HST302: U.S. History

This course is a full-year survey that provides students with a view of American history from the first migrations of nomadic people to North America to recent events. Readings are drawn from K12’s The American Odyssey: A History of the United States. Online lessons help students organize their study, explore topics, review in preparation for assessments, and practice skills of historical thinking and analysis. Activities include analyzing primary sources and maps, creating timelines, completing projects and written assignments, and conducting independent research.

COURSE LENGTH: Two semesters

MATERIALS: The American Odyssey: A History of the United States

PREREQUISITES: K12 middle school Intermediate World History B or HST102: World History

SEMESTER ONE

Unit 1: American Beginnings

Students explore the diversity of the first Americans and the land they inhabited. They trace the rise of European nations and the Age of Exploration after centuries of strife, read an entry from Columbus’s log, and learn of the decimation of the Native American population after Europeans arrived. They see the extent of the Spanish empire in the Americas and read of the hardships in Jamestown. The unit then turns to the founding and maturing of England’s thirteen American colonies.

• Semester Introduction
• Peopling the Americas
• First Americans
• The North American Continent
• Worlds Meet
• Pilgrims and Puritans in New England
• The Middle and Southern Colonies
• The Colonies Grow and Change
• New Ideas and Issues
• Looking at the Colonies

Unit 2: Formation of the United States

After 150 years of relative content, tensions grew between Britain and her North American colonies. Students follow the path of disagreement, discontent, and increasing philosophical differences that led to the American Revolution. They read about the individuals who led the Revolution and about the war itself, and analyze the Declaration of Independence. They then trace the growing demand for a stronger central government than the Articles of Confederation provided, and explore the arguments for and against ratification of the new Constitution. The unit ends with a look at the document that has governed the nation for over two hundreds years—the longest-lived written constitution in the world.

• Growing Tension
• Moving Toward Independence
• We Hold These Truths
• Revolution
• A Long War
U.S. History A, Unit 3: The New Republic

When George Washington became the first president of the United States, no one was quite certain what that position would be like. In this unit, students read about the task Washington faced in establishing precedents for the future and in setting the country on a strong course. They observe the divergent views of the Constitution that led to the rise of political parties and learn the significance of the election of 1800 as power shifted from one party to another without upheaval. Students meet Lewis and Clark and Dolly Madison, and see how the power of the judiciary and federal government grew under John Marshall. They finish the unit by developing a timeline of this critical era.

Unit 4: Change and Growth

In 1800, transportation was much the same as it had been two thousand years earlier. Few people in the United States or elsewhere could vote. In this unit, students explore the remarkable changes that took place in industry, transportation, and politics during the first half of the nineteenth century. They take a virtual field trip to the Erie Canal, one of the engineering marvels of its time. They meet Andrew Jackson, the first “common man” to be elected president, and analyze statistics to assess the reasons for his election. They finish with a brief study of the regional differences that would eventually lead to war.
Unit 5: Forging a National Identity
The nationalism that swept the country after the War of 1812 nurtured the growth of a distinctly American culture. They read about the calls for reform that came out of Americans’ optimism and explore the factors that pushed people to migrate to the west. And they see the darker side of Manifest Destiny in the plight of Native Americans and in the willingness to go to war to gain land.

- Comparing and Contrasting
- Writing the Essay
- Seeking Perfection
- Freedom for All
- The Push West
- Texas: The Lone Star Republic
- War and Riches

Unit 6: The Union in Crisis
The Civil War was the most serious crisis and biggest tragedy in United States history. Students trace the growing tensions between North and South and the events that led inexorably toward secession and war. They follow the war itself from military, political, and personal views, and analyze the appalling statistics the war created. Then they read about the struggle to reconstruct the Union and assess its achievements and failures.

- Growing Apart
- Debate and Division
- Disunion
- The War Begins
- Terrible Conflict
- War’s End
- A War on All Fronts
- Reuniting a Nation
- Reconstructing a Nation

Unit 7: Entering the Modern Era
During the late 1800s, the nation experienced tremendous growth in many areas. Students follow the enormous migration across the Great Plains, the arrival of millions of immigrants to American shores, and the rise of new ways of manufacturing and doing business. They see the hardships factory and mine workers faced, and the demands for reform that came from diverse segments of society. They finish with a project on the era.

- Settling the American West
- The Changing West
- The End of a Way of Life
- New Industries Emerge
- Inventors and Industrialists
- How Big is Too Big?
- The Price of Industrialization
- Seeking a Better Way
- Beacon of Hope
- The Immigrant Experience
Unit 8: Semester Review and Test
Students prepare for and take the semester test.

SEMESTER TWO
Unit 1: A New Century
The twentieth century has been called “America’s Century.” In this unit, students study the early years of the modern age and the rise of modern cities, our modern political system, and a modern approach to reform.

- Semester Introduction
- Cities Grow
- City Life
- Populists
- Progressives
- Taking on Power
- Less Than Equal
-Demanding a Voice
- Making a Difference

Unit 2: Turning Points
During the first quarter of the twentieth century the United States stepped onto the world stage. In this unit, students begin by completing a research project. Then they trace the rise of the nation’s power from the emergence of American imperialism just before 1900 through the end of the Great War and beyond. They examine the complexity of the postwar period and its fears and fads.

- Choosing a Research Topic
- Choosing a Presentation Format
- The Annotated Bibliography
- The Process Paper
- An American Empire
- Presidents and Policies
- The Great War
- The War at Home
- Assessing the Great War
- Embracing the Peace
- A New Culture
- Action and Reaction
- Analyzing an Era
- The Project
Unit 3: Democracy Tested
The boom times of the 1920s gave way in 1929 to the worst depression in the nation's history. Students study the reasons for this economic catastrophe as well as its human toll. They meet Franklin Roosevelt and assess the leadership qualities that changed Americans' attitudes, and evaluate the successes and failures of the New Deal. Then they trace the rise of the totalitarian regimes in the years leading up to World War II. They explore the course of the war, the role of the United States in achieving victory, and the experience of those who served abroad and on the homefront.

- The Bubble Bursts
- Depression
- Seeking Solutions
- Confronting the Crisis
- New Strategies
- Reflections
- War Clouds
- Going to War
- The War at Home
- Fighting on Two Fronts
- War's End

Unit 4: Postwar America
The years after World War II brought prosperity, pressure to conform, and a new kind of war to the United States. Students follow the path of Cold War tensions abroad and within the United States. They explore the culture of the fifties and see the darker side of the era—poverty and discrimination. Then they follow the struggles and achievements of the civil rights movement.

- A War of Words and Ideas
- The Cold War at Home and Abroad
- Eisenhower at the Helm
- From War to Peace
- A New American Dream
- The New Frontier
- Your Magazine Project
- The Beginning of Change
- Demanding Change
- A New Generation

Unit 5: A Time of Turmoil
The United States and the Soviet Union came to the brink of nuclear war during the Cuban Missile Crisis. At the same time, events in Southeast Asia drew American presidents and the nation into its longest war. Involvement in Vietnam spanned a period of nearly twenty years and divided the nation. Students trace the major events of the war and explore the culture of the era. They assess the achievements and failures of the Nixon presidency and reflect on the impact of these tumultuous years.

- Crisis
- War in Vietnam
- Reflections on War
- Culture and Counterculture
- Tragedies
• Women on the Move
• Voices for Change
• Complex Times
• The Watergate Scandal
• Transition

Unit 6: Toward a New Millennium
Resurgent conservatism dominated the 1980s and beyond. Students study the meanings of “conservative” and “liberal” and meet the politicians and others who embodied the opposing ideologies. They review the events of September 11, 2001, and the changes those events fostered in American foreign and domestic policies. Throughout this unit, students are reminded of the tenuous nature of historical judgments, particularly judgments about the recent past.

• A Changing Mood
• Reaganomics
• Cold War Warriors
• Legacies
• The Post-Cold War World, Part 1
• A New Age
• The Clinton Years
• Divisions
• The Post Cold War World, Part 2
• Entering a New Millennium
• New Realities
• War and Disaster
• Looking Ahead

Unit 7: Semester Review and Test
Students prepare for and take the semester test.