

**United States History I
Belchertown High School
Social Studies Department
2009/2010 Academic Year**

Instructor: Mrs. O'Neill

Textbook: Danzer, et al. The Americans. Evanston, IL: McDougal Littell, 2005.

Reader: Douglass, Frederick. Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass. New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1995.

Course Description:

U.S. History I is a year-long examination of the intellectual, social, political and economic origins of the United States (pre-Colombian America - 1877). We will study the causes and consequences of the American Revolution. Students will analyze the basic framework and key concepts of the U.S. Constitution and the American form of democracy. We will study Native American societies, immigration, slavery, abolition and concepts such as popular sovereignty, federalism, separation of powers and individual rights.

We will explore westward expansion, the development of political parties and economic and social change from 1850 to 1861 (e.g., slavery and States' Rights). Students will learn about "sectional conflict" and how it led to the Civil War as well as other tensions in American society. We will conclude with an in-depth treatment of the Civil War, including Reconstruction.

As part of a detailed study of American history, this class will explore the rights, duties and responsibilities of American citizens. Students will discuss the meaning of academic excellence and how they can become productive contributors to society.

Course Overview:

- Three Worlds Meet (Indigenous, European and West African Societies from 20,000 B.C. – 1500)
- The American Colonies Emerge (1521-1681)
- The Colonies Come of Age (1651-1763)
- The War for Independence (1765-1783)
- Shaping a New Nation: The Constitution (1781-1788)
- Launching the New Nation (From Presidents Washington to Madison 1789-1816)
- Nationalism and Sectionalism (1815-1840)
- Reforming American Society (1820-1850)
- Moving West (1825-1847)
- The Union in Peril (Slavery and States' Rights 1850-1861)
- The Civil War (1861-1865)
- Reconstruction (1865-1877)

Methods: Homework will include reading, writing essays and completing assigned handouts. In class we will conduct class discussions about the reading and take notes including new terms and vocabulary. We will take part in interactive classroom activities as well as analyze primary source documents, political cartoons and images. Using historical documents, we will answer document-based questions (DBQs). We will work with maps and timelines, watch videos, prepare projects for presentation and develop our analytical writing skills.

Required Materials: Please bring your textbook with a cover, a pencil or pen (black or dark blue ink only – no colored pens) daily, a spiral notebook and three ring binder with pockets for handouts. Your spiral notebook will be for taking class notes, interactive classroom activities, in-class assignments and for homework assignments. If you fill a notebook you will need another, so plan accordingly.

Grading: Quizzes and Exams*: 70%
Homework: 20%
Class Participation/Class Work: 10% **Total: 100%**

*Exams may include papers, presentations and alternative assessments.

Extra Credit: By completing a written project you may earn an additional five points (5%) to the term (quarterly) grade. This is optional. Please seek advance approval from me for topic and grading rubric. Limit one project per semester.

Class Rules: Students will respect all people, including themselves, and all property, including their own, at all times. All backpacks and purses will be stored under your chair while in class. Cell phones and electronic devices will be stored out of sight during class. Homework will not be accepted late unless an excused absence from class is presented. Homework assignments and class work will be graded as follows:

5 points = 100%	All questions answered, thoroughly and accurately
4 points = 80%	All questions answered, less detail
3 points = 60%	Incomplete, most questions answered
2 points = 40%	Incomplete, some questions answered
1 point = 20%	Incomplete, a few questions answered

Extra Help: I am available to give extra help if needed. Please see me before school, during my free period (E), during my directed study hall (A), or after school by appointment.