



# United States History

8<sup>th</sup> Grade SCPS Pre-IB & Gifted

Milwee Middle School

2017-2018 Course Syllabus

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## Course Overview

8th Grade Pre-IB Prep United States History is designed for the highly motivated student who wishes to pursue the International Baccalaureate Program or Advanced Placement courses in high school. Students will explore the events of U.S. history using documents, images, cartoons and other primary sources along with secondary text. With a more rigorous focus on document based inquiry, the students will examine and analyze the political, economic, technological and social developments of the United States from the **period of colonial settlement through post-Civil War Reconstruction**. Florida's role in our nation's history will also be emphasized. Instruction will focus on students developing an understanding of themes in U.S. history including the impact of expansion, the development of conflicts, the influence of diverse groups on American culture and the impact of world events on American thinking. This course was designed to give students a more in-depth view of U.S. History and includes the development of complex skills in reading, writing and research. Writing in a historical context will be emphasized and students will be expected to engage in extended research and produce writing of significance on a frequent basis. At Milwee Middle, engineering lessons will also be infused throughout the year.

The main textbook for this course is *America: History of Our Nation*. Students will be provided with a hard copy to take home and online access to the textbook. TreeOfEd.com is a virtual resource that will be widely used.

## Class Requirements

As a student in my class, you are required to:

1. Come to class and be on time
2. Come to class prepared everyday with your
  - o Folder with 2 pockets and 3 center prongs (one per semester, so buy 2 now.)
  - o Pen and/or pencil
  - o Notebook paper
3. Show respect for yourself, other students, and the faculty/staff (this includes substitutes!)
4. Always try to do your best!

The school-wide discipline policy will be used to enforce the above requirements, if needed.

**Makeup work:** It is the student's responsibility to get their makeup work the day they return from an absence. According to school-wide policy, students have two (2) days to makeup work after an absence.

## Community Service

Students in the SCPS Pre-IB program are required to participate in community service. Eighth grade students **must earn 24 hours** of community service between the end of 7<sup>th</sup> grade & mid-May 2018. If you would like to qualify for the Presidential Service Award for 50 hours or more of service, please submit your hours by April 1<sup>st</sup>. Also, if you do community service hours at any SCPS school, please sign up to become a SCPS Dividend and log those hours.

## Advanced Placement Skills

The AP History and Social Science Curriculum Alignment Framework identifies four key skills that students need to master to be successful in academically challenging course work, which can prepare them for advanced-level coursework success. These skills include:

- Practice Inquiry
- Identify and interpret information from primary and other sources
- Analyze data from written and visual sources
- Evaluate, apply and clearly present information

## DBQ Project

One of the main components of this course will be the DBQ Project, which is committed to helping teachers implement rigorous writing and thinking activities with students of all skill levels. This project is guided by the 5 core beliefs:

1. All students need to learn how to think
2. Learning to think requires practice
3. Thinking is hard work
4. Thinking is clarified by writing
5. Thinking is for everyone

Through Document Based Questions (DBQs), students develop high-level critical thinking skills through engaging questions and use of primary and secondary sources. Students are given the opportunity to investigate history from a variety of perspectives. DBQs support discussion and debate as students clarify their own ideas and write evidence-based arguments. Learning this way not only deepens student understanding of history, it also builds reading, thinking, and writing skills.

## History Fair:

All 8th grade Pre-IB Prep students are required to complete a History Fair research project. History Fair is an inter-disciplinary program that allows students to broaden their historical experiences and develop necessary research skills that engage them in higher order thinking skills. Students will choose a historical topic related to the annual theme, then conduct primary and secondary research. After analyzing and interpreting their sources, students will draw a conclusion about the significance of their topic and present their work in one of five ways: a paper, an exhibit, a performance, a documentary, or a web site.

Detailed information about the NHD requirements will be provided by the start of 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter and the project will be due in January 2018. For more information in the meantime, please visit [www.nhd.org](http://www.nhd.org).

**The theme for 2018 is “Conflict and Compromise in History.”**

Student Signature:

Parent Signature:



# MILWEE MIDDLE SCHOOL

*Home of the Spartans*

Dear Milwee Parents/Guardians:

Welcome to the 8<sup>th</sup> grade SCPS Pre-International Baccalaureate (Pre-IB) Prep United States History course. This is an exciting opportunity for students to examine history like a historian. With a more rigorous focus on document based inquiry, the students will examine and analyze the political, economic, technological and social developments of the United States from the period of colonial settlement through Reconstruction.

Students taking the Pre-IB Prep United States History course are required to engage in analytical reading and writing assignments. This course is designed to foster critical thinking skills, which are necessary for success in future Pre-IB, International Baccalaureate (IB), and Advanced Placement (AP) courses. The expectations for the Pre-IB Prep students are that they can construct a written argument, analyze written and visual sources, conduct extended research projects and become strong independent readers. All students enrolled in the Pre-IB Prep United States History course will be held accountable for completing work on time, reviewing content at home each evening for a minimum of 10 minutes, and engaging actively in their learning process.

The Pre-IB Prep United States History course is intended to prepare students for advanced-level courses at the high school level, which can include Pre-IB, IB, and AP courses. These programs offer students from ninth to twelfth grade the opportunity to be challenged academically and, in the process, possibly earn college credit. Higher-level courses allow your child to be competitive with other college bound students. Statistics show that students who have taken IB and AP courses in high school are much more likely than their peers to complete a bachelor's degree in four years or less.

Parental guidance in your child's learning process is critical. Parents can support their child by developing daily routines for distraction free review and encouraging independent reading. Daily attendance is essential to student success. Students need to employ the use of a planner in order to maintain organization and keep their deadlines. Parents can assist in the development of their child's worldview by helping students make connections between the content and the current world.

I look forward to working with you and your child. Together we can make this a very productive and successful year.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at: [Jessica\\_day@scps.k12.fl.us](mailto:Jessica_day@scps.k12.fl.us)

Sincerely,

Jessica Day