

U.S. History Honors traces the nation's history from the precolonial period to the present. Students learn about the Native American, European, and African peoples who lived in North America before a large part of it became the United States. They examine the beliefs and philosophies that informed the American Revolution and the subsequent formation of the government and political system. Students investigate the economic, cultural, and social motives for the nation's expansion, as well as the conflicting notions of liberty that eventually resulted in a civil war. The course describes the emergence of the United States as an industrial nation and then focuses on its role in modern world affairs.

Moving into the 20th and 21st centuries, students probe the economic and diplomatic interactions between the United States and other nations while investigating how the world wars, the Cold War, and the “information revolution” affected the lives of ordinary Americans. Woven through this chronological sequence is a strong focus on the changing conditions of women, African Americans, and other minority groups.

The course emphasizes the development of historical analysis skills such as comparing and contrasting, differentiating between facts and interpretations, considering multiple perspectives, and analyzing cause-and-effect relationships. These skills are applied to text interpretation and in written assignments that guide students step-by-step through problem-solving activities.

Honors students perfect their ability to use logic and evidence to create persuasive written arguments in five-paragraph essays, two independent research projects, and shorter exercises such as document-based questions and analytic discussions.

The course is built to state standards and standards from the National Council for History Education, the National Center for History in the Schools, and the National Council for Social Studies.

Length: Two Semesters

Unit 1: First Contacts

Unit 2: Becoming American

Unit 3: America in the Age of Jackson

Unit 4: North-South Conflict

Unit 5: Post-Civil War America

Unit 6: Industrial America

Unit 7: Semester 1 Review and Exam

Unit 8: Populism and Progressivism

Unit 9: The Age of Imperialism



Unit 10: Progress and Challenges

Unit 11: The Cold War Begins

Unit 12: Change Is in the Air

Unit 13: Contemporary Issues

Unit 14: Semester 2 Review and Exam

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