

CURRICULUM GUIDE

8TH GRADE UNITED STATES HISTORY

COURSE DESCRIPTION: UNITED STATES HISTORY is a yearlong class required for all 8th grade students. The course is designed to help students understand the development of the United States from the time of the European explorers through the early 1900s. A special emphasis is given to the use of primary sources and to the study of cultures other than the traditional white, European culture, including the contributions of Native Americans, African Americans, and women.

SPECIAL EMPHASIS: Along with the study of American history, students will be working on developing their note-taking skills. Students will do this by taking notes on assigned readings and in using those notes in class discussions/lectures.

COURSE OUTLINE

I. Three Worlds Meet

A. The English Establish 13 Colonies

1. Early Colonies Have Mixed Success
2. New England Colonies
3. Founding the Middle and Southern Colonies

B. The Colonies Develop

1. New England: Commerce and Religion
2. The Middle Colonies: Farms and Cities
3. The Southern Colonies: Plantations and Slavery
4. The Backcountry

C. Beginnings of An American Identity

1. Early American Culture
2. Roots of Representative Government
3. The French and Indian War

II. Creating a New Nation

A. The Road to Revolution

1. Tighter British Control
2. Colonial Resistance Grows
3. The Road to Lexington and Concord
4. Declaring Independence

B. The American Revolution

1. The Early Years of the War
2. The War Expands
3. The Path to Victory
4. The Legacy of the War

C. Confederation to Constitution

1. The Confederation Era
2. Creating the Constitution
3. Ratifying the Constitution

4. Seven Principles of the Constitution

III. The Early Republic

A. Launching a New Republic

1. Washington's Presidency
2. Challenges to the New Government
3. The Federalists in Charge

B. The Jefferson Era

1. Jefferson Takes Office
2. The Louisiana Purchase and Exploration
3. Problems with Foreign Powers
4. The War of 1812

C. National and Regional Growth

1. Early Industry and Inventions
2. Plantations and Slavery Spread
3. Nationalism and Sectionalism

IV. A Changing Nation

A. The Age of Jackson

1. Politics of the People
2. Jackson's Policy Toward Native Americans
3. Conflicts over States' Rights
4. Prosperity and Panic

B. Manifest Destiny

1. Trails West
2. The Texas Revolution
3. The War with Mexico
4. The California Gold Rush

C. A New Spirit of Change

1. The Hopes of Immigrants
2. American Literature and Art
3. Reforming American Society
4. Abolition and Women's Rights

V. The Nation Divided and Rebuilt

A. The Nation Breaking Apart

1. Growing Tensions Between North and South
2. The Crisis Deepens
3. Slavery Dominates Politics
4. Lincoln's Election and Southern Secession

B. The Civil War Begins

1. War Erupts
2. Life in the Army
3. No End in Sight

C. The Tide of War Turns

1. The Emancipation Proclamation
2. War Affects Society
3. The North Wins
4. The Legacy of the War

D. Reconstruction

1. Rebuilding the Union
2. Reconstruction and Daily Life
3. End of Reconstruction

VI. America Transformed

A. Growth in the West

1. Miners, Ranchers, and Cowhands
2. Native Americans Fight to Survive
3. Life in the West
4. Farming and Populism

B. An Industrial Society

1. The Growth of Industry
2. Railroads Transform the Nation
3. The Rise of Big Business
4. Workers Organize

C. Changes in American Life

1. Cities Grow and Change
2. The New Immigrants
3. Segregation and Discrimination
4. Society and Mass Culture

EVALUATION: Students will be evaluated in two major areas: daily work (notes, quizzes, projects, work in class, class participation), and chapter tests. A student's final grade each quarter will be approximately 50% daily work and approximately 50% test grades.

TEXTBOOK: Creating America: A History of the United States. Copyright 2005 by McDougal Littell.