

## **UNITED STATES HISTORY**

Eighth grade students study the course content of the Texas TEKS for 8<sup>th</sup> grade, which is the history of the United States from colonization to Reconstruction. The textbook is the foundation for the facts of history. It is accompanied by the use of reading primary source materials, listening to musical selections, examining art works and viewing documentaries. The social sciences are integrated into the course: history, geography, political science, sociology and economics, and on occasion archaeology and anthropology. Technology skills are integrated through research on the internet and through the production of reports and graphic representations of the that data.

Daily and long-term assignments are designed to create the knowledge base which is drawn on to engage students in critical thinking skills. Students will produce written and visual representations of the course content in cross-curricula activities using language arts, fine arts and, sometimes, performance arts to bring meaning and understanding to history.

### **FIRST SEMESTER**

**AMERICAN GOVERNMENT.** In this unit students will study the Constitution of the United States. It is the backdrop for understanding United States involvement in world issues and events and it is the basis for discussion of national and local politics. The purpose of these discussions is to create an awareness of the privileges, rights and responsibilities of a United States citizen.

#### **Students study:**

Establishment of our Federal Republic  
The Legislative Branch  
The Executive Branch  
The Judicial Branch  
The Amendments to the Constitution

The rights and duties of  
American Citizens  
The Election Process  
The Separation of Power  
Checks and Balances

#### **HISTORY FAIR**

During First Semester all students begin an in-depth study of one topic of their choice related to the theme of National History Day (see History Fair).

#### **THE ENGLISH COLONIES**

The semester ends with the study of English exploration and colonial policy. Students gain an appreciation for the chronological flow of the events and social conditions in our history and especially for the development of self-government and constitutional law in the colonies.

## **SECOND SEMESTER**

### **The WARS**

Students will study the causes and effects of wars in our history. We will focus on The French and Indian War, the American Revolution, the War of 1812, and the Civil War. The War for Texas Independence and the Mexican American War, while part of the chronology of this period are referenced, not studied in depth, since they have been studied in 7<sup>th</sup> grade.

### **The PRESIDENTS**

George Washington through Andrew Johnson

### **SOCIAL and ECONOMIC HISTORY**

Students will study the role of Religion in founding of America and the role that our faith takes in forming the conscience of a voting citizen. The class will cover the spirit of individualism that built our nation, spurred the development of capitalism, and increasingly expanded the rights of the individual through Constitutional Amendments.

Students will study:

Life in pre-revolutionary America  
The development of agriculture and  
the plantation society  
Slavery  
Industrialization  
Territorial expansion  
Manifest destiny

Social Movements: abolition and  
temperance  
The Economy: tariffs, the  
bank, depression, free enterprise  
Key Supreme Court decisions  
The role of women  
Regional culture clashes

### **COLONIAL DAY**

8<sup>TH</sup> Grade students will bring a day in pre-revolutionary America to life during Colonial Day. Students assume the role of a person in the colonies in 1775. Younger students “tour” the display areas.

### **HISTORY FAIR**

All 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students are invited to participate in the school History Fair. It is a requirement for Honors History students. All students will research a topic and create a product. Students in History Honors create an exhibit, a documentary, a performance, a paper or a website and write a process paper and annotated bibliography.

Students who are not required to participate in the school History Fair use their research to create a collage and an annotated bibliography.



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