8th Grade U.S. History Objectives

Unit One

The Thirteen Colonies Unit 1607-1753
Students will examine the reasons for settling in America and how England benefited from establishing the thirteen colonies.

The English Establish 13 Colonies 1585-1732
Students will understand how the first English colonies survived and began to grow, while colonists both learned from and experienced conflict with Native Americans.
• Understand the concept of mercantilism.
• Describe early English attempts at colonizing.
• Explain English financing of a colony.
• Summarize how Jamestown was founded and grew.
• Analyze the conflicts of the Jamestown colonists both with Native Americans and themselves.
• Explain why the Pilgrims established the Plymouth Colony.
• Explain why the Puritans set up the Massachusetts Bay Colony.
• Compare and contrast the founding of the Middle colonies.
• Explain how economics influenced the development of the Southern Colonies.
• Identify unique reasons for the founding of Georgia and Maryland.

The Colonies Develop 1700 – 1753
Students will analyze the economic and social development of the American colonies during the first half of the 18th century.
• Explain how distinct regions developed during the colonial period.
• Describe the Atlantic triangular trade system.
• Identify the resources of the New England, Middle, and Southern colonies.
• Evaluate the unique contributions immigrants made to the Middle colonies.
• Analyze the plantation economy and the use of slaves.

Unit Two

The Revolutionary Era Unit 1689-1783
Students will understand that disagreements between English citizens and their government resulted in colonial revolution in North America culminating in a new central government.

Beginnings of an American Identity 1689 – 1763
Students will identify the values shared by British colonists and how these values led to the growth of a representative government.
• Analyze the importance of land ownership within the structure of colonial society.
• Explain the ideas of the Enlightenment period and their impact on government.
• Identify the rights that colonists expected as English subjects.
• Evaluate how England’s Glorious Revolution affected the colonies.
• Explain the importance of the Zenger trial verdict.
• Analyze the causes and effects of the French and Indian War.
• Describe how England won the war.
The Road to Revolution 1763 – 1776

Students will understand what events led to the American Revolution.

- Identify why the Proclamation of 1763 angered the colonists.
- Understand why the British felt they had the right to tax their American colonies.
- Explain the different British tax laws and how the colonists reacted to each tax law.
- Evaluate the role of the Continental Congress prior to Lexington and Concord.
- Analyze the cause and effects of the battles at Lexington and Concord.
- Describe the early conflicts between the Continental and British armies.
- Explain the Olive Branch Petition and why that attempt at peace failed.
- Explain how and when colonial leaders declared independence from Britain.

The American Revolution 1776 – 1783

Students will understand the chronological events of the American Revolution and how the colonists were victorious in their revolution against the British.

- Explain why British colonists were split on the issue of independence from Britain.
- Analyze early British strategy.
- Summarize the causes and effects of the Battles of Saratoga.
- Explain why and how Europeans came to the aid of the colonists.
- Describe the war on the frontier.
- Summarize important sea battles.
- Explain and evaluate why the war shifted to the South.
- Analyze different fighting strategies and their effects.
- Summarize events that led to the end of the Revolutionary War.
- Compare and contrast the strengths of American and British armies.
- Identify the requirements of the Treaty of Paris of 1783.
- Numerate the costs and casualties of the American Revolution.
- Identify challenges that faced the new United States.

Unit Three

The Confederation to Constitution Unit 1776-1791

Students will understand and analyze our living Constitution.

Confederation to Constitution 1776 - 1791

Students will analyze the Articles of Confederation, the Constitutional Convention, and the debate over ratifying the Constitution.

- Analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation.
- Evaluate the importance of the Northwest Ordinance.
- Identify the causes and effects of Shays’ Rebellion.
- Identify key events leading to the Constitutional Convention.
- Analyze the major issues and compromises of the Constitutional Convention.
- Describe the positions of the Federalists and Anti-Federalists.
- Summarize efforts to pass and ratify the Bill of Rights.

The Constitution and Citizenship

Students will understand the seven principles of the Constitution which shaped our government, and define the rights and responsibilities of a U.S. citizen.

- Analyze the Seven Principles of the Constitution.
- Identify and explain the roles of the three branches of government.
- Describe the process of amending the Constitution.
- Identify rights given to citizens under the Bill of Rights.
- Be aware of the societal changes created by Amendments 11-27.
- Explain the naturalization process.

**Unit Four**

**The Early Republic Unit 1789-1850**

Students will make sense of our early efforts to establish a new nation, and how America grew and changed from the 1780’s to the 1850’s.

**Launching a New Republic 1789 - 1800**

**Students will explain how the leaders met the challenges of establishing a new nation.**
- Identify the structure of the newly formed federal court system.
- Understand the role of the president’s first cabinet.
- Explain the key factors of Hamilton’s financial plan.
- Distinguish between loose and strict construction.
- Explain the importance of the Ohio River Valley and how this lead to conflict.
- Identify the reasons for and the results of the Whiskey Rebellion.
- Evaluate Washington’s position of neutrality in foreign affairs.
- Explain how political parties developed.

**The Jefferson Era 1800 – 1816**

Students will understand how Jefferson’s presidency affected the political and geographic makeup of the United States.
- Summarize how Jefferson’s political beliefs led to changes in political programs.
- Analyze the significance of Marbury v. Madison.
- Relate how Jefferson came to make the Louisiana Purchase.
- Critique the pros and cons of the Louisiana Purchase.
- Recognize the causes of the War of 1812.
- Document the major battles of the War of 1812.
- Evaluate the effects of the War of 1812.

**National and Regional Growth 1800 – 1844**

Students will understand how the Industrial Revolution and new technologies affected the culture and economy of the United States.
- Assess the pros and cons of the factory system, interchangeable parts, the steam engine, and the telegraph.
- Explain the relationship between the invention of the cotton gin and the expansion of slavery.
- Describe the events surrounding early slave revolts and the effects of these revolts.
- Make sense of the treaties that expanded and settled some national boundaries.
- Analyze sectional tensions and the compromises that lessened those tensions.
- Explain the rationale behind the Monroe Doctrine.

**The Age of Jackson 1824 – 1840**

Students will understand how Andrew Jackson’s presidency had far reaching political, social, and economic consequences.
- Explain why Andrew Jackson was so different from previous presidents.
- Analyze Jacksonian Democracy and the expansion of voting rights.
- Defend Jackson’s creation of the spoils system.
- Describe the conflicts the U.S. had with Native Americans in the Southeast.
• Evaluate Jackson’s Indian removal policy.
• Describe how some Native American tribes resisted the removal policy.
• Compare and contrast regional economic and political concerns and how those concerns increased sectionalism.
• Analyze the issues in the states’ rights debate.
• Relate how Jackson’s attack on the bank affected the economy after he left office.

**Manifest Destiny 1810 – 1853**

**Students will understand westward expansion and its effects on the development of the nation.**

• Identify the reasons why people moved west.
• Explain how and why the Santa Fe, Oregon, and Mormon Trails became important.
• Make sense of the tensions between Texans and Mexico City.
• Explain the origins of manifest destiny.
• Document the significant events in the Mexican War.
• Detail the agreements arrived at in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.
• Be aware of the fact that Texas was its own country.
• Illustrate the impact of the gold rush on California.

**Unit Five**

**The Civil War Era Unit 1846-1865**

**Students will understand how intense feelings aroused by the slavery question and states’ rights resulted in the Civil War, and the challenges of rebuilding the nation after the war.**

**The Nation Breaking Apart 1846 – 1861**

**Students will understand the conflicts that pulled the North and South apart and the attempts to resolve those issues.**

• Explain how the abolitionists’ movement heightened tensions between the North and South.
• Demonstrate knowledge of why the issue of slavery was so important in the new acquired territories.
• Evaluate the results of the Wilmot Proviso and the statehood of California.
• Understand and make sense of the Compromise of 1850.
• Compare and contrast the effects the Fugitive Slave Act and “Uncle Tom’s Cabin” had on the North and South.
• Analyze the concept of popular sovereignty.
• Identify the causes and results of “Bleeding Kansas”.
• Evaluate why the Republican Party was formed.
• Summarize the results of the Dred Scott case.
• Analyze the impact of John Brown’s raid.
• Discern why the Democratic Party split in the Election of 1860.
• Identify the issues in the Election of 1860.
• Make meaning of the secession of the southern states from the Union.
• Evaluate the Union’s response to southern secession.

**The Civil War Begins 1861 – 1862**

**Students will understand how the Civil War began, its progress during the early years, and its impact on the Union and Confederacy.**

• Describe why fighting began at Fort Sumter.
• Analyze the strengths and weaknesses of each side.
• Explain each side’s basic strategy.
• Summarize the results of the First Battle of Bull Run.
• Evaluate the changes in military technology.
• Explain the importance of Union victories in the West with Confederate victories in the East.
• Explain how the fall of New Orleans helped the Union.
• Document the outcome of the Battle of Antietam.

The Tide of War Turns 1863 – 1865

Students will understand the major events of the Civil War from 1863-1865 leading to Union victory and the effect of this conflict on the country.

• Be aware of the reasons for the call for emancipation.
• Identify the significance of the Emancipation Proclamation.
• Analyze the response to the proclamation.
• Describe the role of African-American soldiers in the war.
• Realize there was growing discontent with the war.
• Explain the anger over the draft laws.
• Describe the economic and social effects of the war in the North and South.
• Evaluate the importance of the Battle of Gettysburg, Siege of Vicksburg, and Sherman’s March to the Sea.
• Trace the Northern Virginia campaign of 1864 to Appomattox.
• Analyze Lee’s surrender at Appomattox.
• Explain the significance of the 13th Amendment.
• Tell the story of Lincoln’s assassination.
• Compare and contrast the economic, physical, and emotional costs of the war on the North and South.

Reconstruction to the Gilded Age 1865 – 1890

Students will evaluate the political and social conflict over how to rebuild the South after the Civil War.

• Analyze the conflict that developed over Reconstruction and identify the goals of the Radical Republicans.
• Explain the impact of the Civil Rights Act of 1866 and the 14th Amendment.
• Evaluate the effects of Reconstruction.
• Critique the impact of land reform, sharecropping, and the contract system.
• Trace the development of the Ku Klux Klan.
• Interpret the impact of Grant’s election and the passage of the 15th Amendment.
• Explain events that led to the end of Reconstruction.
• Analyze the social and political effects of Reconstruction on African Americans.
• Understand the causes and effects of westward expansion.
• Describe U.S. industrialization in the late 19th Century.
• Evaluate the period of the Gilded Age.