



The David A. Stein Riverdale/Kingsbridge Academy MS/HS 141

Department of
Education
City of New York

Principal
Lori O'Mara

Assistant Principals
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11th Grade United States History and Government

Riverdale Kingsbridge Academy, 2015 – 2016

Mr. Cushing – Room 319

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“The past is not dead. It’s not even past.”

- William Faulkner

Introduction

The writer James Baldwin once observed that history “does not refer merely, or even principally, to the past. On the contrary, the great force of history comes from the fact that we carry it within us, that history is literally *present* in all that we do.” As Baldwin understood, the force of history is alive in our own world. Especially in a political democracy like the United States, whose government is designed to rest on the consent of informed citizens, knowledge of the past is essential. In fact, nearly every question facing our nation today has its foundation in the constantly evolving history of the American people and landscape: questions of national identity and religion; of economic, racial, and gender equality; issues of war and international diplomacy; debates over homeland security, civil liberties, immigration, and the natural environment. Such questions are not only relevant today, but have in fact been debated for several generations by diverse groups of Americans.

The primary aim of this class is to provide students with the analytical skills and factual knowledge necessary to deal critically with the problems and materials of our nation’s history, to help students *become the informed citizens* on whom the United States will rely in the future.

The Course

11th Grade United States History and Government is a full-year course divided into two semesters worth of credit. You will earn one credit for “U.S. History 1” (from September thru January) and one credit for “U.S. History 2” (from February thru June). Please be aware that if you fail *either* the fall *or* spring semester, you will need to make up that credit in Summer School or repeat the course next year.

Solid reading and writing skills—along with a willingness to devote *serious time to homework and study*—are necessary to succeed. Emphasis will be placed on critical thinking skills, essay writing, class discussion, and interpretation of original historical documents. All students will take the **New York State Regents Exam** in June 2016. Because we have just one year to get from Christopher Columbus to Barack Obama, we have to move quickly! The course is divided into 13 units of study, with two or three weeks devoted to each.



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The tentative unit schedule with corresponding chapters from our textbook, The Americans, is below:

** Online textbook: my.hrw.com → username: bhsb6 → password: rkahistory → Go to The Americans (NY edition) **

UNIT	DATES	<i>The Americans</i> Reading
Native Americans, European Exploration, British Colonies	September 11 – October 7	Chapter 1 – 3
Revolutionary War	October 8 – 20	Chapter 4
Experiments in Government	October 21 – November 4	Chapter 5
Early National Period thru “Era of Good Feelings”	November 5 – 17	Chapter 6 – 7
Age of Jackson	November 18 – December 4	Chapter 8 – 9
Causes of the Civil War	December 7 – 18	Chapter 10
Fighting the Civil War and Reconstruction	December 21 – January 14	Chapter 11 – 12
Late 19 th Century Industrialization	January 15 – February 12	Chapter 13 – 16
U.S. Imperialism and Progressivism	February 22 – March 15	Chapter 17 – 18
World War I, 1920s, 1930s	March 16 – April 4	Chapter 19 – 23
World War II, Cold War	April 5 – 22	Chapter 24 – 27
Civil Rights to Modern America	May 2 – 20	Chapter 28 – 33
REGENTS REVIEW	May 23 – June 13

Grading Policy

Your final grade for each marking period is entirely within your own control. I can promise that if you devote substantial time, energy, and effort to the course, *you will be successful!*

Class Participation	5%
Notebook / Binder Check	5%
Homework	20%
Projects	10%
In-Class Essays	25%
Tests	35%

*** Your final grade for each semester will be the average of your 3 grades from that semester’s 3 marking periods. Please be aware that Mr. Cushing will use your actual *raw score* (on Jupiter Grades) from each of the 3 marking periods to obtain your overall semester grade. In other words, if you only earn a 32% in a given marking period, that 32% is the score that will be averaged – not the 55% that appears on your report card.



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Policy on Make-Up Tests

- MISSED TESTS or IN-CLASS ESSAYS: Tests or In-Class Essays missed due to absence must be taken within three days of the original exam date. Make-up opportunities are Lunch period or after school, excluding Mondays after school and days on which Mr. Cushing has to leave for an RKA soccer/basketball game.
- These are your ONLY opportunities to take the make-up. *If you miss the make-up, for any reason, you will receive a zero.*
- You may not miss another class to take a make-up test or essay. It must be done during Lunch period or after school within the three-day make-up period.

* **Homework Slips** will be distributed at the start of every week containing assignments and reminders. After a test or essay, the make-up day reminder will always be written on the top of the Homework Slip.

* I will be using **Jupiter Grades** – please login and follow your progress online. Homework Slips will also be uploaded to Jupiter Grades every week. Therefore, if you are absent on a Monday and there is homework that night, it is still due Tuesday. My expectation is that you accessed the Homework Slip online (via Jupiter Grades), and completed it that night.

Class Expectations

- The first and *most important* rule is: NO TALKING UNLESS I CALL ON YOU!
- RESPECT your classmates, your teacher, and yourself at all times in my classroom.
- Cell Phones and other electronics are **not allowed** in class. If seen, I am mandated to take them from you and give them to your dean.
- Remember that your personal honor and integrity are a crucial part of who you are as a person and as a citizen. Therefore, I expect that you will do all of your *own* work at all times. Plagiarism will be punished by a **zero** on that assignment, a parent phone call, and a referral to your class dean.
- Respect the opinions and ideas of your peers—whether or not you agree with them. Discussion and debate will play an important role in our course, so it is very important that all students feel comfortable expressing their opinions and their questions in class.

Required Materials

- A 3-ring binder filled with loose-leaf paper. A section reserved for U.S. History in a larger binder is also fine.
- At least 3 dividers MUST be used to make separate sections for: homework; class notes; and essays.
- A spiral notebook can serve as your class notes section, provided you also have dividers for the other two sections in a 3-ring binder.
- A notebook plus a *folder* for U.S. History can only earn you up to 50% on the binder check each semester.
- During the binder check, Mr. Cushing will check to see that all Notes are dated and in the correct order.