

## Advanced Placement U.S. History Summer 2017 Coursework

AP U.S. History is a course that requires an in-depth look at more than 500 years of history in a roughly eight month time period. Therefore we have no choice but to dive right into content from the very beginning of the school year. In order to assist this process, it is necessary for the students to complete summer work. This work not only begins the required content for the class, but serves as your introduction to the class and your teacher. Please take this seriously this summer as the grades you receive for this work are opportunities to begin the year in a very positive manner. Be certain to complete **both** assignments! Those of you taking Honors English II will also be using *1776* in the English classroom. The *1776* assignment is due on the first day of class. The *Adams vs. Jefferson: The Tumultuous Election Of 1800* assignment will be read in segments beginning in late September. We will be using the *Adams* book for content but also for developing skills in the reading of higher-level non-fiction.

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**Assignment 1:** Acquire/purchase *1776* by David McCullough (Simon and Schuster, 2006).

David McCullough is perhaps the most respected modern American author of history. You have almost certainly also heard his voice through his talents as a narrator for numerous significant documentaries produced over the last three decades. *1776* focuses on perhaps the most important year of the American Revolution and includes military, political and social history of both sides in this epic struggle.

**Read:** The entire book. I am aware of the online summaries/downloads that exist and these will not be nearly enough to fulfill the requirements for this text and should NOT be used.

**Write: First,** as you read the book, you will encounter numerous *significant* events. Consider the meaning of the word “significance” as it relates to historical events. This is the key not only to this assignment, but to greater success in AP US History in the coming year. You will not just sit and memorize facts but will instead be expected to look at events and people through the lens of **significance**. What does this mean?

**Second,** you should identify the five (5) most **significant** events/happenings within the course of this book. Please avoid focusing *only* on military engagements and battles to the exclusion of individual actions or inactions that helped shape our movement toward independence. Obviously, this is your opinion. However you are expected to **justify** this opinion. For each event, you are to write a paragraph, using appropriate English, which provides your rationale for your selection which explains **significance**. Be sure to avoid anything but third person writing! You must also reference the pages of the book where the events occur and it may be appropriate to quote significant statements or segments of the text. *You are required to select events from all sections of the book to assist in showing that you have completely read it.* Must be typed, 12 point font for all assignments.

**Third,** you are to write a one to two page essay that supports the statement that **1776 was an extremely significant year in American history**. Please be sure to write this in your very best formal English as this will be a part of the grade assigned to the essay.

**Quiz: Fourth,** you will be taking an open note quiz on the book within the first week. This is only a quiz designed to assure you have read. It will not be overly challenging if you have indeed read, but feel free to take notes as you read and use them in class.

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**BE SURE TO BEGIN ASSIGNMENT 2 ON THE REVERSE OF THIS PAGE!**

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**Assignment 2:** Acquire/purchase *Adams vs. Jefferson: The Tumultuous Election Of 1800* by John E. Ferling (Oxford University Press, 2005)

This book focuses on what some historians call the most important presidential election in American history. However, this is not just focused on the eventual election of (*spoiler alert*) Thomas Jefferson but also on the emergence of the “new” United States under the Constitution. You will learn about the formation of the government and the emerging political factions that threaten to pull the new nation apart. You will also be exposed to something unheard of in 1801 but taken for granted today—the peaceful transition of power between two competing and angry political parties. This content is extremely important to your success in the Federalist Period unit and later next year on the AP exam.

**Read:** You are responsible for the entire book. However, I only encourage you to begin the book over the summer. This is a shorter but more complex read and part of the first quarter is developing skills in reading non-fiction.

**Also:** It is extremely important that this book be read in its entirety. However, it will be read in segments that will require that you answer specific questions presented to you during September and October. You will also be preparing questions that will be used as a part of a Socratic seminar once we have completed the book. Initial due dates will be later in September so please have the book and be prepared to read. Feel free to begin over the summer if you wish.

In addition, during the third and fourth quarter of the school year, students will be reading a book which will begin to serve as both enrichment of content and the beginning of review for the AP exam in May. Therefore, you will need to acquire/purchase *American Colonies: The Settling of North America* by Alan Taylor (Penguin Books, 2001). I suggest that you find a current student of this class who will no doubt be happy to give you this book or sell it to you for a very cheap price.

I encourage you to avoid procrastination and to “attack” these assignments earlier in the summer. Late August arrives earlier than you might expect and you do not want to be scrambling and the end of the summer!

*If you have questions about this assignment, please feel free to email me at [pchidester@wscloud.org](mailto:pchidester@wscloud.org). I will respond as quickly as possible but do not be surprised if it takes a day or two as I will be enjoying the summer*

**Grading Rubric for 1776 paragraphs**

Each paragraph will be scored for the following components:

Missing

Incomplete

Fully complete

1. Student has identified and explained an important event
2. Student has cited the specific portion of the book with quote if appropriate.
3. Student fully justifies reasoning for selection of event. In other words, explain the **significance**.
4. Student uses appropriate English writing to explain event

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