

AP United States History Summer Assignment 2018-2019

(Periods 1 & 2)

“History is not something that is simply brought out of the archives, dusted off, and displayed as ‘the way things really were.’ It is a painstaking construction, held together only with the help of assumptions, hypotheses, and inferences.”

~James West Davidson & Mark Hamilton Lytle, *After The Fact: The Art of Historical Detection*

Remember the Following:

- You’re taking this course because you love history, you enjoy a challenge, you want college credit, you heard the instructor is witty and intelligent, etc.
- This course is about a JOURNEY, not the destination. Or, it’s a marathon, not a sprint.
- Although the pace is fast and the workload appears daunting, assignments and assessments are predictable and manageable if you keep up with the work.
- Because we have so much to cover, the summer assignment is an opportunity for you to get your brain thinking like a historian.

Expectations:

I consider this course to be student-centered. It is your responsibility to ensure your success in the class. My role is to be the facilitator of the learning.

Much of the work is not individually graded, but that doesn’t mean you don’t have to do it. The purpose of homework, including the summer assignment, is to reinforce classroom activities and to fill in knowledge gaps. Homework in AP, while copious at times, is designed to impart the knowledge necessary to take the AP exam and to reinforce the skills needed to pass the exam. Doing all your work does not guarantee you an “A”, just like in college. You not only have to do the work, but you need to understand the material and retain it as well! You need to take ownership of your own learning and studying.

The course resembles what is seen in university classrooms. You are provided a college-level textbook and supplemental readings which need to be completed before class. Grades rely on written work, quizzes, tests, and your notebook. In-class work emphasizes synthesis, analysis, and application of information.

Summer Assignment:

Part I – Read the article “1491” by Charles C. Mann from *The Atlantic*. The article describes how vastly populous and sophisticated the Western Hemisphere was prior to Columbus’s arrival. As you read, consider the arguments for a larger native population, the complexity and diversity of cultures, and the ways and implications of native interactions with the environment. How does Mann construct his arguments, and why is this research important? The article can be found online at <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2002/03/1491/302445/> or click the link on Mr. Olson’s webpage.

Part II – After reading the article, please write a response to ONE of the following prompts:

- A. Analyze the validity of Mann’s arguments that pre-Columbian populations were much larger than previous estimates. Are some causes more valid than others?
- B. Compare and contrast the complexity and diversity of pre-Columbian cultures and the European cultures. How were they similar and different?
- C. Evaluate the ways the environment changed and/or stayed the same due to Native American interaction and exploitation before and after European contact. How did the arrival of Europeans affect native impact on the landscape?

Start with engaging hook and a thesis statement of your argument. Give a brief summary of the article. Support your arguments with specific historical examples and textual evidence. You are welcome to use up to three additional sources if needed; please cite them and include a citation page if you do.

Your response should be legibly hand-written on the lined paper. The response should be no longer than two pages. You should write in 3rd person, using a formal, academic style of writing. Do not use slang, abbreviations, or an overly dramatic or fluffy narrative. Your response should be free of grammar, punctuation, and spelling errors.

Total Value: 24 points

Summer Suggestions:

Throughout the year, you will be reading *America’s History* 8th Edition by Henretta, Hinderaker, Edwards, and Self along with the following texts:

The Cartoon History of the United States by Larry Gonick

AND

A People’s History of the United States by Howard Zinn

OR

A Patriot’s History of the United States by Larry Schweikart and Michael Allen

You are welcome to start familiarizing yourself with those texts.

You may also want to explore the following YouTube series about the textbook:

- Adam Norris APUSH Review (Be sure to find the 8th Edition in the playlist)
- Jocz Productions History Videos (has great reviews of the time periods)
- Crash Course US History (doesn’t follow the book, but is a fun time!)

The historical content is your responsibility; start preparing now!