

Welcome to Grade 8 U. S. History

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Grading Policy and Office Hours: Due Dates posted on Edline Deadlines: Seven Days past Due Dates  
 Students may see me at the following times: Tuesday & Wednesday from 2:40-4:00; Lunchtime; Monday-Friday - 7:00-7:30

UNITS OF STUDY

| Title  | Enduring Understandings  |
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| <p><b>UNIT 1</b><br/> <b>Democracy: Political Systems of the People</b></p> <p>August 26<sup>th</sup><br/>                     Through<br/>                     October 31<sup>st</sup></p> <p>First Marking<br/>                     Period</p>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Political systems are the people, practices, and institutions that use power to help make and enforce societal decisions. Governments are the formal decision making institutions created in a political system. In a democracy the political system reflects belief in a government that represents the people, protects individual rights, and helps determine the common good.</li> <li>• Political systems are often evaluated by the success of the economic system. Dissatisfaction with the economic system may lead people to seek change in the political system.</li> <li>• People may change political systems by working within the system or outside the system. However, when a political system won't change, people may try to abolish it and create a new system. This may cause violent conflicts.</li> <li>• Historically, political systems have developed from authoritarian to more democratic. The American Revolution was based on Enlightenment ideas that rejected the divine right of kings in favor of a democratic political system.</li> <li>• For more than 200 years the political system born of the Revolution has provided many means for change. The result has been a stable, yet flexible political system.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Essential Questions</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What is government supposed to do?</li> <li>2. How is the economic system linked to the political system?</li> <li>3. Why do people try to make change?</li> <li>4. How can people create change?</li> <li>5. What is the role of leadership during times of great change?</li> <li>6. How can change sometimes lead to violent conflict?</li> <li>7. Do violent conflicts achieve goals?</li> </ol> |
| <p><b>UNIT 2</b><br/> <b>Creating a National Political System and Culture</b></p> <p>November 1<sup>st</sup><br/>                     Through<br/>                     January 23<sup>rd</sup></p> <p>Second Marking<br/>                     Period</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Culture is the shared system of beliefs, values, and practices of a society.</li> <li>• The shared values of the American political system have formed a cohesive national identity in a historically pluralistic society. Citizen rights and responsibilities, rule of law, separation of church and state, equal opportunity, representative and limited government, freedom and independence, and the opportunity of a market economy are fundamental democratic values.</li> <li>• The Constitution was written to provide a structure for government that reflected democratic values and established a stable, prosperous nation. However, compromises based on beliefs of the time restricted access to the promises of the Constitution for most Americans. The amendment process was included to reflect changing attitudes, beliefs, and needs of the growing republic.</li> <li>• Events in the early years of the nation and conflicts with foreign powers helped to define American values and shape a shared national identity.</li> <li>• Two hundred years later the debate lives on as Americans balance serious challenges to national security with the historic blessings of a free society.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Essential Questions</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What is American culture?</li> <li>2. What values are shared among most Americans?</li> <li>3. How does a national culture develop?</li> <li>4. How does a nation balance competing values?</li> <li>5. How does government balance individual rights and the common good?</li> </ol>   |

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| <p><b>UNIT 3</b><br/> <b>Geographic and Economic Change Shape the Nation</b></p> <p>January 24<sup>th</sup><br/> Through March 27<sup>th</sup></p> <p>Third Marking Period</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Geographic characteristics, which include both physical and human features, influence the development of economic systems and culture.</li> <li>• Market economic systems thrive on competition, private ownership, free enterprise, trade, limited government involvement, and continual growth.</li> <li>• Characteristics of geographic and economic systems help shape the cultural norms of a society.</li> <li>• From 1800-1840, the changing geography and economy of the United States included industrialization, extension of the slave-based plantation system, expansion of national boundaries, arrival of new immigrant groups, removal of Native American groups, and growth of cities and transportation networks.</li> <li>• These changes helped develop fundamental aspects of American political and social culture such as American nationalism, role of the common man, belief in social reform, and participation in the political process.</li> <li>• The culture of the United States continues to be influenced by geographic and economic changes such as immigration, global trade, and urbanization.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Essential Questions</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What makes up the geography of a region?</li> <li>2. How does geography give identity to a nation?</li> <li>3. How do geographic and economic systems work together?</li> <li>4. What are the costs of economic expansion?</li> </ol>  |
| <p><b>UNIT 4</b><br/> <b>A Nation Divided and Rebuilt</b></p> <p>March 28<sup>th</sup><br/> Through June 16<sup>th</sup></p> <p>Fourth Marking Period</p>                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural systems are the shared beliefs, values, customs, and behaviors that influence how societies develop and change. These beliefs and values are seen in the economic, social, and political systems of a nation.</li> <li>• Differences in cultural beliefs within a nation often lead to divergent visions of the future, including how economic, social, and political systems may develop.</li> <li>• When cultural differences develop in distinct geographic regions, people may begin to develop a stronger identity to their region than the nation.</li> <li>• The American Civil War was a regional split in culture (economic, social, and political systems). At the outset, Unionists fought to preserve the American political system and the Confederates fought against invasion. As the brutality of the war intensified differences, Northerners demanded the abolition of slavery and the Southerners sought to maintain their culture as a separate nation.</li> <li>• Attempts were made to reunite the nation and extend social, political, and economic opportunities to African Americans in the era of Reconstruction. Cultural change was accepted by some but resisted by most. The differences that led to war, including views on race and the role of the federal government reverberate in American culture today.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Essential Questions</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How do people resolve fundamental cultural differences in a democracy?</li> <li>2. At what point should people fight to defend deeply held beliefs?</li> <li>3. How is cultural change accepted or resisted by a society?</li> <li>4. How much can enduring change be sustained without strong leadership?</li> </ol> |