2016-2017 Syllabus

8th Grade U.S. History

Mr. Jeremiah Stokka

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Course Description:

Webster’s online dictionary defines History as, “a chronological record of significant events (as affecting a nation or institution) often including an explanation of their causes.” In Grade 8, students study the history of the United States from the early colonial period through Reconstruction. The content in Grade 8 builds upon that from Grade 5 but provides more depth and breadth. Historical content focuses on the political, economic, religious, and social events and issues related to the colonial and revolutionary eras, the creation and ratification of the U.S. Constitution, challenges of the early republic, the Age of Jackson, westward expansion, sectionalism, Civil War, and Reconstruction and more. Students describe the physical characteristics of the United States and their impact on population distribution and settlement patterns in the past and present. Students analyze the various economic factors that influenced the development of colonial America and the early years of the republic and identify the origins of the free enterprise system. Students examine the American beliefs and principles, including limited government, checks and balances, federalism, separation of powers, and individual rights, reflected in the U.S. Constitution and other historical documents. Students evaluate the impact of Supreme Court cases and major reform movements of the 19th century and examine the rights and responsibilities of citizens of the United States as well as the importance of effective leadership in a constitutional republic. Students evaluate the impact of scientific discoveries and technological innovations on the development of the United States. Students use critical-thinking skills, including the identification of bias in written, oral, and visual material.

Honor Code:

The Honor Code will be strictly enforced in this class. Students who plagiarize or cheat on assignments (including essays), quizzes or exams will receive NO CREDIT for that particular assignment, quiz or exam. Offending students will also be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with ELA guidelines.

Electronic Devices:

See ELA Handbook

Course Outline

1. Term 1
	1. Unit 1: The Role of Geography in the United States
		1. 5 Themes of Geography
		2. Mapping
	2. Unit 2: European Exploration
		1. Native American Nations
		2. Why Explore?
		3. Columbian Exchange
		4. Where to explore?
	3. Unit 3: Colonization
		1. New England, Middle, Southern Colonies
		2. Economic and political impacts of 13 colonies
		3. Ideas which led to the American Revolution
2. Term 2
	1. American Revolution
		1. Specific battles
		2. Key contributors
		3. Effects of the revolution
	2. U.S. Government
		1. Structure and function of the US government established by the constitution
		2. Key documents
3. Term 3
	1. Manifest Destiny
		1. Territorial growth of the US before the Civil War
		2. Industrialization
		3. Specific conflicts
	2. Political and Social systems pre Civil War
		1. Development of American political systems
		2. Social Reforms
4. Term 4
	1. Civil War
		1. Cause and effects
		2. What led to Reconstruction
	2. Reconstruction
		1. Development of the American west following the civil war
		2. Why did people move west?