



United States Civics Class  
Syllabus and Class Contract

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Course Description	<p>Aligned with the Massachusetts History and Social Science Frameworks, the primary purpose of a history and social science education is to prepare students to have the knowledge and skills to become thoughtful and active participants in a democratic society and a complex world.</p> <p>“Government of the people, by the people, for the people” is not just a historical phrase from Lincoln’s “Gettysburg Address,” but an ideal that must be renewed and reinvigorated by each succeeding generation. The future of democracy depends on our students’ development of knowledge, skills, and dispositions that will enable them to embrace democracy’s potential, while recognizing its challenges and inherent dilemmas.</p> <p>My goal each year is to promote your interest in being civically engaged. I encourage a very active learning approach, which focuses on posing challenging discussion questions in light of historical events. Your opinions can be as enlightening as those of historians! Through writing, debate, and discussions I will constantly encourage you to justify your views by seeking connections between events in history.</p> <p>Beginning with the Foundations of our Democracy and ending with an examination of major Supreme Court Cases, we will build upon research and writing skills developed in the first year of your Social Studies curriculum. We will review thesis development and analysis needed for completing solid essay responses related to historical topics. Additionally, in-class time will focus on further evaluation of primary and secondary sources, as well as focus on media literacy.</p>								
Text(s) and Other Instructional Resource(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· <i>Generation Citizen workbook</i> (stays in classroom)</li><li>· iCivics.org, Nearpod, Class Dojo, Google Classroom, Peardeck</li><li>· Primary Sources, News Articles &amp; Current Events</li></ul>								
Grading Criteria	<p>Quarterly grades are based on a point system depending upon the type of assessment. Listed below is a typical range of point values, but you will know in advance how much each assessment is worth.</p> <table border="0" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"><tr><td style="padding-right: 20px;">Exams &amp; Quizzes</td><td style="padding-right: 20px;">25 %</td><td style="padding-right: 20px;">Projects</td><td style="padding-right: 20px;">30 %</td></tr><tr><td>Homework</td><td>15 %</td><td>In-class exercises</td><td>30 %</td></tr></table>	Exams & Quizzes	25 %	Projects	30 %	Homework	15 %	In-class exercises	30 %
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Make-up Work	<p>Following an absence, students will be responsible for making up missed work. The student must contact me to make arrangements for completing all assignments. All work missed due to absences will be placed in the absence bin.</p>								
Extra Help	<p>Students who require extra help should make arrangements with me.</p>								

Course Expectations	<p><b>You can expect that I will . . .</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● create a positive work environment in which you may express your opinions in an appropriate manner and are challenged to seek your own answers as you develop into life-long learners</li> <li>● listen and be flexible when it may be needed</li> <li>● be available for extra help before and after school; should you need extra help, simply notify me a day or two before so I am sure to be in my room</li> <li>● establish clear due dates and guidelines for all assignments</li> <li>● use a variety of instructional techniques and materials in an effort to reach all learners</li> <li>● be human, as I do make mistakes!</li> </ul> <p><b>I can expect that you will . . .</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● arrive to class on time and be prepared for the work at hand</li> <li>● complete your homework and writing assignments and bring them to class on time</li> <li>● see me when you are absent to obtain any missed work</li> <li>● be open-minded and considerate of the rights and feelings of all class members</li> <li>● participate in class lessons (activities, discussions, projects etc.)</li> <li>● Lessons, which take place in class, cannot always be repeated effectively outside of class. Therefore, your attendance and participation will not only affect your understanding of material, but also your grades on homework, quizzes, notebook checks, and exams.</li> <li>● Feel comfortable in addressing any issues related to your understanding of the material. Although my expectations of you will be very high, I understand that things happen.</li> </ul>
Behavioral Expectations	<p>Students' behavior in the classroom must at all times be appropriate. Specifically, students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Report to class on time, obtain a valid pass if late.</li> <li>· Carry a chromebook, charger and writing utensil to class.</li> <li>· Sit in assigned seats and remove their hats and hoods</li> <li>· Refrain from bringing food or drinks into class!</li> <li>· Remain in seats until dismissed</li> <li>· Not bring cellphones to class as they are prohibited in the classroom and will be sent to the office for parental retrieval.</li> <li>· Show sincere effort at all times.</li> <li>· Refer to their Classroom Procedures and Routines handout when in doubt.</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Please Remember:</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">We are a community that depends on the respect and responsibility of ourselves as well as our classmates in order to function properly. Be positive, be cooperative, and be kind.</p>	