

United States History

8 | EIGHTH GRADE SOCIAL STUDIES

United States History and Geography: Colonization of North America to Reconstruction

2021-2022 School Year
Bledsoe Co. Middle School
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Planning: 10:15-11:30 AM

Overview

Course Description: *“Eighth grade students will study the European settlement of North America and the role geographic features played in the early settlement of Thirteen Colonies. Students will examine the development and maturation of the Thirteen Colonies and the political, cultural, and economic influences that led to the American Revolution. Students will analyze the major events and outcomes of the American Revolution as well as the individuals who played influential roles in the development of the new nation. Students will follow the development of the United States and its government, continuing through the early 19th century. Students will analyze the impact of the expansion and sectionalism of the U.S., including implications on domestic and foreign policy. Students will also study policies that affected American Indians and African Americans. Finally, students will examine the major events and issues leading up to the Civil War, individuals and events that were significant during the war, and the resulting era of Reconstruction. **This course will place Tennessee history, government, and geography in context with U.S. history in order to illustrate the role our state has played in American history.** This course is the first of a two year survey of U.S. history and geography and picks up where 7th graders finish their study of world history. This course is designed to help students think like historians, focusing on historical concepts in order for students to build an understanding of the history of the U.S. Appropriate primary sources have been embedded in the standards in order to enhance students’ understanding of the content. This course can be used for compliance with T.C.A. § 49-6-1028, in which all districts must ensure that a project-based civics assessment is given at least once in grades 4–8.”* Source:

https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/standards/ss/Social_Studies_Standards.pdf

Goals

The purpose of this class is to become high school and college and/or career ready. In order to do this, students must be exposed to materials of a higher reading level, situations and events throughout history exemplifying critical thinking and analysis, as well as discussion and study of many cultures. Therefore, we will be studying, in-depth, several concepts, *primary and secondary resources*, accompanied by a variety of nonfiction texts of both informational and literary nonfiction as well as many primary historical documents. Students will also develop skills in note taking and the building blocks of research. This course will also, **“Not unreasonably deny the student access to varying points of view (5); Not deliberately suppress or distort subject matter relevant to the student’s progress. (6)” T.C.A. § 49-5-1003**

https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/stateboardofeducation/documents/TN_Teacher_Code_of_Ethics.pdf

Requirements & Procedures

This course requires students to read and participate both independently and as a class. Students will be required to participate in whole-class discussions, small group discussions, and projects, albeit virtually or in person. Students will present ideas individually as well as within a group. They will seek guidance from their peers and provide guidance to their peers in return. It is essential that students are: **PRESENT, PREPARED, ON TIME, AND FOCUSED.**

Show up, speak up, listen up, and step it up! Trying goes A LONG WAY!

Materials

The following list of materials includes everything you will need for this portion of U.S. History:

- 1 folders with brads/fasteners and pockets
- 2 packs of loose leaf paper (at least)
- 1 composition book or spiral notebook
- pencils (at least 2 packs, but I suggest more since they get lost so easily)
- Ink Pens (Black or Blue preferred, Red for grading) - Students may **NOT** write in red, orange, yellow, or green.

TEXTBOOKS - DEVICES - AND REQUIRED MATERIALS SHOULD BE WITH STUDENTS IN THE CLASS AT ALL TIMES (UNLESS DIRECTED OTHERWISE)

Evaluation & Grade Distribution

Students are evaluated and assessed in a variety of ways. The grade for the class will be broken up into four categories:

Classwork/Homework	20%
Quizzes	20%
Journals	10%
Assessments (Test & Projects)	40%
Midterm & Semester Tests	10%

At the end of each term (nine-weeks segment), I always drop - *for those that completed ALL work* - I the lowest quiz grade. Everyone has a “bad” sometimes, and I believe in rewarding those who try.

CLASSWORK/HOMEWORK - Most work actually brought home is classwork that has not been finished. I assign homework around 2 nights a week (excluding most Wednesdays), which also includes weekends for projects and special activities. The purpose of homework is not to punish! It is not to introduce new material. There are two very important reasons I assign homework and your student needs to complete his or her homework.

HOMEWORK IS A QUICK REVIEW OF THE DAY’S MATERIAL TO HELP SOLIDIFY THE SKILL IN HIS OR HER (THEIR) BRAIN. HOMEWORK ALSO TEACHES SELF-DISCIPLINE.

On occasion, I assign a take-home quiz/test, or I might require some extra work for a project, essay, etc. Several assignments come through our 8th grade social studies **consumable workbook, *U.S. History & Geography: Colonization of North America to Reconstruction***.

Students will be encouraged to highlight and make free-hand notes in their book to serve as a study guide for each chapter.

When I grade homework, I usually do not grade for accuracy. I grade for effort, which means that you can get every bit of it wrong, but if you honestly tried and followed my instructions, you will still receive a 100. I do this to encourage students to attempt homework, even if they’re not proficient in the skill yet. This means that everyone has the same chance to earn a good grade for homework. The goal is to discuss and identify why an answer is wrong or misunderstood and to learn from those mistakes. This is beyond fair, since my homework usually takes less than half an hour to complete.

QUIZZES - We will do weekly/bi-weekly quizzes in regards to various skills (i.e. vocabulary, names, ideas) we’re practicing in the classroom. I **DO NOT** usually offer second chances for quizzes. Quizzes are meant to be a review of classwork/homework and preparation for tests or other assessments. Quiz grades might also come from assignments we do in class that are not traditional quizzes, such as writing a quick Exit Ticket to literature, a video, or Google Slides presentation. (So, not always multiple choice, T/F, matching, etc). Most quizzes are in the form of a *vocabulary crossword puzzle*.

ASSESSMENTS - This category deals with any assignment that takes a great deal of time or energy to complete. We will have fewer of these grades than any others simply because they are time-consuming. Examples of assessments (not a conclusive list):

- Unit or term tests
- Essays
- Group or individual projects

Responsibilities for those involved:

Teacher: My responsibilities include preparing and delivering appropriate and challenging lessons to the student, coinciding with standards and practices set forth by the Tennessee Dept. of Education. I will do my best to grade assignments in a timely manner. I will work hard to make sure I provide a learning environment that encourages the students to learn and push themselves further than they have before. My communication lines are open. However, I have over 100 students, so my time to contact parents/guardians is limited. I will only call or email if there is a problem.

Email is the absolute quickest way to reach me, as I keep my email open all day and check it frequently during early morning and at night.

Student: The student is responsible for arriving to class prepared. It is up to the student if he or she pays attention and puts forth effort. It is his or her responsibility to keep up with assignments, grades, etc. In my class, it is necessary for students to take notes, stay organized, study for quizzes/tests, ask for help when needed, complete any make-up work, and try new skills on their own before they ask for help. Student success is directly reflected in student effort. Students are expected to adhere and abide by the **Social Contract** that he or she has helped to create with the class as a whole.

Parent: It is the *parent's responsibility* to make sure his or her student is at school every day possible. **Tardies and absences that can be avoided absolutely should be avoided. Parents need to question their children about what they've been doing in class, the grades they've been making, and upcoming assignments/assessments that they need to prepare for. Parents need to check emails, Google Classroom, and/or Skyward frequently.** Call or email if there are questions or concerns. There is ample room for them to write down assignments, due dates, etc. Parents need to use this to stay in touch with all teachers. It is a valuable tool. Please do not ignore your child's progress until the end of the year or at all. They need support and expectations at home, too, especially at this critical age.

"I am both excited and honored to be your child's teacher. If we each do our part, then we will all have a successful year!"

- Mr. Colvard

***Your signature below indicates and acknowledges that you have read and understand the Procedures, Grading, all other content found in the above items A copy of the class syllabus will be available at all times via Google Classroom.**

Student Signed: _____

Parent/Guardian Signed: _____ **Date:** _____