AP US History Skills Overview

APUSH is designed to challenge students as they think deeply about American history from pre-colonial days to modern times. It is not a course that will be based on memorization of lists of facts, but instead, a development of historical thinking skills and their practice. The following information on skills is taken from the College Board AP United States History Curriculum Framework 2014-2015.

**Historical Thinking Skills**

**Skill Type I: Chronological reasoning**

1. **Historical Causation** - Proficient students should be able to….
   1. Compare causes and/or effects, including between short-term and long-term effects.
   2. Analyze and evaluate the interaction of multiple causes and/or effects.
   3. Assess historical contingency by distinguishing among coincidence, causation, and correlation, as well as critiquing existing interpretations of cause and effect.
2. **Patterns of Continuity and Change over Time** - Proficient students should be able to..
   1. Analyze and evaluate historical patterns of continuity and change over time.
   2. Connect patterns of continuity and change over time to larger historical processes or themes.
3. **Periodization** - Proficient students should be able to…
   1. Explain ways that historical events and processes can be organized within blocks of time.
   2. Analyze and evaluate competing models of periodization of US history.

**Skill Type II: Comparison and Contextualization**

1. **Comparison** - Proficient students should be able to…
   1. Compare related historical developments and processes across place, time, and/or different societies, or within one society.
   2. Explain and evaluate multiple and differing perspectives on a given historical phenomenon.
2. **Contextualization** - Proficient students should be able to…
   1. Explain and evaluate ways in which specific historical phenomena, events, or processes connect to broader regional, national, or global processes occurring at the same time.
   2. Explain and evaluate ways in which a phenomenon, event or process connects to other, similar historical phenomena across time and space.

**Skill Type III: Crafting Historical Arguments from Historical Evidence**

1. **Historical Argument** - Proficient students should be able to…
   1. Analyze commonly accepted historical arguments and explain how an argument has been constructed from historical evidence.
   2. Construct convincing interpretations through analysis of disparate, relevant historical evidence.
   3. Evaluate and synthesize conflicting historical evidence to construct persuasive historical arguments.
2. **Appropriate Use of Relevant Historical Evidence** - Proficient students should be able to…
   1. Analyze features of historical evidence such as audience, purpose, point of view, format, argument, limitations, and context germane to the evidence considered.
   2. Based on analysis and evaluation of historical evidence, make supportable inferences and draw appropriate conclusions.

**Skill Type IV: Historical Interpretation and Synthesis**

1. **Interpretation** - Proficient students should be able to…
   1. Analyze diverse historical interpretations.
   2. Evaluate how historians’ perspectives influence their interpretations and how models of historical interpretation change over time.
2. **Synthesis** - Proficient students should be able to…
   1. Combine disparate, sometimes contradictory evidence from primary sources and secondary works in order to create a persuasive understanding of the past.
   2. Apply insights about the past to other historical contexts or circumstances, including the present.