

Department: History

Course Name: American Studies

Course Description:

This thematic class explores American history and culture through 5 distinct units. Each unit is guided by a question which students will explore with their teacher and then in small groups organized around a topic within the theme. These themes allow students to spend time exploring a unique period in American History and then compare it with periods their classmates are researching. Work is organized by independent assignments and collaborative group assignments. Students develop expertise on their sub themes through annotating secondary sources, analyzing primary sources, constructing historical timelines and taking synthetic notes. In collaboration with their small groups, students will present their expertise while classmates practice note taking and comparison skills. All students are then assessed on their knowledge gained from all the sub themes.

Washington D.C. Field Study Trip

This final Field Study will take our cultural study to Washington D.C. Over three days and two nights, students will explore different sites in the city and participate in historical and community-building activities throughout the trip. Students will be expected to complete a monument analysis and then complete their final project for American Studies as their culminating final.

Content:

- Movement and Migration
 - What influences people to leave their homes and create new ones?
- Innovation
 - Is all progress positive?
- Popular Culture
 - How does popular culture reflect the values and norms of its time OR push against those values and norms?
- Equality
 - What has “equality” looked like in the United States?
- War
 - Is there such a thing as a “good” war?

Skills:

Essay writing using primary sources

Analyze and compare points of view in primary sources

Strengthen oral communication skills via class discussions, and oral presentations

Develop and refine Socratic questioning and reasoning

Develop basic research skills using library and Internet sources

Refine research skills using primary source material

Strengthen basic study skills, including vocabulary acquisition and note-taking

Use technology to complete assignments and projects

Compare and contrast various historical periods and cultural topics

Text and Materials:

United States History, (Holt-McDougal, Copyright 2012)

A free etext version is provided by HRA
Selections from *A Young People's History of the United States* (supplied by teacher)
To Kill a Mockingbird- Graphic Novel (selections provided by teacher)
Primary source materials provided by teacher

Methods of Instruction:

Discussion
Primary source analysis
Lecture
Documentary footage
Essay writing
Written homework
Class presentations
Field trips

Methods of Evaluation:

This Day in History research and presentation
Homework
Quizzes
Tests
Projects
Document Based Essay
Timed Evidence Based Paragraphs
Essay- co-taught with English Department
Research Paper- co-taught with English Department

