



United States History & Geography

George Ellery Hale Middle School
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Fall 2009 Course Overview

Welcome to United States Geography

This is to welcome you and your child to my 8th grade American History class. It will be my goal not only to teach you child, but to also ensure that he/she has a stimulating and enjoyable learning experience. During this semester, we will be covering many aspects of United States History and government. The students will have the opportunity to do written assignments, group and individual assignments, critical thinking skills, reports, and/or projects. It is expected that they will develop the skills necessary to succeed in the field of Social Studies.

As a first step toward accomplishing this goal, a brief course description and outline of grading policies have been provided below.

Students will be expected to keep a 3-ring notebook (or a section of a notebook) for all work. Students will also be expected to have a 70-page spiral notebook for Agendas and Dispatches. Students will be expected to save all work in a large folder at home (All work – classwork, homework, and projects (graded and ungraded) for a notebook grade.)

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Homework may be assigned any night as needed. Many assignments are given several days in advance. Marks are based on the total accumulation of points in homework, classwork, quizzes, exams, reports, projects and extra-credit. Some work will be given a check (✓) grade. Two checks are equal to a letter grade. Tests usually equal 100 or more points; reports equal 50 or 100 points; quizzes range from 5-25 points; homework equals 10-30 points, and check grades equal 5-10 points.

Absent students are given one day for each days absence to make up work. Late work results in less points and a lower letter grade. Late work is only allowed one week to be turned in late after that there will be no late work accepted. Tests are usually

given at the end of each chapter. All classes will have a major semester project to do. (This will be explained in the near future.)

Extra Credit Assignments are always available for the conscientious and enthusiastic student. Many of these assignments are activities that cannot be done in the classroom due to a lack of time. These assignments are strongly recommended, however, they are not a substitute for missed work.

My conference period is Period 4 (11:38-12:31 a.m.). Please call ahead for an appointment. Team conferences are also available if there is a need to meet with more than one of the four-team teachers.

Grade Scales:

A = 4	A = 90-100
B = 3	B = 80-89
C = 2	C = 70-79
D = 1	D = 60-69
F = 0	F = 59 & below



MRS. ESCALANTE'S WISH LIST: If you have any of the items listed, donations are greatly appreciated. Assorted colored pencils, tracing paper, paper towels, 11x17 copy paper, copy paper (8 1/2x11), glue sticks and/or glue, sponges, Kleenex, and construction paper to supplement our school allotment would also be appreciated. This year it is especially critical as there is no money for these supplies.

The major units of study for this class are:

- American Revolution
- A New Nation
- Growth of political Parties
- Constitution/ Government
- Manifest Destiny
- Westward Movement
- Civil War
- Reconstruction
- Industrial Revolution

Work Habits will be determined as follows:

- Assignments completed on time and with best effort.
- Prepared daily; required materials brought to class.
- Diligent participation in class; effort to examine own work for improvement.
- On time to class.
- Ready to work at bell; keeps work area clean.

Cooperation will be determined as follows:

- Respecting others' right to learn and the teacher's right to teach.
- Adheres to all class and school rules.
- Willingness to learn, participate, and make improvements.
- Maintains courteous relations with teachers and peers
- Demonstrates the ability to work with others, help as needed, to set and achieve goals.

MY WEBSITES: I have a grade website to help you monitor your student's grade more efficiently. Through this website you may e-mail me with your concerns. My URL is:

<http://www.eClassInfo.com/home.asp?ID=Profbjescalante>

Each student will be given a password and ID so that you will have private grade access. Grades will be updated on a weekly basis.

I also have a homework website where the daily homework and worksheets that are on my computer are posted. My URL is:

<http://www.teacherweb.com/CA/HaleMiddleSchool/BEscalante/>

I am looking forward to an exciting and most rewarding school year with my new social studies students.



The overall content standards are:

- 8.1 Students understand the major events preceding the founding of the nation and relate their significance to the development of American constitutional democracy.
- 8.2 Students analyze the political principles underlying the U.S. Constitution and compare the enumerated and implied powers of the federal government.
- 8.3 Students understand the foundation of the American political system and the ways in which citizens participate in it.
- 8.4 Students analyze the aspirations and ideals of the people of the new nation.
- 8.5 Students analyze U.S. foreign policy in the early Republic.
- 8.6 Students analyze the divergent paths of the American people from 1800 to the mid-1800s and the challenges they faced, with emphasis on the Northeast.
- 8.7 Students analyze the divergent paths of the American people in the South from 1800 to the mid-1800s and the challenges they faced.
- 8.8 Students analyze the divergent paths of the American people in the West from 1800 to the mid-1800s and the challenges they faced.
- 8.9 Students analyze the early and steady attempts to abolish slavery and to realize the ideals of the Declaration of Independence.
- 8.10 Students analyze the multiple causes, key events, and complex consequences of the Civil War.
- 8.11 Students analyze the character and lasting consequences of Reconstruction.
- 8.12 Students analyze the transformation of the American economy and the changing social and political conditions in the United States in response to the Industrial Revolution.

CRITERIA FOR MARKS

Academic Mark	A	B	C	D	FAIL
Quality of Work	Demonstrates an exemplary level of understanding of content standards and tasks.	Demonstrates a thorough understanding of the content standards and tasks.	Demonstrates an understanding of the content standards and tasks.	Demonstrates a limited understanding of the content standards and tasks.	Demonstrates an inability to understand the content standards and tasks.
Interpretation and Application	Demonstrates exceptional and fluent skills in analyzing, synthesizing, and drawing inferences from observations and other data or information.	Demonstrates fluent skills in analyzing, synthesizing, and drawing inferences from observations and other data or information.	Demonstrates satisfactory skills in analyzing, synthesizing, and drawing inferences from observations and data or information.	Demonstrates a limited ability to analyze, synthesize, and draw inferences from observations and other data or information.	Demonstrates an incomplete and/or inaccurate analysis of data or information that has been collected.
Thinking and Reasoning Skills	Demonstrates an insightful and thorough use of prior knowledge and skills to create innovative ideas, products or performances in a variety of contexts.	Demonstrates an insightful use of prior knowledge and skills to create innovative ideas, products or performances in a variety of contexts.	Demonstrates use of prior knowledge and skills to create innovative ideas, products or performances in a variety of contexts.	Demonstrates limited use of prior knowledge and skills to create innovative ideas, products or performances.	Demonstrates incomplete use of prior knowledge/skills to create innovative ideas, products or performances.
Quantity of Work	Produces extra work in addition to assigned work, of both teacher-generated and self-initiated toward achieving standards for the course.	Produces extra work in addition to all assigned work, usually teacher-generated and self-initiated toward achieving standards for the course.	Produces the assigned work in achieving standards for the course.	Demonstrates a need to improve in the amount of work completed and effort expended toward achieving standards for the course.	Demonstrates no improvement of the work completed and in the effort expended toward achieving standards for the course.

WORK HABITS	E	S	U
Effort	Demonstrates exceptional determination in accomplishing tasks and mastering standards.	Demonstrates determination in accomplishing tasks and mastering standards.	Demonstrates little determination in accomplishing tasks and mastering standards.
Responsibility	Accepts complete responsibility for personal actions and demonstrates honesty, fairness, and integrity.	Accepts responsibility for personal actions and frequently demonstrates honesty, fairness, and integrity.	Accepts little responsibility for personal actions.
Attendance	Maintains excellent attendance record by consistently avoiding unnecessary absences or tardies.	Maintains a satisfactory attendance record by avoiding unnecessary absences or tardies.	Makes little effort to maintain a satisfactory attendance record; is frequently absent or tardy without excuses.
Evaluation	Makes explicit effort to examine work using both teacher-generated and self-generated criteria.	Makes effort to examine work using teacher-generated criteria.	Makes use only of teacher-generated criteria to examine work on an inconsistent basis.

COOPERATION	E	S	U
Courtesy	Maintains courteous relations with the teacher and other students and consistently works without disturbing others.	Demonstrates courteous relations with the teacher and other students and generally works without disturbing others.	Demonstrates discourteous behavior towards the teacher and other students and consistently lacks consideration for others.
Conduct	Obeys rules, respects public and personal property and actively promotes the general welfare.	Obeys rules, respects public and personal property and supports the general welfare.	Shows disregard for rules; has little respect for public and personal property and often opposes the general welfare.
Improvement	Assumes responsibility for personal improvement and rarely needs correction.	Tries to improve and usually accepts corrections in an objective manner.	Makes little attempt to improve and shows indifference or resistance to corrections.
Class Relations	Demonstrates leadership ability to work with others in a variety of situations to set and achieve goals.	Demonstrates ability to work with others in a variety of situations to set and achieve goals.	Demonstrates little ability to work with others in a variety of situations to set and achieve

----- Tear-Off -----

Please sign this tear-off and have your child return it to the classroom teacher the next school day.

I have reviewed the above information with my child.

Student's Name (please print)

Parent's/Guardian's signature

Mrs. B Escalante

Teacher's Name

E-mail address