

Dear Gallatin High AP American Studies Student:

May 20, 2026

Greetings! According to our records, you are enrolled in our AP American Studies course for the 2026-2027 school year. (This course is also known as AP US History and Honors English III) In contrast to regular American Studies, AP requires the study of more content, in greater depth, for a shorter period. The A.P. Exam is in early May. To accommodate this reality and the shortened block scheduling class periods, we need to jumpstart the learning process with the following required tasks. Over the summer, students will complete the assignments listed below.

1) A.P. United States History:

A. View AP Heimler History Era I Review

▶ APUSH Unit 1 REVIEW [Period 1: 1491-1607]—Everything You NEED to Know
Era II Review

▶ APUSH Unit 2 REVIEW [Period 2: 1607-1754]—Everything You NEED to Know
(complete the content comprehension questions.)

B. Completed Columbian Exchange SAQ

C. Watch the *Hamilton* musical and complete the viewer's guide.

YouTube: <https://youtu.be/gHej85lf2Rg?si=Z7gbMvANrmvCos1l&t=1>

2) Honors English III:

E. Read one of the selected English III options (see program sheet) and complete the Chapter Notes Graphic Organizer.

F. Complete the introduction letter assignment (see program sheet).

1.) You will receive a copy of the text *APUSH Crash Course*, as it will be used as the class text throughout the year on the first day of class.

2.) Follow instructions and thoroughly complete all parts.

NOTE: The completed materials are **due the 1st/2nd day of class** for a grade. Late assignments = reduced credit. We recommend that you **begin these tasks about four weeks before school starts**. During the first two weeks of school, we will review the material and take a challenging comprehensive exam. Full transparency: These assignments are indicative of the pace and the workload of the class. **I have provided you with a suggested calendar for the month of August on the back so you are not tempted to overwhelm yourself the week before school**. We look forward to having you as a student next year. **Please contact us via email if we can be of any additional help**. Enjoy your summer!

Mr. Kusak and Mr. Newman - Gallatin High AP American Studies teachers
joe.kusak@bsd7.org & kyle.newman@bsd7.org

AUGUST 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31	1	2	3	4	5

Suggested Summer Reading Schedule

On August 3rd start and complete the Heimler AP Era I videos and complete the comprehensive questions # I-II.

On August 10th, start and complete the Heimler AP Era II videos and complete the comprehensive questions #III-IX

On August 17th start and complete Columbian Exchange SAQ.

On August 24th, watch and complete the *Hamilton* Musical Viewing guide

On August 28th, relax because you have one more weekend before school starts !

On August 31st school commences for your junior year.

On September 12th, Unit I/II test.

For Honors English III Choice Book: We suggest that you read your chosen book over the course of four weeks. Try to read about $\frac{1}{4}$ of the book each week to space it out. You can shorten or lengthen this pace depending on your reading speed/interest in the book. Find the chapter

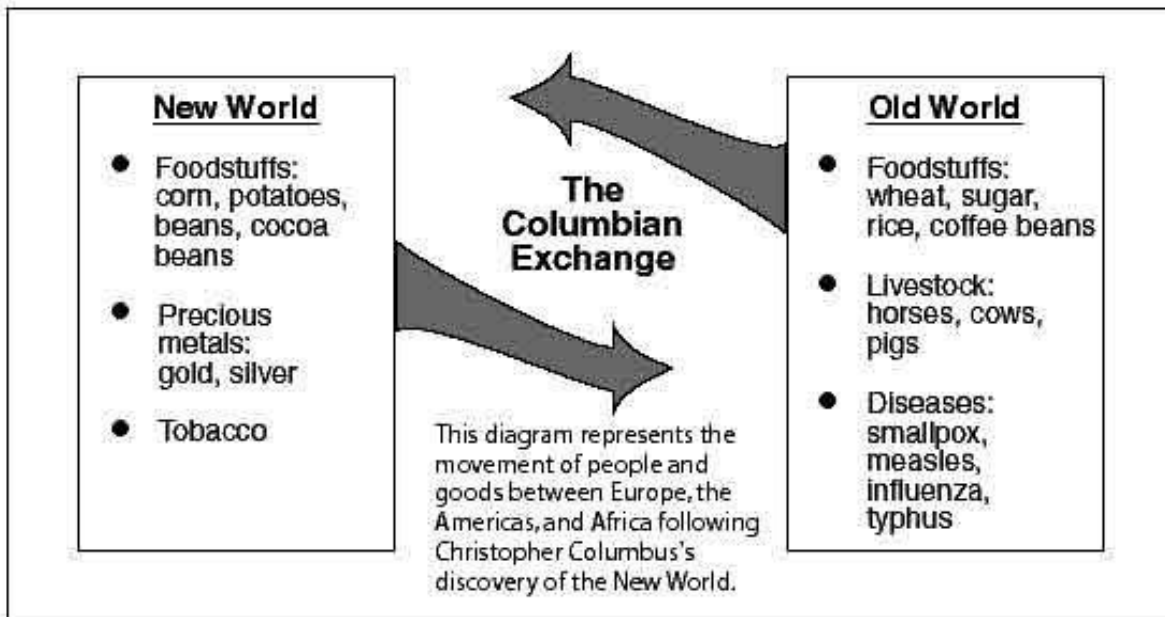
Summer Reading Review Questions (5 formative points each/45pts)

Collected Day 2 of class

Directions: Use complete sentences and your own words, type a detailed, five to seven sentence response to each of the following review questions. Each packed paragraph should contain a clear topic sentence, specific examples from the Heimler videos and explanations as to why specific examples are relevant.

1. One of the most striking features of the Native American society at the time of European discovery was its sheer diversity. Support this statement.
2. In what significant respects did England's colonial settlement history in the Americas differ from that of Spain and France?
3. In what ways did the New England economy, society, and government differ from those in the Chesapeake colonies?
4. What were the major character defining features of each colonial region (Chesapeake, New England, Middle, and Southern Atlantic Colonies) in British North America?
5. Compare and contrast the Puritans and the Quakers. How were they similar and different? (Think Venn Diagram)
6. How did the concept of mercantilism and the practice of triangular trade promote Anglicization and draw the colonies of British North America into a larger Atlantic World?
7. What factors and circumstances hastened the transition from indentured servitude to slavery in British North America?
8. How was the Great Awakening different from the Enlightenment? To what extent did both movements help prepare the American colonists for the American Revolution?
9. In your opinion, what are the major defining characteristics of America today? What roots of these traits can you find in the colonial experience of North America?

SHORT ANSWER QUESTION (9 formative points)



Use the diagram above and specific evidence from the Era I video answer parts (A), (B), and (C). Write your very concise, one paragraph response on a clean sheet of paper for each specific part.

- (A) Briefly explain one significant way in which the Columbian Exchange impacted the historical development of the Americas.
- (B) Briefly explain one significant way that the Columbian Exchange impacted the historical development of Europe.
- (C) Briefly identify **ONE** significant component of the Columbian Exchange that is **NOT** listed in the diagram above **AND** indicate how it impacted the historical development of **EITHER** the Old or New Worlds.

SAQ Format/setup

- Directly answer the question. Be painfully explicit.
- Use the phraseology of the question (but do not rewrite or repeat the question).
- Include specific historical terms/events/people in each section of each SAQ.
- Limit your response to each section to 2-4 content rich sentences.
- You have 23 lines on which to write.

Use the formula: A.C.E.

- **A** = Answer. You directly answer the question by identifying your claim.
- **C** = Cite. You briefly define/describe your claim
- **E** = Expand. your claim through historical context.

YouTube: <https://youtu.be/gHej85lf2Rg?si=Z7gbMvANrmvCos1l&t=1>

Hamilton Discussion Questions- Please watch the movie and record your answers
20 Formative pts.

Character and Story Analysis

- 1) What motivates Alexander Hamilton throughout the musical?
- 2) How does Aaron Burr's personality and approach to life differ from Hamilton's?
- 3) Why is the relationship between Hamilton and George Washington significant?
- 4) What role do the Schuyler sisters play in Hamilton life?
- 5) How does Eliza Hamilton change throughout the musical?

Themes and Messages

6. The phrase, "Who tells your story," is repeated throughout the musical. What does it mean and why is it important?
7. How does Hamilton portray ambition as both a strength and a flaw?
8. Why is legacy such an important theme in the musical?
9. How does Hamilton highlight the impact of immigrant contributions in America?
10. What lessons can we learn from the rivalry between Hamilton and Burr?

Historical Context

- 11) How does Hamilton portray the American Revolution differently than traditional history lessons?
12. In what ways does the musical take creative liberties with history?
13. What does the musical reveal about the challenges of creating a new government?
14. How does Hamilton portray Thomas Jefferson and his role in shaping America?
15. Why was the debate over the national bank so significant in Hamilton's time?

Music and Storytelling

16. How does Lin-Manuel Miranda use hip hop, rap, and other musical styles to tell Hamilton's story?
17. Why is "A Room Where it Happens" such a powerful song?
18. How does the musical use motifs, a *distinctive, recurring pattern, theme, or dominant idea in a work of art*, and repeated lyrics to connect different moments in Hamilton's life?
19. What impact does having a diverse cast playing the Founding Fathers have on the way we see history?
20. Why do you think Hamilton resonates with modern audiences?

Honors English III Summer Assignments

Welcome to Honors English III! I can't wait to see you all in the fall with the good work we get to do alongside Mr. Kusak's AP U.S. History curriculum. In order to prepare yourself for the upcoming school year, there are two major assignments that need to be completed before the start of the 2026-2027 school year.

1. Reading and analysis of a student-choice book from a list of six appropriate texts.
2. An introduction letter assignment introducing yourself to your new teachers and classmates.

I) Honors English III Summer Reading List for 2026-2027

Students are required to choose one book to read from this list. ***Books can be checked out from GHS's library, the public library, or purchased by the student if they want a personal copy.***

Students must use the *Chapter Notes Graphic Organizer* to take notes during their reading (see attached). Although you are required to read only one book, I hope you will find more that you may enjoy! Please keep track of the title and author of the book(s) you have read using your chapter notes. Within the first two weeks of your return to school, you will be given an assignment to complete related to one of your book choices.

Summer Reading Choices:

Where Men Win Glory, by Jon Krakauer

A biography of Pat Tillman, an American football player who left his professional career and enlisted in the United States Army after the September 11 attacks. He was killed in 2004 in the US war in Afghanistan by friendly fire, an incident which the US government attempted to cover up. To write the book, Krakauer drew heavily upon Tillman's journals, interviews with the Tillman family, *Boots On the Ground by Dusk: My Tribute to Pat Tillman* by Mary Tillman, and extensive research on the ground in Afghanistan.

The Anxious Generation, by Jonathan Haidt

After more than a decade of stability or improvement, the mental health of adolescents plunged in the early 2010s. Rates of depression, anxiety, self harm, and suicide rose sharply, more than doubling on many measures. Why?

In this 2024 text, social psychologist Jonathan Haidt lays out the facts about the epidemic of teen mental illness that hit many countries at the same time. He then investigates the nature of childhood, including why children need play and independent exploration to mature into competent, thriving adults. Haidt shows how the play-based childhood began to decline in the 1980s, and how it was finally wiped out by the arrival of the phone-based childhood in the early 2010s. He presents more than a dozen mechanisms by which this great rewiring of childhood has interfered with children's social and neurological development, covering everything from sleep deprivation to attention fragmentation, addiction, loneliness, social contagion, social comparison, and perfectionism.

The Joy Luck Club, by Amy Tan

A 1989 novel that focuses on four Chinese immigrant families in San Francisco who start a mahjong club known as The Joy Luck Club. The book is structured similarly to a mahjong game, with four parts divided into

four sections to create sixteen chapters. The three mothers and four daughters (one mother, Suyuan Woo, dies before the novel opens) share stories about their lives in the form of short vignettes. Each part is preceded by a parable relating to the themes within that section.

The Grapes of Wrath, by John Steinbeck

An American realist novel published in 1939. The book won the National Book Award and Pulitzer Prize for fiction, and it was cited prominently when Steinbeck was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1962. Set during the Great Depression, the novel focuses on the Joads, a poor family of tenant farmers driven from their Oklahoma home by drought, economic hardship, agricultural industry changes, and bank foreclosures forcing tenant farmers out of work. Due to their nearly hopeless situation, and in part because they are trapped in the Dust Bowl, the Joads set out for California on the "mother road", along with thousands of other "Okies" seeking jobs, land, dignity, and a future.

Fast Food Nation: The Darkside of the All-American Meal, by Eric Schlosser

To a degree both engrossing and alarming, the story of fast food is the story of postwar America. Though created by a handful of mavericks, the fast food industry has triggered the homogenization of our society. Fast food has hastened the milling of our landscape, widened the chasm between rich and poor, fueled an epidemic of obesity, and propelled the juggernaut of American cultural imperialism abroad. That's a lengthy list of charges, but Eric Schlosser makes them stick with an artful mix of first-rate reportage, wry wit, and careful reasoning.

Schlosser's myth-shattering survey stretches from the California subdivisions where the business was born to the industrial corridor along the New Jersey Turnpike where many of fast food's flavors are concocted. He hangs out with the teenagers who make the restaurants run and communes with those unlucky enough to hold America's most dangerous job - meatpacker. He travels to Las Vegas for a giddily surreal franchisers' convention where Mikhail Gorbachev delivers the keynote address. He even ventures to England and Germany to clock the rate at which those countries are becoming fast food nations. *Fast Food Nation* is a groundbreaking work of investigation and cultural history that may change the way America thinks about the way it eats.

The Haunting of Hill House and the short story ***The Lottery***, by Shirley Jackson

The Haunting of Hill House is the story of four seekers who arrive at a notoriously unfriendly pile called Hill House: Dr. Montague, an occult scholar looking for solid evidence of a "haunting"; Theodora, the lighthearted assistant; Eleanor, a friendless, fragile young woman well acquainted with poltergeists; and Luke, the future heir of Hill House. At first, their stay seems destined to be merely a spooky encounter with inexplicable phenomena. But Hill House is gathering its powers—and soon it will choose one of them to make its own.

The Lottery is a famous and controversial short story by Shirley Jackson, first published in 1948, that describes a small, seemingly normal American town's annual lottery, which culminates in a frightening ritual. The story is known for its shocking twist, which reveals the horrific, violent nature of the tradition, and serves as a dark commentary on blind adherence to tradition, scapegoating, and the potential for cruelty within ordinary people.

****CONTINUE READING TO THE NEXT PAGE FOR THE CHAPTER NOTES GRAPHIC ORGANIZER****

Name_____

Directions – As you read, summarize and discuss key features in the book using the table below. This may be typed or neatly handwritten and turned in the first week of school. Complete chapter notes for each book read. **You will have to add rows to the graphic organizer to match the amount of chapters in your book.** THESE WILL BE TURNED IN PHYSICALLY, SO MAKE SURE YOU PRINT OFF YOUR COMPLETED ORGANIZER IF DONE DIGITALLY.

Chapter	Chapter Summary Please summarize the major plot points or content from each chapter. <i>Use your own words!!</i>	Analysis: Choose 1-2: • Discuss ONE trait ONE of the characters has in this chapter or how ONE of the characters changes from the beginning to this chapter. • Discuss a part of this chapter that surprised you or made you think about something in your own life. • Discuss a literary device used in the chapter.

II) Introduction Letter Assignment/Instructions

5 formative points

Using the letters below as examples, write a letter of introduction (1-2 pages) about yourself, family, and interests. For example, what do you like? Dislike? What do you think we should know about you that would help us do a better job as your teachers? What do you expect out of this course? Etc. Print out for the first day.

Hello Fine Young Bozemanites,

It is with an enthusiastic zeal and a profound love of teaching that I welcome you to our year- long adventure. A clear connection can be made to our own lives with our challenging course called AP United States/English III Honors.

As the oldest of four boys, I love traveling and seeking out new environments. I have a diverse past with many different addresses and occupations. I grew up in Louisville, Kentucky but graduated from Hampden Sydney College in Virginia, with a B.A. in History in 1997. Working many odd jobs along the way--from camp coordinator, lift operator, trail crew leader, and owner of my own small business--I obtained my teaching certificate and Masters of Teaching and Learning from the University of Louisville in 2003. My teaching profession began in an inner city school environment before I moved to Bozeman in the summer of 2005. This is my twenty-third year in education and my ninth year teaching APUSH.

The highlight of my teaching career has been working alongside many talented English teachers to engage students in the complex history of our American past. It is in this pursuit of understanding the past that I better understand my own fortunate place in the world and recognize how lucky and blessed I am. My wife and I have two daughters, June who is seventeen and Kit, age fourteen. There is no finer moment than watching my own daughters try something for the first time, become frustrated, and then accomplish the task several days later. I am in awe of the learning process and understand the joy it brings. It is my hope to guide you through the year so that you may feel the same sense of pride in your accomplishments and appreciation for our American story. I hope you concur with the same sentiment for learning.

Sincerely--Mr. Kusak

Greetings AP/Honors Scholars,

Welcome to English III Honors! I am beyond excited to start this journey with you as a life-long learner. To begin, I wanted to say 'hello' again to students whom I've taught in the past and greetings to all of my new students. The combination of ELA and History in this class provides an opportunity to study literature and culture through the framework of American history, allowing students to understand history through cultural artifacts that arose from each historical era. This is my third year teaching this class with Mr. Kusak and I could not be more stoked for the chance to grow as an educator and an individual.

I grew up in Helena, MT and have always had a deep connection with the outdoors. Camping, hiking, fishing, hunting, and community service have been passions of mine from a young age. As an Eagle Scout and educator, I believe that service to your community and helping your neighbors is a sacred duty. After high school, I earned both a Bachelor's and a Master's degree in English Education at MSU. Over the course of my 13 years of teaching, I've been blessed with the opportunity to teach in a large variety of locations, cultures, and student populations. I started my teaching career in Arlee and Charlo on the Salish-Kootenai/Flathead Reservation in northwestern Montana. After teaching everything from British Literature to Economics, I decided to broaden my craft by teaching the International Baccalaureate English Program in Beijing, China. During these two years, I taught with educators from all over the world and honed my skills in AP/advanced class instruction. After returning to the states in 2019, I found myself teaching English in the block schedule in Casper, WY. Fortunately for me, I was hired on with GHS during its opening year (2020) and have been here ever since! I consider myself very fortunate in that I work in a job I love with great colleagues and awesome students. I'm excited that you have decided to take this class and look forward to working/growing with you and Mr. Kusak this year.

Regards,

Mr. Newman