

# Honors United States History

## I. Textbook

David M. Kennedy, Lizabeth, Cohen, , The AmericanPageant: A History of the Republic 15<sup>th</sup> Edition (Boston: McDougal Littell/Houghton Mifflin, (2014)

## II. Prerequisites

Successful completion of History II, or equivalent

## III. Course Description

Honors U.S. History is a challenging course. It is a two-semester survey of American History from the age of exploration and discovery to the present. Solid reading and writing skills, along with a willingness to devote considerable time to homework and study, are necessary to succeed. Emphasis is placed on critical and evaluative thinking skills, essay writing, interpretation of original documents and historiography.

## IV. Course Goals

Students will:

- master a broad body of historical knowledge
- demonstrate an understanding of historical chronology
- use historical data to support an argument or position
- differentiate between historiographical schools of thought
- interpret and apply data from original documents, including cartoons, graphs, letters, etc.
- Effectively use analytical skills of evaluation, cause and effect, compare and contrast

## V. Course Objectives

After completing the course, Students will have broad based knowledge of the scope and sequence of American History and the various interpretations of key historical events and eras.

## **VI. Course Sequence**

### **Semester One**

#### **A. Unit 1: Colonial History (2 weeks)**

Readings:

Text-American Pageant Chapters 2-5

Themes:

1. The emergence of American cultural traits and the factors that contributed to them.
2. Emerging regional patterns and how they evolved.

Content:

- Motive and methods of colonization: Spain, France, Britain
- Push-pull factors bringing colonists to the New World
- Comparison and contrast of Southern, Middle, and New England political, economic, social and religious patterns

Test

#### **B. Unit 2: Independence (2 weeks)**

Readings:

Text: Chapters 6-8

Themes:

1. Colonists reevaluate their relationship with Great Britain and with each other
2. The American Revolution as a conservative or a radical movement
3. The American Revolution's place in world developments of the time period.

Content:

- Mercantilism- costs and benefits for Britain and the colonies
- British policy changes, post 1763
- Emerging colonial cooperation and decision for independence
- Military victory and terms of the Treaty of Paris

Test

**C. Unit 3: Post-Independence and the Critical Period (2 Weeks)**

Readings:

Text: Chapters 9-10

Themes:

1. Impact of colonial experience on post-independence government
2. Development of the United States Constitution and the Bill of Rights
3. The emergence of political parties and the factors that divided them
4. The development of sectional specialization and interdependence
5. The conflict between national power and states' rights

Content:

- Government under the Articles of Confederation- Successes and failures
- Constitutional Convention
  - Personalities
  - Compromises
  - Controversies
  - Ratification
- Hamilton v. Jefferson
- British-French conflict and its impact on American politics
  - Trade
  - Diplomacy
  - Alien and Sedition

Test

#### **D. Unit 4: Jefferson's Administration / Growth of Nationalism (2 weeks)**

Readings:

Text: Chapters 11-12

Handouts

Themes:

1. The peaceful transfer of power from one party to another
2. Changes in party position
3. National growth and the growth of nationalism

Content:

- Jefferson's "Revolution of 1800"
- -Changes in Party Positions
- -Louisiana Purchase
- -Diplomatic Problems
  
- War of 1812: Causes, Conduct, Consequences
  - Era of Good Feelings
  - Rise of Nationalism
  - Diplomatic Achievements
- Marshall Court rulings and precedents
- Monroe Doctrine

Test

#### **E. Unit 5: The Age of Jackson (2 Weeks)**

Readings:

Text: Chapters 13 – 18

Themes:

1. The emergence of the second American party system
2. The emergence of the “Common Man” in American politics
3. Geographical and economic expansion
4. Reform movements and the American character

Content:

- Election of 1824 and the founding of Jackson’s Democratic Party
- Jackson’s Administration:
  - Spoils System
  - Nullification
  - Bank War
  - Cherokee Removal
- Manifest Destiny and the War with Mexico
- Immigration; social, political, and economic developments; and reform movements, 1820-1850

Test

## **F. Unit 6: Slavery and Sectionalism (2 weeks)**

Reading:

Text: Chapters 19-20

Themes:

1. Sectionalism

## 2. Slavery and causes of the Civil War

### Content:

- Slavery as a social and economic institution
- The politics of slavery:
  - Missouri Compromise
  - Abolitionists
  - Compromise of 1850
  - Kansas-Nebraska Act and “Bleeding Kansas”
  - Dred Scott decision
  - Lincoln-Douglas Debates
  - John Brown’s Raid
  - Election of 1860

Test

### **Semester Exam**

### **Semester Two**

#### **G. Unit 7: Civil War and Reconstruction (4 Weeks)**

Readings:

Text: Chapters 21-23

Themes:

1. Secession and War

2. The struggle for equality
3. Reconstruction issues and plans
4. Native American relations

Content:

- Military strategies, strengths and weaknesses, events and outcomes
- The Home Front, North and South
  - mobilizing manpower, finances, public opinion
  - social, economic, and political impact of war
  
- Presidential v. Congressional reconstruction plans and actions
- Economic development: the New South?
- 1877 Compromise and Home Rule
- Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. Dubois leadership styles and programs
- Native Americans
  - Plains Wars and Reservation Policy
  - Dawes Act
  
- Comparison of reform attitudes towards African-Americans and Native Americans in the late 19th century

Reconstruction Essay

Test

**H. Unit 8: Rise of Business and Labor (2 Weeks)**

Readings:

Text, Chapters 24- 25

Themes:

1. Political alignment and corruption in the Gilded Age.
2. Role of government in economic growth and regulation.

3. Social, economic, and political impact of industrialization.

Content:

- Gilded Age politics
- . Party alignment
- . Political corruption and reform
- Industrial growth
- Government support and actions
- Business tycoons: methods, accomplishments, philosophers
- Rise of organized labor
- Changing conditions
- Union, leaders, methods, successes and failures

Test

**I. Unit 9: Populists and Progressive (3 weeks)**

Readings:

Text, Chapters 26, 27, 28, 31, 32

Themes:

1. Inflation/Deflation – Role of government in the economy
2. Role and effectiveness of third parties
3. Immigration and urbanization
4. Patrician reformers
5. Bryan and Wilson: “Jeffersonian goals in Hamiltonian form” (Conflict and Consensus)
6. Teddy Roosevelt/Taft/Wilson: Conservatives as Progressives (reform to preserve)

Content:

- Agrarian Revolt
- .Post- war problems
- . Attempts to organize



- . Election of 1896
- Immigration and urbanization in the late 19th century
- Social and cultural developments in the late 19th century
- Urban middle-class reformers lead a call for change
- .Muckrakers
- . Women’s issues and roles
- . Political corruption and reforms
- .Consumer and environmental protection
- . Business and labor issues
- Teddy Roosevelt, Taft, and Wilson administration’s respond to Progressive movement.

Test

### **J. Unit 10: Imperialism and World War I (3 Weeks)**

Readings:

Text, Chapters 29, 30, and 33

Themes:

1. The changing role of the US in world affairs – from isolationism to world power.
2. US motives in World War I and post-war agreements
3. Presidential and congressional roles in policy management.

Content:

- Reasons for interest in world affairs
- Spanish-American War
- . Cuban situation
- .Military preparedness and action
- .Treaty provisions
- .Philippine annexation –debate and results
  
- Open Door Policy

- Teddy Roosevelt’s “big stick diplomacy”
  - .Roosevelt Corollary and applications
  - . Panama intervention and canal building
  - . Nobel Peace Prize
- 
- Taft’s Dollar Diplomacy
  - Wilson’s “Moral’ or “Missionary” Diplomacy
  - Neutrality, 1914-1917
  - World War I as a war to “make the world safe for democracy”
  - Various interpretations of US motives in World War I
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- World War I at home
  - Economic impact
  - Harassment of German-Americans
  - Women and Minorities
  - Espionage and Sedition Acts
  - Business and Labor relations
  - Creel Committee – wartime propaganda
  - Treaty negotiations and Senate rejection of Versailles Treaty

Major Assignments and Assessments:

World War I Position Statement- Students evaluate the US claim to be fighting the war “to make the world safe for democracy” Was it a valid claim? (Unit Test)

### **K. Unit 11: The 1920s – 1930s (3 Weeks)**

Readings:

Text, Chapters 34, 35, and 36

Themes:

The 1920s:

1. Post – World War I compared to post – Civil War nativism, laissez-faire, labor government, farmers, and attitudes toward reform.
2. US pursuit of “advantages without responsibilities”.
3. Administration policy of “nullification by administration”
4. Cultural conflicts: native v. foreign; rural v. urban.
5. Revolution in manners and morals

The 1930s:

1. The role of government in society and the economy
2. Political realignment.
3. Human suffering and response to the Great Depression>

Content:

- The 1920s
- Post War recession
- Intolerance
- KKK
- Immigration restriction
- Sacco and Vanzetti
- Prohibition and Organized Crime
- Jazz Age culture, Youth Rebellion, Literature of Disillusionment
- Business growth and consolidation, credit and advertising
- Harding, Coolidge, and Hoover Administrations
- Scandals
- “Trickle-down economics”
- “Business of America is Business”
- Boom and Bust in the Stock Market

- Foreign Policy
  
- The 1930s
- Hoover v. Roosevelt's approach to the Depression
- New Deal Legislation – Effectiveness and Criticisms
- Supreme Court Reactions and Court Packing Plan
- Dust Bowl and Demographic Shifts
- Extremists' alternatives: Coughlin, Long, Townsend
- Political Party Alignment – the new Democratic Coalition
- Impact of the Great Depression on various population groups

Test

### **L. Unit 12: World War II and the Origins of the Cold War (3 weeks)**

Readings:

Text, Chapters 37, 38, and 39

Themes:

1. Comparison of Wilson and Roosevelt as neutrals, wartime leaders, Allied planners, post-war planners.
2. US adopts new role as peacetime leader in post war world.
3. Home front conduct during World War I and World War II

Content:

- US response to aggression – neutrality legislation, Lend-Lease Act
- Pearl Harbor and US response
- Military Strategy
- Germany First
- Second Front Debate
- Island hopping
- Atomic Bomb

- Home Front
  - Relocation of Japanese-Americans
  - Women and Minorities in the Workplace
  - Demographic Impact
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- Wartime Diplomacy and Cooperation
  - Atlantic Charter (Compare to Fourteen Points)
  - Wartime Conferences
  - United Nations Founding and participation
  - Splintering of Wartime Alliance and Adoption of Containment
  - Berlin Airlift
  - Truman Doctrine
  - Marshall Plan
  - NATO
  - Korea

Major Assignments and Assessments:

Essay: Was the “Germany First” strategy adopted by the US the proper strategy to pursue in World War II, considering that Japan had attacked the United States at Pearl Harbor? Elaborate in detail.

Test

### **M. Unit 13: Post-War Domestic Issues (2 Weeks)**

Readings: Chapters 40, 41, 42, and 43

Themes:

1. Continued impact of New Deal in government’s role in society.
2. Struggle of civil liberties and civil rights.
3. Checks and balances at work in American politics

## Content:

- Truman Administration
  - Fair deal
  - GI Bill of Rights
  - Taft- Hartley Act
  - 22nd Amendment
  - 1948 Election
  - Loyalty Program
  - Integration of the Armed Forces
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- Eisenhower Administration
  - McCarthyism
  - Modern Republicanism
  - Highway Construction
  - Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka
  - Earl Warren Court
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- Kennedy/Johnson Administrations
  - Civil Rights Movement: Popular and Government response
  - War on Poverty and Great Society Programs
  - Counter-Culture and anti-establishment Movements

## Test

### **N. Unit 14: Foreign Policy – Eisenhower to G.W. Bush (3 Weeks)**

#### Readings:

Text: Chapters 40, 41, 42, and 43

#### Themes:

1. Cycles of freezes and thaws in East-West relations
2. The “Vietnam Syndrome” in post-war foreign policy.

3. Human rights v. strategic self-interest in policy formulation.
4. Interrelationship of foreign policy and stability.

Content:

- Eisenhower
- Liberation, not containment
- John Foster Dulles
- Massive retaliation
- Asia Policies:
- Korea
- Southeast Asia- Geneva Accords and aid to South Vietnam
- Peaceful Co-Existence – Khrushchev’s visit
- U-2 Incident
  
- Kennedy
- Flexible Response
- Aid for Social and Economic Development
- Peace Corps
- Alliance for Progress
- Southeast Asia military and economic aid
- Berlin
- Bay of Pigs (1961) and Cuban Missile Crisis (1962)
- Johnson
- Vietnam War
- Nixon/ Ford
- Vietnamization
- Nixon Doctrine
- China Card
- Détente
- Carter
- Human Rights Policies
- Camp David Accords
- Panama Canal Treaties
- SALT II, Afghanistan, and Olympic Boycott
- Iran Revolution and Hostage Crisis

- Reagan
- The “Evil Empire”
- Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI/”Star Wars”)
- Iran-Contra
- Grenada/ Lebanon
- The twilight of the Cold War

Test

### **Final Exam**

### **VII. Evaluation**

Unit assignment sheets will be provided every two/three/four weeks. Daily reading assignments and discussion questions will be included. Class will be a combination of lecture, coverage of discussion questions, and answering student questions. Tests will be a combination of objective and essay questions. Periodically student essays will be required.

### **VIII. Supplemental Materials**

Readings, Maps, and other materials will be provided as needed