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AP Social Studies Themes and Skills

AP US History has seven themes while AP Government has five. The themes for AP Government appear in AP US History but become more focused.

1. American Identities: the development of American nationalism, the greater American identity, and the emergence of group identities.

Example: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2. American Economies and Technologies: how various economies have been structured over time, as well as how technological change has promoted and/or affected economic development.

Example: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

3. American Populations: the human geography of the United States.

Example: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

4. Political Power in the US: the role of government, the people’s understanding of its nature, and how political processes have been shaped.

Example: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

5. The US in World Affairs: how the United States has interacted with various peoples and governments.

Example: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

6. American Geography and Environments: how the physical geography (climate, natural resources, plants, animals, etc.) has helped shaped United States history.

Example: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

7. American Culture and Conviction: “the significance of ideas, religious beliefs, and cultural values as formative influences.”

Example: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

The skills required for AP US History will always be used, whether they are recognized or not. They are required for analyzing historical content and making connections between events in the past, as well as the themes listed above. These are skills you have probably already practiced but may not know what they are called off hand.

1. Identifying cause and effect: determining relationships and how “historical actions and forces influence each other.”

2. Change and Continuity: identifying patterns over a period of time and how specific changes and continuities are related to broad historical events, themes, and processes; for reference, a change is when something becomes different while a continuity is when something remains the same or similar to the original in two or more ways which provides a connection between the past version and the present.

3. Sequencing: organizing events into meaningful stretches of time, and distinguishing their characteristics from others and other possibilities, requiring specific identifying information.

4. Comparing historical events: relating and contrasting events across time and/or geographical location creating a context by which to evaluate them.

5. Historical trends: connecting specific events to wider historical processes and showing how they are related.

6. Creating and assessing historical arguments: understanding and recognizing the components of an effective argument to the point of creating them and evaluating the arguments of others.

7. Data Analysis: assessing the significance of various forms of historical quantitative and spatial evidence (charts, maps, graphs, statistics, finances, etc.) to determine its value to a historical argument.

8. Interpreting the past: understand how perspectives are shaped by internal and external circumstances to leave many forms of interpretation for the same event.

9. Synthesizing historical evidence: using multiple pieces of evidence, various media, primary and secondary sources, etc. to create compelling historical arguments. This is slightly different from the synthesis that will be expected on DBQs.

The skills for AP Government are slightly less vague than those for AP US History, but will seem very similar to each other at first glance. However, it is expected that the skills from AP US History will continue to be used as needed (especially change and continuity and synthesis).

1. Describe and explain constitutional and political institutions, principles, processes, models, and beliefs.

2. Explain connections among political behavior, political institutions, beliefs, and cultural factors.

3. Read, analyze, and interpret quantitative data to draw conclusions about political principles, behaviors, processes, and outcomes.

4. Read, analyze, and interpret qualitative sources.

5. Develop an argument about political principles, processes, behaviors, and outcomes.

Activity 1: Read Chapter one of your textbook and identify themes by using examples from the text. APUSH students are required to find two examples of each theme, AP Government students are required to find two examples of each theme and additional examples of any government theme until the chart is filled in. Identify the theme in the first column, the support from the text in the second with citation (page number), and your explanation of how this passage exemplifies the theme in the third column. (Theme identification and support)

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| Theme | Text Used | Explanation |
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Activity 2: Use your textbook to answer the following questions that focus on specific skills. (Skill demonstration)

APUSH Chapter 1

Cause and Effect: Given an event, explain either the cause or the effect.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Cause | Effect |
| Due to low sea levels, a land bridge appeared between Asia and North America during the Ice Age. | 1. |
| Corn was the first staple crop in the Americas. | 2. |
| There were no complex nation-states comparable to the Aztecs in North America. | 3. |
| 4. | European explorers began to look for new trade routes to cut out middlemen and keep products from the East relatively cheap. |
| 5. | Spain became the dominant colonizing power, and continued to explore the Americas for the next century. |

Historical Trends: Identify and explain what connects the terms below using multiple complete sentences.

6. The Columbian Exchange, middlemen.

7. The plantation system, the encomienda system.

Arguments: Create or evaluate an argument based on what you have read.

8. Create an argument for the following question: The landing of Columbus in the New World did more good than harm in the long run.

9. Evaluate the argument based on what you have read: The Spanish needed to secure their lands in the New World against the French and English to make sure they remained the top world power, to increase the money supply, and to create a new Christian world.

Data Analysis: Look at the map on page 18 and answer the questions below using multiple complete sentences.

10. How do Portuguese claims compare to Spanish claims?

11. Why was it crucial to find new trade routes to Asia?

12. What is different about the routes of the Spanish and the Portuguese compared to the British and French?

Change and Continuity Over Time: Given the topic, identify two changes and two continuities.

13. Trade

14. Agriculture

15. Government

Activity 2: Use your textbook to answer the following questions that focus on specific skills. (Skill demonstration)

AP Government Chapter 1

1. What is political participation?

2. Why should a government maintain a national defense?

3. What are policymaking institutions?

4. What is needed for democracy to happen?

5. Describe the three theories of American democracy.

6. What does pluralism suggest about American culture?

7. How does democracy impact the policymaking system?

8. How are the challenges of democracy reflective of American political behavior and/or culture?

9. Look at the chart on page 13. Do you agree or disagree with the question that was asked? Why?

10. Look at the chart on page 19. What do the results of this chart mean for American egalitarianism?

11. Look at the cartoon on page 14. What characteristics of American political culture are displayed? How do you know?

12. Look at the political cartoon on page 21. How does this cartoon demonstrate both individualism and culture war?

13. Develop an argument, giving at least three supports: Is there a culture war in the US currently?

14. Develop an argument, giving at least three supports: Which theory of American democracy exists in the US?

15. Develop an argument, giving at least three supports: Which is more important to American political and cultural identity, populism or individualism?

APUSH Chapter 2

Cause and Effect: Given an event, explain either the cause or the effect.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Cause | Effect |
| 1. | England becomes the dominant power along the Atlantic, while Spain maintains its current empire. |
| The Virginia Charter extended the rights of Englishmen abroad to promote the creation of new English colonies in the New World. | 2. |
| 3. | Large-scale European colonization change the lives of Native Americans creating “unprecedented demographic and cultural transformations.” |
| Both slavery and a primitive forma of self-government were established in Virginia in 1619. | 4. |
| 5. | Georgia becomes the last of the thirteen original colonies, acting as a buffer and providing “a vital link in imperial defense.” |

Sequencing: Place the events listed below in order and explain their significance to the colonial foundings. You will need to write out the whole event in the chart.

* The defeat of the Spanish Armada
* Tobacco becomes the staple crop of Virginia
* Joint-stock companies are more successful than individual businesses
* The Maryland Act of Toleration
* Carolina splits into North and South

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Year | Event | Significance |
|  | 6. |  |
|  | 7. |  |

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|  | 7. |  |
|  | 8. |  |
|  | 9. |  |

Data Analysis: Look at the chart on page 39 and answer the questions below using multiple complete sentences.

10. What is significant about who founded each colony? What does this tell you about colonial life?

11. Using this information, how successful were joint-stock companies in the colonies? How do you know?

12. Why would it be better to be a royal colony?

Comparison: Using what you have read between chapters one and two, compare the given topics on your own paper using a chart or Venn diagram.

13. North and South Carolina

14. Reasons for Spanish colonization and reasons for English colonization.

Arguments: Create or evaluate an argument based on what you have read.

15. How do the “three D’s” (page 33) apply to the Jamestown colony?

Note-taking

DO NOT COPY: paraphrase or reword important points from both text and Power Points.

Ask yourself questions: if there is something you do not understand, come up with specific questions for yourself to answer later about that thing or questions specifically related to what you do not understand.

Summarize: make sure you know what you have read by summarizing each major section or topic in your own words, this should be a short paragraph (3-5 sentences).

Vocabulary: if you encounter a word you don’t know, look it up and use it in a sentence for future reference.

Use what works for you: if you hate Cornell notes, don’t use them. If you hate bullet points, don’t use them. Find what works for you and stick with it. Your notes are your notes, you make them to help you.

Activity 3: Read the passage below and take notes.

The sixteenth-century English intellect had plenty of fare for imaginative rumination. Sir Thomas More’s *Utopia*, translated into English in 1551, beckoned with its perfect society in Paradise, a small island somewhere in the New World. Richard Hakluyt interviewed many of the sailors and adventurers to those new lands and his edited travelogues of the 1580’s sparked expectations of wealth and plunder beyond anyone’s dreams. Even William Shakespeare contributed to this romantic geography with the captivating beauty of Prospero’s island in *The Tempest*.

The fantasy of far-away visions had a particular appeal to the residents of a troubled, turbulent England. The British Isles (and most of Europe) had rebounded from the catastrophic social and economic effects of the Black Death two centuries earlier and land was at a population-boom premium. Increased prosperity brought increased trade, and worldwide mercantile networks and commercial expansion were underway. A primary English contribution to this new market system was wool, a commodity that made the conversion of formerly open feudal farmlands to the enclosed pasture profitable. Displaced peasants left the countryside and moved to major cities like London in search of livelihood, and the ranks of the urban poor swelled.

Also in the sixteenth century, Henry VIII broke his country’s ties with the Catholic Church and established the Church of England with himself as head. Although this English chapter of the Protestant Reformation had more to do with dynastic succession and Henry’s hope for a son than theological dispute, his actions nonetheless loosed religious dissent and sectarianism in his kingdom. The eventual ascension of his Catholic daughter, Mary, re-established Catholicism in England for a time until Elizabeth I severed ties with Rome a second time in 1558 and rekindled religious differences anew.

Activity 4: Chapter Notes and Vocabulary.

Read the designated chapters of your book, taking notes as you go. Define the vocabulary terms for these chapters on your own paper.

AP Government Chapter 1 Vocab

1. Government
2. National defense
3. Public goods
4. Socialize
5. Politics
6. Political participation
7. Policymaking system
8. Linkage institutions
9. Policy agenda
10. Political issue
11. Policymaking institutions
12. Interest group
13. Public policy
14. Policy impacts
15. Democracy
16. Justice
17. Statute
18. Regulation
19. Majority rule
20. Minority rights
21. Pluralism
22. Hyperpluralism
23. Elitism
24. Political culture
25. Egalitarianism
26. Liberty
27. Individualism
28. Laissez-faire
29. Populism
30. Culture war

APUSH Chapter 1 Vocab

1. Nation-state
2. Cahokia
3. Three-sister farming
4. Middlemen
5. Plantation system
6. Columbian exchange
7. Treaty of Tordesillas
8. Conquistadores
9. Capitalism
10. Encomienda
11. Battle of Acoma
12. Pope’s Rebellion
13. Black Legend
14. Adapt
15. Expedition

APUSH Chapter 2 Vocab

1. Protestant Reformation
2. Roanoke Island (VA)
3. Spanish Armada
4. Surplus
5. Primogeniture
6. Joint-stock companies
7. Charter
8. Jamestown (VA)
9. First Anglo-Powhatan War
10. Second Anglo-Powhatan War
11. Disposability
12. Epidemic
13. Commerce
14. Act of Toleration (1649)
15. Maryland
16. Diaspora
17. Barbados Slave Code
18. Squatters
19. Tuscarora War
20. buffer

Activity 5: Applying Themes and Skills

APUSH Chapters 1 & 2

Themes you will need: Geography and Environment, Economies & Technologies

Skills you will need: Comparison, sequencing, data analysis (use maps from book), creating an argument, change and continuity

Guidelines: Write a five paragraph essay that answers the question. You will need to create an argument/thesis statement.

Assess the progress of colonization and trade in North America.

AP Government Chapter 1

Themes you will need: American identities, American culture and conviction

Skills you will need: #2, #5

Guidelines: Write a five paragraph essay that answers the question. This will be more of an informative writing piece so you will need a thesis, but not necessarily an argument.

How does an individual’s perspective influence their political values and behaviors in relation to their greater culture?

Activity 6: “The Scarlet Letter”

You will need to have read this entire book and completed the accompanying tasks by Monday, June 26.

You can access this book for free online or download via Project Gutenberg at gutenberg.org or the direct link below.

<http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/33/pg33-images.html>

\*This book will also have some bearing in your AP English classes as an example of classic American literature and romanticism which you can use to easily compare to other works you read in the future.\*

APUSH: Your task is to write a minimum six paragraph comparison essay regarding the influence of religion on everyday life, specifically within Puritan communities. You will need to directly reference “The Scarlet Letter” and your textbook. You may choose to include other pieces of research as well. You will need to turn in your completed essay, and outline, on June 26. Citations will be footnotes.

AP GOV: Your task is write a minimum five paragraph essay on how culture influences government and vice versa. You will need to use both this book and your textbook, and provide examples from the societies of “The Scarlet Letter” and modern day America. You will need to turn in your completed essay, and outline, on June 26. Citations will be footnotes.