

Mr. Rippey

Website – www.rippy-sphs.info

U.S. History II is a broad coverage of historical issues from the colonial era to at least 1980, but will focus mostly on the period from 1870 on. It will not attempt to cover every detail of US History in this period. It will address major themes, trends, and consequential periods and events in US History. It is good preparation for college style classes including occasional lecture format and independent work. Most important, it is specifically designed to help you gain the skills necessary to do well in the IB History program junior and senior years: critical analysis, the ability to understand and interpret sources, the ability to understand and synthesize large amounts of information, and the ability to argue a position using that historical evidence. It will also make a special effort to connect what was happening in the US to the rest of the world.

Texts: - *The Americans* by Danzer, et al.

- Essays and documents on my website will be used regularly.

Rules of the Classroom:

- 1) **No food or beverages allowed, or destruction of room/furniture**
- 2) **No speaking while others are speaking (no cursing)**
- 3) **No radios, ipods, cell phones, hats, or other items not allowed in school (I WILL TAKE THEM)**
- 4) **No lateness**

- Detentions will be assigned after 2nd lateness (specified detention day) and for other consistent rule infractions.
- If I take an electronic device once, I will hold it for the day.
- **If I take an electronic device a second time, I hold it until the end of the week (or over the weekend) and call your parents.**

General/Academic Information:

- Course requirements include completing homework, class participation (from which you learn), in-class group activities, tests, a variety of position papers on specific issues, a portfolio, and written analyses of 2 historical novels.
- IGPRO!
- **Any work or tests missed can be handed in or made up late within 1 week** of the test date or due date for the assignment. Written excuses for missed assignments is necessary to make up any work. A mandatory **loss of 10 points** (1 letter grade) will occur without a written excuse.
- On a test, scores from 90 - 100 are an A; 89-80 a B; 79-70 a C, etc. (I give +'s and -'s)
- 64% is passing. 63% is an F.

ANALYSIS OF AN HISTORICAL NOVEL

An analysis of an historical novel **is not a book report**. It is a paper identifying, describing, and analyzing the historical situations and events surrounding the character or characters in that novel. You may mention any literary techniques the author uses to get their points across, but **these techniques should not be the focus of your paper**.

- 1) It should include a **brief**, general description of the plot and setting of the book.
- 2) It should focus more specifically on what the novel tells you about attitudes, race, work, industry, cities, rural areas, society, politics, the economy, and life in general during that period. Which of these topics you discuss will depend in part on which novels you choose to read. You may choose to show the effects of immigration, industry, politics, and the economy on the lives of the characters. You may choose to focus on the attitudes or opinions of the characters themselves, and how they are affected by their circumstances. Or, you may choose simply to focus on their everyday lives - what they did to get through each day. What was their life like according to the author? *Connect these parts of the book to the history that we learned in our class! Does the author describe the history accurately?*
- 3) You should also identify and explain the author's voice in the work. What is his or her attitude or viewpoint? Are they protesting something in society, or are they justifying the status-quo? What are their views on race, racism, industrialism, the economy, poverty, etc.? Do they do an effective job of describing life during that era?
- 4) You should use evidence and quotes from the book to explain your points and to support your thesis. All quotes, as well as ideas or themes that you are explaining, must be cited with the page number in parentheses at the end of the sentence or paragraph using them. You **may not** use any outside sources besides your text book for historical background. Any outside sources (your textbook) should also be cited.

Your analysis should be 4-6 pages long. It should not be longer - part of writing with set limits means learning to choose to focus on specific themes or issues. Generally, you will need at least 4 pages to cover the historical themes.

You will read and analyze 1 novel this year. The novels you may choose from are these:

Out of this Furnace, by Thomas Bell

The Octopus, by Frank Norris

The Breadgivers, by Anzia Yezierska

Uncle Tom's Children by Richard Wright

America is in the Heart, by Carlos Bulozan

The Grapes of Wrath, by John Steinbeck

In Dubious Battle, by John Steinbeck

Third Ward Newark – Curtis Lucas

Native Son, by Richard Wright

No-No Boy by John Okada

Down These Mean Streets, by Piri Thomas

The Quiet American, by Graham Green

Goodbye Columbus, by Philip Roth

The Poisonwood Bible, by Barbara Kingsolver

U.S. History II Portfolio Requirements

Portfolio Objective: Students will demonstrate and evaluate their own growth and understanding of U.S. History by preparing a portfolio of work completed.

Your portfolio is worth 200 points one time per year. It is due at or immediately following your midterm exams, and must have work from both the first and second cycles.

With that specification, your portfolio must include the following:

- 1) Table of Contents
- 2) A letter from you to me (the reader), describing why each item was included in the portfolio. Describe changes in your understanding, attitudes, and achievements, citing specific examples presented in your portfolio, memories of class activities, group activities, lectures, etc.
The letter could include:
 - a) comments about group work and sharing activities,
 - b) your assessment of your ability to discuss and express your thoughts clearly,
 - c) comments, general questions, and questions about historical concepts you have not fully understood that we have dealt with in class,
 - d) reflections about your growth as a history student after being enrolled in the course,
 - e) your thoughts on history in general.
- 3) Class notes for 2 days, explaining their importance and what you learned.
- 4) One rewritten (**edited and improved**) essay (include the original).
- 5) Summary of 2 in-class activities (group or individual).
- 6) One homework, with an explanation of why that particular assignment was chosen.
- 7) One test, with your comments on why you may have done well or badly, and how you could improve your performance.
- 8) The blank rubric attached to this syllabus.

PORTFOLIO RUBRIC

COMPLETENESS OF PORTFOLIO = 60 possible points

8 points	Table of Contents	
8 points	Letter	
8 points	Class Notes +Explanations	
8 points	Rewritten Essay	
8 points	Summaries of Classwork	
8 points	Homework	
8 points	Test	

Total Points (+ 4 for rubric)

QUALITY OF PORTFOLIO = 40 possible points

Quality	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Point Value	4 pts.	6 pts.	8 pts.	10 pts.
Self Assessment + Growth as Student				
Commitment + Time Spent Assembling				
Variety - Work Reflects More than One Unit				
Discussion of Completed Work, Notes, Tests, Historical Themes or Questions				

Total Points -

PORTFOLIO FINAL GRADE (total points x 2) -

Parent Signature

I, _____, have read and understand the required work that my son or daughter must complete in order to succeed and excel in Mr. Rippey's Pre-IB US History course, and understand the code of conduct that he or she will be expected to follow, and the type of work that will be expected.

Parent Signature _____

Student Signature _____

Date _____

* Please note that all major assignments and regular reading assignments will be available with their approximate due dates at my website: www.rippy-sphs.info (on the main page and on the Pre-IB page).