

Advanced Placement U.S. History Summer 2019 Coursework

AP U.S. History is a course that requires an in-depth look at more than 500 years of history in a roughly eight month time period. Therefore we have no choice but to dive right into content from the very beginning of the school year. In order to assist this process, it is necessary for the students to complete summer work. This work not only begins the required content for the class, but serves as your introduction to the class and your teacher. Please take this seriously this summer as the grades you receive for this work are opportunities to begin the year in a very positive manner. The *April 1865: The Month that Saved America* assignment will be the second day of class in August. We will be using this book for content but also for developing skills in the reading of higher-level non-fiction.

Assignment 1: Acquire/purchase

April 1865: The Month that Saved America by Jay Winik (Harper Collins, 2010)

This book focuses on what historian Jay Winik calls one of the most important months in American history. It is important that you read for understanding so that you can participate in discussions of the importance of this period of time in the chronology of American history.

Read: You are responsible for the entire book. This is a more complex read than many of you have had before and part of the first quarter is developing skills in reading non-fiction. You should read carefully for understanding and I encourage you to take notes about events, people and the possibilities of how the end of the Civil War and transition to peace could have been much different. You can expect a quiz/test about the book on the second day of class and you will be able to use any notes that YOU have prepared on the quiz. During the first few weeks of the quarter, all students will be developing a complete C-E-W essay that will be based upon the book, so a thorough and complete reading will be necessary in order to successfully write this assignment.

Additionally, as you read you should develop at least five (5) broad thinking/discussion questions from the reading that will be submitted for teacher review on the second day of class. For example,

Is history just repeating itself? People still argue over the same ideas and things from hundreds of year ago.

How do leaders North and South differ in their views of their opponents?

Please be sure that your questions reflect the entire book, not only the earliest sections. A Socratic seminar will be scheduled during the 1st grading period which will require participation from all students. If you are unfamiliar with the Socratic Method, please research on the internet the types of questions that support meaningful discussions.

BE SURE TO BEGIN ASSIGNMENT 2 ON THE REVERSE OF THIS PAGE!

Assignment 2:

In addition, during the third and fourth quarter of the school year, students will be reading a book which will begin to serve as both enrichment of content and the beginning of review for the AP exam in May. Therefore, you will need to acquire/purchase *American Colonies: The Settling of North America* by Alan Taylor (Penguin Books, 2001). I suggest that you find a current student of this class who will no doubt be happy to give you this book or sell it to you for a very cheap price.

I encourage you to avoid procrastination and to “attack” these assignments earlier in the summer. Late August arrives earlier than you might expect and you do not want to be scrambling and the end of the summer!

If you have questions about this assignment, please feel free to email me at pchidester@wscloud.org. I will respond as quickly as possible but do not be surprised if it takes a day or two as I will be enjoying the summer.