HST500: AP® U.S. History

Students explore and analyze the economic, political, and social transformation of the United States since the time of the first European encounters. Students are asked to master not only the wide array of factual information necessary to do well on the AP® Exam but also to practice skills of critical analysis of historical information and documents. Students read primary and secondary source materials and analyze problems presented by historians to gain insight into challenges of interpretation and the ways in which historical events have shaped American society and culture. The content aligns to the sequence of topics recommended by the College Board and to widely used textbooks. Students prepare for the AP® Exam.

**COURSE LENGTH:** Two semesters

**MATERIALS:** AMERICA: A Narrative History, by Tindall et al., 7th ed.

**PREREQUISITES:** Success in a previous history course and a teacher/counselor recommendation

**SEMESTER ONE**

**Unit 1: Foundations of U.S. History (1492-1763)**

Students practice critical thinking, identify historians' biases, and read original documents critically. They look at European nations in the late 15th century and their struggle for power in the Americas, the development of the English colonies in North America, and the effects of those colonies on native people. They look at the colonies' assertion of their own right to self-governance. The content in this unit maps to the following sections of the College Board's AP topic outline: Transatlantic Encounters and Colonial Beginnings; Colonial North America; The American Revolutionary Era.

- Introducing AP U.S. History
- Colonial Development
- Governing the Colonies

**Unit 2: The American Revolution (1763-1789)**

Students look at the roots of rebellion, exploring the British interventions in American colonial affairs between 1763 and 1776 that led some colonists to conclude that they must sever their relationship with England. They look at events during and after the Revolution and the effect independence had on the people living in the former colonies. They examine the creation of the Articles of Confederation and the Constitution, paying particular attention to the political philosophies behind these documents. In the College Board's topic outline, the content in this unit maps to The American Revolutionary Era; The Early Republic.

- The Road to Revolution
- The Revolutionary War
- From Confederation to Constitution

**Unit 3: The Early Republic (1789-1824)**

Students look at the establishment of the nation’s two-party system and the changing role of the federal government. They study the major issues and events that divided the Federalists and the Democratic-Republicans at the end of the 18th century, Jefferson’s vision for the United States and the issues that confronted Jefferson and Madison, and the expanding role of the federal government after the War of 1812. In the College Board’s topic outline, the content in this unit maps to The Early Republic; Transformation of the Economy and Society in Antebellum America.

- The Federalists
- The Jeffersonian Republicans
- The Rise of Nationalism
Unit 4: The Age of Jackson (1824-1850)
Students explore the presidency of Andrew Jackson, the relocation of Native Americans, and the philosophy of individualism that influenced religion and social reform. They analyze the social and religious changes of the Second Great Awakening and the social reform movements that followed, and investigate literature from this period. They explore the social developments that resulted from post-War of 1812 changes in the national economy. In the College Board’s topic outline, the content in this unit maps to The Transformation of Politics in Antebellum America; Religion, Reform, and Renaissance in Antebellum America.

- Jacksonian Democracy
- Jacksonian Reform
- Sectionalism

Unit 5: The Civil War Era (1844-1877)
Students look at Manifest Destiny and the expansion of U.S. territory. They examine the expansion of slavery into the new territories and how this eventually led to the Civil War. They look at the shifting goals of the North, the impact of the Civil War on both North and South, and some important Civil War battles. Finally, students look at the effects of Reconstruction on the politics, society, and economy of the South. In the College Board’s topic outline, the content in this unit maps to Territorial Expansion and Manifest Destiny; The Crisis of the Union; Civil War; Reconstruction.

- National Expansion
- The Road to Civil War
- The Civil War
- Reconstruction

Unit 6: Industrialization (1870-1896)
Students look at the rapid growth of businesses during the late-19th century, examine the careers of some notable entrepreneurs, and consider the effects of rapid industrialization. They look at the working and living conditions of industrial workers and their efforts to improve their lives. They review social and economic developments in the South, and examine late-19th century patterns of migration and settlement in the West. In the College Board’s topic outline, the content in this unit maps to The Origins of the New South; Development of the West in the Late Nineteenth Century; Industrial America in the Late Nineteenth Century; Urban Society in the Late Nineteenth Century.

- Industrial Development
- The New South and New West

Unit 7: Review and Exam
Students review what they have learned and take the final exam.

- Review
- Exam

SEMESTER TWO
Unit 1: Change and Reform (1877-1917)
In this unit, students look at how urbanization affected the life and culture of people living in the U.S. in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. They investigate the rise of new professions, efforts to reform the cities, the experiences of immigrants, and how city life affected popular culture. Then they explore the politics of the late-nineteenth century, focusing especially on progressivism and agrarian Populism. The content in this unit maps to the following sections of the College Board’s Advanced Placement topic outline: Urban Society in the Late Nineteenth Century; Populism and Progressivism.

- Urbanization
- Political and Agricultural Reform
- The Progressive Era
Unit 2: Imperialism and World War I (1895-1919)
In this unit, students look at the pre-1898 roots of American imperialism. They also examine U.S. foreign policy after 1898 and its long-term implications. Then they explore America’s policy of keeping itself isolated from European affairs, both before and after World War I. They also examine the war itself, paying special attention to how it affected American society. The content in this unit maps to the following section of the College Board’s Advanced Placement topic outline: The Emergence of America as a World Power.
- Imperial Expansion
- World War I

Unit 3: The Twenties and Thirties (1920-1939)
In this unit, students begin by exploring the growth of consumer and youth culture in the years following World War I. They also look at the strains of reactionary conservatism that emerged in this era, and consider how modernism affected the art, literature, and science of the period. After studying the U.S. economy and politicians of the 1920s, they consider Roosevelt’s attempts to end the Great Depression and how his policies changed over the years. Finally, they examine the effects that the Depression had on the people who lived through it. The content in this unit maps to the following sections of the College Board’s Advanced Placement topic outline: The New Era: 1920s; The Great Depression and the New Deal.
- Culture of the 1920s
- Politics and Economics in the 1920s
- Depression and the New Deal

Unit 4: World War II and Containment (1939-1950)
In this unit, students first examine American isolationism, the beginnings of World War II, and America’s gradual entry into World War II. Then they explore the effects that World War II had on the U.S. economy, society, and government, and look at the role American fighting forces played in World War II. Finally, they assess the origins of the Cold War, review Cold War clashes between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, and investigate the fears that shaped America’s internal politics. The content in this unit maps to the following sections of the College Board’s Advanced Placement topic outline: The Second World War; The Home Front During the War; The United States and the Early Cold War.
- Path to War
- World War II
- Containment and the Cold War

Unit 5: Post-War Politics and Society (1945-1970)
In this unit, students explore 1950s culture—from rock ‘n’ roll and television to evangelism and suburbanization, and on to the critics who spoke out forcefully against the culture in which they lived. They also investigate the tense Cold War relations between the U.S. and the Soviet Union and look at the domestic policies of the Eisenhower administration. Finally, they analyze the events that made the 1960s such a turbulent era politically and culturally, including Vietnam, the civil rights movement, the rise of the New Left and hippie counterculture, and the ascendance of minority rights movements for Native Americans, Hispanic farm workers, and women. The content in this unit maps to the following sections of the College Board’s Advanced Placement topic outline: The United States and the Early Cold War; The 1950s; The Turbulent 1960s.
- Society in the 1950s
- The Eisenhower Years
- Turbulent Times: The 1960s
Unit 6: The Modern Age (1970-Today)

In this unit, students review the presidencies of Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford, Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan, George Bush, and Bill Clinton. They examine changes in military strategy in Vietnam after 1968 and the continuing antiwar movement. Next, they explore the conservatism of the 1980s and analyze the policies and rhetoric of Ronald Reagan. They also look at the social and cultural trends of the time, including the advent of AIDS and the new popularity of the personal computer. Finally, they analyze how Clinton changed the Democratic Party and how immigration in the 1980s and 1990s helped reshape the nation's demographics. The content in this unit maps to the following sections of the College Board's Advanced Placement topic outline: Politics and Economics at the End of the Twentieth Century; Society and Culture at the End of the Twentieth Century; The United States in the Post-Cold War World.

- The 1970s: At Home and Abroad
- Reagan and Bush: The Conservative Years
- Our Times

Unit 7: Preparing for the AP Exam

Students review what they have learned and take the final exam.

- U.S. History Review
- Final Course Exam