

St. Clement's School
Course Outline
Eighth Grade American History
Fall Semester

This course outline is a general guide to familiarize students and parents with an overview of the course. It is an approximation of the content and objectives of the course for the fall semester. The rate of progress may vary depending upon the learning pace that the students can accomplish throughout the semester.

I. Course Content

- A. Unit one: American beginnings
 - 1. What is history?
 - 2. The world before the opening of the Atlantic
 - a. The earliest Americans and cultural areas in North America
 - b. Europe during the Middle Ages
 - c. Trade across the continents
 - 3. Voyages to the Americas and the race for trade routes
- B. Unit two: Colonies in the Americas
 - 1. New Empires in the Americas
 - a. The Conquistadores and Spanish America
 - b. Religious and political changes in Europe
 - c. The race for empires
 - 2. The English Colonies
 - a. The Virginia Colony and the Pilgrims' experience
 - b. The New England, Southern, and Middle Atlantic Colonies
 - 3. Life in the English Colonies
 - a. Forms of government
 - b. The growth of trade
 - c. The colonial economy
 - d. The great awakening
 - e. American culture
- C. Unit three: The colonies break free
 - 1. Conflicts in the colonies
 - a. Trouble of the Frontier
 - b. Consequences of the French and Indian War
 - c. Trouble over taxes
 - d. New taxes and tensions
 - 2. The American Revolution
 - a. The Revolution begins
 - b. Declaring independence
 - c. Dark hours for the revolution
 - d. The patriots gain hope
 - e. Independence
- D. Unit four: A new American nation forms a government/Articles of Confederation

II. Objectives

A. Content objectives-Unit One

1. Artifact inquiry: what is archaeology
2. CNN news segment: Preserving the Past
3. American music segment: Stomp Dance
4. Primary Documents
 - a. Tuskegee and Caddo creation myths
 - b. The creation story: Iroquois
 - c. First impressions of the New World
5. Lecture #1: Old World developments lead to the European discovery of American
6. The Trade Game: distinguishing European economic resources
7. Connecting to Geography: The Columbian Exchange
8. Charts
 - a. Indian civilizations
 - b. famous European explorers

B. Learning objectives - unit one

1. Examine the use of archaeology in the study of history
2. Learn how to view video segments and retrieve relevant information
3. Listen to and analyze musical selections
4. Analyze primary and secondary documents
5. Understand how to take notes from a lecture
6. Understand how to read and make use of various types of maps
7. Create a chart that classifies various Indian cultures and the accomplishments of European explorers

C. Content objectives - unit two

1. American's past video segments
 - a. The serpent god
 - b. Diary of a young girl
2. Primary documents
 - a. Aztec Account: The Messenger's Report
 - b. Hernando Cortes: A Letter Describing the Natives
 - c. Retreat of Cortes
 - d. The Massachusetts Bay Colony v. Anne Hutchinson
 - e. Narratives of the Salem witch trials
 - f. Olaudah Equiano: The Middle Passage
 - g. Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God
3. Geography activity: Cortes conquers Mexico
4. CNN Presents Video Segments
 - a. Mission Bells in California
 - b. Visit to Colonial America
5. Charts
 - a. Spanish colonies
 - b. The Thirteen colonies
 - c. Colonial forms of government
6. Secondary documents: Biography Reading on Martin Luther

7. Lectures
 - a. Exploration and settlement of the New World
 - b. The thirteen colonies
 - c. Colonial political practices
 - d. Colonial economic practices
 - e. Colonial religious practices
 - f. Colonial society and culture
 8. Videos
 - a. 500 Civilizations: The First English Settlements
 - b. The Middle Passage
 - c. Frontier Homes
 10. Linking geography and history: The Major Colonial Economies
 11. Colonial economy game
 12. Political Cartoon: A Colonial Protest
- D. Learning objectives - unit two
1. Learn how to critique video segments and retrieve relevant information
 2. Analyze primary and secondary documents
 3. Understand how to take notes from a lecture
 4. Understand how to read and make use of various types of maps
 5. Create charts that classifies the political and economic organization of the Spanish and English Colonies, and a comparison of the Colonial forms of government
 6. Distinguish between the New England, Middle Atlantic, and Southern Colonial economies using maps and the Colonial Economy Game
 7. Interpret political cartoons
 8. View videos and learn how to determine the historical truth of a video
 9. Recognize that history is an interpretative science and differing or opposing viewpoints can both have historical accuracy
- E. Content objectives - unit three
1. Lectures
 - a. The French and Indian War
 - b. Britain's new policy for America
 - c. Basic causes of the American Revolution
 - d. Declaration of Independence
 - e. Revolutionary War
 - f. Effects of the American Revolution
 - g. Articles of Confederation
 - h. Weaknesses and achievements of the Articles of Confederation
 2. Charts
 - a. Early conflicts in America
 - b. British Colonial policy
 - c. Events that lead to the American Revolution
 - d. Comparing the Articles of Confederation with the Constitution
 3. CNN Presents Video Segments
 - a. Boycotts, Boycotts, Boycotts
 - b. What if the United States had lost?

4. Simulation: Stamp Act
 5. Primary documents
 - a. Proclamation of 1763
 - b. Patrick Henry: The Voice of Freedom
 - c. Declaration of Independence
 - d. Shay's Rebellion Indicates the Need for a New Constitution
 - e. The Threat by Shay's Rebellion has been Exaggerated
 6. The Intolerable Acts
 7. Art in American History: The Boston Massacre
 8. Geography activity: Boston at the start of the American Revolution
 10. America's Past Video Segment: A Call to Arms
 11. Political Cartoon: Defending the British
 12. Map Study: Northwest Territory
 13. Article: It is not a Union
- F. Learning objectives - unit three
1. Learn how to critique video segments and retrieve relevant information
 2. Analyze primary and secondary documents
 3. Understand how to take notes from a lecture
 4. Understand how to read and make use of various types of maps
 5. Create charts that recognize the policies and events that led to the American Revolution
 6. Discuss and evaluate the effects of the Proclamation of 1763 and the Intolerable Acts
 7. Examine the inequalities of the British Stamp Act
 8. Analyze the accuracy of historical drawings
 9. Evaluate the message of historical songs
 10. Begin a comparison of the Articles of Confederation with the Constitution
 11. Compare and Contrast two opposing viewpoints of Shay's Rebellion
 12. Learn how to analyze an article
 13. Recognize that history is an interpretative science and differing or opposing viewpoints can both have historical accuracy

III. Grading

- A. Weighting of assignments
 1. Tests, notebooks, and projects constitute 40% of the six week average
 2. Daily assignments and homework constitute 30% of the six week average
 3. Quizzes constitute 20% of the six week average.
 4. Discussion and participation constitute 10% of the six week average.
- B. Three major projects
 1. During October, the students are divided into teams of three, and must create a proposal for a viable colony
 2. The students create a political, economic, and social system based on those used in the American colonies
 3. In addition they create a model of what their colony would look like

During January, the students recreate the Constitutional Convention. They are assigned the role of one of the founding fathers who attended that convention.

They research the political stance and arguments of their character and then debate from that position.

In April, the students create a travel brochure demonstrating their knowledge of the westward movement in American History. They choose either Texas, California, or Oregon and create a brochure that tries to persuade Americans to move west.

IV. Class Policies

A. Materials

1. Textbook
2. 1 hard cover 3 ring binder; one inch is preferred
3. 1 set of dividers
3. Notebook paper
4. Pen and/or pencil
5. Red grading pen

B. Late Work

1. Late homework or class work will be accepted on the next day only. Ten points will be automatically deducted from any late assignments.

C. Absence Policy

If you are absent, it is expected that your assignment will be picked up in the office either the afternoon of the absence, or the following morning. If possible, students need to be ready for class when they return. This will prevent them from falling behind and have increased difficulty understanding the topics being discussed when they return to class.

In the event of a planned absence, school policy requires that students get their assignments before they leave and have them completed and ready to turn in the day they return to class. Please see the Parent-Teacher Handbook for further explanations of these guidelines.

Any tests missed due to absences will be taken before the absence in the event of a planned absence, or on the day the student returns in the event of an excused absence.

D. Homework

On the day of each test, a Contract is given that explains all homework for the following unit. The Contract covers a varying period from two to four weeks, depending upon the size of the unit. It is expected that students have the homework completed on the date the assignment is due. All homework is to be done in complete sentences.

The following information is to be on any papers that are turned in: first and last name, date, class number, and the assignment name. All written assignments may be written out by hand or done on the computer.