83 – 86	C = 73 – 76	D = 63 – 66	60% of points
	B- = 80 – 82	C- = 70 – 72	D- = 60 – 62	possible

Parents may check your grades at any time by logging in to the school's secure website. Parents will receive password and log-in information in the first few week of the semester.

Late Work: Late assignments will be accepted only if the student could not turn them in due to illness, approved school activity, or any other legitimate excused absence. You will have two weeks from the time of your return to complete any missing assignments. Late work will not be accepted from students without a valid excuse. I do not give extra credit assignments to students who waste opportunities to do the work at the appropriate time. However, extra credit questions are occasionally put into quizzes, homework and in-class assignments.

Expectations for this Course:

- Parent

- The parent will devise assignments appropriate to the student's abilities and to the assigned topics.
- The parent will check the student's progress daily.
- The parent will make sure that the student does more than just complete the paperwork portion of the assignments; i.e. the parent must make sure that the student understands the major concepts and vocabulary of each unit.
- Parents are expected to grade all essays and portfolios before the student submits them to the instructor. The instructor will provide grading rubrics for these major assignments.
- The parent will check the student's progress by using the online grade reporting system. Parents who cannot log into the system should contact the front desk for a password.

- Student

- The student will be on time and on task at every session.
- The student will complete the assigned readings prior to coming to class.
- The student will complete the assigned written exercises prior to coming to class.
- The student will bring pen, pencil and writing paper to every class session. Textbooks should be left at home unless directed otherwise.
- The student will check progress in the course by using the online grade reporting system to verify the accuracy of the recorded grades.

Scope and Sequence:

Specific reading suggestions/assignments will be given at the Tuesday class sessions. This list of topics might undergo a few minor modifications as the year progresses to accommodate holidays, testing schedules, and the overall pace of the class.

Week #

1. Philosophical Origins and the Founding of the New Nation
2. The Founding of the New Nation
3. The Civil War and Reconstruction
4. The Industrial Revolution in America
5. The Industrial Revolution in America
6. Immigration
7. Populism and other Social Movements
8. Progressive Movements
9. Late 19th / Early 20th Centuries
10. Imperialism: The U.S. as a World Power
11. The Progressive Movement
12. World War I

13. Life in 1920s: The Jazz Age
14. Life in 1920s: The Jazz Age
15. 1930s: The Great Depression
16. 1930s: The Great Depression
17. 1930s: The New Deal
18. Fall Semester Final Exam
19. WWII
20. WWII
21. WWII
22. Post WWII Foreign Policy / The Cold War
23. The Cold War
24. The Cold War
25. Post-war America
26. Post-war America
27. Post-war America
28. Post-war America
29. Civil Rights Movements
30. Civil Rights Movements
31. Civil Rights Movements / The New Frontier and the Great Society
32. Vietnam
33. Nixon and Watergate, Ford and Carter
34. [STAR TESTING]
35. Reagan and Neo-conservatism through Bush 43
36. Contemporary Issues
37. Unresolved Problems in Contemporary Society:
38. Final Exam

Special caveat for participants in the Tuesday Program:

Although the instructor rarely shows film as part of the of the Tuesday curriculum, the students might occasionally view excerpts from documentary films. The instructor generally does not like to show movies as doing so is often not the best use of class time. However, sometimes films are available that are excellent sources of information. When and if a film is shown in the Tuesday class, parents should know that serious effort has been made to find sources of the highest quality. Parents should also be aware that some of the films might address subject matter that might make some students uncomfortable. Specifically, much of the materials covered in the units on the two World Wars and the Holocaust have the potential to be upsetting. Finally, parents should be assured that the instructor will only show footage of a truly educational nature and gratuitous violence and sensationalism are not parts of the planned curriculum. If you have questions about any film that the instructor plans to show in the course, please contact him before the planned instruction.

Survival Tips for World History and U.S. History

Get rest and eat well

You will perform better if you have a good solid breakfast before class. “Junk food” interferes with thought processes, energy levels, attention span and overall health.

Stay focused

Students are in any given class for only 75 minutes. Often it is difficult to stay alert and attentive. A sensible diet will help. Remember that each 75-minute class represents one week’s worth of material in a traditional class. You cannot afford to drift off or goof around.

Prepare at home

You will not retain or master any of the material if your only contact with it is in the Tuesday class. The readings are assigned for a reason. If you read a passage and do not understand it, get help. Ask questions, consult a dictionary, consult a different source (like an encyclopedia).

Take advantage of our tutoring services.

All teaching staff are available during the Thursday Support sessions from 9:00 to 12:00.

Know what to expect.

Use your weekly assignment sheets or the course web pages to check on assignment deadlines and class requirements. Parents may check your grades at any time by logging in to the school’s secure website. Parents will receive password and log-in information in the first few week of the semester.

If you know how grades are computed, you will not have any unpleasant surprises at the end of the semester. Students should have many kinds of opportunities to learn. There is no one best method of learning. Accordingly, the class is designed so that there is no one single method of computing grades. Your semester grade is determined by your work in three different areas:

1. Homework (submitted in portfolios)
2. Tests and quizzes
3. Class activities

Quizzes are brief assessments of the students’ understanding of concepts and vocabulary that should have been studied during the previous week. All major history tests are essays. The essay topic is always presented in the form of a question at the beginning of each new unit. Therefore, every student knows the topic of the essay test for the unit being studied long before the test is due. Use your portfolio to find material to include in your essays.

Essay Topics In U.S. History

Refer to the Parent's *Guide to History Homework Portfolios and Assessments* for more information regarding the essay tests. The following essay topics will be used for the unit exams:

Unit	Topic
Revolution	How Revolutionary was the American Revolution?
Civil War	Many people believe that the Civil War is the single most significant event in American history. Give your justifications if you agree with this statement. If you disagree with this statement, explain which event(s) you think are more important.
Immigration	Given what you now know about the history of immigration to this country, and considering current events, what should be the immigration policy of the United States?
Industrial Revolution	Was the Industrial Revolution Good for America?
Imperialism	Was imperialism a good policy for the United States in the late 1800s and early 1900s? or What should be the United States' Foreign Policy?
Progressive Movement	Did the Progressives have a lasting Impact on America?
Turn of the Century and WWI	How does the mass culture of the United States compare with that of 100 years ago? or If you were President Wilson, would you have asked Congress for a Declaration of War in 1917? or Should the United States have entered the Great War? or Would you have enjoyed living during the 1890's?
The Jazz Age	Would you have enjoyed living during the 1920's? or Was Prohibition a good idea? or After the repeal of Prohibition, alcoholic beverages were no longer forbidden products. Should the United States take a similar attitude toward marijuana and legalize its production, sale, and use?

The Great Depression and the New Deal	<p>Was FDR's New Deal good for America? or Did FDR's New Deal programs have a lasting impact on American Society? or Should the Government Increase Aid to the Needy?</p>
WWII	<p>Was the United States justified in relocating Japanese and Japanese Americans from the west coast? or Was the United States justified in dropping the atomic bomb? or In what ways did the war have an impact on the civilian population of the United States? or Did the defendants in the Nuremberg trials have a reasonable defense?</p>
The Cold War / Foreign Policy	<p>Should the United States have implemented the Marshall Plan? or What are the similarities and differences between American society during the Cold War and American society in 2012? or Should the United States be praised or condemned for its actions during the Cold War? or Did the constant conflict between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. ultimately yield positive results?</p>
The Cold War at Home	<p>Much has been written about the "American Dream." What was the American dream, has it changed, and is it still attainable? or How did movies in the 50s reflect the attitudes and fears of the American public? or In what ways would life in the U.S. during the Cold War appeal to you?</p>
Civil Rights Movements	<p>Did the Johnson Administration's Great Society programs leave a lasting impact on American society? or Did the Civil Rights Movement leave a lasting legacy? or Has the Civil Rights Movement achieved its goals?</p>

Vietnam War	How did the Vietnam War change America? or What, if any, are the similarities to the U.S. involvement in Vietnam with the recent military involvements in Iraq, Afghanistan or Libya ?
The United States in Recent Times	What is (are) this country's most serious problem(s)?

[This is a work in progress. Topics may be added, withdrawn, or refined as time and inspiration allow. Parents are welcome to suggest alternate topic questions. If parents want their student to write on a different topic, please clear it with the instructor first – EC]