

# PVCCP 8TH GRADE AMERICAN HISTORY

**Teacher:** Mr. Casey Muns

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## COURSE STATEMENT

This course will consider American history from 1865 to the present. It emphasizes the American rise to preeminence on the world stage, and the intensification of internal and external challenges to the American national identity. Geography will also be a component of the curriculum throughout the semester. Principles from general revelation and the biblical worldview will serve as the interpretive framework throughout this class. In light of this interpretive framework, we will see how history is a purposeful and spiritually nurturing pursuit, since it deepens the revelation of God/the Good. The intellectual, cultural, religious, political, military, and economic changes that have occurred over the last 150 years will be analyzed in light of the founding ideals of this nation and its rich religious heritage from the Colonial era. Primary source readings will aid in developing an accurate assessment of the most significant ideas and events within the United States and in the world at large.

## COURSE POLICIES

**Attendance/Absences/Make-up-work:** Students must make up any tests, quizzes, or other assignments missed due to an excused absence within **one** week. Students must turn in work assigned prior to their absence the day they return and homework assigned during their absence the day after they return. Students should talk to the teacher about extenuating circumstances promptly.

**Classroom Rules/Expectations:** Students are expected to arrive punctually each day, ready to participate. Students are expected to redeem the classroom time by faithful engagement with the subject at hand and an edifying interaction with peers and teacher.

**Homework:** 10% will be deducted from assignments for every day it is late.

**Integrity:** Plagiarism on any quiz, test, paper, project, or homework assignment will result in a grade of zero for all persons involved. Parents and the Headmaster will be notified of the incident.

**Extra Credit:** It is not available to students on an individual basis. **Please do not inquire.** There will be extra credit questions on tests. There will be extra credit assignments offered to the whole class from time to time.

## GRADING POLICY

**Bell work assignments (10 points)**

**Participation (5 points daily)**

**Oral Quizzes (10 points)**

**Projects (25 points)**

**Tests (50 points)**

**Final Exam 20% of semester grade**

## COURSE PROCEDURES

**Organization:** Planners, binders, and annotations will be randomly checked for neatness and completion. See school template for annotation requirements.

**Writing:** There is a small writing component in history. Students will express their understanding of main ideas through small (one paragraph to one page) assignments. These assignments will appear as 'Projects' in the grade book. We will incorporate the ideas from The Foundation of Critical Thinking.

**Reading Assignment:** Students are expected to have read the material before class and annotate sufficiently to engage faithfully with the ideas embodied in the text. Annotation at the Jr. High level should accord with school wide policy of annotation. Page summaries will also be used in the annotation process when directed. When reading comprehension questions are assigned then no annotation is required.

**Bell work/Geography:** Students will need to arrive on time and complete a short written practice at the beginning of each class. Typically this will be geography practice.

**Participation:** Students who participate will do well in my class; I am looking for active engagement in class discussion that fosters depth of inquiry. I look for questions that clarify and push the material further. Scores will be inputted on a daily basis. Five points will be awarded every day and students can lose these points due to tardiness, lack of preparation, lack of reading and inappropriate talking in addition to the failure to be active in our class discussions.

**Oral Quizzes:** Oral quizzes will be administered sometimes twice a week over our list of Permanent Questions (see note below about Permanent Questions). Students may create flashcards (optional) and use them to answer the quiz and receive a maximum of 80%. No other study material can be used during the oral quiz. Students are not expected to answer word for word but idea for idea. As we near closer to the test day, the maximum value of the flashcards will decrease to a maximum of 70% in the effort to wean students off their flashcards.

**Tests:** Tests are larger than quizzes and students will need to spend more time preparing for them. They will include short answer, fill-in the blanks, and essay responses. In most instances, the Permanent Questions are the study guides, but if additional materials are needed such as a map, then a study guide will be provided. We will always have dedicated reviews days.

**Projects:** Students will enhance their learning through independent and group projects. Typically students will select a topic from a list that I provide and prepare for a 5-7 min presentation. A rubric will be provided 2.5 weeks in advance of the project and no more than two class periods will be provided for research. Research should begin as soon as possible to avoid conflicting with other classroom demands. Extensive homework time will be dedicated for these projects.

**Semester Final:** At the conclusion of each semester there will be a final on all the material *for only that semester*. A dedicated review time and study guide will be provided. Semester finals are worth 20% of the grade and will be based on previous exams and quizzes

### PERMANENT QUESTIONS

'Permanent Questions' is a list of 10-12 take-away ideas from each unit. We will cover the content of these questions in lessons and consistently refer to them throughout the year. These ideas are reformulated and appear on unit exams and again on the final semester exam. Students are expected to become familiar with these ideas and revisit them throughout the unit. Toward the end of the unit, oral quizzes will be conducted twice a week to evaluate student progress. Students have the option to create flashcards and use them during an oral quiz to receive a maximum of 80%. Students who perform well on the oral quizzes typically perform well on my unit exams.

Writing assignments will also be given to enhance student understanding of the main ideas. This will allow them to see the hidden connections between ideas. These exercises may occasionally take the place of an oral quiz.

### ASSISTANCE PROCEDURES

If you experience difficulty with any part of this class, there are ordinary means available to help you succeed in the course:

1. Complete the reading thoroughly and annotate carefully.
2. Be attentive in classroom discussion and engage by raising clarifying questions.
3. Attend afterschool help hours on Mondays.
4. Inquire of the teacher to provide input regarding his perception of your situation.
5. Inquire of peers who have successfully complied with the course requirements.

Email is the best way to reach me. I will reply within 24 hours or the next business day. Feel free to call my school number at (602) 992-8140 Ext. 7306. Leave a message with your name, reason for call, and a number I can reach you at.

*The goal of history is "not to teach the art of prophecy but the much subtler and more difficult arts of seeing things in context, of understanding the roots and directions and pace of change, and of distinguishing what is truly new under the sun from what is not. The study of history, it has be rightly said, does not make one smart for the next time, but wise forever."* –David Kennedy

# Course Outline

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- 1) **FOCUS:** The examination of American history in light of the curse and the promise and to appreciate the fullness of God's revelation in history.
- 2) **SCOPE:** Historical Hermeneutics & American History
  - a) Assumptions & interpretation used in the study of history
  - b) Reconstruction & Growth
  - c) Naturalistic outlook, Progressivism, & Spread of Totalitarianism
  - d) Welfare state: Great Depression & New Deal
  - e) WWI & WWII
  - f) Cold War & American Rise to Superpower
- 3) **READING LIST:**
  - a) *A BASIC HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES: THE GROWTH OF AMERICA VOL. 4*
  - b) *A BASIC HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES: THE WELFARE STATE VOL. 5*
  - c) *A DOCUMENTARY HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES*

*"History never repeats itself but it rhymes," said Mark Twain.*