

AMERICAN HISTORY
2009-20010
Mr. Aholt

COURSE SYLLABUS

Course Description:

American History is a required full year course. This course will emphasize the impact of historical events on contemporary America. The goal of the course is for students to utilize critical thinking and writing within a framework of historical understanding. The course has as its focus American History since 1877. Events included in American History are: Reconstruction, The American Western Frontier, The Gilded Age, Progressive America, WWI, The Roaring Twenties, The Great Depression, WWII, Social and Civil Rights Movements, Economic Policy of the 1980s, and Cultural Revolutions within the 1990s.

Instructional Philosophy:

I believe that each student can succeed in this or any other course. This class will have a variety of formats including lectures, video clips, historical documents, group problem solving, discussions and others. Classroom activities will include note-taking, reading, writing, research, individual and classroom activities and problem solving designed to include all learning styles. High quality work is expected on all activities and assignments and opportunities to resubmit work to meet those high expectations will be provided.

Major Course Goals:

A. Guide students in the study of American history through the use of a textbook, classroom experience, the use of technology, research and other avenues.

B. Provide a classroom setting in which the topic of American history can be discussed and debated freely with all viewpoints respected.

C. Help students analyze additional topics of American history that surface during their course studies.

D. Encourage students to continue learning American history after the course is completed.

Major Course Objectives/Benchmarks by Quarter:

The following topics are a tentative schedule of areas of study we will be discussing during the course of the year.

1st Quarter: Reconstruction, Expansion of American West, Gilded Age Presidents

2nd Quarter: Gilded Age, Progressive Era, World War I

3rd Quarter: Roaring Twenties, Great Depression, World War II

4th Quarter: Cold War, Civil Rights Struggle and the 1960's, Modern American President

Major Course Projects and Instructional Activities:

Students will be required to take notes, complete reading assignments and writing assignments. Students will also be required to do in class projects and the following major projects.

1. Students will be required to read and complete 4 book reviews. Books must incorporate one of the 7 disciplines of Social Studies: Anthropology, Government, Law, Psychology, Sociology, United States History, or World History.
2. Complete one research paper on a topic relating to a topic covered in class.

Required/Recommended Readings:

The following books are recommended reading for students who wish to expand their knowledge of subject matter that will be covered in class.

Ellis, Joseph J. *Founding Father*. New York: Vintage Books, 2002.

Tuchman, Barbara W. *The Guns of August*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1994

Tygiel, Jules. *Baseball's Great Experiment: Jackie Robinson and his Legacy*. New York: Vintage Books, 1984.

Orwell, George. *1984*. New York: Harcourt Brace, 1949.

Diamond, Jared. *Guns, Germs, and Steel*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1999.

Bradbury, Ray. *Fahrenheit 451*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1953.

Zinn, Howard. *A People's History of the United States*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers Inc., 2003

Course Assessment Plan:

Students will be given a variety of assignments for varying point totals. The students' grade will be based on points earned out of total points possible. Percentages will be rounded to the nearest whole point. Letter grades will then be determined according to the school grading scale (see student handbook). There will be a comprehensive final exam for this course to determine mastery of content.

Classroom Expectations:

1. Be prepared for class. Upon entering the room you should have completed the reading and/or homework assignment and have writing materials and textbook ready.
2. Be on time. You will be considered tardy if you are not in the correct assigned seat when the tardy bell rings.
3. Deadlines must be met. Do all work promptly.
4. Appropriate classroom behavior is expected from everyone and will make the year more pleasant.
 - a. Stay in your seat, unless permission has been granted.
 - b. Raise your hand to speak. Speaking without permission will not be tolerated.
 - c. The teacher, not the bell, will grant dismissal of class.
 - d. Drinks and bathroom passes will not be granted. This must be done between classes, not during the class period. Only extreme emergencies will this policy be changed. Ex. Doctors note
 - e. No food, candy, gum or drink allowed in the classroom.

Remember that everyone has rights but those rights do not include infringing on other people's rights.

Supplies and Materials Needed:

1. 2 Notebooks-one specifically for notes and assignments and one for daily questions/journal writings. You will periodically turn these notebooks in for a grade. Please do not use the same notebook for American History that you use for any other classes.
2. Black/Blue Pen or Pencil
3. Textbook will be assigned to each student.
4. Any materials necessary to complete projects. i.e. Poster boards, markers, colored pencils, etc.

Homework Policy and Grading Scale: Please refer to the Student Handbook for the Homework Policy. The grading scale is as follows:

A.....	100-95	C.....	76-73
A-.....	94-90	C-.....	72-70
B+.....	89-87	D+.....	69-67
B.....	86-83	D.....	66-63
B-.....	82-80	D.....	62-60
C+.....	79-77	F.....	59-0

Extra Help:

If you are feeling overwhelmed, find yourself falling behind, or are having any problems outside of class that are adversely affecting your performance in class, be sure to let me know. Do not wait until the end of the semester when it will be too late. I am more than willing to work with you but I need to know you are having difficulties.

Time and Place to be reached by Parent:

In the mornings I am at the middle school 1st-3rd hours and I am at the high school 5th-7th hours. I can be reached by phone at 431-2616 Ext. 4166
4th hour is my conference hour and my travel time from middle school to high school. I highly encourage you to use email if possible to contact me. I check my email almost daily.

My email address is saholt@centralr3.org