

# Welcome to 8<sup>th</sup> Grade U.S. History

## Expectations and Syllabus

Students in grade eight study the ideas, issues, and events from the framing of the Constitution up to World War I, with an emphasis on America's role in the war. After reviewing the development of America's democratic institutions, particularly the shaping of the Constitution, students trace the development of American politics, society, culture, and economy and relate them to the emergence of major regional differences. They learn about the challenges facing the new nation, with an emphasis on the causes, course, and consequences of the Civil War. They make connections between the rise of industrialization and contemporary social and economic conditions.

In eighth grade, students will also be tested by the state at the conclusion of the school year on all material they have studied in grades 6, 7, and 8. Because of this, students will have opportunities to practice and review material learned throughout their time in middle school.

**Attendance is very important!** Students who attend school have opportunities to study material, complete activities designed to increase the amount of their understanding, and review and practice new learning. When a student misses school, he or she also misses these opportunities. The work we will be doing in this class is a foundation for work they will be expected to do in high school and on into college.

**Participation is very important!** In order to offer you additional elective opportunities, social studies will only be taught 3 days a week. This makes your attendance and preparedness even more important. You will be expected to do a LOT of preparation at home and to participate in class regularly. If it appears that you are falling behind, you will be removed from your elective classes and placed in a social studies enrichment class until you catch up!

**Saturday Academy** will be offered about once a month. These are OPTIONAL learning experiences and will focus on the use of technology to answer essential questions. If you are falling behind, these classes can help you to improve your grade as work completed can be submitted for an additional grade.

### **What we will be studying**

#### TRIMESTER 1:

Unit One: Exploration and Settlement (1400s-1700s)

Unit Two: Independence (1774-1783)

Unit Three: Forming a Government (1777-1784)

#### TRIMESTER 2:

Unit Four: Struggles of a New Nation (1785-1830)

Unit Five: Westward Movement (1828-1840)

Unit Six: North & South – The Nation Divides (1800-1850)

#### TRIMESTER 3:

Unit Seven: The Civil War (1860-1865)

Unit Eight: Reconstruction (1865-1877)

Unit Nine: Test Review

Unit Ten: America Becomes a World Power (1877-1914)

## **Course Expectations**

You will be issued a textbook entitled United States History: Independence to 1914. You are responsible for its condition and return. Books should be LEFT AT HOME unless otherwise directed by your teacher. The majority of needed materials will be provided. If you leave your book behind, you do it **AT YOUR OWN RISK!** (Your teacher is NOT a book-sitter) Books that are lost or damaged after being left in the classroom remain the responsibility of the student who checked it out.

You will also be expected to read and respond to a variety of primary source documents including letters, speeches, and government documents. These will be provided by the teacher and are your responsibility to maintain.

**Classwork and Homework** will be turned in regularly. You teacher will let you know where completed work should be turned in or kept in the classroom.

**Projects** are expectations for nearly every unit. Some projects will allow you the opportunity to work with partners or small groups and others will be done independently. Projects are a significant portion of your grade so time will be given in class to work on them, but there may be a need to complete some of the work at home. As a result, regular homework will be lessened when there is a current project assigned.

**Tests and Quizzes** are also a significant part of your grade. Most of your tests will be take-home tests. In class, you will be expected to complete short answer response tests and one-two chapter tests.

**Service Projects** will also be completed. There will be more information about this later.

## **Grading Policy**

Your grade will be calculated as follows:

Classwork/Homework: 25%

Projects: 35%

Tests/Quizzes: 30%

Participation: 10%

## **Agendas**

You will be expected to use your agenda daily and it WILL be counted as part of your participation grade.

## **A Note on Eighth Grade Promotion Requirements**

In order to participate in the end of the year activities for eighth graders – including the promotion ceremony – you must end the school year with a grade point average of no less than 2.0. This means that you need to achieve a “C” or better in each class to participate. **THIS CLASS COUNTS TOWARD YOUR GPA!**

Looking forward to a great school year!  
Ms. Dunphy, Miss Marsh & Ms. Nichols