

AP United States History
Summer Assignment 2011

American History at its best remains NOT simply a collection of facts, not a politically sanctioned listing of indisputable “truths,” but an on-going mode of collective self discovery about the nature of our society.

- Eric Foner (Columbia University)



The summer is an excellent time to purchase an AP United States History review book. Here are a few recommendations:

Cracking the AP U.S. History Exam
(The Princeton Review)

5 Steps to a 5: AP U.S. History
(McGraw/Hill)

AP U.S. History Crash Course
(REA)

Fast Track to a 5
(McDougall/Littell)



Using the handout from *American History: The Easy Way*, respond to the following questions. Be sure to use complete sentences and answers. (30 points)

Approaches to History: The Method of the Historian

1. In what ways is the study of history “scientific?”
2. Why is it difficult for historians to keep out their personal biases?

Native American Immigrants

3. Where did North America’s “first immigrants” come from? What is the most widely accepted theory of how they got to North America?
4. Compare and contrast the Aztecs and Pueblo(also called the Anasazi) TO THE Algonquin.
5. Using a different source, who were the “mound-builders” (Cahokia)? How would they compare to the Aztecs, Pueblo (also called the Anasazi) and Algonquin?
6. When Europeans arrived, they met Native Americans that the Europeans judged to be “uncivilized.” Define what it means to be civilized. Cite evidence that might have been used by the Europeans to prove their claim. What evidence could be cited to show the Europeans were wrong?

European Immigrants

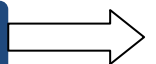
7. What evidence supports the possibility that Europeans found their way to North America before Columbus (1492)?
8. What role did the Renaissance play in European interest in the world outside of Europe?
9. Why is Christopher Columbus given more attention (when studying US History) than the many other explorers of the 1400’s & 1500’s?
10. The United States grew from English colonization. What is the English claim to land in North America based?

Approaches to History: Explaining History by Multiple Causes

11. What is the “multi-causal” approach for explaining events?

The Spanish in the Americas – The Early Years

12. While the French and English were more involved in fighting each other and building their nations in Europe, the Spanish explored and began to set up colonies in the Western Hemisphere (Central and South America & the Caribbean). What was the role played by religion that kept the “northern” Europeans from exploration and yet did not have the same effect on the Spanish? What role did religion play for the Spanish?
13. What impact did Spanish settlement in the Western Hemisphere have on Native American culture?
14. What did each of the following non-Spanish explorers do and for what country? Cartier, Hudson, Drake
15. As history is frequently told by “the winners,” how might the story of European exploration and settlement be told from the point of view of the Native Americans?



History is NOT just about dead people and things from long, long ago. We are all “historical figures.” To that end, this part of the summer assignment is intended to give you an opportunity to reflect on your place in history.

Time Line #1 [35 points total]

Create a time line (or sequence of events) for YOUR LIFE. (This does not have to be deeply personal. It is not intended to violate your privacy. It will be displayed in the classroom.)

1. This must include 10 events from your PERSONAL lifetime. (birth, “firsts”, etc. -- events in your life that are important or meaningful to you) [20 points]
 - For each of the ten events, write a 2-3 sentence summary of the event and why it is important/meaningful. Just the facts, please.
2. For FIVE of the events, provide a document that will help others to learn about the event. [15 points]
 - For each document, provide a brief description of the document and what a “learner” could infer (to form an opinion about something that is based on information that you already have) from the document about the event.

Time Line #2 [35 points total]

Create a timeline of “current events” that occurred during your lifetime.

1. This must include 10 “current” events that occurred during your lifetime. (politics, disasters, social/cultural events, etc.) [20 points]
 - For each of the ten events, write a 2-3 sentence summary of the event and why it is important/meaningful. Again, just the facts, please.
2. For FIVE of the events, provide a document that will help others to learn about the event. [15 points]
 - For each document, provide a brief description of the document and what a “learner” could infer (to form an opinion about something that is based on information that you already have) from the document about the event.

How should the final product LOOK?

- Each timeline should be done separately.
- Use the horizontal line format.
- Each timeline should fit on paper that is 8 ½ x 33. (That is three “normal” sized sheets of copier/printer paper.)
- The documents should be connected to the event on the time line.
- Be sure your name is on the back of each time line.

