



Course No.

Course Title: Grade 8 – Introduction to United States History

Course Description The eighth grade curriculum is designed to provide students with an in-depth understanding of the major events, people, and movements that have shaped American history commencing with European exploration, seventeenth century colonial settlements, the American Revolution and will culminate with the significant events and people that have shaped the development of the United States Constitution and the new national government. The incorporation of critical thinking skills, research with primary source documents, and utilization of project-based learning will be required in this course. Relevant United States geography will be correlated with the historical events that have encompassed the period from European exploration through the Constitutional era. This course will provide students the necessary foundation to meet the requirements of the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and to continue their studies of United States History at the high school level.

Framework Strand/ Standard	Learner Outcomes	Recommended Teaching Strategies	Recommended Assessments	Cross Curriculum Connections	Resources/Materials
UNIT I: The Age of Exploration and Colonization					
WHI.12, 13, 14 WHI.29, 30, 31	The students will explain how the Reformation in Europe increased rivalry among European nations to establish colonies in the Americas.	Cause & Effect map showing the impact of the Reformation on colonial settlement.	Advantages and disadvantages of European nations establishing colonies in the Americas.	Science: Invention and effects of the printing press.	<u>TEXT</u> : <i>Creating America</i> (Holt-McDougall)
WHI.33, 34, 35	Students will explain how the Scientific Revolution and the Enlightenment in Europe led to early exploration and democratic principles in America.	Compare views & ideas of the European population prior to & after the Enlightenment and its effects on the start of exploration and new ideas of government.	Develop cause and effect charts to detail how events in Europe led to a race and competition for colonization in the American colonies.		<u>WEBSITE</u> : www.classzone.com (accompanies textbook)
WHI.32	The students will be able to describe how the British naval defeat of the Spanish Armada affected the colonization of the Americas.	Cause and effect map on the defeat of the Spanish Armada	<u>Writing Activity</u> : Explain how history would have been different if Spain had succeeded.	<u>ELA/Geography</u> : Explorer's Log (primary source) simulation activity.	
Concepts & Skills (Grades 8-12) See appendix	The students will analyze the early attempts of the British at colonization and their reasons for failure, as well as the reasons for settlement, hardships, and eventual successes of Jamestown and Plymouth.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Use Web diagram to visually identify the factors that caused some colonies to fail. Examine the similarities & differences between 	<u>Writing Activity</u> : Analyze the reasons for the successes and failures of early English colonies (Roanoke, Jamestown, and Plymouth).	<u>Science</u> : Gathering and analyzing disease statistics.	



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		Jamestown & Plymouth 3. Compare and contrast Puritans and Pilgrims.			
Concepts & Skills (Grades 8-12) See appendix	The students will be able to compare and contrast the founding of each of the 13 colonies as well as the economic and social differences of the New England, Middle and Southern Colonies.	Concept Map to show the separate features of each colonial region.	Develop/create travel brochure/poster on select region focusing on climate, people, economic development & resources.		
Concepts & Skills (Grades 8-12) See appendix	The students will analyze and explain the impact that political documents such as the Magna Carta and the Mayflower Compact have had on Anglo-American political heritage.	1. Analyze the development of self-rule and self-government. 2. Analyze primary source document: <i>Mayflower Compact</i>			<u>Primary Source:</u> <i>Mayflower Compact</i>
Unit II: The American Revolution					
USI.1	The students will analyze the impact on the colonies of the French and Indian War, including how the war led to an overhaul of British imperial policy from 1763-1775.	1. Cause and effect map of the French and Indian War. 2. Analyze primary source document: <i>Iroquois Confederation of Nations</i> .	Writing Activity: Explain the rights of English people as stated in the <i>Magna Carta</i> .		<u>Primary Source:</u> <i>Iroquois Confederation of Nations</i> <u>View:</u> <i>Last of the Mohicans</i>
USI. 1 USI. 4 USI. 5	The students will describe the key events that pushed the American colonists towards rebellion and their strategies of resistance against British colonial policies.	Timeline – series of events 1765-1781 Web diagram Analyze primary source material: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Common Sense</i> • John & Abigail Adams 	Writing Activity: Briefly explain the events that led to the growing tension between Britain and the colonists.		<u>View:</u> <i>John Adams, Part I</i> <u>Primary Source:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Common Sense</i> (Thomas Paine) • <i>Letters between Abigail & John Adams</i>



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USI. 2 USI. 3 USI.6	The students will explain and analyze the basic ideals of government, as expressed by Thomas Jefferson in the Declaration of Independence.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze Primary Source: Declaration of Independence (break into 5 parts) Introduce Articles of Confederation to provide background knowledge to move forward. 	Debate: Students will take a stand on the debate over independence. Those <i>for</i> will describe the core ideas of the Declaration, those <i>against</i> will describe the consequences for severing ties with Great Britain.	Science: Effects of smallpox	Primary Source: <i>Declaration of Independence</i> Declaration of Independence <i>The Words that Made America</i> (Sam Fink – Scholastic) <i>View: John Adams, Parts 2 and 3</i>
USI. 4	The students will compare and contrast the advantages and disadvantages of the Americans and the British at the start of the Revolutionary War.	Compare and contrast advantages and disadvantages of the Americans and British at the start of the war.	Writing Activity: Explain the difficulties faced by Americans at the start of the Revolution.	ELA: Using Paine’s <i>American Crisis</i> , students will write an essay to explain the <i>summer soldier</i> and <i>sunshine patriot</i> .	Primary Source: <i>American Crisis</i> (Thomas Paine)
USI. 4	The students will analyze and understand the problems that faced the Continental Army and the crucial role of George Washington’s strategy and leadership.	Students will generate a list of difficulties faced by George Washington and the Continental Army.	Essay: Students pretend to be George Washington and write a letter to Congress requesting much needed supplies.	Science: Effects of lack of hygiene, diseases, frostbite within the Continental Army.	View: <i>The Crossing</i>
USI. 4	The students will understand the significance of the Battles of Saratoga and Yorktown and be able to list the factors that brought about the British defeat in the American Revolution.	Cause and effect map on the Battle of Saratoga. Web Diagram: Why the Americans Won!	Students write a newspaper article about the events that occurred at Saratoga and Yorktown.	Math: Calculating daily cost of feeding one soldier.	
Unit III: The Constitutional Era					
USI. 6	The students will analyze and explain the inherent weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation and the necessity for a new, stronger government under the Constitution.	Cause and effect map demonstrating the weakness of the Articles of Confederation.	Essay: Students will describe the crucial events of Shay’s Rebellion and how they led to the Constitutional Convention.		



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			Categorize : States v. National government		
USI. 6	The students will describe the precedents that were established by the Land ordinance of 1785 and the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 under the Articles of Confederation.	Students will make a chart listing the key points of the Land Ordinance of 1785 and the Northwest Ordinance of 1787.	Writing Activity: Describe the issues that affected the Western territories between 1785-1787 and explain how these issues were settled through the Land Ordinance and Northwest Ordinance.	Math: Finding the total square miles of an area of land.	
USI.7	The students will understand the conflicts that occurred within the Constitutional Convention and the resulting compromises that shaped the Constitution.	Graphic Organizer: analyze the points of view of New Jersey Plan, Virginia Plan, as well as the Great Compromise.	Debate the issues that surrounded the Great Compromise		Primary Source: U.S. Constitution
USI.8	The students will be able to compare and contrast the views of the Federalists and the Anti-Federalists on the issue of governmental power, as represented by Jefferson and Hamilton.	Compare and contrast the views of the Federalists and the Anti-Federalists over ratifying the Constitution.	Analyze the points of view of the Federalists and Anti-Federalists remembering the main issue was the ratification of the Constitution.		Primary Source: Federalist Papers 10 and 51
USI.9	The students will understand the importance of the Bill of Rights (1791) as well as the significance of guaranteed personal liberties.	Compare & contrast the English Bill of Rights in the Magna Carta to the US Bill of Rights. Analyze the Bill of Rights with a focus on the 5 basic freedoms & rights of the accused. Analyze significant amendments to the Constitution.	Students restate amendments in their own words, identifying ways in which each affects people's lives.		Bill of Rights Institute website Primary Sources: Bill of Rights Amendments 11-27 Magna Carta (English Bill of Rights)



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Appendix: Concepts and Skills Grades 8-12 (Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks)

History and Geography

1. Apply the skills of pre-kindergarten through grade seven.
2. Identify multiple ways to express time relationships and dates (for example, *1066 AD is the same as 1066 CE, and both refer to a date in the eleventh or 11th century, which is the same as the 1000s*). Identify countries that use a different calendar from the one used in the U.S. and explain the basis for the difference. (H)
3. Interpret and construct timelines that show how events and eras in various parts of the world are related to one another. (H)
4. Interpret and construct charts and graphs that show quantitative information. (H, C, G, E)
5. Explain how a cause and effect relationship is different from a sequence or correlation of events. (H, C, E)
6. Distinguish between long-term and short-term cause and effect relationships. (H, G, C, E)
7. Show connections, causal and otherwise, between particular historical events and ideas and larger social, economic, and political trends and developments. (H, G, C, E)
8. Interpret the past within its own historical context rather than in terms of present-day norms and values. (H, E, C)
9. Distinguish intended from unintended consequences. (H, E, C)
10. Distinguish historical fact from opinion. (H, E, C)
11. Using historical maps, locate the boundaries of the major empires of world history at the height of their powers. (H, G)

Civics and Government

12. Define and use correctly the following words and terms: *Magna Carta, parliament, habeas corpus, monarchy, and absolutism*. (C)

General Economics Skills

13. Define and use correctly *mercantilism, feudalism, economic growth, and entrepreneur*. (E)
14. Explain how people or communities examine and weigh the benefits of each alternative when making a choice and that opportunity costs are those benefits that are given up once one alternative is chosen. (E)
15. Explain how financial markets, such as the stock market, channel funds from savers to investors. (E)
16. Define and use correctly *gross domestic product, economic growth, recession, depression, unemployment, inflation, and deflation*. (E)
17. Explain how opportunity costs and tradeoffs can be evaluated through an analysis of marginal costs and benefits. (E)
18. Explain how competition among sellers lowers costs and prices, and encourages producers to produce more. (E)
19. Describe the role of buyers and sellers in determining the equilibrium price, and use supply and demand to explain and predict changes in quantity and price. (E)
20. Describe how the earnings of workers are affected by the market value of the product produced and worker skills. (E)
21. Identify the causes of inflation and explain who benefits from inflation and who suffers from inflation. (E)



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22. Define and distinguish between *absolute* and *comparative advantage*, and explain how most trade occurs because of comparative advantage in the production of a particular good or service. (E)

23. Explain how changes in exchange rates affect balance of trade and the purchasing power of people in the United States and other countries. (E)

24. Differentiate between fiscal and monetary policy. (E)

U.S. Economics Skills

25. Explain the basic economic functions of the government in the economy of the United States. (E)

26. Examine the development of the banking system in the United States, and describe the organization and functions of the Federal Reserve System. (E)

27. Identify and describe laws and regulations adopted in the United States to promote economic competition. (E, H)

28. Analyze how federal tax and spending policies affect the national budget and the national debt. (E)