

Seventh Grade History

Overview for Parents

Teacher: Dr. Freeberg

Content and Goals

In the seventh-grade year, students explore American and world history from the final decades of the Nineteenth century through the rise of totalitarianism in Europe and the European phase of World War II. Through a study of these historical periods, students will be given opportunity to explore the broad, interlocking themes of power, wealth, technology, beliefs, and the environment and to reflect on weighty questions about human nature, culture, and social systems. They will also find ample opportunity to develop and hone a variety of skills, including critical thinking, active, critical listening and reading, note taking, writing across a variety of genres, and communicating orally in small and large group discussions, debates, and formal presentations. Through a series of several oral presentations, students will develop teaching skills, learn through teaching, and contribute significantly to the learning experience of the class.

Part I: America Becomes a World Power

- The post-Civil War expansion and success of industrial capitalism (including the monopolies created by Rockefeller, Carnegie, Morgan, and Vanderbilt)
- The struggle of immigrants to find their place in America
- The struggle of workers to have a say in their destiny in the industrial economy, and the rise of organized labor (the “Knights of Labor,” Samuel Gompers and the American Federation of Labor, the IWW, etc.)
- The response of the federal government to the challenges of the times
- The goals and achievements of reformers in the Progressive Era, including Jane Adams and the settlement house movement, John Muir, Teddy Roosevelt, and the conservation movement, Booker T. Washington, W. E. B. Dubois, Ida B. Wells and the struggle to achieve racial equality, and the “muckraker” journalism of Ida Tarbell, Jacob Riis, and Upton Sinclair
- The development of a “blue water” navy and the advent of U.S. overseas possessions — annexation of Hawaii, Spanish-American War’s windfall acquisitions of Cuba, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines, and their effects on U.S. politics
- The rise of anti-imperialism, and its contrast with Teddy Roosevelt’s “big stick” diplomacy and his support for a strong U.S. profile around the globe.



Part II: *World War I*

- Background causes — alliances, militarism, nationalism, and colonial rivalry among the great or emerging powers of Europe
- Immediate causes — assassination of archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo, Austria's ultimatum to Serbia, mobilization by Austria, Russia, and Germany
- Military strategies, trench warfare, and developments in military technology
- Stalemate on the Western Front, unrestricted submarine warfare by Germany
- U.S. entry into the war — Lusitania, Zimmerman Telegram, "war to end all wars"
- Russian Revolution, 1917 — abdication of Czar Nicholas, provisional government, Lenin and communism, Bolshevik successes, civil war, and the Soviet Union
- Armistice, 11/11/18; Versailles Treaty — reparations, Wilson's "Fourteen Points " and "peace without victory," the League of Nations and "collective security"

Part III: *America in the Twenties*

- The presidencies of Warren Harding and Calvin Coolidge
- Prohibition
- Women's suffrage: the 19th Amendment
- Social Change ("flappers," sports, popular heroes, and fads)
- The arts (jazz, literature of the "Lost Generation" and the Harlem Renaissance)
- Technological advances (Henry Ford's assembly line production, residential electrification, radio, movies, Charles Lindbergh and aviation)

Part IV: *America in the Thirties*

- Wall Street stock market crash of '29, "Black Tuesday"
- The presidency of Herbert Hoover
- The Great Depression (Bonus Army, "Hoovervilles," the Dust Bowl)
- The presidency of Franklin Delano Roosevelt
- Eleanor Roosevelt
- The New Deal (new social welfare programs, work programs, regulatory agencies)
- The arts in the 1930s: music, film, dance, visual arts



Expectations for Students

Students should arrive on time with textbook, history binder, and writing utensils. They should complete all homework assignments in a thoughtful and timely manner. In class students are expected to make corrections and enhancements to written answers to homework questions, to take careful notes when asked to do so, to listen attentively and contribute meaningfully during class presentations and discussions, to work productively in small groups, and to be well prepared for assigned presentations.

Homework Requirements

There are three history blocks per week, and there will usually be a reading lesson assigned for homework in preparation for each class. This is a writing-intensive course, and reading assignments will often be accompanied by required written summaries or reflection and evaluation. These will often be provided before unit tests and both class time and homework time will be allotted for test preparation. Most reading assignments will be drawn from the textbook, but occasionally students will also be assigned to read and respond to primary source documents which will be handed out in class. Along with reading questions and test preparation, history homework will occasionally involve short writing assignments or preparation for oral class presentations.

Contacting the Teacher

bruce.freeberg@crossroadsacademy.org

95 Dartmouth College Highway, Lyme, NH 03768 www.crossroadsacademy.org • 603.795.3111

