

AP U.S. HISTORY SYLLABUS 2009-2010

This course is designed to provide a college-level experience and preparation for the AP Exam in May. It is an in-depth study of United States History from the Age of Exploration to the present. Students are expected to read a college-level U.S. history textbook, participate in discussions and debates, read two books related to specific content and utilize that information in designing a group performance, write essays and papers which will demonstrate analytical skills and knowledge of subject area content. Topics include settlement of the New World, colonies and their European ties, colonial life and society, revolutionary ideology, constitutional development, Jeffersonian and Jacksonian visions of democracy, nineteenth century reform movements and Manifest Destiny. Additional topics include sectionalism/Civil War/Reconstruction, the Industrial Age/urbanization/immigration, Populism, Progressivism, World War I, the “Jazz Age”, the Depression/New Deal, World War II, the Cold War/post-Cold War, the era of globalization and the 21st Century vision of the United States.

In addition to the broad topics listed above, the course will return to key themes in various historical periods throughout the year. The interconnections of these themes and the causes and effects of the changes through time will be examined as well. These themes include the evolution of an “American” identity and culture; the development of American foreign policy; economic patterns and transformations; the changing values of society due to social reform movements, religion and domestic policies; the changing role of women; the struggles of various ethnic and racial groups to attain equality in an increasingly multicultural society; war and diplomacy; and the role of the United States in the global community.

Each class meets in an 80-minute block schedule every other day for the entire year. In addition, there is a 30-minute “flex” period in alternate weeks for each of the two sections of students. These flex periods are used to hone specific skills, to read additional primary sources and in general to access enrichment materials. The following assessments will be utilized in determining grades for this course: multiple choice quizzes (most weeks) consisting of questions from released AP exams; timed writings—historical essays and Document-Based Questions (most weeks); unit tests; reviews of articles in historical journals; a group performance each semester based on a book read by the members of the group and demonstrating the historical perspectives in the work. Much emphasis is placed on essay writing. There will be activities and workshops—some during office hours-- designed to improve students’ writing skills.

TEXTBOOKS

Boyer, Paul S., Clifford e. Clark, Jr., Joseph F. Kett, Neal Salisbury, Harvard Sitkoff, and Nancy Woloch. *The Enduring Vision*. 5th ed. Boston, Mass. Houghton Mifflin Co., 2004.

Brinkley, Alan. *American History: A Survey*. 10th ed. Boston, Mass. McGraw-Hill Co., Inc. 1999.

Kennedy, David M. and Thomas a. Bailey. *The American Spirit, Vol. I and II*. 10th ed. Boston, Mass. Houghton Mifflin Co., 2002. (primary source reader)

Each week's assigned chapter from the textbook should be completed by the first day of class in each week, even if the week is shortened by planned or unplanned days off. Classroom activities will require a familiarity with the material in that week's chapter. Each week's lesson will include an examination and discussion of map and chart transparencies which enhance the material under consideration. Each week students will be given a list of vocabulary terms which should be mastered for use in writing essays. Emphasis is placed not only on identification of said terms, but also on knowing why each is significant. Each week's lesson will include a discussion of a few key terms from the list. Primary source readings from *The American Spirit* will be read each week to enhance the material in the primary textbook.

In additions to the aforementioned textbooks, the class will read supplementary material from:

***Zinn, Howard. *A People's History of the United States: 1492 to the Present*. Harpers Perennial Modern Classics

Discussion is an integral part of this course. Each unit features discussions of historians' viewpoints of an event and how those evaluations change through time; the causes and effects of events; the significance of people, places, and events or issues; and the interconnectedness of various themes through time. "Essential Questions" are discussed throughout a unit, but are fully answered as a culminating activity of the unit. They are open-ended and encourage divergent thinking. "Key Questions" have specific answers and build toward the answering of the Essential Questions.

**Essential and Key Questions are required as a component of the Learning Focused Schools model adopted by this high school's administration. These questions are the core of each unit and of the curriculum as a whole. They are to be answered by students through a variety of instructional methods and assessments.

UNIT 1A: Discovery and Colonization of the New World To 1750 (Chapters 1-4)

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| Chapter 1 | Native Peoples of America, to 1500 |
| Chapter 2 | The Rise of the Atlantic world, 1400-1625 |
| Chapter 3 | Expansion and Diversity: The Rise of Colonial America, 1625-1700 |
| Chapter 4 | The Bonds of Empire, 1660-1750 |

Essential and Key Questions:

Essential Question for the Unit--How was the colonization of the Americas a collision of cultures--the European, the Native American and the African?

Key Questions

- A. What common values and practices did Native Americans share, despite their vast diversity?
- B. What were the motives and expectations of European individuals and nations who colonized the New World?
- C. What was the impact of Europeans on Native American culture; and the impact of Native American culture on the Europeans?
- D. How did the interaction between culture and environment shape the American culture?
- E. How and why did the New England, Middle Atlantic and Southern colonial regions differ from one another in purpose, administration, religious and social orientation, and political developments?
- F. Why did indentured servitude give way to racial slavery in England's plantation colonies?
- G. What were the major factors facilitating French and Spanish colonial expansion?
- H. How did the Glorious Revolution and its outcome shape relations between England and its North American colonies?
- I. What were the most important consequences of British mercantilism for the mainland colonies?
- J. What factors best explain the relative strengths of the British, French and Spanish colonial empires in North America?

K. What were the most significant consequences of the Enlightenment and the Great Awakening for life in the British colonies?

Classroom Activities:

1. Discuss the significance of terms on vocabulary lists. (This begins each week and will not be listed again.)
2. Prepare a chart comparing New England; Middle; and Chesapeake + the South colonies in terms of geographic, economic, religious, political and social/cultural factors. Fill in chart using terms from vocabulary list.
3. Debate: Resolved: For a seventeenth-century woman, it was more advantageous to live in New England than in the Chesapeake region.
4. Using the SOAPS technique, read, analyze and discuss a sampling of primary sources from the primary source reader.
5. Discuss Key Questions as they apply to each chapter; discuss Essential Question at the end of Unit 1A.

Essay Questions:

1. What factors or conditions seems to be necessary before a culture can develop sophisticated political, economic and religious structure? Base your analysis on the pre-Columbian societies of North America.
2. “Although New England and the Chesapeake region were both settled largely by people of English origin, by 1700 the regions had evolved into two distinct societies. Why did this difference in development occur?” (1993 AP question)
3. “In the seventeenth century, New England Puritans tried to create a model society. What were their aspirations and to what extent were those aspirations fulfilled during the seventeenth century?” (1983 AP question)

UNIT 1B: Revolution to Republic 1750-1800 (Chapters 5-7)

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| Chapter 5 | Roads to Revolution, 1750-1776 |
| Chapter 6 | Securing Independence, Defining Nationhood, 1776-1788 |
| Chapter 7 | Launching the New Republic, 1789-1800 |

Essential and Key Questions:

Essential Question for the Unit--How and why did the American colonies win their independence from one of the most powerful nations on earth?

Key Questions

- A. How did Britain's policy of salutary neglect influence the development of American society's politics, economy and religions?
- B. What were the major factors leading most colonists to abandon their loyalty to Britain and instead choose national independence? At what point was the Revolution inevitable?
- C. What were the causes and effects of the French and Indian War?
- D. What were the most critical factors enabling the Americans to win the War of Independence with Britain? Was victory for the Patriots inevitable?
- E. In what ways did the first state constitutions and the Articles of Confederation reflect older, pre-Revolutionary ideas about political power and authority; how did they depart from those older ideas?
- F. What aspects of the Constitution limited popular participation in government? How and why were the framers fearful of the masses?
- G. What were the principal features of Hamilton's economic program, and what were its opponents' primary objections?
- H. What principal issues divided Federalists and Anti-Federalists in the presidential election of 1800--ideologically, economically, socially, internationally?
- I. What were the primary factors contributing to the declining status and welfare of nonwhites in the new Republic?
- J. How did differing views of what the nation should become lead to the rise of America's first political parties?

Classroom Activities:

1. Create a timeline with these key years: 1763, 1765, 1766, 1767, 1770, 1773-1775, 1776.

Students chronologically plot the key events which led to the American Revolution. Then discuss: At what point did the Revolution really start?

2. Students in four groups construct charts to compare the impact of the Revolution on various subgroups: women, Native Americans, African-Americans, Loyalists. Each group shares its finding with the class. Class discusses the findings, then decides which group gained the most and which group the least.

3. Read in Brinkley: “The Radicalness of the American Revolution” by Gordon Wood as a basis for discussion of historians’ opinions in different time periods—to answer the question: How radical was the American Revolution?

4. Students read *Federalist #10* and analyze, discuss first in small groups, then in large group. Do they agree or disagree with the position?

5. In groups of four, students reorder the Bill of Rights in priority from most important to least important. Discuss with an eye to reaching consensus.

6. Discuss Key Questions as they apply to each chapter; discuss Essential Question at the end of Unit.

Essay Questions:

1. How did the Great Awakening lead to the American Revolution?

2. “Evaluate the relative importance of the following as factors promoting Americans to rebel: parliamentary taxation, restriction of civil liberties, British military measures and the legacy of colonial religious and political ideas.” (1992 AP question)

3. “Analyze the degree to which the Articles of Confederation provided an effective form of government with respect to any TWO of the following: Foreign relations, economic conditions, and Western lands.” (1996 AP question)

4. DBQ: What were the major arguments used by each side in the debates over the ratification of the U.S. Constitution?

UNIT 2A: Jeffersonians, Jacksonians and More

Chapter 8 Jeffersonianism and the Era of Good Feelings, 1801-1824

Chapter 9 The Transformation of American Society, 1815-1840

Chapter 10 Democratic Politics, Religious Revival, and Reform, 1824-1840
Chapter 11 Technology, Culture, and Everyday Life, 1840-1860

Essential and Key Questions:

Essential Question for the Unit--What roles did Thomas Jefferson and Andrew Jackson play in shaping the American character?

Key Questions

- A. How did Jefferson's philosophy of government shape his policies toward public expenditures, the judiciary and the Louisiana Purchase?
- B. What led James Madison to go to war with Britain in 1812; and what was the impact of that war?
- C. How was the "Era of Good Feelings" a transition period?
- D. To what extent did the Marshall Court alter the powers of the federal government and state governments?
- E. What was the impact on the nation of the Canal Era and the rise of the market economy?
- F. In what ways had American politics become more democratic by 1840 than at the time of Jefferson's election in 1800? How were Jefferson's and Jackson's visions for America disparate?
- G. What new assumptions about human nature lay behind the religious and reform movements of the period?
- H. In what ways did technology transform both the productivity of American industry and the daily lives of ordinary Americans between 1840 and 1860?
- I. What did American writers and artists see as the distinguishing features of their nation? How did they express that in literature, painting, etc.?
- J. What were the economic, political and social differences of the three major regions in early 19th Century America?
- K. To what extent did economic factors motivate foreign policy in the 1840s?

Classroom Activities:

1. Make a chart with these categories down the left side: Education, Religion, Industry and Technology, Trade and Transportation, Constitutional constructionism, President/Party Leader, Economics, Native Americans, Foreign Policy, Expansionism. As headings, use “To what extent”, “Evidence” and “Rationale”. Use terms from the chapter to fill in the grid, with an eye to answering this discussion question: To what extent was the Jeffersonian Era 1800-1828 consistent with the vision of Thomas Jefferson?
2. View C-Span’s video on Alexis de Toqueville. Discuss his view of Americans as a people. What did he like about the American character? What did he dislike? If you were he and making his journey today, how would you describe the American character?
3. Discuss this question: To what extent was Andrew Jackson inconsistent in his ideology? After a short discussion, read and discuss “Where Historians Disagree” in Brinkley for analyses of Jackson’s inconsistencies as seen in different time periods by different historians.
4. Discuss Key Questions as they apply to each chapter; discuss Essential Question at the end of Unit.

Essay Questions:

1. How and why did the lives and status of northern middle-class women change since 1776?
2. “Developments in transportation, rather than in manufacturing and agriculture, sparked American economic growth in the first half of the nineteenth century.” Assess the validity of this statement. (1989 AP question)
3. DBQ: What forces led Americans to declare war on Britain in 1812?
4. DBQ: What were the major arguments used, pro and con, in the debate over expanding suffrage during the Age of Jackson? Which arguments were most valid?

UNIT 2B: The North and the South

- Chapter 12 The Old South and Slavery, 1830-1860
- Chapter 13 Immigration, Expansion, and Sectional Conflict, 1840-1848
- Chapter 14 From Compromise to Secession, 1850-1861
- Chapter 15 Crucible of Freedom: Civil War, 1861-1865
- Chapter 16 The Crises of Reconstruction, 1865-1877

Essential and Key Questions:

Essential Question for the Unit--Did the Civil War resolve the sectional issues among the North, South and West?

Key Questions

- A. How did the rise of cotton cultivation affect the geographical distribution of population and the economy of the Old South?
- B. What conditions in the Old South made it possible for a distinctive culture to develop among the slaves, and what were the predominant features of that culture?
- C. What economic and political forces fed westward expansion during the 1840s?
- D. How did the outcome of the Mexican-American War intensify intersectional conflict; and why did it split the Democratic party?
- E. To what extent did the Compromise of 1850 represent a genuine meeting of the minds between northerners and southerners?
- F. What role did the controversy over the enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Act contribute to the undoing of the Compromise?
- G. What were the political ramifications of the outbreak of conflict in Kansas?
- H. What led southerners to conclude that the North was bent not merely on restricting territorial slavery, but also on extinguishing slavery in southern states?
- I. How successfully did the governments and economies of the North and South respond to the pressures of war?
- J. How did the issues of slavery and emancipation transform the war?
- K. In what lasting ways did the Civil War change the United States as a nation?
- L. To what extent should Reconstruction be considered a failure? a success?

Classroom Activities:

1. Read two Uncle Remus stories. Discuss: what do they reflect about the slave cultures? What symbols or satires do you detect in the stories? What did you detect in the stories which might speak to the subtle resistance of slave society?
2. Read selected excerpts from *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*.

3. Role play selected pages from *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.
4. Debate on this question-- Resolved: Slavery was a generally benign institution.
5. Compare the theses of these historians on the nature of slavery as an institution: Ulrich B. Phillips, Herskovits and Aptheker, Stamp and Elkins, Fox-Genovese. Find textual support used for their opinions, then evaluate their theses. Be sure to note dates when these historians posited their theses. Discuss as a large group. Account for the differences in terms of changing time periods.
6. Make a timeline showing unifying events on one side of the line and disunifying events on the other for these time periods: 1818-1829; 1830-1849; 1850-1856; 1857-1860. This timeline may be used when writing Essay #3 below.
7. Discuss Key Questions as they apply to each chapter; discuss Essential Question at the end of Unit.

Essay Questions:

1. "In what ways did the early nineteenth-century reform movements for abolition and women's rights illustrate both the strengths and weaknesses of democracy in the early American republic? (1993 AP question)
2. "Slavery was the dominating reality of all southern life." Assess the validity of this generalization for TWO of the following aspects of southern life from about 1840 to 1860: political, social, economic and intellectual life. (1984 AP question)
3. Discuss the impact of territorial expansion on national unity between 1800 and 1850. (1997 AP question)
4. "I am not, nor ever have been, in favor of bringing about in any way the social and political equality of the white and black races." How can this 1858 statement of Abraham Lincoln be reconciled with his 1862 Emancipation Proclamation? (1988 AP question)
5. How do you account for the failure of Reconstruction (1865-1877) to bring social and economic equality of opportunity to the former slaves? (1983 AP question)

UNIT 3: Transformation of a Nation, 1860-1920

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| Chapter 17 | The Transformation of the Trans-Mississippi West, 1860-1900 |
| Chapter 18 | The Rise of Industrial America, 1865-1900 |
| Chapter 19 | Immigration, Urbanization, and Everyday Life, 1860-1900 |
| Chapter 20 | Politics and Expansion in an Industrializing Age, 1877-1900 |
| Chapter 21 | The Progressive Era, 1900-1917 |

Chapter 22 Global Involvements and World War I, 1902-1920

Essential and Key Questions:

Essential Question for the Unit--How did various factors combine to thrust the United States into worldwide industrial leadership?

Key Questions

- A. How was life on the Great Plains transformed in the second half of the nineteenth century for both Indians and settlers?
- B. How was the Wild West image of cowboys and Indians created? Why has it remained so popular?
- C. What innovations in technology and business practices helped launch vast increases in industrial production and subsequent fortunes for some merchant capitalists?
- D. What positive outcomes resulted from rapid industrialization for the North?
- E. How did the growth of cities and the influx of immigrants create a new awareness of ethnic and class differences?
- F. How did Victorian morality, women's opportunities and working class unrest shape attitudes and patterns of everyday life?
- G. How did politics reflect the era of social and economic upheaval, 1877-1884? How did third parties impact American society in the late 19th Century?
- H. How did the Grange Movement, Populism and Progressivism represent farmers' growing concerns? What was the significance of the battle between the gold standard and the silver standard?
- I. Why and how did the United States turn from the continental concept of Manifest Destiny to a new, worldwide expansionism?
- J. As progressivism emerged as a national movement, which politicians and issues proved most important? How did progressivism change Americans' view of the proper role of government?
- K. What objectives underlay America's involvement in Asia and Latin America in the early twentieth century?

L. What steps did the United States take to maintain neutrality between 1914 and 1917-- and why did the U.S. enter the War in 1917? How did America's participation in the Great War affect society and the reform spirit of the prewar Progressive Era?

M. To what extent was each of the following a progressive reformer: T.Roosevelt., W.H. Taft, Woodrow Wilson?

N. How did the role of the federal government in the U.S. economy and in American life generally, change in 1917-1918?

Classroom Activities:

1. Discuss Frederick Jackson Turner's Frontier Thesis. In Brinkley, read "Where Historians Disagree" to learn what new Western historians are writing. Does current scholarship support Turner's thesis? What were some of the long-term effects of Turner's thesis?
2. Analyze political cartoons of this era and discuss.
3. View transparencies of photographs from *How the Other Half Lives*. Why was this book considered so startling at the time? Would it have the same effect today if contemporary photographs of the poor were published? Discuss.
4. Discuss the pattern of tariffs beginning with Jefferson and continuing through the Wilson Gorman Tariff.
5. Working in groups of four, students design flow charts on transparency sheets to explain the causes and effects of the Panic of 1893. Share with the large group and discuss "sound money", the banking system and the Gold Standard. Who stands to benefit from each?
6. Students prepare charts comparing and contrasting Populists and Progressives.
7. Read Kipling's "White Man's Burden" and discuss. Why did this poem resonate with so many in this time period?
8. View segments of "Birth of a Nation" and analyze society in this time period, when the film was a huge success.
9. Debate—Resolved: Theodore Roosevelt was more "progressive" than Woodrow Wilson.

Essay Questions:

1. “Although the economic growth of the United States between 1860 and 1900 has been attributed to a governmental policy of laissez-faire, it was in fact encouraged and sustained by direct governmental intervention.” Assess the validity of this statement. (1988 AP question)
2. The size, character, and effectiveness of the organized labor movement changed significantly during 1870-1915. (1985 AP question)
3. Analyze the reasons for the emergence of the Populist Movement in the late nineteenth century. (1995 AP question)
4. “Both the Mexican War and the Spanish-American War were premeditated affairs resulting from deliberately calculated schemes of robbery on the part of a superior power against weak and defenseless neighbors.” Assess the validity of this statement. (1986 AP question)
5. “From the 1840s through the 1890s, women’s activities in the intellectual, social, economic and political spheres effectively challenged traditional attitudes about women’s place in society.” Assess the validity of this statement.
6. DBQ: Why did American nativist groups oppose free, unrestricted immigration in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries?
7. DBQ: How would you define and describe the progressive reform movement?

UNIT 4A: The 1920s Through Midcentury

- Chapter 23 The 1920s: Coping with Change, 1920-1929
Chapter 24 The Great Depression and the New Deal, 1929-1939
Chapter 25 Americans and a World in Crisis, 1933-1945
Chapter 26 The Cold War Abroad and at Home, 1945-1952
Chapter 27 America at Midcentury, 1952-1960

Essential and Key Questions:

Essential Question for the Unit--How did economic developments, political values and mass culture change American society?

Key Questions

A. What were the social, cultural, economic and political factors that contributed to the labeling of the Twenties as the “Roaring Twenties”?

- B. What was the nature and the extent of the social/cultural conflict between WWI and WWII?
- C. How did the Crash of 1929 develop into the Depression by 1933?
- D. What were the main characteristics of the New Deal: 1933-34, 1935-36, 1937-38? How successful was each step?
- E. To what extent and why did the United States shift from neutrality to involvement, 1939-41?
- F. To what extent did the use of the atomic bombs at Hiroshima and Nagasaki contribute to the defeat of Japan? What were the reasons for the dropping of the bombs?
- G. What were the chief features of the Yalta and Potsdam agreements? To what extent was each a success or failure? What were the long-term results of each?
- H. How did the relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union change between 1945 and 1960?
- I. To what extent was American foreign policy from 1945-1968 motivated by economic interests and ideological issues?
- J. How does society in the 1950s compare to that of the 1920s?

Classroom Activities:

1. In groups, students examine women's magazines of the 1920s and 1930s. What do they tell us about women and their role at the time? What do they tell us about American society in general? What is the difference in tone between the '20s and the '30s magazines?
2. Develop graphic organizers to explain the world financial crisis in the 1930s. Discuss the Dawes Plan. Would it win a Nobel Prize today?
3. Read selections from *The WPA Guide to America and Remembering America: A Sampler of the WPA American Guide Series*. Students write an entry which could be included in a contemporary WPA-style book. Discuss the differences.
4. Play selections from "The War of the Worlds" and popular radio shows of the 1930s. Discuss: How did the popular entertainment of the day reflect society's state of mind?
5. Show video clips of Frank Capra's propaganda films contracted by the U.S. government. Discuss the animosity between the Isolationists and the Internationalists. Students construct a chart with these categories: People, Laws, Committees, Others,

Rationales. Insert terms from vocabulary lists which fall under either an Isolationist or Internationalist heading in these categories. Share and discuss: “To what extent and why did the U.S. adopt an isolationist policy in the 1920s and 1930s? How did this come to a head after the Munich Conference? What position was FDR in after Great Britain declared war against Germany? Discuss his developing friendship with Churchill, the Atlantic Charter, the Neutrality Acts in the context of the division of the American citizenry.

5. Debate—Resolved: that the U.S. dropped the atomic bomb primarily for strategic purposes.
6. Read “How to Be a Perfect Wife” from a 1950s Home Economics textbook. What does that say about the role of women? In groups divided by gender, male students devise a list of guidelines for wives for young women today; female students design a list of characteristics *they* think would make a perfect wife for the 21st century. Share and discuss. How are the lists alike and different? What does this discussion show about today’s society? (For homework, construct a “How To Be a Perfect Husband” for the 1950s and for today. Discuss the lists next time and analyze.)
7. View “Good Night and Good Luck” after class work on the McCarthy Era. Discuss. (Students have a good background on this topic from their work on “The Crucible” in 11th grade English class.)
8. Was Eisenhower right to warn us of the “Military-Industrial Complex”? What was he afraid would happen? Discuss in light of current events.
9. Teacher story time—teacher shares her memories of Cold War events with students.

Essay Questions:

1. “The United States entered the First World War not ‘to make the world safe for democracy’ as President Wilson claimed, but to safeguard American economic interest.” Assess the validity of this statement. (1989 AP question)
2. “Social dislocations resulting from wartime considerations frequently bring lasting change within a society.” Evaluate the relevance of this generalization to American society in the twentieth century in view of the experiences of blacks AND women. (1987 AP question)
3. Analyze the ways in which the Great Depression altered the American social fabric in the 1930s. (1996 AP question)
4. DBQ: Describe the urban-rural culture wars of the 1920s and the issues over which they were fought.

5. “Reform movements of the twentieth century have shown continuity in their goals and strategies.” Assess the validity of this statement for Progressivism and the New Deal. (1986 AP question)

6. DBQ: Identify those groups that most strongly opposed the New Deal and explain the reasons for their opposition.

7. Analyze the influence of the following on American-Soviet relations in the decade following the Second World War: Yalta Conference, Communist Revolution in China, Korean War, McCarthyism. (1996 AP question)

UNIT 4B: The Liberal Era to Today

Chapter 28 The Liberal Era, 1960-1968

Chapter 29 A Time of Upheaval, 1968-1974

Chapter 30 Society, Politics, and World Events from Ford to Reagan, 1974-19

Chapter 31 Beyond the Cold War: Charting a New Course, 1988-1995

Chapter 32 New Century, New Challenges, 1996 to Present

Essential and Key Questions:

Essential Question for the Unit--To what extent were the 1960s a turning point in American social, political and economic life?

Key Questions

- A. How did the Vietnam conflict impact American politics and American society?
- B. How was John Kennedy’s New Frontier a new direction in domestic reform?
- C. What did LBJ’s Great Society accomplish?
- D. What and who were the key forces in the Civil Rights movement?
- E. Where did America’s commitment to “containment” lead to using military force against leftist nationalist movements and what are the ramifications of that foreign policy?
- F. What steps were taken and by whom to extricate the United States from Vietnam? What was the political fallout along the way to peace?
- G. How did movements by youth, ethnic minorities and women challenge social norms?
- H. What accounts for the decline of the American economy in the early 1970s? What did the presidents in that decade do to try to reverse the trend?

I. How did the New Right challenge the liberal-moderate consensus that had dominated American politics since the New Deal?

J. How has the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union forced the United States to reevaluate its role in the world?

K. How have fundamental changes in the economy led to significant changes in lifestyle and expectations for middle-class Americans?

L. What is the U.S. role in the technology-driven, global economy of today? How does both U.S. foreign policy and economic policy reflect the profound changes in the world order?

M. What seemingly intractable social problems does the United States face domestically? What have recent presidents done to try to solve them? To what extent have those efforts proved successful?

N. What political challenges face the United States today? What is being done to meet them?

Classroom Activities:

1. Read together some of the stories in *American Ground Zero* and discuss the implications of the U.S. government's atomic testing. Read stories of Agent Orange victims and Gulf War Syndrome victims. How has the American public's reaction to these issues changed over the past 50 years?
2. View "The Fog of War" and discuss the change in McNamara's stance.
3. Students conduct "Morality Trials" of John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson, Richard M. Nixon, Gerald Ford, Ronald Reagan and William Clinton. The purpose of the trials is to determine the morality of these presidents' policies and the effect of those policies on real people.
4. View "All The President's Men" after a discussion of Watergate.
5. Debate—Jimmy Carter was the "worst president of the century."
6. Listen to Chris Matthew's audio book intro to *American Beyond Our Grandest Notions* and discuss.

Essay Questions:

1. "1968 was a turning point for the United States." To what extent was this an accurate statement? In your answer, discuss the following: National politics, Vietnam War, Civil Rights. (1998 AP question)
2. Compare and contrast the "new Feminists" with women's movements of the past. Evaluate the effectiveness of this movement since early Colonial days.
3. Account for the rise of the Native American movement at this time in history.
4. Evaluate the leadership of Ronald Reagan. To what degree did he fulfill the hopes of his new constituency?
5. DBQ: What values and beliefs unite Americans and define our nation and its purpose?