



Curriculum Snapshot/Cover Page for American Studies

Unit 1: American Ideologies

25
Days

Students will be able to study and understand three major early American ideologies: Puritan ideologies, revolutionary ideologies, and transcendentalist ideologies. By first engaging in class discussions revolving around the question, “What is an American?” students will be able to compare and contrast their views with views of the past, to see if they can make any connections. They will read and analyze a number of primary documents, speeches, and poetry. Students will also compose a number of reading reflections and journals. Students will be introduced to American Art/Art History and learn how to read and analyze a work of art in order to enhance their understanding of the visual arts’ connection to U.S. History and American Literature. Students will create artwork representing their personal response to the prompt of, “What does America Look Like to You?”



Unit 2: Industry and Immigration

40
Days

Students will be able to interpret what the American Dream means to them and compare their ideas with those from earlier immigrant groups throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. They will also engage in an all-class novel, *The Great Gatsby*, to enhance their understanding of the American Dream. Working collaboratively, students will use technology to effectively share their knowledge about a specific immigrant group to the class. Students will also research, analyze, and create their own propaganda poster. Students will become familiar with the art created during the time periods discussed in this unit. Specific focus will be placed on artwork created during the Industrial Revolution, immigrant art, Art Deco style in design and architecture, and Pop-Art. Students will create artwork relating to one of the historical art periods. This unit includes an external field trip where students take an architectural/historical tour of the city of Chicago and a tour of the Hull House.



Unit 3: Oppression in the U.S.

40
Days

Throughout the oppression unit, students will analyze primary memoirs, diaries, artwork, and journals from various oppressed groups in the U.S.: Native Americans, African Americans, women, and currently oppressed groups. Students will compose a *take a stand* and *propose a solution* paper on a current event regarding oppression. Students will have an opportunity to analyze songs from pop culture and relay their message about oppression to the class in a mini-presentation. Students will analyze and discuss how America's visual culture (fine and commercial art, media, and signs) affect oppression in the United States.



Unit 4: War and Turmoil in the 20th Century

40
Days

Students will understand the cause and effects of the major wars of the 20th century: WWI, WWII, Korean War, Vietnam War, and the War against Terrorism. They will be presented with a number of primary and secondary sources, maps, and videos. Students will work collaboratively to create a video reenactment of a specific frame of military history. Students will also compose an *inquire and explore* paper questioning the start or outcome of a specific war. Students will compare and contrast artwork created during each of the major wars. They will analyze symbols in the artwork to understand America's differing perspectives during each war. Artwork created specifically for war propaganda as well as other work created during wartime will be discussed. This unit includes an external field trip where students visit the National Veterans Art Museum in Chicago and complete a guided tour led by a Vietnam veteran. Students will begin reading *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* during the Vietnam portion of this unit, and they will continue reading it during unit five.



Unit 5: American Ideologies *Revisited*

20
Days

This unit will present students with the opportunity to connect the ideologies studied in unit one to more current ideologies of the 20th and 21st century, including Cold War ideologies and current ideologies from the most recent election and onward. While finishing *Cuckoo's Nest* and learning about these major ideologies, students will debate the strength between the individual and society. Students will create a visual presentation using technology to share their knowledge of a mental health disorder to the class once they have completed the all-class novel. Students will also compose an *evaluate and judge* piece of writing, comparing the Salem Witch Trials and McCarthyism. Students will be introduced to "outsider" artists and contemporary American artists. Students will compare and contrast modern day artwork, techniques, and processes to those learned in previous units.