

AP US Summer Assignment 2015 - 16

Due: Wednesday, September 16th

The AP U.S. History course, seeks to apprentice students to the practice of history by explicitly stressing the development of historical thinking skills while learning about the past. Students best develop historical thinking skills by investigating the past in ways that reflect the discipline of history, most particularly through the exploration and interpretation of a rich array of primary sources and secondary texts, and through the regular development of historical argumentation in writing. For this summer assignment students will investigate and formulate historical arguments about SOME of the major developments in U.S. history.

Summer Assignment Directions

For the Summer Assignment you will write **THREE 2-page position papers**. Choose one essay question from each of the “Big Four” Thinking Skills (detailed below). In your essay, you will address the key components of the question, as well as clearly provide evidence of your knowledge of the thinking skill. You must include reference to at least one primary source and one secondary source for each essay. (These must be used properly according to MLA format and listed at the end of each essay using [MLA format](#)).

Each position paper must have an introduction with a clear thesis (please underline), multiple paragraphs of support, and a significant conclusion. You should be prepared to share and explain your essays at the start of the school year.

The summer assignment will be turned in on **Wednesday, September 16th**. You will provide your teacher with a hard copy of the assignment. (Times New Roman, 12 pt. Font, 1.5 Spacing) You will also be asked to submit your work in to Turnitin.com. Details will be provided by your teacher at the start of the school year.

Note: HSE students can pick up a textbook in Room 550; HSW students can pick up a textbook in Room 243 before Friday, June 12th. The textbook is not necessary to complete the assignment.

The College Board has identified Nine Historical Thinking Skills

1. Historical Argumentation: Historical thinking involves the ability to define and frame a question about the past and to address that question by constructing an argument. A plausible and persuasive argument requires a clear, comprehensive and analytical thesis, supported by relevant historical evidence—not simply evidence that supports a preferred or preconceived position. Additionally, argumentation involves the capacity to describe, analyze and evaluate the arguments of others in light of available evidence.

2. Use of Relevant Historical Evidence: Historical thinking involves the ability to identify, describe and evaluate evidence about the past from diverse sources (including written documents, works of art, archaeological artifacts, oral traditions and other primary sources), with respect to content, authorship, purpose, format and audience. It involves the capacity to extract useful information, make supportable inferences and draw appropriate conclusions from historical evidence while also understanding such evidence in its context, recognizing its limitations and assessing the points of view that it reflects.

3. Historical Causation: Historical thinking involves the ability to identify, analyze and evaluate multiple cause-and-effect relationships in a historical context, distinguishing between the long-term and proximate.

4. Patterns of Continuity and Change Over Time: Historical thinking involves the ability to recognize, analyze and evaluate the dynamics of historical continuity and change over periods of time of varying lengths, as well as relating these patterns to larger historical processes or themes.

5. Periodization: Historical thinking involves the ability to describe, analyze, evaluate and construct models of historical periodization that historians use to categorize events into discrete blocks and to identify turning points, recognizing that the choice of specific dates favors one narrative, region or group over another narrative, region or group; therefore, changing the periodization can change a historical narrative. Moreover, the particular circumstances and contexts in which individual historians work and write shape their interpretations and modeling of past events.

6. Compare and Contrast: Historical thinking involves the ability to describe, compare and evaluate multiple historical developments within one society, one or more developments across or between different societies, and in various chronological and geographical contexts. It also involves the ability to identify, compare and evaluate multiple perspectives on a given historical experience.

7. Contextualization: Historical thinking involves the ability to connect historical developments to specific circumstances in time and place, and to broader regional, national or global processes.

8. Interpretation: Historical thinking involves the ability to describe, analyze, evaluate and create diverse interpretations of the past — as revealed through primary and secondary historical sources — through analysis of evidence, reasoning, contexts, points of view and frames of reference.

9. Synthesis: Historical thinking involves the ability to arrive at meaningful and persuasive understandings of the past by applying all the other historical thinking skills, by drawing appropriately on ideas from different fields of inquiry or disciplines and by creatively fusing disparate, relevant (and perhaps contradictory) evidence from primary sources and secondary works. Additionally, synthesis may involve applying insights about the past to other historical contexts or circumstances, including the present.

Your assignment will focus on the “The Big Four”

1. Historical Causation (Cause and Effect): CE

2. Continuity and Change over Time: COT

3. Compare and Contrast: CC

4. Periodization: P or Take a Position: TAP

Directions: Choose 3 of the 4 skills listed below. Then choose one essay question for each skill you chose; you cannot do any one skill twice. You will write a total of 3 position papers (2 pages each).

1. Historical Causation (Cause and Effect): CE

Essay Question Choices

1. Explain the major causes and consequence of the American Civil War.
2. Evaluate the extent to which westward expansion led to the development of sectionalism prior to 1860.
3. Explain the three most important causes leading to the Regan Revolution in 1980.
4. Explain the major political and economic causes and consequences for the growth of big business in American society from 1870 to 1900.

2. Continuity and Change over Time: COT

Essay Question Choices

1. Identify and analyze the changing role of women within American society from the American Revolution to the Civil War.
2. Evaluate the extent to which trans-Atlantic interactions from 1600 to 1763 contributed to maintaining continuity as well as fostered change in labor systems in the British North American colonies.
3. Evaluate the extent to which increasing integration of the U.S. into the world economy contributed to maintaining continuity as well as fostering change in U.S. society from 1945 to the present.
4. Evaluate major changes and continuities in the social and economic experiences of African Americans who migrated from the rural South to urban areas in the North in the period 1910–1930.

3. Compare and Contrast: CC

Essay Question Choices

1. Compare and contrast the New England colonies with the colonies in the Chesapeake.
2. Immigration has always played an important role in the history of the United States, compare immigration during the 1840's / 50's with immigration during the 1870's / 80's.
3. Compare and contrast the New England colonies with the colonies in the Chesapeake. Be sure to address two of the three characteristics in your answer: political, economic, and social patterns.
4. Immigration has always played an important role in the history of the United States. Compare and contrast immigration during the 1840's / 50's with immigration during the 1870's / 80's. Be sure to address two of the three in your answer: patterns of settlement, reasons for immigrating, reactions of nativist.

4. Periodization: P or Take a Position: TAP

Essay Question Choices

1. To what extent were the Articles of Confederation successful in dealing with the problems faced by the new nation after the American Revolution?
2. Evaluate the extent to which the Spanish-American War was a turning point in foreign policy in the United States.
3. To what extent was the Containment Doctrine, after the Second World War, successful in dealing with the problems during the Cold War? Be sure to address both domestic and foreign issues.
4. Historians have argued that the Era of Good Feelings was a misnomer. To what extent is this true politically and economically?



Primary Source vs. Secondary Source

A primary source is a document or physical object which was written or created during the time under study. These sources were present during an experience or time period and offer an inside view of a particular event. Some types of primary sources include:

- ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS (excerpts or translations acceptable): Diaries, speeches, manuscripts, letters, interviews, news film footage, autobiographies, official records
- CREATIVE WORKS: Poetry, drama, novels, music, art
- RELICS OR ARTIFACTS: Pottery, furniture, clothing, buildings

Examples of primary sources include:

- *Diary of Anne Frank* - Experiences of a Jewish family during WWII
- The Constitution of Canada - Canadian History
- A journal article reporting NEW research or findings
- Weavings and pottery - Native American history
- *Plato's Republic* - Women in Ancient Greece

What is a secondary source?

A secondary source interprets and analyzes primary sources. These sources are one or more steps removed from the event. Secondary sources may have pictures, quotes or graphics of primary sources in them. Some types of secondary sources include:

- PUBLICATIONS: Textbooks, magazine articles, histories, criticisms, commentaries, encyclopedias

Examples of secondary sources include:

- A journal/magazine article which interprets or reviews previous findings
- A history textbook
- A book about the effects of WWI

Each essay/position paper will be graded according to the following checklist; each essay will be worth **20 points**.

- ✓ Accurate and relevant content/information
- ✓ Addresses the historical thinking skill
- ✓ Includes appropriate sources (both primary and secondary)
- ✓ Uses proper MLA citations
- ✓ Demonstrates a logical, clear plan of organization and includes an introduction and a conclusion