



U. S. History/25-26/8th Instructional Plan

August 8, 2025

Contact Information

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WHAT IS Honors?

The purpose of honors courses is to bridge the gap between regular and Advanced Placement (AP) or Pre-AP classes. They serve as an important part of a tiered academic pathway by offering more rigorous instruction and deeper learning than standard courses.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In 8th Grade U.S. History, students explore the development of the United States from early European exploration through Reconstruction. Using historical documents and critical thinking skills, students analyze key events, figures, and ideas that shaped the nation, including colonization, the American Revolution, the creation of the Constitution, westward expansion, economic and technological growth, and the Civil War. The course emphasizes the founding principles of representative government, individual rights, and democratic ideals, while examining the political, social, and cultural forces that have defined the American experience through 1877.

COURSE ACTIVITIES (What we will be doing)

Below you will find descriptions of the most common activities that students will participate in during the course of each semester.

Throughout the year, students will:

- Analyze primary and secondary sources using historical thinking skills.
- Create timelines, maps, and annotated illustrations to show historical understanding.
- Write letters, journal entries, and editorials from historical perspectives.
- Design creative projects such as museum exhibits, posters, podcasts, and storyboards.
- Participate in debates, simulations, and group presentations.
- Develop arguments and support them with evidence from historical documents.
- Build civic understanding through activities on rights, responsibilities, and government structure.
- Practice critical thinking, collaboration, and communication skills throughout all activities.

GRADES - Click here for → [YWLA Grading Policy](#)

Major (Test, Projects, Writing) 60%

Minor (Notes, Daily Work) 40%



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Classroom Resources

- Folder
- Google Classroom
- Teacher and District created material
- IXL

Exam Date

April 22, 2026

COURSE OBJECTIVES AND TOPICS

Unit 1: Thinking Like a Historian

- Practice historical thinking: narration, interpretation, explanation, judgment
- Learn to source, contextualize, corroborate, and analyze historical document

Unit 2: Colonial America (1587–1763)

- Explore causes of European colonization and development of the 13 colonies
- Analyze how geography influenced settlement and economy
- Understand early self-government and religious/social structures

Unit 3: American Independence (1763–1783)

- Evaluate causes of the American Revolution and key events
- Analyze perspectives of Loyalists and Patriots
- Study the Declaration of Independence and Revolutionary War outcomes

Unit 4: Writing the Constitution (1783–1791)

- Assess weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation
- Understand key compromises and debates in drafting the U.S. Constitution
- Examine the Bill of Rights and principles of limited government

Unit 5: Early Republic (1789–1828)

- Study the formation of political parties and foreign/domestic policy
- Explore economic challenges and the War of 1812
- Analyze court cases that strengthened federal authority



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Unit 6: Age of Jackson (1820s–1830s)

- Understand Jacksonian democracy and expanded suffrage
- Examine policies toward Native Americans and conflicts over tariffs and the Bank

Unit 7: Westward Expansion (1780s–1850s)

- Explore Manifest Destiny, migration trails, and land acquisitions
- Understand the impact of geography and art on the expansion era

Unit 8: Industrialization and Reform (1800s–1850s)

- Analyze the rise of factories, transportation, and urbanization
- Study slavery's expansion and major reform movements
- Examine cultural shifts in literature, music, and art

Unit 9: Sectionalism (1820s–1850s)

- Compare regional differences and economic systems
- Investigate compromises over slavery and rising tensions

Unit 10: Civil War (1860–1865)

- Understand causes and consequences of the Civil War
- Study major battles, leaders, and turning points
- Analyze Lincoln's leadership and legacy

Unit 11: Reconstruction (1865–1877)

- Examine efforts to rebuild the South and reintegrate states
- Evaluate the impact of Reconstruction Amendments and policies
- Explore ongoing social and political struggles after the war

Please feel free to reach out with any questions or concerns. We are excited to work together to make this a successful year of learning!
