US History (8th Grade) Syllabus

*Instructor:*  Zachary Johnson

*Contact Information:* (585) 775-7044

*Teacher website (*[*http://www.rcsdk12.org/Domain/5250*](http://www.rcsdk12.org/Domain/5250) *- after accessing the school page, simply click on “TEACHERS” and find the “Js”)*

 zachary.johnson@rcsdk12.org

*Parent Connect – an excellent way to get up-to-date information regarding student performance in class (*[*https://parentconnect.rcsdk12.org/Login.asp*](https://parentconnect.rcsdk12.org/Login.asp)*)*

**Texts**:

 *The American Journey* (Main Text)

*History Alive! The United States* (Copies made for Class/(potential) Online Access)

*Various Outside Texts will be provided*

**Course Overview**:

 This class will pick-up where our students stopped last year in 7th grade US History – approximately Reconstruction and the beginning of the Gilded Age (late 1800s) and move through in a chronological fashion to the modern era.

The course will be broken up into 6 major units of study, with a final review unit. Within each unit students will be asked to complete a variety of tasks that will hopefully prove engaging, challenging, and enriching. There will also be significant emphasis placed on high school preparedness – making sure that each student is competent in the course of study, but also in a variety of skills that will be the foundation for future success at the high school level.

In order to successfully complete the course students must be active participants both inside and outside of the classroom. Students will encounter group projects, map work, research assignments, independent tasks, teacher led activities, etc. that will require students to push themselves and their classmates over the course of this year.

Finally, as an educator I strive to make *US History* something more approachable, more tangible than students often assume it is – with that in mind there will be an oral history project that will comprise a portion of their final grade – but more information on that in the future!

**Classroom Expectations**:

 Simple as far as I’m concerned …

* For Yourself: Be on time, be prepared, make sure your homework is completed and handed in
* For Each Other: use appropriate and professional in class, interacting with others – including Mr. J, **make sure your cell phones are away**
* For the Room: no writing on desks, walls, class materials, no food in class

As far as dealing with any issues that arise, I will begin with a verbal warning, for the second issue I will involve parents with a phone call home. If issues are not corrected a reasonable consequence (lunch detention or after-school detention) will be assigned, if issues persist administration will be brought into the situation.

It is also important to note that, in accordance with SOTA policy, the following items will be made a primary focus:

* **Cell phones and all Electronics are prohibited in ALL classrooms.**

(To include but not limited to: cell phones, ear buds, headphones, iPODS.)

* **The Dress code will be strictly enforced.**

To include but not limited to:  Hats, hoodies and bandanas as well as what is prescribed by the school handbook and posters.

* **When tardy to class, students must complete tardy book**

If this is a persistent issue students will serve graduating consequences (see above).

**Grading:**

 Students’ grades will be comprised of a variety of assignments ranging from small, daily, relatively informal assignments to larger, more conventional tests/quizzes/essays. Students will also be expected to complete projects/presentations that will play a significant role in their class grade. A general breakdown follows:

 *Class Participation* *and Daily Classwork* – 40% of course grade

*Test/Quizzes* – 25% of course grade (**special note**: *fourth marking period will include a* ***post-assessment*** *that will account for an additional 10% of their grade).*

 *Projects/Presentations –* 20% of course grade

 *Homework –* 15% of course grade

**Make-Up Work:**

 I will follow district policy closely in regards to late work – you will have **one school day** after an assignment is due to submit any late work, if it goes beyond the one day you will receive *NO CREDIT* for the assignment – do not put yourself in that position!

 Of course there are extenuating circumstances that may arise, simply contact me and we will find a suitable solution.

**Course Summary:**

The course will be broken into the following units; within each unit there will be vocabulary, various assignments, a project of some sort, a multiple choice test, and an accompanying essay (that’s a lot – but get used to it!).

**VI. *How can I make change happen? –* The Progressive Era**

* When is change necessary?
* How does change happen?
* How have individuals led movements for change?
* How have governments instituted changes?
* What are the characteristics of a successful movement for change?
* How can we tell if *change* is successful?

**VII. *How do I use power and authority?* – The Rise of American Power**

* Is it ever ok to take control of another person, community, or nation?
* Should the United States have entered World War I?
* How did the war affect Americans at home?
* How did technology impact World War I?

**VIII. *What hardships have I faced and how have I recovered? –* The Impact of War, Prosperity, and the Great Depression**

* What important social changes took place after World War I?
* How were the civil liberties limited in post World War I America?
* In what ways was the boom of the 1920s *false prosperity?*
* How did the Great Depression impact various groups of people?
* How did the US government respond to the Great Depression?

**IX. *Is it possible to stay neutral when others are in conflict?* – World War II to the Cold War**

* Is it possible to remain neutral in an interdependent world?
* Is true peace possible after a major conflict?
* How were America and the world different after the events of World War II?

**X. *What do we learn from our relationships, good and bad, with others? –* Times of Change: Postwar United States**

* Is it fair to impose ones beliefs on others?
* How did international events and government actions shape American society?
* How do media influence what we do and think?
* How did American society change during the 1950s and 1960s?
* How has the role of the federal government changed after World War II?
* What problems from postwar America have persisted in the United States?

**XI. *How can I make my place in America today? –* Modern America**

* What is the appropriate role of the government in the lives of American citizens?
* How do people share their beliefs, values, and opinions with others?
* How do media impact our beliefs and values and the information we interact with?
* How is public policy created and put into effect?
* How have environmental and population changes affected America?

**Materials**:

* Three Ring Binder/Folder
* Dividers
* Loose Leaf Paper/Hole-Punched Notebooks
* Index Cards (will be needed throughout the year)
* PENS AND PENCILS!!!!!!!
* Highlighters

In an effort to ensure that teachers, students, and parents begin the year on the same page please be sure to sign below. And again, if there are any questions or concerns as we move forward please be sure to contact me either via phone or email. Also, there will be three *parent-teacher conferences* this year: October 15, January 13, and March 3 – each from 6:30-8:30 pm, which would be another great opportunity to discuss your student’s progress.

 Thank-you,

Zachary Johnson

*Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

*Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

*Parent Contact Information:*

 *(phone number)*

 *(email)*