



***Louis D. Brandeis High School
AP United States History
United States History Dual Credit***

Welcome

The entire Social Studies Department wishes to extend to you our warmest welcome and best wishes for a successful junior year at Brandeis High School. We hope to make this coming school year a challenging and exciting adventure as we examine the diversity of American history –both past and present - and bring historical context to today’s world.

Requirements

Students are required to complete the following assignment outside of class.

Students must read **A Brilliant Solution: Inventing the American Constitution**, by Carol Berkin. Complete the attached activities (see pages that follow) and be prepared to turn in your work and to take a quiz on the second day of school.

There is no History Fair requirement for AP or Dual Credit, although you are welcomed and encouraged to participate if you wish.

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AP/Dual United States History Summer Assignment

Purchase the book *A Brilliant Solution: Inventing the American Constitution* by Carol Berkin. You may get the book at any major bookstore or Amazon.com; it is available in paperback. If you do not want to purchase the book, check your local libraries, or see Ms. Latham in room B232 for other options.

Time Management Plan

Take your time reading the book. Do not wait until the end of the summer. I suggest you read one or two chapters at a time. It is probably best to create a schedule for your readings that will allow you to finish the book in time for school to start. Also, do not read it too early as summer tends to wipe things from our minds at warp speed.

Written Reflections

Buy a spiral notebook, composition notebook, or sketchbook to record your reflections for this assignment.

Pre-Reading Assignment

Before reading the book, record your answers to the following questions.

1. What can you remember about early American history from your experiences in 8th grade US History or from your study of World Geography and World History?
2. What interests you about studying US History? What does not?
3. Look at the major themes for the course (pages 5-6). Explain how historical evidence you learned in 8th, 9th, or 10th grade social studies addresses these themes. Be as specific as you can. List form is acceptable. The purpose is to demonstrate how much you already know about US History. (In other words, brainstorm a list of information you remember learning in previous history classes that apply to each theme.)

Reading Assignment

The concept of AP/Dual US History is to focus on the big ideas, concepts, themes, trends of history and change over time. Instead of focusing on minor events and occurrences, we will focus on the big ideas that have shaped US history and our world today. To get your mind thinking in this direction, as you read *A Brilliant Solution* you will create a written **and** illustrated summary of the “Big Ideas” in your journal.

Format for “Big Ideas”

For each chapter, **including prologue, Articles of Confederation and the US Constitution**, summarize **AND** illustrate the big ideas. One page (in the journal) per chapter is sufficient. Please use only the front side of each page and make sure

the words are exclusively your own. Any evidence of plagiarism will result in a grade of zero for this project.

Focus on the big ideas and the interactions among the various personalities. One way to practice getting the main idea is to verbally explain the main idea to someone after you have read each chapter. If you have made it easy for them to understand, then you have successfully identified the main idea.

You may use your own artwork if you are artistic or use a collage-type method with cutouts or computer printouts. Feel free to be creative and do what you feel most comfortable doing.

Post-Reading Assignment

After reading the book, answer the following questions in your journal.

1. What is Carol Berkin's thesis (this is found in the prologue)?
2. Is she successful in supporting her thesis? Why or why not? To what extent? Are particular chapters stronger than others are? Are any chapters particularly problematic?
3. Do you agree with her theory? Why or why not?
4. Is *A Brilliant Solution: Inventing the American Constitution* the best title for this book? What title would you give to this book? Explain your answer.
5. Share any other reactions, thoughts, or questions you have.

At the end of the book are two very important sources: The Articles of Confederation (AOC) and The United States Constitution. Using these sources, complete the following in your journal/spiral.

Compare and Contrast the AOC to the US Constitution. You may do this in any manner you wish: "T" Chart, Venn Diagram, Table, etc.

Technology Option

Instead of creating a paper journal you may create a website journal using the free online site <http://www.weebly.com>. This is the same website used for History Fair so it would present you with a great opportunity to get some practice if you are thinking about competing. You will need to create a free account at the beginning. You will be graded using the same rubric as the paper journal, but will submit a single typed sheet of paper with your name and the link to your project. Create a link for each of your entries and include a 'credits' page for your picture sources. Do not forget to "publish" your work or your instructor will not be able to view your work.

Summer Reading Assignment Rubric

I. Before reading the book (15 points)

1. What can you remember about early American history from your experiences in 8th grade US History or from other experiences? 2 Points _____

2. What interests you about studying US History? What does not? 4 points _____

3. Explain how historical evidence you learned in eighth grade US History or from earlier study addresses these themes. Be as specific as you can. List form is acceptable. 9 points _____

Total of 15 points _____

II. Assignment for the Reading (65 points)

For each chapter, **including prologue, Articles of Confederation and the US Constitution**, summarize **AND** illustrate the big ideas. (5 points each chapter)

Introduction (Prologue) _____

The Call for a Convention _____

Makin Mr. Madison Wait _____

A Gathering of Demigods _____

The Perils of Power _____

Schisms, Threats, and Compromises _____

Debating the Presidency Once Again _____

The Convention Ends _____

The Battle for Ratification _____

The Inauguration of President Washington _____

Epilogue _____

The Articles of Confederation _____

The United States Constitution _____

Total of 65 points _____

III. Post-Reading Assignment (15 Points)

1. What is Carol Berkin's thesis? _____

2. Is she successful in supporting her thesis? Why or why not? To what extent? _____

3. Do you agree with her theory? Why or why not? _____

4. Is *A Brilliant Solution: Inventing the American Constitution* the best title for this book? What title would you give to this book? Explain your answer. _____

5. Share any other reactions, thoughts, or questions you have. 10 pts total _____

Compare and Contrast the AOC to the US Constitution. You may do this in any manner you wish – 5 points _____

Total Grade of 100 points _____

Turned in on time _____

United States History Themes

1. American Diversity
 - Diversity of American People
 - Relationships among different groups
 - The roles of race, class, ethnicity, and gender

2. American Identity
 - American national character
 - Ideas about American Exceptionalism
 - Recognizing regional differences
 - Varying interpretation of what it means to be an American

3. Culture
 - Diverse individual and collective expressions
 - Literature, art, philosophy
 - Music, theater, film
 - Popular culture
 - Dimensions of cultural conflict within American society

4. Demographic Changes
 - Changes in birth, marriage and death rates
 - Changes in life expectancy and family patterns
 - Change in population size and density
 - Economic, social, and political effects of immigration
 - Internal migration and migration networks

5. Economic Transformations
 - Changes in trade, commerce, and technology across time
 - Effects of capitalist development
 - Effects of labor, unions and consumerism

6. Environment
 - Consumption and conservation of natural resources
 - Impact of population growth, and industrialization
 - Impact of pollution
 - Urban and suburban expansion

7. Globalization

- Engagement with the rest of the world (15th century to present)
- Colonialism, mercantilism, global hegemony
- Development of markets, imperialism, and cultural exchange

8. Politics and Citizenship

- Colonial and revolutionary legacies
- American political traditions
- Growth of democracy and the development of the modern state
- Defining citizenship
- Struggles for civil rights

9. Reform

- Diverse and various movements
- Broad range of issues: anti-slavery, education, labor, temperance, women's rights
- Issues: civil rights, war public health and government

10. Religion

- Variety of religious beliefs and practices (pre-history to 21st century)
- Influence of religion on politics, economics, and society

11. Slavery and Its Legacies in North America

- Systems of slave labor and other forms of unfree labor (indentured servitude or contract labor)
- Slavery in American Indian societies, the Atlantic World and The American South and West
- Economics of slavery and its racial dimensions
- Patterns of resistance and the long-term economic, political and social effects of slavery

12. War and Diplomacy

- Armed conflict from pre-colonial to 21st century
- Impact of war on American foreign policy
- Impact of war on politics, economics, and society