

Unit Overview

U.S. HISTORY 1877 TO TODAY

In every unit, students respond to the Unit Compelling Question using evidence from the daily lessons and sound reasoning to complete a summative project.

Unit
0

History Through Inquiry

What is the primary purpose of studying history?

Students are introduced to inquiry, historical thinking skills, and civic dispositions. They review founding documents and principles that are essential to defining our democracy.

Unit Project: Students write a statement to argue and reflect on the purpose behind and potential in inquiry as the primary approach to learning history.

Unit
1

Industry and Progress (1870s–1920s)

Does change mean progress?

Students analyze how the Second Industrial Revolution, big business, immigration, and the rise of reform movements transformed U.S. society, the economy, and politics. They evaluate the benefits and consequences of rapid change for different groups.

Unit Project: Students demonstrate their learning and argumentation skills by developing an investigative journalism piece.

Unit
2

Expansionism and Imperialism (1870s–1920s)

Is expansion democratic?

Students examine continental expansion, Tribal sovereignty and resistance, overseas imperialism, and World War I to evaluate how expansion reflected and challenged democratic principles at home and abroad.

Unit Project: Students construct a poem with a civic purpose and write a poet's statement to demonstrate their learning and argumentation skills.

Unit
3

The Interwar Years and World War II (1918–1945)

How should people respond in times of adversity to serve the common good?

Students study the cultural changes and growing tensions of the 1920s, the causes and consequences of the Great Depression, responses to crises through community action and federal policy, and American experiences in World War II at home and abroad.

Unit Project: Students demonstrate their learning, explanatory, and argumentation skills by creating an oral history interview guide and oral historian's statement.

Unit
4

The Cold War (1945–1980s)

What should the public remember about the Cold War?

Students immerse themselves in the Cold War, delving into the growing rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union, the policy of containment, and proxy struggles in Korea and Vietnam. They analyze how the fear of communism fueled McCarthyism and shaped domestic politics and examine the impact of cultural and global shifts caused by the Cold War on a changing nation.

Unit Project: Students create a historical marker or monument proposal, consisting of a design plan and a statement of significance, to demonstrate their learning, explanatory, and argumentation skills.

Unit
5

Debates on Rights and Liberties (1950s–1990s)

How can we create a more perfect union?

Students explore ongoing struggles for equality in the United States and how various groups of people and individuals worked to address these issues. They investigate and analyze the patterns and shifts in various rights movements over time from the civil rights movement to the new right.

Unit Project: Students produce an art exhibition catalog, analyzing how art has evolved within one movement over time, to demonstrate their learning and argumentation skills.

Unit
6

Contemporary United States

How can studying history help us become better citizens?

Students investigate contemporary issues in American society and analyze how modern developments have fostered and challenged civic dispositions. Students use what they have learned to identify a key enduring issue and conduct research in order to engage in a student-led inquiry.

Unit Project: Students develop an inquiry-based lesson proposal on a contemporary issue in the United States that includes relevant questions, tasks, and sources to demonstrate their learning and disciplinary skills.
