US History Individual Study Projects

**Directions:** You will choose one of the following Units/Time Periods of study. (1) You will select one of the following project choices below. (2) You will need to complete a bibliography for your assignment (AT Least 2 print sources and 2 electronic scholarly sources). (3) Each student will complete a Statement of Learning for your assignment (AT Least 1 page per student). (4) You will present your project to the class on the day you sign up for.

Units of Study

1. Gilded Age & The Rise of Big Business (1865-1920)
2. The Progressive Era (1890-1920)
3. Imperialism & World War I (1865-1920)
4. Roaring Twenties, Great Depression, and New Deal (1920-1940)
5. World War II (1941-1945)
6. Cold War Foreign Policy (1945-1991)
7. Cold War Domestic Policy & Civil Rights Movement (1945-1991)
8. The End of the Cold War & Contemporary America (1989-Present)

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| **Create a song and music video**  Create a song and music video. Lyrics must be original, but the tune may follow a song already in existence. You will write out your lyrics along with pictures and graphics that help bring the lyrics to life. You will put all of this information within a disc jacket for your CD/DVD. You will also create a music video to bring your song to life for the class. | **Create a Soundtrack Album**  Create a 10 song soundtrack album for a unit of study in American history. Your song selections may be symbolic pieces or period pieces that encapsulate the mood or events of the times. You will then create a disc jacket for your soundtrack that includes a page for each song. Each song page should include the artist, song titles, and lyrics of the songs as well as a thorough explanation for why the song represents the time period. | **Create an Historical Skit**  Create an historical skit on a particular event during your assigned time period. You will need to type out your dialogue. Your dialogue should be realistic, historically accurate and should attempt to utilize primary sources whenever possible. Be sure to keep your dialogue school appropriate. You may choose to dress up in time period attire. |
|  | **STUDENT CHOICE**  **50 Pts. (Product, Presentation, & Creativity)**  **30 Pts (Historical Accuracy)**  **20 Pts (Statement of Learning)** | **Redesign Mount Rushmore**  You have been assigned by the US Government to redesign Mount Rushmore to make people better relate with the individuals it features. Select 4 individuals and write up a persuasive defense for why those individuals should be featured on the new Mount Rushmore. You need to be prepared to defend these choices in class during your presentation. You will also provide the class with a blueprint of the new Mount Rushmore. |
| **Create a Review Game**  Create a review game for your assigned time period. You need to have clear and concise directions that explain the purpose, rules, and dynamics of the game. Games should be original and challenging in nature. The games should be neatly packaged and ready for a group of your classmates to play. | **Create a Special Edition of TIME**  Create your own TIME Magazine that focuses on a year of your choice (within your assigned unit). The magazine should include at least 10 pages (5 articles and 5 advertisements). You should include topics on culture, people, current events, etc. Your magazine needs a cover and should be bounded. | **Greatest American Award (Cereal Box)**  You will create a cereal box featuring your nominee for the greatest American. Your cereal box should include a portrait or painting of your individual. The back of the cereal box should include your nomination speech for this individual, explaining why he/she should be the Greatest American of his/her generation. The side panels should include major achievements, personal profiles, a time line of major events and any other relevant information that will support your argument. |

**Project Option: Create a Song and Music Video**

**Objective:** Create a 4-5 minute song and music video that represents a specific topic (person, event, group etc) for your assigned era in US History. **Be sure that your lyrics do not include any inappropriate language or themes.**

**Requirements:**

1. Creativity and Originality (20 points)

-Create lyrics and music focusing upon your specific topic or specific era. Lyrics must be original; the tune may be original or may follow the pattern of a song already in existence.

1. Historical Accuracy (30 points)

-Song lyrics are historically accurate and relevant to the time period. The song lyrics have a message and demonstrate an understanding of the historical time period.

-You must provide a bibliography of sources that you use to find the information for your time period. The minimum requirements are:

-2 book or periodical sources (NOT Including Textbooks/Review Books)

-2 internet sources (Scholarly resources)

1. Disc Jacket to your CD/DVD (10 points)

-Print out the lyrics to the song with pictures to help illustrate the subject. Put all written information in a CD Jacket.

1. Quality of the Music Video (20 points)

-Make a music video of the song created. Remember that it must be school appropriate. You will present this video to the class on presentation day.

1. Statement of Learning (20 points) (1 per student)

- A One page explanation must accompany your project. The following should be included:

-Why was this topic of interest to you?

-Specifically, what did you learn? What information was new to you?

-What surprised you the most about this topic?

-Why is this particular era/unit of US History important?



**Project Option: Create a Soundtrack for Your Unit**

**Objective:** You are to choose ***ten songs*** that represent your unit of study. Your song choices can either be symbolic or period pieces that encapsulate the mood or events of the times. **YOU MAY NOT USE SONGS CONTAINING INAPPROPRIATE LANGUAGE.** You will then create a CD disc jacket which will include 1 page for each song. You will include song titles, artists, lyrics, and a justification for why the song deserves to be on a soundtrack for your assigned unit.

**Requirements:**

1. Creativity and Originality (20 points)

-Amasses an interesting collection of songs which demonstrate an understanding of the time period and the issues within the unit of study.

1. Historical Accuracy (30 points)

-Song titles, artists, and lyrics are all accurate.

-Justification for inclusion of song in the soundtrack is historically relevant.

-You must provide a bibliography of sources that you use to find the information for your time period. The minimum requirements are:

-2 book or periodical sources (NOT Including Textbooks/Review Books)

-2 internet sources (Scholarly resources)

1. Disc Jacket to your CD/DVD (10 points)

-Disc jacket includes one page for each song with song titles, artists, lyrics, and justification. Cover art is interesting and related to the time period.

1. Quality of the Presentation (20 points)

-Select 3 songs to showcase to the class and be prepared to explain why each song is relevant to the study of your assigned time period.

1. Statement of Learning (20 points) (1 per student)

- A One page explanation must accompany your project. The following should be included:

-Why was this topic of interest to you?

-Specifically, what did you learn? What information was new to you?

-What surprised you the most about this topic?

-Why is this particular era/unit of US History important?





**Project Option: Historical Skit**

**Objective:** You are to create a 10 minute historical skit which illustrates either a major event during your time period or an overview of the time period. **Be sure that your dialogue is school appropriate.** You may choose to dress up in time period attire and include music in your historical skit.

**Requirements:**

1. Creativity and Originality (20 points)

-Historical skit is both educational and entertaining.

1. Historical Accuracy (30 points)

-Dialogue is historically accurate and includes primary source excerpts throughout.

-Chronology of events is accurate.

-Events, People, and Groups are accurately portrayed and dialogue demonstrates a clear understanding of the historical issues of the assigned time period.

-You must provide a bibliography of sources that you use to find the information for your time period. The minimum requirements are:

-2 book or periodical sources (NOT Including Textbooks/Review Books)

-2 internet sources (Scholarly resources)

1. Dialogue (10 points)

-Dialogue is clear and direct.

-Dialogue needs to include primary source excerpts wherever possible.

1. Quality of the Presentation (20 points)

-Clear preparation apparent throughout the historical skit presentation.

-Students interact with each fluidly and involve other students in the class.

1. Statement of Learning (20 points) (1 per student)

- A One page explanation must accompany your project. The following should be included:

-Why was this topic of interest to you?

-Specifically, what did you learn? What information was new to you?

-What surprised you the most about this topic?

-Why is this particular era/unit of US History important?

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**Project: Create an AP-Style DBQ**

**Objective:** You will create a DBQ based on your assigned theme, a chosen historical era (1950-2010) and the skill of continuity and change over time.

**Requirements:**

1. The Question (15 points)

-Question should be open-ended and multi-faceted. Think of broad questions that cover themes or time periods.

-The layout of your DBQ should replicate exactly the format of the DBQ from the AP Exam.

1. The Documents (30 points)

-Select 7 to 8 documents that illustrate some aspect of the question, add insight or information to the questions, and/or challenge or call into question the traditional or usual historical interpretation of the question. The documents that you select must include:

a. One visual source (cartoon or illustration)

b. One printed material source (newspaper or magazine article or textbook source

c. One personal document (letter or diary entry)

d. One public record document (government document)

e. One political document (speech)

f. One chart, graph or map

-Attach your bibliography sheet referencing where you found your documents. You need to have a source for each of your documents. This could be from a document reader, an online archive, library database, etc.)

1. Prior Knowledge & Document Information Lists (20 points)

-Create a list of outside information that students could use in answering the question. Your list must include a minimum of 15 possible pieces of evidence. Outside information is any information that relates to the question and can be included in the answer but is not specifically contained in the documents.

- Create a page that related the ways in which you would expect the document to be used in terms of “given information” and “information that can be inferred.”

1. A Sample Thesis Statement and Outline(15 points)

-Thesis is well developed and provides the reader with an understanding of where the essay is heading.

-Outline includes both outside information and information from the documents.

1. Statement of Learning (20 points) (1 per student)

- A One page explanation must accompany your project. The following should be included:

-Why was this topic of interest to you?

-Specifically, what did you learn? What information was new to you?

-What surprised you the most about this topic?

- Why is this particular theme of US History important?

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**Project Option: Redesign Mount Rushmore**

**Objective:** The US government has commissioned you to design a new Mount Rushmore monument for a new group of Americans from your unit of study. (1) Select the four best examples of your group (for example, Mount Rushmore is four great presidents) (2) Be prepared to defend your choices as well as answer questions about why you did not choose other people. (3) Design a simple blueprint of the new four face monument and share it with the class. You may use images from the internet. Good luck!

Groups to Consider:

Women

Native Americans

African Americans

Labor Union Leaders

Presidents (other than the Mt. Rushmore Presidents)

Congressmen (non-presidential)

Industrialists

Generals

Cultural Icons

Religious Leaders

Scientists/Inventors

1. Justification of Selections (25 points)

- You will need to write a one page justification for each individual on the new Mt. Rushmore.

-Be sure to explain why these individuals belong on the monument.

-Highlight their major achievements and accomplishments.

-Focus on what they have done to benefit the United States and its people.

-Focus on why they are remembered in US History.

-Be sure to conclude with a discussion of the individual’s legacy.

1. Blue Print of new Mt. Rushmore Monument (10 points)

-Can be hand-drawn or computer-based.

- Be sure to model your monument after the original Mt. Rushmore.

1. Historically Accuracy (30 points)

- Information in justification must be historically accurate. Attention to detail in this regard is very important. You must provide a bibliography of sources used in this project. The minimum requirements are:

-2 book or periodical sources (NOT including textbooks and review books)

-2 reliable internet sources (Scholarly resources)

1. Presentation and Defense of Selections (15 points)

* Present project on your chosen day and be ready to answer questions regarding your selection.

1. Statement of Learning (20 points) (1 per student)

A One page explanation must accompany your project. The following should be included:

-Why was this topic of interest to you?

-Specifically, what did you learn? What information was new to you?

-What surprised you the most about this topic?

- Why is this particular era/unit of US History important?

**Project Option: Create A Review Game**

**Objective:** Students will create a game based on some aspect of their unit of study. The scope of this project is wide-ranging. You may be very specific or you may want your game to reflect the entire discussion of the unit. Decades and events are easier topics to select. The key to creating an effective educational game is clear directions, fun and challenging objectives, and a neat and attractive package.

**Requirements:**

1. Packaging and Game Design (20 points)

-Tastefully presented and packaged- neatness, design, overall appearance.

-You will have a group of your classmates play the game to make sure that the directions are easy to follow.

-Clear, concise, easy to follow directions that clearly and completely explain rules of the game.

1. Creativity and Originality (20 points)

-Your project can reflect originality and creativity in terms of how your game is organized and played, and on the theme upon which it is based. Games that are simplistic are not going to rate as high a score as games that are more detailed and challenging in nature. (You may model your game after an existing game.)

1. Historical Accuracy (30 points)

-The project must be historically accurate. Attention to detail in this regard is very important.

-Bibliography of sources used-minimum requirements:

- 2 book or periodical sources (NOT including textbooks and review books)

- 2 internet sources

1. Presentation of Game (10 points)

* Game flows well and has clear direction.
* Historically appealing with emphasis on historical understanding and inquiry.
* Game was tested before presentation day.

1. Page of Explanation/Statement of Learning (20 points) (1 per student)

-A one page explanation must accompany your project. The following should be included:

-Why was this topic of interest to you?

-Specifically, what did you learn? What information was new to you?

-What surprised you most about this topic?

- Why is this particular era/unit of US History important?

**Project Option: Create A Special Edition of TIME Magazine**

**Objective:** Students are to create a special edition of TIME magazine for a specific year within their assigned era of study. Every so often TIME selects a year that is monumental in shaping or changing the way the United States thinks of itself. These special editions focused on the culture, people, events, and politics of the time.

**Requirements:**

1. News Articles/Magazine Content (50 points TOTAL)

Select a year which you believe is monumental in your assigned unit of study- it can be any year within your unit. You can choose to complete this magazine chronologically or thematically. Your magazine should be in color and should be bound. You may also choose to include a few (no more than 5) advertisements for products that were popular during this time. Your completed magazine should be a minimum of 10 pages in length (5 one page articles; 5 one page ads).

1. Introduction to the Year (Article 1) (10 points)

-Discuss why this year is important enough to have a magazine dedicated to it?

-Why should this year be considered a “landmark year” in history?

1. Culture of the time (Article 2) (10 points)

-Select 3-4 cultural events that shape what happened in that year

-This could be music, literature, art, trends, theatre, sports, television, etc

1. Politics of the time (Article 3) (10 points)

-Look at the politics of the United States at this time, who is the president, Take note of accomplishments/failures Is it an election year? Who is running, platforms, etc?

-Look at the politics of the world. Are there any key foreign dignitaries who are making news?

1. Current Events (Article 4)(10 points)

-Select 4-5 events that happen during this year which the world needs to remember. What happened? Why did they happen? How was the world affected because of them? Why do we remember them today?

e) Important People (5 points)

-Select 3-4 important individuals which shaped this year and made an impact on it. Why are they remarkable? Why should we remember them?

1. Cover (5 points)

-Create a cover for your magazine that contains images and a title that summarize the entire year.

-Be sure to model it after TIME Magazine.

2) Historical Accuracy (30 points)

-The project must be historically accurate. Attention to detail in this regard is very important.

-Bibliography of sources used-minimum requirements:

- 2 book or periodical sources (NOT including textbooks and review books)

- 2 internet sources (Scholarly Resources)

3) Page of Explanation/Statement of Learning (20 points) (1 per student)

-A one page explanation must accompany your project. Following should be included:

-Why was this topic of interest to you?

-Specifically, what did you learn? What information was new to you?

-What surprised you most about this topic?

- Why is this particular era/unit of US History important?

**Project Option: Create a Cereal Box (Greatest American Award)**

**Objective:** The Association of History Academics (AHA) has announced a contest for the Greatest American. AHA has entered into an agreement with General Mills, Inc., to feature this individual on a box of Wheaties which will be designed by the nominating committee for the honoree. Your job is to serve as the chairperson of the nominating committee for an individual of your choosing (within your unit of study).

**Requirements:**

1) Nominating Speech (Back Panel of Cereal Box)(30 points)

-Write up a nominating speech which clearly states why this person deserves to win the award. Be specific.

- Highlight their major achievements and accomplishments.

- Focus on what they have done to benefit the United States and its people.

-Focus on why they are remembered in US History.

- Be sure to conclude with a discussion of the individual’s legacy.

2) Facts and profile of your Nominee (Side Panels of Cereal Box) (10 points)

- Create a list of facts and a profile of your individual to include on the side panels of your cereal box.

-Time Line of major events in the person’s life.

3) Cereal Box Design (10 points)

-Design the cereal box. You may take creative liberties with the traditional Wheaties design, but the cereal name must be prominent. A picture or portrait of your nominee must be on the front of the box. The back must contain your nomination speech, as well as facts and some sort of profile on the nominee.

4) Historical Accuracy (30 points)

- Information on side panels and facts in nominating speech must be historically accurate. Attention to detail in this regard is very important. You must provide a bibliography of sources used in this project. The minimum requirements are:

-2 book or periodical sources (NOT including textbooks and review books)

-2 reliable internet sources (Scholarly resources)

5) Statement of Learning (20 points) (1 per student)

-A one-page explanation must accompany your project. The following should be included:

-Why was this topic of interest to you?

-Specifically, what did you learn? What information was new to you?

-What surprised you the most about this topic?

- Why is this particular era/unit of US History important?