

United States History

Social Studies
NCAA Approved

Grade(s) 11th, Duration 1 Semester, 1 Credit
Required Course

Description

This one credit course is designed to help students gain appreciation/ pride/sense of responsibility for his/her role as an American citizen. Students will gain knowledge of the major events, people and movements that have contributed to the development of the U.S. Students will gain awareness of the diversity of American society and the role of the U.S. in world events. This course will build upon skills and knowledge acquired in previous social studies classes, especially Pacific Rim Studies and AK History. Students will be assessed on reading assignments, daily work, note taking assignments, in-class activities, quizzes, tests and projects.

Scope And Sequence

Timeframe	Unit	Instructional Topics
5 Day(s)	Exploration and Conquest of the Americas	
10 Day(s)	North American Colonization	
10 Day(s)	A Nation is Created	
5 Day(s)	Westward Expansion	
10 Day(s)	The Civil War	
7 Day(s)	Industrialization and the Progressive Era	
5 Day(s)	WW I -1920s	
5 Day(s)	The Great Depression	
5 Day(s)	WW II	

2 Day(s)

The Cold War

10 Day(s)

The Civil Rights Movement

Materials and Resources

Possible Resources

America Pathways to the Present textbook

Course Details

Duration: 5 Day(s)

Unit: Exploration and Conquest of the Americas

Description

Prior to the arrival of European explorers and conquerors at the start of the 16th Century, the Americas were already inhabited by millions of Native Americans. Some scholars say as many as 25 million or more Native Americans inhabited the continents we now call the Americas. We will briefly explore the fascinating and diverse flowering of prehistoric cultures that evolved over thousands of years in the Americas.

Prior to their "discovery" of the Americas, Europe experienced the Fall of the Roman Empire followed by a "Dark Age" or Medieval Period. As a result of the Crusades and their subsequent interactions, Europeans again began to see beyond their immediate temporal and proximate surroundings. Soon the rebirth of learning and ideas or Renaissance was underway, followed by the Protestant Reformation. Competition among the proto nation states of Europe led to an ongoing arms race which morphed directly into a race to conquer and colonize the globe.

The history of the United States will be a synthesis built upon the intersection or collision of these two foundational stories.

Essential Questions

Why Study History ?

How do we know what really happened in History?

What types of sources can we use to find out what really happened in history?

How did the first humans arrive and adapt to the varied environments in North America?

What are the most popular theories about the peopling of the Americas today? What strengths and or weaknesses can you identify in these theories?

How are we "discovering" so much "new" info about events that happened so long ago?

What were the major causes and effects of European exploration?

How does the book Guns, Germs & Steel explain the conquest of the Americas and most of the globe by Europeans?

What was the impact of the Colombian exchange on both sides of the Atlantic?

Assessments

Possible Assessments

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Formative- Journal entries, graphic organizer, class discussion, Columbus role-play, Explorer project

Summative- Unit test

Resources

Possible Resources

America Pathways to the Present textbook, Howard Zinn's A People's History of the United States, Schweikart's A Patriot's History of the United States, National Geographic article: Did the First People Arrive by Land and Sea, Guns, Germs, & Steel (Book & Film), National Geographic Website, Nova: America's Stone Age Explorers, Nova Website.

Vocabulary

The vocabulary taught is based on the specific course readings. The vocabulary for this unit includes but is not limited to: Primary source, secondary source, Conquest, Feudalism, the Crusades, Medieval, Monarch, Renaissance, the Plague, the Reformation, the Colombian Exchange, Conquistadors, genocide, history, prehistory, protohistory, archaeology, artifact, immunity, Paleolithic

Duration: 10 Day(s)

Unit: North American Colonization

Description

Starting in the 15th Century, the search for both wealth and geographic knowledge propels Europeans across the globe. Against great odds and fueled by greed, the Europeans begin a race to "claim" as many non-Christian lands as possible. With the approval of the Pope himself, the Kingdoms of Europe become instruments of conquest and resource exploitation such as the world had never seen.

The Portuguese were the first Europeans to complete a sea journey to Asia in their pursuit of silk and spices. Then Ferdinand & Isabella hired Genoese sailor, Cristoforo Colombo to explore an alternative to the long and perilous journey around the southern tip of Africa. In the wake of Columbus, the Spanish Conquistadors like Cortes and Pizarro achieved unimaginable success in their pursuit of gold and glory - all in the name of God.

Soon the English are raiding Spanish colonies in the Americas as well as their returning treasure ships. Before long, the English, French, Dutch, and later the Russians are all vying for control colonial control in North America. The Atlantic world becomes an intercontinental triangle connected by a maritime trade in guns, germs & steel.

Essential Questions

What are the political, economic, and social roots of colonial settlements in the Americas?

What role did geography play in the settlement pattern of colonization?

How did settlers adapt to the new environments?

How did colonial life evolve?

Assessments

Possible Assessments

Formative- Journal entries, graphic organizer, class discussions, colonial map, comparative essay

Summative- Unit test

Resources

Possible Resources

America Pathways to the Present textbook, A&E video Pocahontas, Her True Story, Virginia Gazette runaway slave ads, On the Misfortune of Indentured Servants by Gottlieb Mittleberger (primary source reading), PBS video Slavery and the Making of America.

Vocabulary

The vocabulary taught is based on the specific course readings. The vocabulary for this unit includes but is not limited to: Colonization, mercantilism, Puritans, Separatists, Quakers, triangular trade, the Middle Passage, cash crop, gentry, indentured servants.

Duration: 10 Day(s)

Unit: A Nation is Created

Description

Between 1776 and 1789, the United States emerged as an independent country, creating and ratifying its new constitution, and establishing its national government. In order to assert their traditional rights, American Patriots seized control of the colonies and launched a war for independence. The Americans declared independence in July 1776 proclaiming "all men are created equal." Congress raised the Continental Army under the command of General George Washington, forged a military alliance with France, and captured the two main British invasion armies. Nationalists replaced the governing Articles of Confederation to strengthen the federal government's powers of defense and taxation with the Constitution of the United States in 1789, still in effect today.

Essential Questions

What were the political, economic, and social causes of the American Revolution?
How did public opinion evolve in regard to the movement for independence?
Was the American Revolution a "revolution" for all participants? Why or why not?
What role did leadership and alliances play in the American victory over the British?
How did the first United States government operate under the Articles of Confederation?
What were the disagreements and compromises at the Constitutional Convention?

Assessments**Possible Assessment**

Formative- Journal entries, class discussions, animation project, space colony constitution

Summative- Unit test

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Resources

Possible Resources

America Pathways to the Present textbook, MEHS library Pathfinder, Discovery Chanel Video The Bill of Rights, community guest speakers, Understanding the U.S. Constitution activity book.

Vocabulary

The vocabulary taught is based on the specific course readings. The vocabulary for this unit includes but is not limited to: Natural Rights, legislative branch, executive branch, judicial branch, Federalists, Anti-federalists, Bill of Rights

Duration: 5 Day(s)

Unit: Westward Expansion

Description

Dramatic population growth and movement, as well as new technology, brought both opportunities and uncertainties to the people of the new republic. Americans responded to the changes with growing confidence in material progress and religious salvation. During the first half of the 1800s, expanding markets and thriving industries and businesses transformed American life. This transformation is called the Market Revolution. The change also intensified divisions between the poor and the wealthy, and between those in different regions of the country. The young republic sped through rapid social change in the early 1800s—change that brought not only new benefits but also new regional and cultural tensions. A growing and dynamic reform movement urged Americans to seek both personal and social improvements, shaping society and the nation for generations to come.

Essential Questions

- In what ways can change/progress/growth be both positive and negative?
- What were the objectives of the Lewis and Clark Expedition?
- How did the Homestead Act and other events of that time motivate families to move west?
- How did Westward expansion affect all Americans?
- What military conflicts arose as a result of U.S. expansionist policies?
- What hardships were faced by settlers along the Oregon Trail?
- What impact did the Gold Rush have on the United States?
- How did the railroad change life in the new country?
- How were the Native Americans affected by key events during this period?

Assessments

Possible Assessment

- Formative- Journal entries, class discussions, primary source analysis, map activity
- Summative- Unit test

Resources

Possible Resources

America Pathways to the Present textbook, Oblinger family letters, Andrew Jackson's speech before Congress on Indian Removal

Vocabulary

The vocabulary taught is based on the specific course readings. The vocabulary for this unit includes but is not limited to: Assimilation, extermination, reservation,

Unit: The Civil War

Description

The middle of the nineteenth century was a time of deep distrust and escalating hostility between the North and the South. Many Americans no longer believed that the federal government could settle their differences, and the Union finally shattered."The Civil War," wrote historian Page Smith, "took place because the southern states felt that they could no longer tolerate their status as members of the Union." After the Civil War, enslaved African Americans gained their freedom and the federal government became a stronger force in citizens' lives.

Essential Questions

What political, social, and economic factors caused the Civil War?
What were the long term results of this war?
How did the American population rebuild and reunite after the Civil War?
What were the conflicting perspectives on slavery?

Assessments

Possible Assessment

Formative- Journal entries, class discussions, primary source analysis ,movie project

Unit test

Resources

Possible Resources

America Pathways to the Present textbook

Vocabulary

Vocabulary

The vocabulary taught is based on the specific course readings. The vocabulary for this unit includes but is not limited to: Abolition, succession, prejudice, emancipation, Civil War, reconstruction, infrastructure, segregation

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Required Course
Duration: 7 Day(s)

Unit: Industrialization and the Progressive Era

Description

Beginning before the Civil War, rapid industrial progress transformed the United States, but relations between those who managed the industries and those who labored in them were sometimes filled with tensions. After the Civil War, Americans moved west of the Mississippi River, taking over the land for farms, ranches, and mines, and forcing out the Native Americans. The settling of the West became one of the great American myths. The years from 1870 to 1915 were marked by political corruption and reform, the arrival of millions of immigrants, the growth of cities, and new ideas about helping the needy. The growth of industry and urban areas in the late 1800s brought many cultural and social transformations to the United States. At the time, many Americans feared change and clung to old ideas about social roles, particularly those that affected women and African Americans.

Essential Questions

How did life change with Industrialization?
What specific social, economic, and political problems needed reform in the late-19th century?
How can an individual help to bring about change in society?
How did massive immigration impact American society?
Who were the Progressives and what were their goals?
What accomplishments were made by the Progressive Movement?

Assessments

Possible Assessment
Formative- Journal entries, class discussions, primary source analysis/project
Summative- Unit test

Resources

America Pathways to the Present textbook

Vocabulary

The vocabulary taught is based on the specific course readings. The vocabulary for this unit includes but is not limited to: Tenements, ghettos, prohibition, suburb

Duration: 5 Day(s)

Unit: WW I -1920s

Description

By the 1890s, business and political leaders with dreams of empires were expanding into new markets and seizing control of territory abroad. Imperialism practiced by a country founded on freedom troubled many United States citizens. At the turn of the century, many Americans hoped to change American society for the better. These reform-minded citizens, who were called Progressives, worked for many different causes at the national, state, and local levels. Some of the reforms they actually achieved had lasting effects on American society. In the second decade of the twentieth century, a terrible war began in Europe, with the death toll eventually totaling an estimated 8 million combatants—and many times more civilians. At first the United States vowed to maintain its neutrality. However, the nation finally declared war in order to support its allies and defend its commercial interests.

Essential Questions

How did the role of the United States in foreign affairs change at the turn of the last century? What were the causes and consequences of WW I? What were the economic, political, and social changes of the 1920s? How did the crash of the market impact daily life? How did the Versailles Treaty lead to World War (WW) II?

Resources

Possible Resources

America Pathways to the Present textbook

Duration: 5 Day(s)**Unit:** The Great Depression

Description

American society changed in many ways following World War I, as the jazz age introduced a variety of new styles, tastes, and manners. Conflict arose between Americans ready to adopt these new manners and new ways and Americans who tried to resist the forces of change. Coming out of World War I, Americans were focused on returning to normal life and improving the nation's economy. Through three one-term presidencies, the country saw an economic boom, labor troubles, and the seeds of an economic disaster that loomed as the decade ended. When the economy of the high-flying 1920s crashed in 1929, the bleak years of the Great Depression began. Behind the headlines and photos of stock-buying-and-selling frenzy and destitution grew a debate that cut to the very political, social, and economic fiber of the country and changed forever how Americans look at government. President Roosevelt's New Deal—the name given to the vast collection of programs and policies formulated to combat the Depression—proved to be only partially successful at ending the nation's misery. Although critics were quick to point to the New Deal's many failures, it was hard to argue against its resounding success in bringing hope to a weary nation. Moreover, the New Deal influenced the social, political, and cultural life and attitudes of Americans in ways that are still apparent today.

Essential Questions

- What was life like during the Great Depression?
- Did the New Deal help to reduce or increase the nation's depression?
- What achievements came from the Depression?
- How did the role of government change from the 1920s to the 1930s?

Assessments

Possible Assessments

Formative- Journal entries, primary source readings

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Resources

Possible Resources

America Pathways to the Present textbook

Duration: 5 Day(s)

Unit: WW II

Description

Economic conditions in Europe and Russia following the end of World War I and the Russian Revolution were devastating. Conditions were ripe for the rise to power of new leaders, totalitarian in approach, who promised to relieve countries of poverty and chaos. Joseph Stalin in Russia, Adolf Hitler in Germany, and (to a lesser extent) Benito Mussolini in Italy each took actions, ostensibly to revitalize their countries, which would result in further devastation and vast destruction.

The prevailing mood in the United States during the 1930s was isolationist as Americans coped with the economic crisis of the depression. But when Japanese forces struck Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, the United States could no longer remain neutral. "The peace, freedom, and security of 90 percent of the world is being jeopardized by the remaining 10 percent....," said President Roosevelt about the war raging in Europe. Many Americans, opposed to intervention, were convinced only after the attack on Pearl Harbor that the United States should be involved in the war. With the American entry into World War II, there was no longer any question about the role of the United States in world affairs.

Essential Questions

Should the United States have aided the Allies against the Axis powers?

Was war between the United States and Japan inevitable?

How important was the home front in the United States' victory in World War II?

Was the treatment of Japanese Americans during World War II justified or an unfortunate setback for democracy?

Should the US employ atomic (nuclear) weapons to defeat its enemies in war? (President Truman's decision to drop the atom bomb on Japan)

Could the United States have done more to prevent the Holocaust?

Assessments

Possible Assessments

Formative- Journal entries, Class discussion, Letter to a WWII soldier

Resources

America Pathways to the Present textbook

Duration: 2 Day(s)

Unit: The Cold War

Description

American foreign policy after World War II remained consistent with the nation's wartime activities: force would be used to oppose authoritarian regimes that the United States considered a threat to the free world. At home, the federal government would use strong, and sometimes questionable, measures to counter what it perceived to be threats to the nation's internal security. As the United States emerged from World War II, the American Dream of having a secure job and owning a house came within reach for many Americans. Fueled by the postwar baby boom, the economy rocketed forward in the late 1940s and 1950s.

Essential Questions

- Was the Cold War inevitable?
- Was containment an effective policy to thwart communist expansion?
- Should the United States have fought "limited wars" to contain communism? (Korean conflict).
- Should President Kennedy have risked nuclear war to remove missiles from Cuba?
- Did American presidents have good reasons to fight a war in Vietnam?

Assessments

Class Discussion

Duration: 10 Day(s)

Unit: The Civil Rights Movement

Description

The 1950s and 1960s were a time of great progress and great frustration for African Americans. Through nonviolent protests and an extremely focused civil rights struggle, African Americans ended institutional segregation and secured voting rights in the South. Lack of progress on economic issues, especially in urban areas, however, drove some to vent their anger through bitter violence. The contrast between the presidencies of John F. Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson is striking. While Kennedy articulated plans for domestic reform, few of his programs actually advanced through Congress, perhaps because of his preoccupation with foreign affairs. When Johnson took office after Kennedy's death, he used his legislative skills to push through Congress some of the most significant social programs in the nation's history.

Essential Questions

- Did the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s expand democracy for all Americans?
- Is civil disobedience the most effective means of achieving racial equality?
- Is violence or non-violence the most effective means to achieve social change?
- Did the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s effectively change the nation?
- Do the ideas of the 1960s still have relevance today?

Assessments

Possible Assessments

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Formative- Journal entries, class discussion, five paragraph essay on the Civil Rights movement.

Resources

Video: [Eyes on the Prize](#): America's [Civil Rights](#) Years 1954-1965- The Awakening
A selection of short stories and articles from the Civil Rights movement
America Pathways to the Present textbook