AP US History Syllabus

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NOTE - this syllabus borrows heavily from AP U.S. History Sample Syllabus 4

**Course Description**

AP US History is a survey course covering American history from the Pre-Columbian period to the present. The class is taught in accordance with the AP US History curriculum framework, and is designed to prepare students for the AP US History Exam in May.

**Textbooks, Supplemental Texts and Resources**

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**Textbooks, Supplemental texts and Resources**

Davidson, James and Mark Lytle. *After the Fact: the Art of Historical Detection.* 4th ed. Boston: McGraw Hill, 2000

Hofstadter, Richard. *The American Political Tradition and the Men Who Made It*. New York: Vintage Books, 1989

Kennedy, David and Lizabeth Cohen. *The American Pageant.* 15th ed. Boston: Wadsworth, Cengage Learning, 2013.

Kennedy, David and Thomas Bailey. *The American Spirit: United States History as Seen by Contemporaries.* 2 vols. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2002.

Maddox, Robert., ed. *Annual Editions United States History.* 2 vols. 17th and 21st ed. New York: McGraw Hill, 2003, 2011.

**Units of Study**

Each unit of study will address the concept questions as related to the time period.

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| **Themes** | **Concept Questions** |
| Identity | How has the American national identity changed over time? |
| Work, Exchange, and Technology | How have changes in markets, transportation, and the technology affected American society? |
| Peopling | How have changes in migration and population patterns affected American life? |
| Politics and Power | How have various groups sought to change the federal government’s role in American political, social, and economic life? |
| America in the World | How has the U.S. involvement in global conflicts set the stage for domestic social changes? |
| Environment and Geography | How did the institutions and values between the environment and Americans shape various groups in North America? |
| Ideas, Beliefs, and Cultures | How have changes in moral, philosophical, and cultural values affected U.S. history? |

**Period 1: 1491-1607 [CR2]**

**Content**

Demographics of Europe, the Americas, and West Africa; Meso-American culture; transatlantic commerce; comparison of colonies across the Americas (religion, economies, politics, cultures); and foundations of slavery.

**Reading Assignments:** *The American Pageant,* Chapters 1-2

**Activities**

* Students read “1491” in *Annual Editions*, and discuss the impact of Colombian exchange.
* Working in groups, students develop a class presentation that analyzes reasons for the development of different labor systems in any two of the following regions of British colonial settlement: New England, the Chesapeake, the southernmost Atlantic coast, and the British West Indies.
* Students will complete a Semantic features chart comparing England, France, and Spain during the period of exploration and colonization. Once the chart is completed, students will write an essay on the following: *Analyze the cultural and economic responses of TWO of the following groups to the indians of North America before 1750.*
1. *British*
2. *French*
3. *Spanish*

As a review for the unit, students will work in groups discussing and framing answers to the essential questions.

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| Identity | How did the identities of colonizing and indigenous American societies change as a result of contact in the Americas? |
| Work, Exchange, and Technology | How did the Columbian Exchange - the mutual transfer of material goods, commodities, animals, and diseases - affect interaction between Europeans and natives and among indigenous peoples in North America? |
| Peopling | Where did different groups settle in the Americas (before contact) and how and why did they move to and within the Americas (after contact)? |
| Politics and Power | How did Spain’s early entry into colonization in the Caribbean, Mexico, and South America shape European and American developments in this period? |
| America in the World | How did European attempts to dominate the Americas shape relations between Native Americans, Europeans, and Africans? |
| Environment and Geography | How did pre-contact populations of North America relate to their environments? How did contact with Europeans and Africans change these relations in North America? |
| Ideas, Beliefs, and Cultures | How did cultural contact challenge the religious and other values systems of people from the Americas, Africa, and Europe? |

**Period 2: 1607-1754 [CR2]**

European colonization; American Indian resistance; economic population patterns; formation of race and identity; and tensions with Britain.

**Reading Assignments:** *The American Pageant, Chapters 2-5*

**Activities: Colonization**

* After reading the chapter on Salem in *After the Fact*, students will discuss the possible reasons for the Salem phenomenon.
* Introduce writing of DBQ using Chesapeake/New England DBQ
* Center for Learning Lesson - Compare Great Awakening, Puritans, and Enlightenment and the influence of each on colonial ideology and development.
* After studying colonial development and utilizing all readings, students will write an essay on the following: Early encounters between American Indians and European colonists led to a variety of relationships among the different cultures. Analyze how the actions taken by BOTH American Indians and European colonists shaped those relationships in TWO of the following regions. Confine your answers to the 1600s.
1. New England
2. Chesapeake
3. Spanish Southwest
4. New York and New France

**Period 3 1754-1800 [CR2]**

**Content**

British colonial policies; enlightenment ideas; war for independence; formation of republic and national identity; work and labor (free and unfree); and regional economic differences.

**Reading Assignments:** *The American Pageant*, Chapters 6-10

**Activities: American Revolution**

* Students will list the 10 events that led directly to the Revolution. Students will defend their choices, then pick the one event that made the Revolution inevitable.
* Students look at primary and secondary sources on the Articles of Confederation and U.S. Constitution, then debate the degree to which the Constitution reflected an emerging sense of American national identity

As a review for the unit, students will work in groups discussing and framing answers to the essential questions.

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| Identity | What were the chief similarities and differences among the development of English, Spanish, Dutch, and French colonies in America? |
| work, Exchange, and Technology | How did distinct economic systems, most notably a slavery system based on African labor, develop in British North America? What was their effect on emerging cultural and regional differences? |
| Peopling | Why did various colonists go to the New World? How did the increasing integration of the Atlantic world affect the movement of people between its different regions? |
| Politics and Power | In what ways did the British government seek to exert control over its American colonies in the 17th and 18th centuries? |
| America in the World | How did the competition between European empires around the world affect relations among the various peoples in North America? |
| Environment and Geography | How and why did the English North American colonies develop into distinct regions? |
| Ideas, Beliefs, and Cultures | How did the expansion of cultural contact that took place with permanent colonization alter conditions in North America and affect intellectual and religious life, the growth of trade, and the shape of political institutions? |

**Period 3: 1754-1800 continued**

**Content**

British colonial policies; enlightenment ideas; war for independence; formation of republic and national identity; work and labor (free and unfree); and regional economic differences.

**Activities: Early Nationhood**

* Students will create a double bubble graphic organizer comparing the Articles of Confederation with the Constitution. Students will write an essay on the prompt FRQ: *Evaluate the extent to which the Articles of Confederation were effective in solving the problems of the new nation. What promises of republicanism did the Articles offer?*
* Examine writings of Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson to explain the creation of political parties in the US.
* Students will write an essay on the following: *Analyze the contributions of TWO of the following in helping establish a stable government after the adoption of the Constitution:*
1. John Adams
2. Thomas Jefferson
3. George Washington

As a review for the unit, students will work in groups discussing and framing answers to the essential questions.

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| Identity | How did different social group identities evolve during the revolutionary struggle? How did leaders of the new United States attempt to form a national identity? |
| Work, Exchange, and Technology | How did the newly independent United States attempt to formulate a national economy? |
| Peopling | How did the revolutionary struggle and its aftermath reorient white-Native American relations and affect subsequent population movements? |
| Politics and Power | How did the ideology behind the revolution affect power relationships between different ethnic, racial and social groups? |
| America in the World | How did the revolution become an international conflict involving competing European and American powers? |
| Environment and Geography | How did the geographical and environmental characteristics of regions opened up to white settlement after 1763 affect their subsequent development? |
| Ideas, Beliefs, and Cultures | Why did the patriot cause spread so quickly among the colonists after 1763? How did the republican ideals of the revolutionary cause affect the nation’s political culture after independence? |

**PERIOD 4 1800-1848**

**Content**

Definition of democratic practices; expansion of the vote; market revolution; territorial and demographic growth; two-party system; Andrew Jackson; and the role of the federal government in slavery and the economy.

**Reading Assignments:** *The American Pageant*, Chapters 11-17

**Activities: Nationalism/Jackson**

* Students will examine cases of the Marshall Court and create a comic strip case study of each. After the information has been shared in a gallery walk, students will determine which case is the most important in the development of the U.S.
* Students are given an assignment to research one antebellum reform movement and explain how it fit into broader patterns of antebellum reform.
* Students are to create visual cues to explain Henry Clay’s American system.
* Students will examine the art of the Hudson RIver School and Rocky Mountain School of art.

**Activities: 19th Century Reform**

* Students will complete a document based question based on reform in the 19th century.

As a review for the unit, students will work in groups discussing and framing answers to the essential questions.

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| Identity | How did debates over American democratic culture and the proximity of many different cultures living in close contact affect changing definitions of national identity? |
| Work, Exchange, and Technology | How did the growth of mass manufacturing in the rapidly urbanizing North affect definitions of and relationships between workers and those for whom they worked? How did the continuing dominance of agriculture and the slave system affect Southern social, political, and economic life? |
| Peopling | How did the continued movement of individuals and groups into, out of, and within the US shape the development of new communities and the evolution of old communities? |
| Politics and Power | How did the ideals of mass democracy, including such concerns as expanding suffrage, public education, abolitionism, and care for the needs affect political life and discourse? |
| America in the World | How did the US use diplomatic and economic means to project its power in the Western hemisphere? How did foreign governments and individuals describe and react to the new American nation? |
| Environment and Geography | How did environmental and geographic factors affect the development of sectional economies and identities? |
| Ideas, Beliefs, and Cultures | How did the ideas of democratization shape and reflect American arts, literature, ideals, and culture? |

**PERIOD 5: 1844-1877**

**Content**

Tensions over slavery; reform movements; imperialism; women and nonwhites; public education; Mexican War; Civil War; and Reconstruction.

**Reading Assignments:** *The American Pageant,* Chapters 17-22

**Activities: Sectionalism**

* Students will read documents from both Stephen Douglas and Abraham Lincoln on the issue of the slavery question. Students will identify the major arguments of each man, and then debate whose argument was most persuasive. Their analysis should include at least two of the following features from each of the documents: audience, purpose, point of view, format, argument, limitations and content germane to the evidence considered.
* Students will read “The Madness of John Brown” from *After the Fact* for an in-class discussion.
* Utilizing information from presentations, articles and textbooks, students will write an essay addressing the question: *Assess the moral arguments and political actions of those opposed to the expansion of slavery in the context of TWO of the following:*
	+ *Missouri Compromise*
	+ *Mexican War*
	+ *Compromise of 1850*
	+ *Kansas-Nebraska Act*

**Activities: Civil War/Reconstruction**

As review for the unit, students will work in groups discussing and framing answers to the essential questions.

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| Identity | How did migration to the US change popular ideas of American Identity and citizenship as well as regional and racial identities? How did the conflicts that led to the Civil War change popular ideas about national, regional, and racial identities throughout this period? |
| Work, Exchange, and Technology | How did the maturing of Northern manufacturing and the adherence of the South to an agricultural economy change the national economic system by 1877? |
| Peopling | How did the growth of mass migration to the US and the railroad affect settlement patterns in cities and the West? |
| Politics and Power | Why did attempts to compromise before the war fail to prevent the conflict? To what extent, and in what ways, did the Civil War and Reconstruction transform American political and social relationships? |
| America in the World | How was the American conflict over slavery part of larger global events? |
| Environment and Geography | How did the end of slavery and technological and military developments transform the environment and settlement patterns in the South and West? |
| Ideas, Beliefs, and Cultures | How did the doctrine of Manifest Destiny affect debates over territorial expansionism and the Mexican War? How did the Civil War struggle shape Americans’ beliefs about equality, democracy and national destiny? |

**PERIOD 6 - 1865-1898**

**Content**

Reconstruction; US imperialism; industrialization; immigration; urbanization; women’s movement; and working class culture and leisure

**Reading Assignments:** *The American Pageant*, Chapters 23-26

**Activities: Gilded Age**

* Industrialist presentations, culminating in discussion on whether these individuals were “robber barons” or “captains of industry”
* Arts in the Gilded Age assignment to look at artwork, architecture and furnishings of the period.
* DBQ on Populist movement.
* Examine the “Frontier Thesis” of Frederick Jackson Turner and discuss the nature of the frontier.
* FRQ on political cartoons about industrialists.

As a review for the unit, students will work in groups discussing and framing answers to the essential questions.

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| Identity | How did the rapid influx of immigrants from other parts of the world than northern and western Europe affect debates about American national identity? |
| Work, Exchange, and Technology | How did technological and corporate innovations help to vastly increase industrial production? What was the impact of these innovations on the lives of working people? |
| Peopling | How and why did the sources of migration to the US change dramatically during this period? |
| Politics and Power | How did the political culture of the Gilded Age reflect the emergence of new corporate power? How successful were the challenges to this power? Why did challenges to this power fail? |
| America in the World | How did the search for new global markets affect American foreign policy and territorial ambitions? |
| Environment and Geography | In what ways, and to what extent, was the West “opened” for further settlement through connection to Eastern political, financial, and transportation systems? |
| Ideas, Beliefs, and Cultures | How did artistic and intellectual movements both reflect and challenge the emerging corporate order? |

**PERIOD 7 1890-1945**

**Content**

Progressive reform; radicalism; World War I and Russian revolution; first red scare; first migration of African Americans; race riots; culture wars of the 1920’s; Hoover and FDR in the capitalist crisis; New Deal; and World War II

**Reading Assignments:** *The American Pageant,* Chapters 27-35

**Activities: Expansionism/Progressivism**

* Students will read either chapter 8 or 9 from *After the Fact*, and then share in class the relationship of these chapters to the goals of the Progressive Movement.
* Students will write a response to the following FRQ: *Analyze the roles that women played in Progressive Era reforms from the 1880’s through 1920. Focus your essay on TWO of the following: Politics, social conditions; labor and working conditions.*

**Activities: War, Boom, and Bust**

* Students will read selections from Chapter 32 of the *American Spirit* and write a response to the following: *Analyze the origins and outcomes of the intense cultural conflicts of the 1920s. In your response, focus on TWO of the following: Immigration, Prohibition, Religion*
* Students will read from Henry Cabot Lodge’s 14 Reservations to the Treaty of Versailles to determine who was most responsible for the failure to ratify the Treaty of Versailles.

**Activities: FDR Era**

* Debate topic: *The New Deal was an effective answer to the Great Depression.*
* Students will write an essay on the following FRQ: T*o what extent were the policies of the New Deal a distinct turning point in US history, and to what extent were they merely an extension of Progressive Era policy goals? Confine your answer to programs/policies that addressed the specific needs of American workers.*
* *After the Fact* lesson - the decision to drop the atomic bomb. Students will interpret historical views of this decision.

As a review for the unit, students will work in groups discussing and framing answers to the essential questions.

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| Identity | How did continuing debates over immigration and assimilation reflect changing ideals of national and ethnic identity? How did class identities change in this period? |
| Work, Exchange, and Technology | How did movements for political and economic reform take shape in this period, and how effective were they in achieving their goals? |
| Peopling | Why did public attitudes towards immigration become negative during this time period? How and why did people migrate within the US during this time period? |
| Politics and Power | How did reformist ideals change as they were taken up by reformers in different time periods? Why did opposition emerge to various reform programs? |
| America in the World | Why did US leaders decide to become involved in global conflicts such as the Spanish-American War, World War I, and World War II? How did debates over intervention reflect public views of America’s role in the world? |
| Environment and Geography | Why did reformers seek for the government to wrest control of the environmental and national resources from commercial interests? |
| Ideas, Beliefs, and Cultures | How did “modern” culture evolve in response to developments in technology? How did debates over the role of women in public life reflect changing social realities? |

**PERIOD 8 1945-1980**

**Content**

Atomic age and the Cold War; suburban development and the affluent society; the other America; Vietnam; social movements of the long 1960’s; Great Society programs; economic and political decline in the 1970s; and the rise of conservativism.

**Reading Assignments:** *The American Pageant,* Chapters 36-39

**Activities: The Cold War Begins**

* Complete a map highlighting Cold War hot spots. Identify specific locations/events on all continents and include the US president involved. Write an essay on the following: *Analyze the successes and failures of the US Cold War policy of containment as it developed in TWO of the following regions during the period 1945-1975:*
	+ *Europe*
	+ *Asia and Southeast Asia*
	+ *Latin America*
	+ *Middle East*
* Read *The Butter Battle Book* by Dr. Seuss to facilitate Cold War discussion. Extension activity to update the book to include events up to the end of the Cold War

**Activities: 1960s-1990s**

* Read “From Rosie to Lucy” in *After the Fact*, then discuss changing women’s roles in America.
* Students compare programs of the New Deal, New Frontier and Great Society.
* Compare writings of Dr. King and Malcolm X.

As a review for the unit, students will work in groups discussing and framing answers to the essential questions.

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| Identity | How did the African-American Civil Rights movement affect the development of other movements based on asserting the rights of different groups in American society? How did American involvement in the Cold War affect debates over American national identity? |
| Work, Exchange, and Technology | How did the rise of American manufacturing and global economic dominance in the years after WWII affect standards of living among and opportunities for different social groups? |
| Peopling | How did the growth of migration to and within the US influence demographic change and social attitudes in the nation? |
| Politics and Power | How did the changing fortunes of liberalism and conservatism in these years affect broader aspects of social and political power? |
| America in the World | Why did Americans endorse a new engagement in international affairs during the Cold War? How did this belief change over time in response to particular events? |
| Environment and Geography | Why did public concern about the state of the natural environment grow during this period, and what major changes in public policy did this create? |
| Ideas, Beliefs, and Cultures | How did changes in popular culture reflect or cause changes in social attitudes? How did the reaction to these changes affect political and public debates? |

**PERIOD 9: 1980-present**

**Content**

Reagan at home and abroad; growth of poverty; Bush, Sr. and end of Cold War; Clinton and the internet; race relations; NAFTA and other trade agreements; 9/11; Patriot Act; education policies of Bush, JR and Obama; and environmental policies.

**Reading Assignments:** *The American Pageant,* Chapters 39-42

**Activities:**

* Students use a graphic organizer to compare the causes and goals of each act as described in excerpts from the 1924, 1965, and 1990 Immigration Acts.
* Looking at economic data about employment, compensation, and household data broken down by race, gender and education from the 1970s to 2010, each student will write an essay that makes an argument about whether or not the American Dream existed.

As a review for the unit, students will work in groups discussing and framing answers to the essential questions.

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| Identity | How did demographic and economic changes in American society affect popular debates over American national identity? |
| Work, Exchange, and Technology | How did the shift to a global economy affect American economic life? How did scientific and technological developments in these years change how Americans lived and worked? |
| Peopling | How did increased migration raise questions about American identity and affect the nation demographically, culturally, and politically? |
| Politics and Power | How successful were conservatives in achieving their goals? To what extent did liberalism remain influential politically and culturally? |
| America in the World | How did the end of the Cold War affect American foreign policy? How did the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 impact America’s role in the world? |
| Environment and Geography | How did debates over climate change and energy policy affect broader social and political movements? |
| Ideas, Beliefs, and Cultures | How did technological and scientific innovations in areas such as electronics, biology, medicine, and communication affect society, popular culture and public discourse? How did a more demographically diverse population shape popular culture? |

**Review and AP Exam**