Welcome to U.S. History class! This course is divided into seven units during which we will study some very exciting and challenging times in United States history. We will also be practicing and developing effective research, writing, and reading skills as we study our nation's past. At the conclusion of this course, you should have gained a thorough understanding of the changes and development of the U.S. from 1600-present, as well as learned strategies to use for researching, analyzing, reading, and writing in social studies.

Course Description:

U.S. History intensively examines the development and changes of American history from the forming of the union to the present day events. The course covers the social, political, cultural, military, economic, and diplomatic aspects of the time periods. Maryland history will also be explored in various areas, when applicable. In addition to developing a deeper understanding of the relationship between our nation’s, past, present, and future, one of the primary goals of U.S. History is to create a learning environment where students can take ownership of their own learning process. Students can expect this course to be fast-paced and require them to use higher-level thinking skills. Students will be expected to compare, contrast, construct, argue, evaluate, infer, deduce, analyze, interpret, criticize, apply, synthesize, explain, justify, summarize, revise, write, and test. It will be imperative that students are prepared to be challenged and to work diligently. Because the content for the course is extensive, students will be expected to complete some coursework independently using Moodle and/or other materials and resources. This independent study will require students to conduct their own research to advance their own learning.

Teacher Information:

Amber Bhatti  
amber@onenessfamily.org  
301-648-8720

Course Website:

https://oneness.moodlecloud.com  
Select U.S. History

Technology

You are expected to bring your computer with you to class, completely charged, every day! Technology is incorporated into the course on a daily basis. This course uses Moodle, an online space for course materials. Here you will find sources such as flip charts, notes, instructional materials, supplemental readings, assignment/project descriptions, rubrics, etc. Moodle may also be used for submission of many assignments. In addition, you will be required to utilize
technology on a regular basis in your research for the course and to complete a variety of assignments and assessments.

Electronics

NO use of headphones, iPods, cell phones, ear buds, or other electronics in classroom, unless otherwise specified by me (i.e. for instructional purposes). When students enter the classroom, all electronic devices must be put away. I reserve the right to remove any disruptions to learning, including but not limited to, students’ cell phones.

Course Overview

Article of the Week:

In order to help foster an understanding of the connections between current events and our nation’s role in the world, students in U.S. History will complete a weekly article summary. This will require students to locate and read a current news article from a reputable media source. Students will compose a written summary of the article, define key vocabulary terms from the article, explain personal reactions and opinions to the article content, and describe text (text-to-text, text-to-self, text-to-world) connections. The Article of the Week will be due each Monday. Completion of this weekly assignment is a student’s responsibility outside of class time.

Primary Source Critical Analyses:

Primary sources from a specific time period or topic of study can provide unique insight. The analysis and interpretation of primary sources is an effective way of improving reading comprehension, and developing critical thinking and higher order questioning skills. Students in U.S. History course will complete a Primary Source Critical Analysis for each unit of historical study in the course. These analyses will require students to utilize various reading strategies, consider multiple perspectives, summarize key components of the primary source, and evaluate the role of the primary source in historical context.

For each analysis, students will be required to compose a written response that addresses each of the following components related to the primary source:

1. CONTENT-What is the content? What is the main idea? What is the major point or meaning of the primary source in its historical context? Keep in mind that the meaning of the source in a contemporary setting would be very different. You want to try to understand what it meant at the time to the people who would have been exposed to it.
2. CITATION-Who created this and why? What type of source is it?
3. COMMUNICATION-What is the author’s point of view or bias? Who is the intended audience? Why was the source created? What is the tone of the source?
4. CONTEXT- What is the context of the source? What is the historical situation in which the primary source was produced? What is going on in the world, country, region, or locality when this was created? OR What other sources (primary or secondary) might help provide answers to this question? What else do we need to know to better understand the evidence in this source?  
5. CONNECTIONS-How does this connect to what you already know? What were some of the possible effects of the primary source? What historical impact may it have had?  
6. CONCLUSIONS-What contributions does this make to our understanding of history? How do you come to these conclusions? How does this primary source help answer our essential question(s) for this unit?  

Research Paper:  

In the final marking period of the course, students in U.S. History will write a 4-6 page research paper based on an essential research question related to United States history from the span of time between 1600-present. This may be related to a topic such as war, movements, reform, conflict, cooperation, change, political leadership, technology, international relations, etc. The research paper will require students to compose a driving thesis statement, create an outline, complete research note cards, and properly provide evidence from, and cite both primary and secondary source material.

Sample Essential Research Questions for Research Paper:  

-Is America really a land of opportunity?  
-Should the South have been treated as a defeated nation or as rebellious states after the Civil War?  
-When should a president be impeached or removed from office?  
-Has rapid industrial development been a blessing or a curse for Americans?  
-Were big business leaders “captains of industry” or “robber barons?”  
-Can workers attain economic justice without violence?  
-Did America fulfill the dreams of immigrants?  
-Has immigration been the key to America’s success?  
-Has the “West” been romanticized?  
-Can the “white man’s conquest” of Native Americans be justified?  
-How did transportation facilitate or hinder change in the West?  
-Have Native Americans been treated fairly by the United States government?  
-Can reform movements improve American society and politics?  
-Were the Progressives successful in making government more responsive to the will of the people?  
-Did the press cause the Spanish-American War?  
-Was the United States justified in going to war against Spain in 1898?  
-Was the acquisition of the Panama Canal Zone an act of justifiable imperialism?  
-Was it possible for the US to maintain neutrality in World War I?  
-Was the decade of the 1920s a decade of innovation or conservatism?  
-Did the 19th Amendment radically change women’s role in American life?
-Should the United States have enacted the Prohibition Amendment?
-Could the Great Depression have been prevented?
-Did the New Deal effectively end the Great Depression and restore prosperity?
-Should the United States have aided the Allies against the Axis powers?
-Was the treatment of Japanese Americans during World War II justified or an unfortunate setback for democracy? -Could the United States have done more to prevent the Holocaust?

*Additional research opportunities will be provided throughout the course as part of both formative and summative assessments. This includes gathering content and contextual information for Primary Source Critical Analyses, researching current event topics, and synthesizing sources for essay writing and the creation of numerous multi-media projects.

Course Units:

Unit 1: Forming a Union - Colonial and Constitutional Foundations 1607 - 1800
Essential Question: What are the American foundations for liberty and freedom?
Possible Unit Assessments: quiz(zes), test(s), writing prompts, essay(s), primary source analysis, and American Revolution Museum Project.

Unit 2: Expansion, Nationalism, and Sectionalism 1800-1865
Essential Question: Was the Civil War inevitable?
Possible Unit Assessments: quiz(zes), test(s), writing prompts, essay(s), primary source analysis, Performance Task, and I-Search Independent Research Project for Sectionalism.

Unit 3: Post-Civil War America Industrialization, Urbanization and the Progressive Movement
Essential Question: How was America’s response to the challenges of growth & progress aligned to its ideals of democracy?
Possible Unit Assessments: quiz(zes), test(s), writing prompts, essay(s), primary source analysis, and Reconstruction Group Project or Individual Project.

Unit 4: Prosperity and Depression: At Home and Abroad.
Essential Question: How does a nation balance its own needs and interests with that of other nations?
Possible Unit Assessments: quiz(zes), test(s), writing prompts, essay(s), primary source analysis, and Great Depression Project.

Unit 5: World War II and the Cold War
Essential Question: To what extent have America’s responses to foreign policy challenges been successful?
Possible Unit Assessments: quiz(zes), test(s), writing prompts, essay(s), and primary source analysis.

Unit 6: Social and Economic Change: Domestic Issues
Essential Question: Is there one America or many?
Possible Unit Assessments: quiz(zes), test(s), writing prompts, essay(s), primary source analysis, and Civil Rights Now and Then Individual/Group Project.

Unit 7: The U.S. and Globalization
Essential Question: Is the United States moving toward or away from its foundational ideals?
Possible Unit Assessments: quiz(zes), test(s), writing prompts, essay(s), primary source analysis, and Research Paper.

Daily Bell Ringers: Days of the Week

Each day students in U.S. History will begin class with a bell ringer activity. These bell rings focus on different social studies, writing, and analysis skills, and utilize a variety of sources.

Map It Monday

Students are given a blank map the world that they will use each Monday. They are provided with and read a short article about a region, country, or place. As a class, we will discuss the region and article. Students will then label the area on their map, which will be related to current events, global connections, American, and/or world history.

Twitter Tuesday

Students create a “tweet” from the perspective of an important American figure, about an event, idea, movement, etc. from history. The American figure is related to the current unit of study.

Who Said It? Wednesday

Students read, analyze, and reflect upon a quotation (primary source) from an important American figure or historical document. The quotation is from the current unit of study.

Throwback Thursday

Students are presented with a historical photograph (primary source) from the current unit of study and are required to answer analysis questions based on the photographic evidence and knowledge of the time period.

Fun Fact Friday

Students are presented with a historical fact and compose a written response to a prompt about the historical fact.
Essential Agreements

1. Follow the policies outlined in the student/family handbook, as they all apply to this classroom. You know what actions are appropriate for a classroom setting and what actions are not.
2. Help create a classroom atmosphere of respect. The study of the past requires us to investigate numerous topics and consider varied opinions and perspectives. Every individual in this classroom should feel free to express his/her ideas without fear of ridicule or judgment. Respect yourselves, your peers, and your school.
3. Be responsible. It is up to you to take charge of your own learning and behavior.
4. Come to class prepared. Please bring your folder/notebook, pen/pencil, textbook(s), and completed assignments to class each day.
5. Be aware. Before leaving class for the day, make sure you have recorded information regarding homework and long-term assignments as well as other important announcements.
6. Actively participate in classroom activities and lessons.
7. Be confident. Each of you is capable of achieving great success in this course. Believe in your abilities and your potential to be a successful learner!
8. Come talk to me! If you ever have any questions or need help, do not hesitate to stop by and see me. I will be available both before and after school to discuss any issues or questions. We may also set up a time that is convenient for all involved. I can be reached at amber@onenessfamily.org

Here is what you should expect of me:

1. To provide you with timely, detailed, and constructive feedback regarding your work.
2. To maintain organized grades and classroom materials.
3. To respect your ideas, opinions, viewpoints, and needs.
4. To provide you with clear directions, rules, and expectations to guide your learning.
5. To be available for communication and collaboration with you and your parents/guardians.

Discipline

When the school’s behavior guidelines or agreements are violated, the following general steps are followed:
1. There is communication with the student
2. There is communication with the parent
3. A written record is kept as a marker; and a conference with a parent is set up if necessary
4. A discipline slip serves as a more serious marker.
5. Suspension, Expulsion and/or Recommended Withdrawal
Grading Policy

Your grade for this course will be earned based on a variety of assessments including, but not limited to, quizzes, tests, homework, writing assignments, in-class activities, projects, etc. Please make sure you turn in all of your work on time. Submitting late work will significantly impact your grade. Students will not be tested or required to hand in assignments on the day the student returns from school if they were assigned on the day the student was absent. Students shall adhere to deadlines for tests and projects that were established/assigned prior to the absence.

*Students have equal to the number of days absent for make-up work, test, assignments, reports, etc., up to a maximum of five (5) days without penalty.*

Late Policy:

There will be a 10% deduction from the score of an assignment, when an assignment is submitted late. An assignment is considered late if it is not submitted at the time of collection.

Grading Scale:

A= 90-100
B= 80-89
C= 70-79
D= 60-69
E= 0-59

Academic Honesty

Your grade is a reflection of your skills, knowledge, and understanding of the course content. Therefore, *any work that is not your own will not be accepted or assessed.* Cheating or plagiarism of any kind will result in a 0% for the assignment. This includes homework, daily-in class assignments, writing assignments projects, quizzes, and tests. Assignments that required you to use additional resources (books, websites, photographs, etc.) must be properly cited to submit with your work.

Attendance

Attendance is important to student success. All work (in-class and homework) must be made up when a student misses school for any reason—including excused trips. Students going on excused trips must get the assignments BEFORE leaving on their trip, and it is due the day they return to school from their trip. It is the expectation of the teacher that she will be notified of the trip at least a week in advance. Students
who are absent from class for ANY reason (field trip, vacation, sports, etc.) are responsible for talking with me to find out what they missed. If a student is in school, but misses history class (sport, appointment, etc.), the student MUST see me beforehand to submit that day’s homework and to find out what he/she will be missing in class. If the student doesn’t do this, the assignments given and collected on that day will be considered late.

The student will need to arrange to make-up missed assessments. (tests, quizzes, etc.)

Formative & Summative Assessments

Formative Assessments: Formative assessments are those that need to be completed to demonstrate progress and/or the need for additional practice or instruction. Failure to complete formative assessments will be reflected in a student’s overall grade.

Summative Assessments: Summative assessments are those that need to be completed to demonstrate mastery of the subject, content, or skill. Failure to complete summative assessments will be reflected in a student’s overall grade.

The late policy (10% deduction) applies to ALL assessments/assignments, this includes both formative and summative work.

Grade Percentages

Marking period grades are calculated for this course using the following categories and percentages.

Homework: 10% Formative Assessments
Daily (in-class) Assignments/Activities: 20%
Projects, Research & Writing Assignments: 35%
Tests/Quizzes/Exams: 40%

Final Exam

This course also includes a final course examination, which is cumulative, encompassing all subjects and topics studied from throughout the course.

I am looking forward to a great year! :)
