

Course: Honors History/ American Civilization

Theme: *Communication in History- The Key to Understanding*

Prerequisites: Teacher/counselor recommendation

Length of course: one year

Credits: five units per semester

Grade Level: 9th

Text: Alistair Cooke, *America*

supplementary readings from time to time

Novels may be assigned during the course of the year

Entrance and attendance in Monterey County History Day is required for this class

Course Description:

American Civilization is one segment of a two-year honors program designed for advanced, college bound freshmen. Areas that will be covered will include history, literature, philosophy, art and sociology. Emphasis will be on critical thinking and writing skills and this course can be considered a stepping-stone for further honors and Advanced Placement classes offered to upper classmen. This course will be tied to the ninth grade Honors English class and some lessons will be shared.

Course Objectives:

Each student will develop high-level skills in the areas of reading, writing, listening, classifying, comparing, surveying, recalling, organizing, speaking, and leadership as they relate to the course content. We will work on nurturing critical thinking skills as related to identification, analysis, interpretation, and application of information.

Course Requirements and Student Activities:

1. All students must be on time and ready to work each day.
2. All assignments must be completed in ink (blue or black only) or typed (double spaced). Papers completed in pencil or colored ink must be redone for minimum credit. **All essay work outside of class must be typed.**
3. All work must contain the student's full name, date, period and assignment title.
4. Students must keep a separate (three ring) notebook for American Civilization. This will be collected on a random basis throughout the year and on the day of the final. Notebooks will be divided into the following sections: Text homework/ notes/ handouts and worksheets/ Essays, Tests, History Day.
5. Written assignments will be given on textbook and supplemental readings and on class discussions. Students are expected to attempt each section of the assignment. **In addition to the textbook you will need to have access to a dictionary as well as an encyclopedia for some homework assignments.**
6. Lecture/ discussion will be a major part of class presentations. **Participation by students is expected and graded.**

7. Short papers, oral reports and group work will be assigned.
8. Examinations will be varied: essay and short answer mixed with true/false, matching, multiple choice and chronological order.
9. Map work will be given throughout the year.
10. Students will complete a **required** History Day project in the **first semester** on the topic *Communication in History: The Key to Understanding*.. Some class time will be given to this project but students will need to complete extensive research on their own. Class due dates will be given out later. A presentation of the *How To's* of history day will be given in class by the third week of school. Topics will be chosen by the student, with teacher approval. Topics must deal with American history.

NOTE: Students will be entered in the County History Day competition and **are required** to be available on February 25, 2005 between 4-8 p.m. to set up projects in the MPC gym. Students must also appear on February 26, 2005 for a ten-minute judging interview at MPC or to present their media or performance work. Times will be announced the week before. **PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW SO THERE WILL BE NO CONFLICTS.** The Sunday award ceremony is optional but starts at 2:00 p.m.

Attendance and tardies:

The attendance and tardy policies of P.G. High will be followed. Cutting class is not tolerated and I will lower a student's quarter grade by one for each truancy. Tardies are disruptive to the class and students who are unable to arrive on time and ready to work will receive after school detention. Continued tardies can result in removal from class. (see student/parent handbook). Continual absences will prevent students from receiving a high participation grade. Students with excused absences will be expected to make up work in a timely fashion. **Please be aware class discussions and some assignments cannot be made up.**

Evaluation and Grading Policy:

Grades will be based on a point/percent basis for all assignments. Some assignments will receive more than one grade (unit tests for example). Grades will be based on content knowledge, mechanics and organization when possible. (See *Standards* page for specifics)

A weekly participation grade will also be given for each student. Participation in discussions and class activities is important and students who do not contribute orally to the class will notice lower quarter and semester grades.

Students have a right to know where they stand in the class during each grading period. Students wishing their grade should submit a piece of paper (standard size) to the instructor containing the proper heading and stating that a grade check is being requested. Completed grades will be returned within the next two class periods. Grade checks should be limited to one every two weeks unless there are special circumstances that require immediate attention.

Comments:

All students are expected to keep up with class work and be aware of when assignments are due. Absent students should check with their classmates regarding any missed days.

If your absence is not due to illness I expect you to turn work in ahead of time or to place it in my mailbox in the front office on the day it is due. If you are ill you should be prepared to turn in the late work on the day you return to school. Due to block scheduling this class meets three days a week, if you are absent on an A or C day but here on the B day I expect your work to be turned in then. If you miss class on Tuesday through Friday please be aware that you are missing the equivalent of two classroom periods. Long-term projects are expected on due dates regardless of student's attendance that day. (THIS INCLUDES HISTORY DAY)

In recent years computers, especially printers, have caused problems for some students regarding due dates. All work is due on the due date! If your computer fails you, you must submit handwritten work in ink. Please be aware that there are computers available for use on campus in the library and labs.

If you need additional help please make an appointment to see me after school. I am also available during lunch on most days. I am not available during break. Missed exams are to be made up within twenty-four hours when possible. Make ups will occur **outside of class time.**

Please return this signed course description tomorrow. At that time you will be given another copy to place in the front of your notebook. Make sure you read the *Forms and Literary Standards* sheet before signing

L. Griffiths

office phone # 646-6619 ext. 300

parent signature student signature

PLEASE PRINT STUDENT'S NAME: _____ PERIOD: _____