

“Freedom is not Free”

- Korean War Memorial

7th Grade Humanities

*Mr. Miller / Room 132 / Team 7A
2004 – 2005*

US HISTORY COURSE OVERVIEW

Seventh grade Social Studies focuses on the development of the United States from its origin through the Civil War and beyond. Assignments are project-based and derive from the essential questions listed below. Throughout the year, we will periodically examine and interpret the statement “freedom is not free” as inscribed on the Korean War Memorial.

Essential Questions

- How has the environment influenced the social, political, economic, and cultural development of people in the Americas?
- How do we approach the study of the U.S. through the lens of history?
- Why is it important to approach the study of history through a variety of perspectives?
- How have themes including colonialism, federalism, expansionism, industrialism, and individualism influenced the development of the U.S.?
- What is the role of a citizen in a representative government?
- How have economic factors influenced the growth of the U.S. and its involvement in world affairs?
- What sacrifices have inhabitants of the U.S. made to earn and maintain freedom? Is the cost of freedom ever too high?

LANGUAGE ARTS COURSE OVERVIEW

Seventh grade Language Arts is a full year course focused on developing reading, writing, and oral communication skills. Students will work on narrative, expository, and persuasive modes of writing. In addition, students will develop comprehension and interpretation skills through analysis of both fiction and non-fiction.

Essential Questions

- How do readers employ knowledge of literary elements to understand purpose and theme in a novel?
- What techniques do writers use to create vivid settings, construct realistic characters, and develop an engaging plot?
- What process does a writer utilize to create great writing?
- What strategies help readers comprehend difficult texts?
- What does it mean to grow as a writer/reader?
- How does the writer incorporate knowledge of the six plus one writing traits (organization, ideas & content, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, conventions, and presentation), Washington State Essential Academic Learning Requirements, and the Seattle Public Schools Academic Standards?

Keep this syllabus safe in your notebook for future reference!

MATERIALS

Required

- Heavy-duty three ring binder, and all other school-wide required materials (planner, pencils, pens, paper, etc.)
- Composition book to use as a reading journal. I recommend buying at least two since some students will fill their composition book faster than other students will.
- A book to read in class everyday for sustained silent reading.

Suggested Materials

- 3.5" floppy disk (formatted for Windows)
- Small, paperback dictionary and/or thesaurus
- Color pens and pencils
- A plastic water bottle (there is a water cooler right outside my door).

Please let me know if you are unable to provide materials or if you have any extra to donate.

WISH LIST

I would also appreciate donations of the following items to help me run my classroom:

- Boxes of tissue (we go through these quickly in a classroom!)
- 8 1/2" x 11" printer paper
- Books (new or used, especially young adult literature)
- Fabric scraps to use for a project later in the year.

Novels/Texts

We will read one novel in language arts each quarter that relates to the time we are studying in U.S. History as follows:

- First Quarter: The Heart of a Chief by Joseph Bruchac (Native Americans)
- Second Quarter: Dragon's Gate by Laurence Yep (Chinese immigration)
- Third Quarter: Nightjohn by Gary Paulson (slavery)
- Fourth Quarter: literature circle centered around immigration

WEEKLY CURRENT EVENTS HOMEWORK FOR U.S. HISTORY

A current event report will be due every Friday in which students must find an article related to an assigned topic. More details about the report format will be handed out in class.

Note!

Since this is a presidential election year, we will be doing an election unit instead of the normal current events reports during first quarter.

WEEKLY ROUTINES FOR LANGUAGE ARTS

Warm Ups

Students will have warm up writing activities each day at the beginning of language arts class. These will be stored in the three-ring binder and collected periodically.

Reading Journal

Each quarter, students are expected to read one book of their own choosing on their own time and during in-class silent reading time. They will record journal entries about the book in a composition book (a format for entries will be explained in class). The journals will be checked periodically in class. Students are required to have their reading journal with them in class each day and are encouraged to have it anytime they are reading their personal reading book.

Weekly Vocabulary List

Each week, students will identify five words from their personal reading books to record in the back of their reading journals. For each word, the students will need to write the source of the word, the definition, part of speech, and compose an original sentence that clearly conveys the meaning of the word.

PLANNERS

Students are required to have their planner (provided by the school) in class with them each day. Time will be provided in class every Monday for students to record all of the assignments that will be due during the week. Parents and guardians are encouraged to check their student's planner at least once a week, preferably Monday nights, to stay informed of upcoming assignments.

GRADING POLICIES

While many projects will integrate work between social studies and language arts, students will receive a separate grade for each course.

Grading Scale

- 100% - 90% = A
- 89% - 80% = B
- 79% - 70% = C
- 69% - 60% = D
- Below 60% is failing

Penalty for Late Work

The highest possible grade a late assignment may receive is a 60% (D-). Extra time is allowed only when students are absent or in case of a family emergency, in which case a note from the parent is required.

CLASSROOM POLICIES

Team 7A Goals for Students

- Be respectful to all students, staff, and the school facility
- Follow all directions (including school rules)
- Be ready to learn each day (have materials ready and come with a positive attitude)
- Be punctual (be on time to class, turn work in on time)
- Use class time effectively

Consequences for Not Meeting Expectations:

1. Verbal warning
2. In-class consequence
3. Student will fill out an Action Plan to improve his/her behavior
4. Parents will be contacted
5. Student will receive an administrative referral

Tardiness

Students must be on time to class each period. This means being in the seat when the bell rings. Parents will be contacted after the third tardy and the fourth will result in an administrative referral.

CLASS WEB SITE

I designed my web site to help keep students and parents informed about classroom assignments and student achievement. The web site can be accessed at:

<http://www.eckstein.seattleschools.org/elmiller/>

Please familiarize yourself with some of the key features, which can be accessed from the menu on the left of the homepage.

On-line Calendar

The calendar is updated weekly with due dates for assignments and reflects what students should be writing in their planners every Monday in class. It is intended to reinforce the study habit of keeping the planner updated.

Grades Posted On-line

Students and their parents/guardians will be able to check their grades on-line. Grades will typically be updated once a week. Access to grades is password protected and students will submit a password to Mr. Miller in class.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Eric Miller
Prep period: 3rd (10:05 – 10:55)

School phone: 252-5010
Email: elmiller@seattleschools.org

Name: _____ Due: _____ Period: _____

Student/Parent Information Sheet

1. Parent/guardian name(s):
2. Home phone #:
3. Work phone #:
4. Email address:
5. May I include your email address in a group distribution list? I may use this periodically to send out announcements and updates on classroom activities.

Yes

No

6. Best time of day, best method to contact you, and who to ask for:

7. Does the student have access to a computer at home? Yes No

8. If yes, do you have an Internet connection? Yes No

Parent signature

Student signature

(Date)

(Date)