



June 12, 2009

FROM: AP U.S. History Team
(Mr. Cabiati, Mr. Maxwell, Ms. Youngren)
TO: AP U.S. History Students for 2009 – 2010
SUBJECT: Summer Assignment

Welcome to Advanced Placement United States History! The AP US History team congratulates you on your choice to take this challenging course!

AP United States History is designed to provide you with the analytical skills and factual information necessary to deal critically with the problems and issues of United States history. The program prepares you for intermediate and advanced college courses by making demands upon equivalent to those made by full year introductory college courses. This year, you will learn to assess historical material--their relevance to a given interpretive problem, their reliability and their importance--and to deal with the evidence and interpretations presented in historical scholarships. An AP United States History course should thus develop the skills necessary to arrive at conclusions on the basis of an informed judgment and to present reasons and evidence clearly and persuasively in essay format (from the College Board).

Accordingly, we begin with the enclosed summer assignment – a Reading Journal and a Book Review. The assignment is also available on the Lake Braddock Secondary School homepage (<http://www.fcps.edu/LakeBraddockSS>). This assignment will provide you with a base of knowledge in early American history that will allow all AP US History classes to move quickly into the AP curriculum when school begins next September. The assignment will be equivalent to one test grade in the first quarter and the both parts of the assignment will be equally weighted (Reading Journal = 50%, Book Review – 50%). We also require all AP US students to obtain an AP US History Test Review book prior to the beginning of the school year – we have provided a list of a few AP review books within this letter.

We strongly suggest that you begin early and complete requirements periodically rather than waiting until the last week before school starts. If you have any questions about this assignment, please e-mail the AP US History Team Leader, Mr. Maxwell (Daniel.Maxwell@fcps.edu). We will welcome the opportunity to assist you.

Sincerely,

Lake Braddock A.P. United States History Team



Advanced Placement U.S. History Resources:

LBSS AP US Textbook (you will receive it on the first day of school):

American History : A Survey, 11th Edition (multiple editions published)

Author: Alan Brinkley

AP US History Test Preparation Books (you are required to have one):

Barron's How to Prepare for the AP, U.S. History Advanced Placement Examination

ISBN: 0764177524

Cracking the AP U.S. History Exam

Princeton Review

ISBN: 0375765336

Five Steps to a 5: AP U.S. History

ISBN: 0071476318

Kaplan AP US History

ISBN: 141955087X

Master the AP U.S. History

ARCO

ISBN: 0768924693

REA's AP United States History w/CD-ROM (REA) The Best Test Prep for the AP U.S. History Exam with TESTware: 7th Edition

ISBN: 0738602191

Additional Resources:

United States History: Preparing for the Advanced Placement Examination

by John J. Newman, John M. Schmalbach

ISBN: 1567656609

This book is difficult to find and you may only find used copies. Please note – it is much closer to a textbook than a test review book.

AP United States History Flash Cards

ISBN: 0764178377

This is work YOU could do given the vocabulary in the textbook and study guides. However, these cards are a good resource for reviewing for tests, essays, and other assessments.



2009 A.P. U.S. History Summer Assignment Instructions Due the FIRST DAY OF CLASS

Part I – Reading Journal

Choose and read one of the books on early-American history listed at the end of these instructions. While reading, you will be required to keep a reading journal for **every chapter** of the book you choose. For each chapter, your journal should include:

1. **THESIS:** The author’s thesis or main point for the chapter – this is often found in the introduction of the chapter and revisited at the conclusion. What is the author trying to prove to you in this chapter?
2. **VOCABULARY CHART:** on the left, write down any historical term, event, person, place or reference that you do not fully understand; on the right, write down any general vocabulary word you do not understand:

History Vocabulary
term – explanation

General Vocabulary
term – explanation

3. **GENERAL NOTES:** following the events or argument the author puts forth – remember the S word in history: SIGNIFICANCE! What was the significance of what you wrote down – if you don’t know, you probably shouldn’t have written the note.
4. **REFLECTION:** At the end of the chapter – in your own words – what was the point of the chapter, what did it make you think about while reading (any links to other parts of history?), what questions do you still have about the chapter?

Part II – Critical Book Review

In addition to the reading journal explained above, you are required to write a critical book review as the second part of your summer assignment. The goal of the book review you will write for AP US History is to analyze the author’s thesis, evidence, and writing style to determine the relative merit of the book and its place in historical scholarship. This is an elaborate way of saying that this review is NOT a book report – you should not provide a long summary of the book nor should you quote extensively from the book. Your goal is to identify the author, the thesis, the types of evidence and sources used, and then make a critical judgment on the effectiveness of the author in answering the questions set forth in the work.

General Format for the Book Review:

1. Times New Roman font, 12 point
2. Double Spaced
3. Approximately 2 to 3 pages in length
4. Written in the third person, past tense – no “I believe the author was attempting to do this” – you should say “the author attempted to prove this but did not succeed.”
5. Cover Page: Your name
Subject (AP US History)
Date
(space here)
Full bibliographic entry for your book – use MLA format (see the Lake Braddock web site for examples – under “Library”)



Format for Writing:

You are not required to write a specific number of paragraphs for each section listed below – use as many or as few as it takes to address the focus of the section.

First Section: provide background on the author, qualifications, and other books written. Provide a brief summary of the book including the main topics, the time periods involved, major people-places-events but remember this is NOT a book report!

Second Section: what is the author’s thesis – what is the author trying to prove? Why do you think the Author wrote about this subject and the specific people-places-events included in the book? How did the author try to prove the thesis? What evidence and types of resources did the author use? Examine the footnotes and any bibliography included in the book. Who was the audience the author hoped to reach? What type of writing style did the author use?

Third Section: time for your analysis – what was good about this book? Do you believe the author proved the thesis? Was the writing style effective? Was the evidence and arguments convincing? Also, what was bad about the book? Was the evidence NOT convincing? Was the thesis poorly constructed or unclear? Unproven? Did the author’s writing style or format distract you from the thesis?

Fourth Section: your overall assessment of the book and the author. Was the good better than the bad? Was the book a worthwhile read – did it contribute anything new to the study of history (as far as you know)? What other books have been written on this

Book List:

Please note, the majority of these books are available at local Fairfax County Public Libraries although we expect them to be popular near the end of the summer break! If you plan to check them out, we advise that you check them out early. Also, these books are available online and in local bookstores in paperback – most should be available as used books.

1776

by David McCullough ISBN: 0743226720

Founding Brothers: The Revolutionary Generation

by Joseph J. Ellis ISBN: 0375705244

Benjamin Franklin: An American Life

by Walter Isaacson ISBN: 074325807X

Revolutionary Characters: What Made the Founders Different

By Gordon Wood ISBN: 0143112082

Alexander Hamilton

by Ron Chernow ISBN: 0143034758

Founding Mothers: The Women Who Raised Our Nation

by Cokie Roberts ISBN: 006009026X

His Excellency: George Washington

By James Ellis ISBN: 1400032539

Mayflower: A Story of Courage, Community, and War

by Nathaniel Philbrick ISBN: 0143111973

Slavery and the Making of America

by James Oliver Horton, Lois E. Horton
ISBN: 0195304519

Miracle at Philadelphia: The Story of the Constitutional Convention, May to September 1787

by Catherine Drinker Bowen, ISBN: 0316103985

Dearest Friend: A Life of Abigail Adams

by Lynne Withey ISBN: 0641807627