

8th Grade U.S. History Syllabus

Instructor: Sharon Saylor

School: South Middle School

Contact Information: Sharon.Saylor@fcstn.net

Office Hours: 3rd period 10:05 - 10:55

Course Name: U.S. History and Geography: From Colonization to Reconstruction

Rationale: All 8th-grade students need to develop proficient critical thinking, analytical, and writing skills. Middle school teachers must start making inferences, identifying bias, developing cohesive arguments, and expressing themselves with clarity. Learning to distinguish between primary and secondary sources, examining these resources to extract relevant information, annotating grade-level readings, and organizing historical events for memory are necessary skills for 8th graders. Lastly, students will develop a historical awareness wherein they examine historical events with empathy and sincere discernment, evaluate why people of a particular era responded to specific events as they did, and identify historical patterns, correlating them to the present world.

Tennessee State-mandated curriculum standards:

<https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/stateboardofeducation/documents/2020-sbe-meetings/november-6%2c-2020-sbe-meeting/11-6-20%20III%20D%20Technical%20Revisions%20to%20Social%20Studies%20Standards%20Attachment%20Clean.pdf>

Course Description:

This course covers U.S. history from the early colonial period through Reconstruction. Students will explore significant events, people, and movements that shaped the nation, emphasizing critical thinking, historical analysis, and understanding cause-and-effect relationships.

Prerequisite: Proficiency in 7th grade World History and Geography and 7th grade RLA skills

Course Objectives:

- Understand the key events, people, and movements from colonization through Reconstruction in U.S. history.
- Develop skills in historical analysis, critical thinking, and effective communication.
- Analyze primary and secondary sources to gain multiple perspectives on historical events.
- Connect historical events to contemporary issues.

Grading Scale: Every assignment is graded on a point system.

Late Policy:

All course assignments should be submitted on time, including bellringers, Smartbook readings, discussion notes, quizzes/ exams, class projects, in-class activities, and other graded assignments. However, unforeseen circumstances happen to all of us. If a student is absent, he or she must consult Google Classroom to view what was completed in class and any notes, handouts, homework, etc. According to board policy, you must complete all make-up work within 5 days of your absence. If you are unable to complete an assignment on time, you must contact the instructor immediately in person or by email to explain. Please review the policy regarding individual and group assignments.

Individual assignments that are submitted after the due date will receive the following deductions:

1. Late assignments submitted **within four (4) weeks** after the due date will receive a 10% deduction.
2. Assignments submitted late **more than five (5) weeks but before the last day before grades are due** will receive a 20% deduction.
3. No assignments will be submitted once grades are posted.

Group assignments such as in-class projects and stations will not be accepted after the due date outside of special circumstances (e.g., death in the family, significant personal health issues), which the instructor will review on a case-by-case basis.

Assessment and Grading

Homework and Classwork:

Quizzes and Tests

Projects, Speeches, and Essays

Map exercises

Primary source analyses

Smartbook Readings

Exit Slips

Participation in Discussions

Required Materials

Textbook: McGraw Hill United States History and Geography: From Colonization to Reconstruction

Composition notebook and Folder

Pens, Pencils, Highlighters

Access to a Computer/Chromebook for Research

Classroom Expectations

- Respectful behavior towards classmates and teacher.
- Active participation in class discussions and activities.
- Timely submission of assignments.
- Adherence to school policies on attendance and academic integrity.

Units of Study

Unit 1: The New Nation (1775-1800)

Topics:

- Students will explore the foundation of the U.S. government, the principles of the Articles of Confederation and the U.S. Constitution, and the individuals who played influential roles in the development of the new nation. In addition, students will examine the steps taken by Tennessee to achieve statehood and the initial development of government.

Objectives:

- Analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation, and describe the Land Ordinance of 1785, the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, the Northwest Territory, the Lost State of Franklin, and Shays' Rebellion.
- Describe the roles of James Madison and George Washington during the Constitutional Convention, and analyze the major issues debated, including the Great Compromise and the Three-Fifths Compromise.
- Examine the principles and purposes of government listed in the Preamble and principles stated in the Constitution, including the separation of powers, federalism, and checks and balances.
- Describe the conflict between Federalists and Anti-Federalists over the ratification of the Constitution, including the protection of individual rights through the Bill of Rights and concern for states' rights.
- Analyze the major events of President George Washington's administration, including the precedents he set, Whiskey Rebellion, and ideas presented in his farewell address.
- Explain how conflicts between Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton resulted in the emergence of two political parties by analyzing their views on foreign policy, economic policy, a national bank, and strict versus loose interpretation of the Constitution.
- Explain the controversies that plagued the administration of President John Adams, including the conflicts with Great Britain and France, the XYZ Affair, and the Alien and Sedition Acts.
- Identify how westward expansion led to the statehood of Tennessee and the importance of its first state constitution (1796)

Activities:

- Bellringers, Video discussions, Civil Discussions, Map exercises, Primary source analysis, Smartbook reading, Inquiry journals, Essays, Speeches, Projects, Exit slips

Unit 2: Growth of a Young Nation (1800-1820)**Topics:**

- : Students will analyze the strengthening of the judicial branch, the major events of Thomas Jefferson's presidency, the War of 1812, and the role of the U.S. on the world stage.

Objectives:

- Analyze the significance of the election of 1800 and Chief Justice John Marshall's opinion in Marbury v. Madison.
- Explain the major events of Thomas Jefferson's presidency, including the Conflict with the Barbary pirates • Embargo Act • Lewis and Clark Expedition • Louisiana Purchase
- Explain the causes, course, and consequences of the War of 1812, including • Use of impressment and trade restrictions between the U.S. and Great Britain • Roles of Andrew Jackson and William Henry Harrison • Significance of the Treaty of Ghent • Rise in nationalism in the U.S.
- Identify and locate the changing boundaries of the U.S. as a result of the Convention of 1818 and the Adams-Onis Treaty.
- Analyze the purpose and effects of the Monroe Doctrine.

Activities:

- Bellringers, Video discussions, Civil Discussions, Map exercises, Primary source analysis, Smartbook reading, Inquiry journals, Essays, Speeches, Projects, Exit slips

Unit 3: Sectionalism and Reform (1790s-1850s)**Topics:**

- Students will analyze the social, political, and economic development of the North and South during the early 19th century, including the growth of sectionalism and reform movements.

Objectives:

- Describe the development of the agrarian economy in the South, the locations of the cotton-producing states, the significance of cotton and the cotton gin, and the founding of Memphis as a center for cotton and the slave trade.
- Analyze the characteristics of Southern society and its influence on the social and political conditions prior to the Civil War.
- Identify the conditions of enslavement, and explain how slaves adapted to and resisted bondage in their daily lives, including Nat Turner's revolt.

- Explain the development of the American Industrial Revolution, including Eli Whitney and interchangeable parts • Emergence of trade unions • Lowell System • Role of the textile industry • Samuel Slater
- Describe how technological developments affected the growth of the industrial economy and cities in the North.
- Identify the push-pull factors for Irish and German immigrants, and describe the impact of their arrival in the U.S. prior to the Civil War.
- Analyze the development of roads, canals, railroads, and steamboats throughout the U.S., including the Erie Canal and the National Road.
- Describe the significance of the Second Great Awakening and its influence on reform in the 19th century.
- Analyze the development of the women's suffrage movement, including the Seneca Falls Convention, and the ideals of Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Sojourner Truth.
- Analyze the significance of leading abolitionists, including William Lloyd Garrison, Frederick Douglass, Elihu Embree, and Harriet Tubman, and the methods they used to spread the movement.

Activities:

- Bellringers, Video discussions, Civil Discussions, Map exercises, Primary source analysis, Smartbook reading, Inquiry journals, Essays, Speeches, Projects, Exit slips

Unit 4: The Jacksonian Era (1824-1840)

Topics:

- Students will analyze the impact of John Marshall on the strengthening of the judicial branch and the major events of Andrew Jackson's presidency.

Objectives:

- Analyze the role played by Chief Justice John Marshall in strengthening the judicial branch, including the key decisions of the Supreme Court in *Gibbons v. Ogden* and *McCulloch v. Maryland*.
- Examine the importance of the elections of 1824 and 1828, including the corrupt bargain, the spoils system, and Jacksonian Democracy.
- Examine President Andrew Jackson's actions regarding the Bank of the U.S. and the Nullification Crisis, and analyze the effects of these events on the nation.
- Describe the impact of the Indian Removal Act and the struggle between the Cherokee Nation and the U.S. government, including the significance of *Worcester v. Georgia* and the Trail of Tears.
- Identify that the Tennessee Constitution of 1834 expanded voting rights for non-property owners.

Activities:

- Bellringers, Video discussions, Civil Discussions, Map exercises, Primary source analysis, Smartbook reading, Inquiry journals, Essays, Speeches, Projects, Exit slips

Unit 5: Expansion and Division of the Nation (1820s-1860s)

Topics:

- Students will analyze the social, political, and economic impact of expansion on the U.S., the growing tensions between the North and South, and how compromise sought to hold the country together.

Objectives:

- Analyze the concept of Manifest Destiny and its impact on the development of the nation, and describe the economic incentives for westward expansion.
- Explain the reasons for and the provisions of the Missouri Compromise (i.e., Compromise of 1820) and its impact on expansion.
- Describe American settlements in Texas after 1821, the causes of the Texas War for Independence, the roles of David Crockett and Sam Houston, and the legacy of the Alamo.
- Analyze the reasons for and outcomes of groups moving west, including the significance of • Fur traders • Mormons • Oregon Trail • Santa Fe Trail
- Identify the major events and impact of James K. Polk's presidency, including the annexation of Texas and the settlement of the Oregon boundary.
- Describe the causes and consequences of the Mexican War, including the controversy over the Rio Grande boundary and the Mexican Cession.
- Analyze the discovery of gold in California, its social and economic impact on the U.S., and the major migratory movement (including the forty-niners and Asian immigrants).
- Explain the reasons for and the impact of the Compromise of 1850 (including Henry Clay's role as "The Great Compromiser") and the Fugitive Slave Act (including Harriet Beecher Stowe's influence with Uncle Tom's Cabin).
- Describe the significance of the Gadsden Purchase of 1853.
- Explain the motivations behind the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854, and analyze the effects of the compromise, including: • Rise of the Republican Party • "Bleeding Kansas" • Preston Brooks' attack on Charles Sumner • John Brown's raid at Harper's Ferry
- Analyze the Dred Scott v. Sandford decision and the resulting split between the North and South.
- Explain the arguments presented by Stephen Douglas and Abraham Lincoln on slavery in the Illinois Senate race debates of 1858.

Activities:

- Bellringers, Video discussions, Civil Discussions, Map exercises, Primary source analysis, Smartbook reading, Inquiry journals, Essays, Speeches, Projects, Exit slips

Unit 6: The Civil War (1860-1865)

Topics:

- Students will examine the political changes that sparked the Civil War, the differences between the North and South, and the key leaders, events, battles, and daily life during the war

Objectives:

- Describe the election of 1860 and its candidates (i.e., John Bell, Stephen Douglas, Abraham Lincoln, and John Breckinridge), and analyze how the campaigns reflected sectional turmoil in the country.
- Describe the outbreak of the Civil War and the resulting sectional differences, including • Economic, geographic, and technological advances • Military strategies • Roles of President Abraham Lincoln and Jefferson Davis • Significance of Fort Sumter • Geographical divisions within states
- Explain the significance of the following battles, events, and leaders during the Civil War, including First Battle of Bull Run • Battle of Shiloh • Battle of Antietam • Battle of Gettysburg • Battle of Vicksburg • Sherman's March to the Sea • Surrender at Appomattox Court House • David Farragut • Nathan Bedford Forrest • Ulysses S. Grant • Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson • Robert E. Lee
- Analyze the significance of the Emancipation Proclamation and the Gettysburg Address.
- Describe African American involvement in the Union army, including the Massachusetts 54th Regiment at Fort Wagner and the 13th U.S. Colored Troops in the Battle of Nashville.
- Analyze how the writings of Sam Watkins and Elisha Hunt Rhodes illustrated the daily life of the common soldier.

Activities:

- Bellringers, Video discussions, Civil Discussions, Map exercises, Primary source analysis, Smartbook reading, Inquiry journals, Essays, Speeches, Projects, Exit slips

Unit 7: Reconstruction (1865-1877)

Topics:

- : Students will analyze the social, economic, and political changes and conflicts during Reconstruction, the events and lasting consequences of Reconstruction, and Reconstruction's impact on Tennessee.

Objectives:

- Analyze the immediate political impact of the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln and Andrew Johnson's ascension to the presidency.
- Explain the significance of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments to the U.S. Constitution.

- Analyze President Abraham Lincoln's Ten Percent Plan, President Andrew Johnson's Plan, and the Radical Republican Plan for Reconstruction.
- Identify the significance of the Tennessee Constitution of 1870, including the right of all men to vote and the establishment of a poll tax.
- Analyze the conflict between President Andrew Johnson and the Radical Republicans, including Johnson's veto of the Tenure of Office Act and his impeachment.
- Explain the restrictions placed on the rights and opportunities of freedmen, including racial segregation, black codes, and the efforts of the Freedmen's Bureau to address the problems confronting newly freed slaves.
- Trace the rise of the Ku Klux Klan and vigilante actions in the South and in Tennessee, including the role of Governor William Brownlow.
- Explain the roles carpetbaggers and scalawags played during Reconstruction.
- Explain the Compromise of 1877 and its role in ending Radical Reconstruction.

Activities:

- Bellringers, Video discussions, Civil Discussions, Map exercises, Primary source analysis, Smartbook reading, Inquiry journals, Essays, Speeches, Projects, Exit slips