United States History and Government
Summer Study Guide 2026
Mr. Tavarez

UNITS COVERED

1. Colonial Foundations (1607– 1763)
2. Constitutional Foundations (1763 – 1824)
3. Expansion, Nationalism, And Sectionalism (1800 – 1865)
4. Post-Civil War Era (1865 – 1900)
5. Industrialization And Urbanization (1870 – 1920)
6. The Rise Of American Power (1890 – 1920)
7. Prosperity And Depression (1920 – 1939)
8. World War II (1935 – 1945)
9. Cold War (1945 – 1990)
10. Social And Economic Change/Domestic Issues (1945 – Present)
11. The United States In A Changing World (1990 – Present)

Included in this packet:

1. Unit Background Essay
2. Guiding Questions
3. Word Bank
4. One Writing Prompt Per Unit

Instructions:

1. Suggested Pacing: One Unit Per Week.
2. Read guiding questions first.
3. Review word bank and research any words not found on the essay.
4. Read background essay and annotate answers to guiding questions.
5. Answer the writing prompt using terms from the word bank.

Introduction

Directions:
Answer the prompts in the table below.

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What do you think historians do?	How might you describe the daily work of a historian?

If you were a historian studying US History, where would you begin?

Unit 1: Colonization and Settlement, 1585–1763 (Modified)

1. American colonization between 1585 and 1763 occurred during what historians call the early modern period, a transitional era between the medieval world and modern society. According to John Demos, this period combined new developments—such as capitalism, political theory, and imperial competition—with traditional ways of life rooted in religion, subsistence farming, and close-knit communities. European colonization of North America reflected this tension between innovation and tradition, as settlers pursued modern economic and political goals while clinging to familiar cultural practices.
2. European expansion into the Americas was driven by imperial rivalry, religious motives, and the search for wealth. While Spain and Portugal dominated Central and South America, England entered the colonial race later and focused on North America and the Caribbean. English colonies developed with different goals and settlement patterns. In New England, particularly Massachusetts, colonization was shaped by Puritan religious ideals. Communities were organized around churches, moral discipline, and town life, with farming primarily serving household needs rather than large-scale profit. Over time, however, New England evolved into a more commercial society, symbolized by the shift "from Puritan to Yankee".
3. In contrast, the Chesapeake colonies of Virginia and Maryland were founded for economic gain. After failing to find gold, settlers turned to tobacco cultivation, which shaped the region's social and economic structure. Tobacco farming required large amounts of land and labor, leading to dispersed plantations rather than compact towns. This system encouraged social inequality and dependence on bound labor, initially through indentured servitude and later through slavery.
4. Other European powers also established colonies in North America, including the French in Canada, the Dutch in New Netherland, and the Spanish in Florida and the Southwest. Over time, however, England absorbed most of these territories, creating a largely English-controlled colonial region. Although English settlers dominated numerically, colonial society became increasingly diverse during the eighteenth century due to immigration from Germany, Ireland, and Africa. By the time of the American Revolution, only about half of the population was of English descent.
5. Native Americans played a complex role in colonization. Initially, they often assisted European settlers by teaching them survival skills, such as farming local crops. However, as settlement expanded, Native Americans faced land loss, warfare, and devastating diseases brought by Europeans. These factors caused catastrophic population decline and pushed Native communities away from coastal areas and into the interior.
6. Settlers also struggled to survive in an unfamiliar environment. Many arrived weakened by illness and lacked sufficient supplies. The dense forests, unfamiliar climate, and cultural differences created both physical and psychological challenges. To cope, settlers attempted to recreate English society in the New World by using familiar place names and maintaining traditional customs. This strategy helped them preserve a sense of identity despite their changing circumstances.
7. A major challenge facing all colonies was labor scarcity. Different regions responded in different ways. New England relied mostly on family labor, while the Chesapeake used indentured servants and later enslaved Africans. The Carolinas developed plantation slavery tied to rice cultivation, benefiting from African agricultural knowledge. These labor systems were often coercive and contributed to social inequality, but they allowed colonial economies to expand despite limited manpower.

8. Politically, colonial governments became increasingly decentralized. Although England initially expected tight control, distance and local conditions led to the rise of colonial assemblies and town governments. Power remained concentrated among elites, especially wealthy landowners, and participation was limited by property, religion, race, and gender. Conflicts among elites occasionally erupted into violence, such as Bacon's Rebellion and Leisler's Rebellion, revealing tensions within colonial leadership.
9. By 1770, North America contained thirteen English colonies with a population of over two million whites, nearly half a million enslaved Africans, and a reduced but still significant Native American presence. Most colonists valued independence, hard work, religious reputation, and social stability. While they viewed themselves as English, their experiences in America had begun to shape a distinct identity. This growing sense of difference laid the foundation for ideas of American exceptionalism and future independence.

Guiding Questions	Word Bank
1. How did geography and cash crops influence where and how people lived in New England versus Virginia? 2. Why did relations between Native Americans and colonists eventually turn violent? 3. What were the key differences between indentured servitude and slavery? **4.** Who held political power in colonial society, and who was excluded?	Colonization Puritanism Tobacco Economy Indentured Servitude Slavery Jamestown Settlement (1607) Puritan Migration to New England Expansion of Tobacco Cultivation Bacon's Rebellion (1676) English Takeover of New Netherland (1664) Puritans Native Americans English Colonists Enslaved Africans Nathaniel Bacon

Writing Practice: Use at least 5 key terms or people to write one well-developed paragraph identifying one significant event from the time period and explain the historical circumstances surrounding that event. In your paragraph, make sure you:

Explain the important ideas and conditions that shaped the time period.

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Discuss the political, economic, social, or cultural factors that helped cause it.

Unit 2: The New Nation, 1783–1815

1. The American Revolution involved three bold and unprecedented risks. First, the colonies sought independence from the powerful British Empire, becoming the first in the Americas to successfully break from their mother country. Second, they united thirteen often-divided states into a single nation. Third, they created a republic—a government without a monarch or aristocracy, where sovereignty rested with the people. In 1789, the United States was the only large republic in the world, and history offered few examples of republics that endured. Many, like ancient Rome, had collapsed into dictatorship. That the new nation survived at all was remarkable.
2. Yet in the 1780s, survival was uncertain. Under the Articles of Confederation, the national government was too weak to tax, raise revenue, or maintain an army. Economic turmoil, interstate disputes, and uprisings like Shays' Rebellion exposed its fragility. In response, leaders met in 1787 to draft a stronger framework: the United States Constitution. After intense debate between Federalists and Anti-Federalists, the Constitution was ratified, later amended with a Bill of Rights to protect individual liberties.
3. Even under the new Constitution, the republic remained fragile. The nation was small—about four million people in 1790, including 800,000 enslaved African Americans—and overwhelmingly rural. Most Americans lived on farms with limited comforts. Women had few legal rights under the doctrine of coverture, though the idea of "Republican motherhood" encouraged greater female education so women could raise virtuous citizens.
4. Political divisions soon emerged. Leaders such as George Washington, Alexander Hamilton, and John Adams led the Federalists, who favored a strong national government, industrial growth, and closer ties to Britain. Thomas Jefferson and James Madison led the Democratic-Republicans, who preferred an agricultural republic, stronger state governments, and sympathy for France. The two sides clashed over economic policy (including Hamilton's national bank), foreign affairs, constitutional interpretation, and the meaning of republicanism itself.
5. The debate intensified during crises such as the Whiskey Rebellion and the passage of the Alien and Sedition Acts, which limited immigration and criminalized criticism of the federal government. Republicans condemned these acts as unconstitutional. The bitter election of 1800 resulted in Jefferson's victory, which he called the "Revolution of 1800" because it marked a peaceful transfer of power between parties—an unprecedented achievement for a republic.
6. Jefferson reduced taxes and the national debt and sought to limit federal power. However, he also expanded the nation dramatically through the Louisiana Purchase, which doubled U.S. territory. Although it contradicted his strict interpretation of the Constitution, Jefferson recognized its strategic importance. His presidency also faced foreign challenges, including conflict with Britain over trade and impressment. His Embargo Act, which halted American trade, backfired economically and politically.
7. These tensions culminated in the War of 1812 against Great Britain. Initially marked by military failures, the war ended in 1815 with a peace treaty restoring prewar boundaries. News of Andrew Jackson's victory at New Orleans fostered a sense of national pride, even though the battle occurred after peace had been negotiated. The war weakened the Federalist Party permanently and strengthened national identity.
8. Meanwhile, slavery remained the nation's deepest contradiction. Although northern states gradually abolished slavery, it expanded in the South, especially after Eli Whitney's cotton gin made cotton production highly profitable. Southern leaders increasingly defended slavery as essential, while free Black Americans demanded equality in the nation they had helped build. The divide between a free North and a slave South deepened.

9. Western expansion further shaped the republic. Through military victories and treaties, the United States gained control of lands north of the Ohio River and secured navigation of the Mississippi. The Northwest Ordinances established a process for admitting new states on equal footing with the original thirteen, reinforcing the principle of union rather than colonial rule.
10. Finally, the Federalist legacy endured in the judiciary. Chief Justice John Marshall strengthened the Supreme Court's authority by establishing judicial review and asserting federal supremacy over the states. His decisions promoted national power and protected business interests, embedding Federalist principles in American law.
11. By 1816, the United States had survived internal division, foreign war, and political upheaval. Though flawed by slavery and inequality, the republic endured and expanded. Ironically, despite Jeffersonian ideals of a simple agrarian nation, industrial growth accelerated after the War of 1812. The early republic thus blended Federalist and Republican visions, creating a stronger and more unified nation than many had thought possible.

Guiding Questions	Word Bank
1, What were the three major "gambles" taken by the leaders of the American Revolution, and why were they considered risky at the time? 2. Why did the Articles of Confederation fail, and how did the United States Constitution attempt to fix those weaknesses? 3. What were two major differences between the Federalists and the Democratic-Republicans in the 1790s? Provide specific examples of policies or events that show these differences. 4. How did events such as the Louisiana Purchase and the War of 1812 strengthen or challenge the power of the federal government? Explain your reasoning.	Shays' Rebellion Constitutional Convention Ratification of the Constitution Bill of Rights Whiskey Rebellion Alien and Sedition Acts Election of 1800 Louisiana Purchase War of 1812 George Washington Alexander Hamilton Thomas Jefferson James Madison John Adams John Marshall Eli Whitney Articles of Confederation Constitution Federalism Federalists Judicial Review Nationalism Cotton Gin
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Unit 3: National Expansion and Reform, 1815–1860

1. During the early 1800s, Americans increasingly viewed their nation as unique and destined to play a special role in world history. After the generation of the American Revolution left public life, a new generation embraced the belief that the United States represented liberty, democracy, and opportunity. However, many Americans recognized that the nation often failed to live up to these ideals. This tension inspired numerous reform movements that sought to improve American society.
2. The United States experienced rapid economic growth and expansion during the Antebellum Era. Improvements in transportation and communication, including roads, canals, postal services, and newspapers, connected people across the country. Literacy rates increased, and Americans became better informed about political and social issues. At the same time, westward expansion attracted settlers seeking land and opportunity. The growth of the frontier, however, led to conflicts with Native Americans as settlers moved into Indigenous lands.
3. Industrialization transformed parts of the North. Factories powered by rivers created new jobs and encouraged many people to leave farming. Cities expanded rapidly, and American merchants developed trade networks around the world. Although economic growth created opportunities, it also produced periods of financial crisis, including the Panics of 1819, 1837, and 1857. Much of the nation's prosperity depended on cotton, which tied the economy closely to slavery. While the North became increasingly industrialized, the South relied on plantation agriculture and enslaved labor.
4. Political and religious changes also shaped American society. The expansion of voting rights for white men and the adoption of religious freedom strengthened democratic ideals. The separation of church and state allowed religious groups to grow without government control. During the Second Great Awakening, a series of religious revivals swept across the nation. Evangelical preachers encouraged individuals to seek personal salvation and actively improve society. These revivals increased church membership and inspired many Americans to address social problems through reform.
5. Religious enthusiasm led to the creation of numerous voluntary organizations known collectively as the "Benevolent Empire." These groups promoted education, missionary work, Bible distribution, Sabbath observance, and other causes. Reformers believed that citizens had a responsibility to improve both themselves and society. They focused on issues such as alcohol abuse, poverty, crime, and moral behavior.
6. One of the most successful reform efforts was the Temperance Movement. Reformers argued that excessive alcohol consumption caused social problems, including violence, poverty, and family instability. Leaders such as Lyman Beecher encouraged Americans to abstain from alcohol entirely. Temperance organizations attracted hundreds of thousands of members and significantly reduced alcohol consumption, although efforts to ban alcohol completely would continue for decades.
7. Immigration increased dramatically during the 1840s and 1850s, particularly from Ireland and Germany. Many immigrants were Catholic, which led to tensions with some Protestant Americans. Nativist groups discriminated against Catholics, while Catholic leaders worked to defend religious freedom and establish their own schools and institutions. These conflicts challenged Americans to broaden their understanding of religious liberty.
8. The most important reform movement of the era was abolitionism, the effort to end slavery. Free African Americans, Quakers, and other activists had long opposed slavery, but the movement gained momentum in the 1830s. The spread of cotton cultivation strengthened slavery in the South, while many Northerners became increasingly critical of the institution. William Lloyd Garrison called for immediate emancipation through his newspaper, *The Liberator*. Abolitionists organized petitions, public meetings, and anti-slavery societies to challenge slavery and promote equal rights.

9. The issue of slavery created growing sectional tensions between the North and South. The Missouri Compromise of 1820 temporarily eased disputes over the expansion of slavery, but disagreements continued. Southern leaders increasingly defended slavery as essential to their society and economy, while many Northerners opposed its expansion into western territories. These conflicts deepened political divisions and pushed the nation closer to civil war.
10. The abolition movement also inspired the Women's Rights Movement. Women who participated in reform organizations often faced discrimination and were denied leadership roles. Activists such as Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Mott, Susan B. Anthony, and Lucy Stone began demanding greater equality for women. In 1848, the Seneca Falls Convention marked the beginning of the organized women's rights movement. Delegates adopted the Declaration of Sentiments, which called for equal rights and women's suffrage. Although these ideas were considered radical at the time, they laid the foundation for future progress.
11. By the 1850s, the United States had become increasingly divided over slavery and its expansion. Northerners emphasized economic opportunity, individual achievement, and free labor, while Southern leaders defended slavery as the basis of their social system. The election of Abraham Lincoln in 1860 convinced many Southern states that slavery's future was threatened. As a result, Southern states seceded from the Union, leading to the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861.
12. The reform movements of the Antebellum Era reflected Americans' belief that their nation should live up to its founding ideals of liberty and equality. Inspired by religious revivalism and democratic values, reformers sought to improve society by addressing issues such as alcohol abuse, slavery, and women's rights. Their efforts transformed American culture, shaped political debates, and contributed to the growing sectional conflict that ultimately led to the Civil War.

Guiding Questions	Word Bank
1. How did the belief in American exceptionalism influence reform movements before the Civil War? 2. How did economic growth, industrialization, and westward expansion transform American society between 1800 and 1861? 3. How did the abolitionist movement and the women's rights movement challenge existing social and political systems? 4. How did growing sectional differences between the North and South contribute to the outbreak of the Civil War?	Missouri Compromise Seneca Falls Convention Election of Abraham Lincoln (1860) Battle of Fort Sumter American Exceptionalism Abolitionism Women's Rights Movement Sectionalism Secession William Lloyd Garrison Lyman Beecher Elizabeth Cady Stanton Susan B. Anthony

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Unit 4: Civil War and Reconstruction, 1861-1877

1. The period following the Civil War, known as Reconstruction (1865–1877), was one of the most important and controversial eras in United States history. During Reconstruction, the nation faced the difficult task of rebuilding the South, restoring the former Confederate states to the Union, and determining the rights and freedoms of nearly four million formerly enslaved African Americans. At the same time, the country experienced rapid economic growth, westward expansion, and significant political conflict. Reconstruction represented an ambitious effort to transform American society, but many of its goals remained unfinished.
2. The first phase of Reconstruction, known as Presidential Reconstruction, was led by President Andrew Johnson after the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln in 1865. Johnson sought to reunite the nation quickly and was lenient toward former Confederates. As Southern states reentered the Union, many white Southern leaders attempted to preserve as much of the old social order as possible. They passed Black Codes, laws designed to limit the freedom of African Americans and keep them economically dependent. Violence against African Americans increased, and white supremacist groups such as the Ku Klux Klan used intimidation and terror to maintain white control. Although the Freedmen's Bureau provided assistance to formerly enslaved people and poor whites, it faced strong resistance throughout the South.
3. Freedom brought major changes to the lives of African Americans. Formerly enslaved people sought to reunite families, establish independent households, gain access to education, and exercise their new freedoms. Economically, however, many African Americans found themselves trapped in the system of sharecropping. Under this arrangement, landowners provided land and supplies while laborers worked the fields in exchange for a share of the crop. Because sharecroppers often borrowed money for supplies at high interest rates, many fell deeply into debt. As a result, sharecropping created a cycle of poverty that dominated the Southern economy for generations.
4. Dissatisfaction with Johnson's policies led Congress to take control of Reconstruction in 1867. This second phase, known as Congressional or Radical Reconstruction, aimed to secure civil and political rights for African Americans. Congress passed the Reconstruction Acts, dividing the South into military districts and requiring Southern states to create new constitutions. States also had to ratify the Fourteenth Amendment, which granted citizenship and equal protection under the law to people born in the United States. African American men gained the right to vote and participated actively in politics, electing representatives and helping shape new state governments.
5. Reconstruction governments introduced important reforms throughout the South. They expanded public education, improved infrastructure, and attempted to create fairer tax systems. African Americans served in local, state, and national offices for the first time in American history. However, these governments faced intense opposition from many white Southerners. White Democrats criticized Republicans, labeling Southern white Republicans as "scalawags" and Northern Republicans as "carpetbaggers." These terms were used to discredit those who supported Reconstruction policies and racial equality.
6. Resistance to Reconstruction often turned violent. White supremacist organizations intimidated voters, attacked political leaders, and sought to restore Democratic control of Southern governments. Republican coalitions struggled to maintain power in the face of violence, economic challenges, and declining support from the North. Reconstruction gradually weakened, and its final collapse came after the disputed presidential election of 1876. As part of the Compromise of 1877, Republican candidate Rutherford B. Hayes became president, and federal troops were withdrawn from the remaining Southern states. Without federal protection, many of the gains African Americans had achieved during Reconstruction were quickly undermined.

7. Historians have debated Reconstruction for more than a century. Early twentieth-century scholars often portrayed Reconstruction as a failure caused by allegedly corrupt governments and unprepared African Americans. Later historians challenged this interpretation, arguing that Reconstruction failed because it did not go far enough in protecting the rights of freedpeople. Historian Eric Foner famously described Reconstruction as "America's unfinished revolution," emphasizing its ambitious goals and the persistent struggle for equality.
8. Despite its shortcomings, Reconstruction left a lasting legacy. The Thirteenth Amendment abolished slavery, the Fourteenth Amendment established citizenship and equal protection, and the Fifteenth Amendment protected voting rights regardless of race. Although Southern states later used poll taxes, literacy tests, and other measures to deny African Americans the vote, these constitutional amendments provided the legal foundation for the Civil Rights Movement of the twentieth century.
9. Reconstruction was a remarkable attempt to rebuild a nation after civil war and redefine American democracy. While many of its immediate goals were defeated by resistance and compromise, the principles of equality, citizenship, and political participation established during this era continued to inspire future generations. The struggle begun during Reconstruction would shape American history for decades and remains essential to understanding the ongoing pursuit of civil rights and equal justice in the United States.

Guiding Questions	Word Bank
1. What challenges did the United States face in rebuilding the nation after the Civil War? 2. How did Presidential Reconstruction and Congressional (Radical) Reconstruction differ in their approaches to reunifying the country? 3. To what extent did Reconstruction improve the lives of formerly enslaved African Americans? 4. Why did many white Southerners resist Reconstruction, and how did they attempt to regain political and social control? 5. Was Reconstruction a success or a failure?	Reconstruction Presidential Reconstruction Radical Reconstruction Black Codes Freedmen's Bureau Sharecropping Ku Klux Klan Scalawags Carpetbaggers Fourteenth Amendment Fifteenth Amendment Compromise of 1877

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Unit 5: The Gilded Age and Progressive Era (1870–1929)

1. The period from the end of Reconstruction in 1877 through the 1920s was one of the most transformative eras in United States history. Historians often divide this period into two connected eras: the Gilded Age (approximately 1877–1900) and the Progressive Era (approximately 1900–1929). During these years, the United States experienced rapid industrialization, urbanization, immigration, and economic growth. At the same time, Americans faced serious challenges including political corruption, economic inequality, poor working conditions, and social injustice. The Progressive Era emerged largely as a response to the problems that developed during the Gilded Age. Together, these eras helped shape modern American government, business, and society.
2. The Gilded Age was characterized by tremendous economic expansion fueled by railroads, factories, and new technologies. Industrial leaders such as Andrew Carnegie, John D. Rockefeller, and J. P. Morgan built vast business empires that dominated industries such as steel, oil, and banking. The growth of large corporations transformed the American economy and made the United States one of the world's leading industrial powers. Millions of immigrants from Europe arrived seeking economic opportunity and provided much of the labor needed for expanding factories and cities. However, the wealth generated during this period was unevenly distributed. While some business leaders accumulated enormous fortunes, many workers faced low wages, long hours, dangerous conditions, and economic insecurity. The era became known as the "Gilded Age" because beneath its appearance of prosperity were widespread social and political problems.
3. Rapid industrialization also led to the growth of labor unions and labor conflicts. Workers organized to demand better wages, safer working conditions, and shorter hours. Strikes and labor disputes became common as workers challenged the power of large corporations. At the same time, cities expanded rapidly as immigrants and rural Americans moved to urban areas in search of jobs. Urban growth created overcrowded housing, poor sanitation, and increased poverty. Political machines often controlled city governments, exchanging jobs and services for votes while engaging in corruption and patronage. Many Americans became concerned that government was unable or unwilling to address the growing problems created by industrial capitalism.
4. In response to these challenges, the Progressive Era emerged in the early twentieth century. Progressives believed that government should play a more active role in solving social, economic, and political problems. Reformers sought to regulate large corporations, reduce corruption, improve working conditions, protect consumers, and expand democracy. Journalists known as "muckrakers" exposed corruption, unsafe products, and poor living conditions, helping to build public support for reform. Progressive reformers also promoted scientific management, efficiency, and the use of experts to improve government and society.
5. Several important political leaders shaped the Progressive Era. Theodore Roosevelt expanded the role of the presidency and became known for his efforts to regulate trusts, protect consumers, and conserve natural resources. Roosevelt believed the federal government should act as a mediator between business and labor and ensure fairness in the economy. Woodrow Wilson continued many Progressive reforms, supporting measures such as the Federal Reserve System and stronger regulation of business practices. During this period, government became more actively involved in addressing economic and social issues than ever before.
6. Progressive reformers also worked to expand democracy. Constitutional amendments established the direct election of senators, created the federal income tax, and granted women the right to vote through the Nineteenth Amendment. Women played a major role in Progressive reform movements, advocating for public health improvements, education, child labor laws, and suffrage. Reformers such as Jane Addams worked to improve conditions for immigrants and the urban poor through

settlement houses and social services. Despite these advances, many Progressive reforms did not fully address racial inequality. African Americans in the South continued to face segregation, discrimination, and disenfranchisement under Jim Crow laws.

7. The Progressive Era also overlapped with major national and international developments. During World War I, the federal government expanded its influence over the economy and society to support the war effort. The war accelerated the Great Migration as hundreds of thousands of African Americans moved from the South to northern cities seeking jobs and greater opportunities. Following the war, the United States entered the Roaring Twenties, a decade marked by consumer culture, new technologies, mass entertainment, automobiles, and changing social norms. Despite these changes, many Progressive reforms continued to influence American life and government.
8. The Gilded Age and Progressive Era together represent a critical period of American transformation. The Gilded Age brought industrial growth, technological innovation, and economic expansion, but it also created significant social and economic problems. The Progressive Era sought to address these challenges through reform, regulation, and expanded government action. Key people such as Carnegie, Rockefeller, Roosevelt, Wilson, and Addams, along with major events including industrialization, labor conflicts, women's suffrage, World War I, and the Great Migration, helped shape the nation's development. The reforms and institutions created during this era continue to influence American society and government today.

Guiding Questions	Word Bank
1. What was one major economic change that occurred during the Gilded Age? 2. How did industrial leaders such as Andrew Carnegie and John D. Rockefeller influence the American economy? 3. Identify one problem faced by workers or city residents during the Gilded Age. 4. What was one goal of Progressive Era reformers? 5. Explain how the Progressive Era attempted to address problems that developed during the Gilded Age.	Andrew Carnegie, John D. Rockefeller, J. P. Morgan, Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, Jane Addams Industrialization, Urbanization, Immigration, Big Business, Labor Unions, Political Corruption, Progressivism, Trust-Busting, Women's Suffrage, Conservation Growth of Big Business, Labor Strikes, Progressive Reforms, Federal Reserve Act (1913), Nineteenth Amendment (1920), Muckrakers.

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Unit 6: The Rise of American Power in the World

1. During the nineteenth century, the United States generally avoided becoming deeply involved in the political affairs of other nations. Following the advice of George Washington, Americans sought friendly relations with foreign countries while avoiding permanent alliances. The nation focused on expanding across North America through events such as the Louisiana Purchase, the annexation of Texas, and the acquisition of Alaska. The Monroe Doctrine declared that European nations should not interfere in the Western Hemisphere, while the United States would stay out of European conflicts.
2. By the 1890s, however, American foreign policy began to change. The western frontier had largely disappeared, and many Americans worried about economic problems following the Panic of 1893. At the same time, powerful European nations such as Britain and Germany were building overseas empires. Many Americans believed the United States needed new markets, resources, and strategic locations to compete in the modern world. Others argued that the nation had a duty to spread democracy and civilization abroad. These ideas encouraged greater American involvement in international affairs.
3. Events in Cuba pushed the United States toward war with Spain. Americans were sympathetic to Cuban rebels fighting for independence from Spanish rule and were outraged by reports of Spanish brutality. Newspapers used yellow journalism to publish sensational stories that increased public support for intervention. Tensions escalated after the explosion of the battleship USS Maine in Havana Harbor in 1898. Although the cause of the explosion was unclear, many Americans blamed Spain and demanded war.
4. The resulting Spanish-American War was short but significant. American forces defeated Spain in Cuba and the Philippines. The war transformed the United States into an imperial power as it gained control of Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines. In Cuba, the United States promised independence through the Teller Amendment but later limited Cuban sovereignty through the Platt Amendment. The war marked a major turning point because it represented America's first large-scale effort to intervene overseas and acquire territories beyond North America.
5. The acquisition of the Philippines sparked a national debate over imperialism. Supporters argued that the islands would provide access to Asian markets and strengthen American military power. Opponents formed the American Anti-Imperialist League, which included leaders such as Andrew Carnegie and Samuel Gompers. They argued that imperialism violated American ideals of self-government and consent of the governed. When Filipino nationalists resisted American rule, the United States fought a costly and bloody conflict known as the Philippine-American War, demonstrating the challenges of maintaining an overseas empire.
6. Under President Theodore Roosevelt, the United States expanded its influence throughout the Western Hemisphere. Roosevelt believed in maintaining a strong military and famously advised Americans to "speak softly and carry a big stick." His foreign policy was reflected in the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine, which stated that the United States could intervene in Latin American countries to maintain stability and protect American interests. Roosevelt also supported the construction of the Panama Canal, completed in 1914, which greatly improved trade and naval movement between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. The modernization of the Navy and the global voyage of the Great White Fleet demonstrated America's growing military power.
7. President Woodrow Wilson continued interventionist policies in Latin America, particularly in Mexico. Wilson opposed the dictatorship of General Victoriano Huerta and supported efforts to establish a government he considered more democratic. American troops and naval forces became

involved in Mexican affairs, reflecting the belief that the United States had a responsibility to influence political developments in neighboring countries.

8. When World War I began in Europe in 1914, Wilson declared American neutrality. Many Americans wanted to stay out of the conflict, but events gradually drew the nation closer to war. Germany's use of unrestricted submarine warfare led to the sinking of ships carrying American citizens and goods. Tensions increased further when the British revealed the Zimmermann Telegram, in which Germany encouraged Mexico to attack the United States. In April 1917, Wilson asked Congress to declare war on Germany, arguing that America must help "make the world safe for democracy."
9. American participation helped the Allied Powers achieve victory in 1918. After the war, Wilson proposed the creation of the League of Nations to prevent future conflicts through international cooperation. However, many senators, led by Henry Cabot Lodge, opposed joining the League because they feared it would limit American independence and give foreign nations influence over U.S. decisions about war. As a result, the Senate rejected the Treaty of Versailles, and the United States never joined the League.
10. By 1920, American foreign policy had undergone a dramatic transformation. The United States had evolved from a nation focused primarily on continental expansion into a global power with overseas territories, a strong military, and an active role in international affairs. The debates over imperialism, intervention, and international cooperation would continue to shape American foreign policy throughout the twentieth century.

Guiding Questions	Word Bank
1. What factors caused the United States to become more involved in world affairs during the 1890s? 2. Why was the Spanish-American War a turning point in American foreign policy? 3. What arguments were made for and against American imperialism? 4. How did Theodore Roosevelt expand American influence in Latin America and the Caribbean? 5. Why did the United States enter World War I, and why did the Senate reject membership in the League of Nations?	William McKinley Imperialism Monroe Doctrine (1823) Roosevelt Corollary Zimmermann Telegram Explosion of the USS Maine (1898) Treaty of Versailles / League of Nations Theodore Roosevelt Woodrow Wilson Henry Cabot Lodge Philippine-American War World War I Opening of the Panama Canal (1914) Unrestricted Submarine Warfare

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Unit 7: Prosperity And Depression (1920 – 1939)

1. World War I transformed the modern world and profoundly affected the United States. The war introduced total warfare, mobilizing entire economies and societies for conflict. Millions of soldiers were killed or wounded, four major empires collapsed, and new political movements emerged, including communism in Russia under Vladimir Lenin. The postwar world was further devastated by a global influenza epidemic that killed millions. Although the United States emerged from the war as a victorious world power, Americans soon faced difficult challenges at home and abroad.
2. President Woodrow Wilson hoped to create a lasting peace after the war. In January 1918, he proposed his famous Fourteen Points, which called for open diplomacy, free trade, self-determination for nations, and the creation of a League of Nations to prevent future wars. However, at the Paris Peace Conference, Wilson was forced to compromise with European leaders. The resulting Treaty of Versailles blamed Germany for the war and imposed harsh penalties. Although Wilson strongly supported the League of Nations, many Americans feared that membership would drag the United States into future foreign conflicts. Led by Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, opponents in the Senate rejected the treaty, and the United States never joined the League.
3. The years immediately following the war were marked by social unrest and economic hardship. In 1919, racial violence erupted across the country during the "Red Summer." Race riots broke out in cities such as Chicago as African Americans who had migrated north during the Great Migration faced discrimination and hostility. At the same time, workers organized thousands of strikes to demand better wages and working conditions after wartime inflation reduced their purchasing power. Major strikes involving steelworkers, police officers, and shipyard workers reflected growing tensions between labor and business.
4. Fear of communism and radicalism intensified after a series of bombings in 1919. Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer launched the First Red Scare, during which thousands of suspected radicals and immigrants were arrested or deported, often without due process. These actions demonstrated how concerns about national security could lead to restrictions on civil liberties.
5. The 1920s also witnessed major cultural conflicts as Americans debated modernization and traditional values. One significant issue was Prohibition. The Eighteenth Amendment and the Volstead Act banned the manufacture and sale of alcoholic beverages beginning in 1920. Supporters believed alcohol caused crime, poverty, and social problems, while opponents argued that Prohibition violated personal freedom. Instead of eliminating alcohol consumption, Prohibition encouraged illegal activities such as bootlegging and organized crime.
6. Immigration became another source of controversy. Many Americans feared that immigrants threatened traditional American culture and jobs. Congress passed immigration laws in 1921 and 1924 that sharply limited immigration from Southern and Eastern Europe and completely excluded immigrants from most Asian countries. These laws reflected growing nativism and isolationism during the decade.
7. The debate between science and religion became national news during the Scopes Trial of 1925. High school teacher John Scopes was prosecuted for teaching evolution in Tennessee, where state law prohibited instruction that contradicted the biblical creation story. The trial symbolized the larger conflict between modern scientific ideas and traditional religious beliefs.
8. During this period, the Ku Klux Klan experienced a dramatic revival. Unlike the Reconstruction-era Klan, the new organization expanded beyond the South and targeted African Americans, immigrants, Catholics, Jews, and other groups. At its peak, millions of Americans joined the Klan, reflecting widespread fears about social change and diversity.
9. African Americans responded to discrimination in different ways. Marcus Garvey promoted black nationalism, economic self-sufficiency, and pride through the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). At the same time, the Harlem Renaissance celebrated African American culture through literature, music, and art. Writers such as Langston Hughes and Zora Neale Hurston, along with the

popularity of jazz music, helped foster a new sense of cultural pride that would influence future civil rights movements.

10. Despite social tensions, the 1920s became one of the most prosperous decades in American history. Republican presidents Warren G. Harding, Calvin Coolidge, and Herbert Hoover favored pro-business policies, tax cuts, and limited government intervention. New technologies, including automobiles, radios, household appliances, and electric power, transformed daily life. Mass production and consumer credit allowed more Americans to purchase goods than ever before. The decade also saw the rise of celebrities such as Charles Lindbergh and Babe Ruth, who became symbols of American achievement and success.
11. However, prosperity was not shared equally. Farmers struggled with falling crop prices, and many industries faced economic difficulties. At the same time, speculation in the stock market encouraged risky investments. By October 1929, stock prices had risen far beyond their actual value. The Stock Market Crash of 1929 triggered a severe economic downturn that became known as the Great Depression.
12. The Great Depression devastated the American economy. Businesses failed, banks closed, and unemployment reached nearly 25 percent. Millions of Americans lost their jobs, savings, and homes. President Herbert Hoover believed that voluntary cooperation among businesses, charities, and local governments could solve the crisis. Although he supported measures such as the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, many Americans felt his response was too limited. Policies such as the Smoot-Hawley Tariff further weakened the economy by reducing international trade.
13. By 1932, public frustration with Hoover's leadership led to the election of Franklin D. Roosevelt. Roosevelt promised a "New Deal" that would expand the role of the federal government in addressing economic problems and helping struggling Americans. His election marked the end of the 1920s era and the beginning of a new chapter in American history.
14. The period from 1919 to 1932 was one of dramatic change. The United States experienced international leadership, cultural conflict, economic prosperity, and economic collapse. These years shaped modern America and laid the foundation for the New Deal and the nation's response to future challenges.

Guiding Questions	Word Bank
1. To what extent was the 1920s a decade of both progress and conflict in American history? 2. How did African Americans seek greater equality and opportunities during the 1920s? 3. What were the major causes of the Stock Market Crash of 1929 and the Great Depression? 4. How effective was President Herbert Hoover's response to the Great Depression? 5. How did the Great Depression change Americans' expectations of the federal government?	Woodrow Wilson Marcus Garvey Langston Hughes Herbert Hoover Franklin D. Roosevelt Harlem Renaissance Scopes Trial Stock Market Crash of 1929 Great Depression First Red Scare

Writing Practice: Use at least 5 key terms or people to write one well-developed paragraph identifying one significant event from the time period and explain the historical circumstances surrounding that event. In your paragraph, make sure you:

Explain the important ideas and conditions that shaped the time period.

Discuss key people, key concepts, and/or key events connected to the era. I

Discuss the political, economic, social, or cultural factors that helped cause it.

Unit 9: Cold War (1945-1990s)

1. World War II marked a turning point in modern American history, transforming the United States into a global superpower and reshaping nearly every aspect of American life. In the decades following the war, the nation experienced dramatic economic growth, major social change, intense ideological conflict during the Cold War, and shifting political cycles that alternated between liberal reform and conservative revival. These developments, stretching from the late 1940s through the end of the 20th century, defined the modern United States.
2. After World War II, the United States entered a period of unprecedented prosperity. Wartime production ended the Great Depression, created full employment, and increased wages for many Americans. Savings accumulated during wartime rationing fueled a postwar consumer boom, helping expand suburban housing, automobile ownership, and mass consumer culture. The nation also experienced rapid technological development, laying the foundation for the computer age.
3. At the same time, the United States emerged as a global leader locked in ideological conflict with the Soviet Union. Under Harry S. Truman, tensions with the USSR escalated into the Cold War. By 1947, American foreign policy centered on containment—the effort to stop the spread of communism. The Truman Doctrine framed the conflict as a global struggle between democracy and totalitarianism, while the Marshall Plan rebuilt Western Europe to prevent Communist expansion. Military alliances such as NATO formalized the division between East and West, while the Soviet Union responded with its own bloc in Eastern Europe.
4. Early Cold War conflicts soon followed. The Berlin crisis, the Soviet atomic bomb test, and the rise of Communist China intensified fears of global communist expansion. The Korean War (1950–1953) became the first major military conflict of the Cold War, confirming that the struggle between superpowers could erupt into open warfare.
5. In the 1950s and early 1960s, American politics developed a broad centrist consensus. Presidents such as Dwight D. Eisenhower and John F. Kennedy maintained most New Deal programs while focusing on economic growth and Cold War containment. Both parties largely agreed on capitalism, democracy, and anti-communism as guiding principles, limiting major ideological conflict in national politics.
6. However, anti-communism also shaped domestic life. Fear of internal subversion led to investigations by the House Un-American Activities Committee and the rise of McCarthyism. Political debate narrowed, and accusations of communist sympathy were used against labor leaders, civil rights advocates, and supporters of social reform.
7. Despite political conformity, the postwar era was also a time of profound social change. African Americans returning from World War II demanded equal rights after fighting for freedom abroad. The Civil Rights Movement gained momentum through legal challenges, mass protests, and grassroots organizing.
8. Major victories came under Lyndon B. Johnson, whose administration passed the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. These laws outlawed segregation and protected voting rights, marking a major transformation in American democracy. The movement inspired other struggles for equality, including the women's rights movement. Feminists such as Betty Friedan and organizations like the National Organization for Women challenged traditional gender roles and pushed for workplace equality.
9. By the 1960s, social activism expanded further through student movements, antiwar protests, and the emergence of the New Left. American society was increasingly divided over issues of race, gender, and authority.
10. The Cold War escalated into a major military conflict in Vietnam. Under Kennedy and especially Johnson, U.S. involvement expanded dramatically. The Vietnam War became deeply unpopular, especially as casualties rose and televised coverage brought the war into American homes. Antiwar protests, draft resistance, and campus unrest reflected a growing generational divide.

11. The late 1960s became a period of national crisis. Political assassinations, urban riots, and protests at events such as the Democratic National Convention in 1968 revealed deep divisions. The election of Richard Nixon signaled a shift toward appeals to law and order and a growing conservative backlash.
12. The 1970s brought economic and political instability. The Watergate scandal forced Nixon's resignation, undermining trust in government. Economic problems such as inflation, unemployment, and the 1973 oil crisis created what many saw as a national "malaise." Supreme Court decisions and cultural changes further divided Americans along ideological lines.
13. A shift occurred with the rise of conservative politics under Ronald Reagan in the 1980s. Reagan promoted tax cuts, military expansion, and a strong anti-communist foreign policy. His presidency restored confidence in American institutions and projected optimism about economic growth. At the same time, negotiations with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev helped reduce nuclear tensions and contributed to the eventual end of the Cold War.
14. Under George H. W. Bush, the Cold War formally ended with the collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991. The United States emerged as the world's sole superpower. The Gulf War further demonstrated American military dominance in a new global order shaped by coalition warfare and international cooperation.
15. From the end of World War II through the 1990s, the United States underwent extraordinary transformation. It rose to global leadership, faced intense ideological conflict during the Cold War, achieved major social reforms in civil rights and gender equality, and experienced cycles of political upheaval and renewal. These decades established the foundation of modern American society, while also raising enduring questions about equality, power, democracy, and America's role in the world.

Guiding Questions	Word Bank
1. What were the goals of containment, and how did they shape U.S. foreign policy during the Cold War? 2. How did fear of communism influence both foreign and domestic policy in the United States? 3. Why did the Vietnam War become so controversial, and how did it divide American society? 4. How did the 1960s transform ideas about race, gender, and political activism? 5. Why did trust in government decline in the 1970s?	Containment Truman Doctrine Marshall Plan NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) Warsaw Pact Korean War Vietnam War Berlin Wall (fall, 1989) Soviet Union collapse (1991) Cuban Missile Crisis (contextual event) Dwight D. Eisenhower John F. Kennedy Lyndon B. Johnson Richard Nixon McCarthyism HUAC (House Un-American Activities Committee)

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Explain the important ideas and conditions that shaped the time period.

Discuss key people, key concepts, and/or key events connected to the era. I

Discuss the political, economic, social, or cultural factors that helped cause it.

Unit 11: The United States In A Changing World (1990 – Present)

1. In 1941, *Time* magazine publisher Henry Luce famously predicted the rise of an "American Century," in which the United States would dominate global politics, economics, and culture. By the end of the twentieth century, this prediction had largely been realized. The United States emerged from the Cold War as the world's sole superpower, having led the defeat of fascism in World War II and communism during the Cold War. By the 1990s, the nation appeared positioned for continued global leadership, supported by economic growth, technological innovation, and expanding cultural influence. However, the period from the 1990s through the early 2000s also revealed deep political divisions, global instability, and new challenges that complicated America's role in the world.
2. The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 marked the end of the Cold War and removed the threat of nuclear confrontation between superpowers. Many Americans viewed this moment as the beginning of a more peaceful and stable global era. However, new challenges quickly emerged. Ethnic nationalism, religious fundamentalism, and global terrorism began to shape international conflicts. Violence in regions such as Central Africa and the Balkans included acts of ethnic cleansing, while tensions in the Middle East persisted between Israel and Palestinian groups, as well as among different Islamic sects.
3. Throughout the 1990s, the United States also engaged in limited military actions abroad, including strikes against Iraq under Saddam Hussein and operations targeting Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda. Although the Cold War had ended, global instability remained a defining feature of the era.
4. Domestically, the 1990s were marked by significant economic growth under President Bill Clinton. The United States experienced one of the longest peacetime economic expansions in its history. Unemployment fell, inflation remained low, and the stock market reached record highs. In 1998, the federal government achieved a budget surplus for the first time in decades.
5. Several factors contributed to this growth, including free trade agreements such as NAFTA, low energy prices, Federal Reserve monetary policy, and the rise of computer technology and the Internet. However, economic gains were uneven. While many Americans prospered, income inequality increased. High-skilled workers and college graduates saw rising wages, while many low-skilled and manufacturing workers experienced wage stagnation or decline. Globalization also contributed to job outsourcing and wage competition.
6. During this period, political cooperation between parties began to weaken. Although Clinton achieved policy successes such as welfare reform, tax credits for working families, and expansion of education and healthcare programs, his presidency was also marked by intense partisan conflict. The failed attempt to reform healthcare in the early 1990s and the 1994 Republican takeover of Congress signaled growing division. Clinton's impeachment following the Monica Lewinsky scandal further intensified political polarization, even though he was acquitted by the Senate.
7. The late twentieth century also brought dramatic social and technological change. Advances in genetics and biotechnology created new medical possibilities but also raised ethical concerns. At the same time, the rise of the Internet revolutionized communication, commerce, and entertainment. Originally developed as a government project, the Internet expanded rapidly in the 1990s, transforming how Americans worked, shopped, and communicated.
8. Media consumption also changed significantly. Cable television, digital recording devices, and online platforms fragmented audiences that had once shared common national experiences. Instead of mass media broadcasting to a unified public, Americans increasingly consumed "narrowcast" content tailored to specific interests. This contributed to cultural fragmentation and, in some cases, political polarization.
9. By the early 2000s, political divisions had deepened. Many Americans increasingly consumed media that reinforced their existing beliefs, a phenomenon often described as an "echo chamber." Partisan loyalty intensified, and compromise between Democrats and Republicans became more difficult.
10. The 2000 presidential election between George W. Bush and Al Gore highlighted these divisions. Although Gore won the popular vote, Bush was ultimately declared the winner after a controversial Supreme Court decision halted a recount in Florida. This event raised questions about the electoral process and contributed to political tension.
11. Bush's presidency was soon defined by the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. The coordinated strikes on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon killed more than 3,000 people and fundamentally altered

American foreign and domestic policy. The United States launched the War on Terror, invading Afghanistan to dismantle al-Qaeda and remove the Taliban from power.

12. In 2003, the United States also invaded Iraq under the belief that Saddam Hussein possessed weapons of mass destruction and had links to terrorism. Although Hussein was quickly removed from power, no such weapons were found, and the war became long and costly. Over time, public support declined as the conflict became increasingly complex and unstable.
13. Domestically, the Bush administration expanded government surveillance and security measures through policies such as the USA Patriot Act and the creation of the Department of Homeland Security. These actions reflected the tension between national security and civil liberties in the post-9/11 era.
14. By the mid-2000s, public dissatisfaction with the Iraq War and political leadership increased. In 2005, Hurricane Katrina exposed failures in government response and deepened criticism of federal leadership. By 2008, the United States faced its most severe financial crisis since the Great Depression. The collapse of the housing market led to widespread bank failures, job losses, and a global recession.
15. This crisis set the stage for the election of Barack Obama in 2008. Obama's campaign emphasized "hope" and "change," and he became the first African American president in U.S. history. His election was widely viewed as a historic moment reflecting long-term changes in American society, including the legacy of the civil rights movement.
16. However, Obama inherited significant challenges, including economic instability, ongoing wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and deep political polarization. While his election raised expectations for national unity and reform, the underlying divisions in American politics remained strong.
17. From the 1990s through the early 21st century, the United States remained a dominant global power, but its position became increasingly complex. The optimism of the post–Cold War era gave way to new challenges, including terrorism, economic instability, and political polarization. Technological innovation and globalization transformed society, while immigration reshaped the nation's demographic composition.
18. By the end of the 2000s, some scholars questioned whether the "American Century" was ending, as rising global powers such as China and India gained influence. Others argued that the United States remained resilient despite its internal challenges. What was clear, however, was that the nation had entered a new era defined by uncertainty, rapid change, and ongoing debates about its role in the world.

Guiding Questions	Word Bank
1. How did the end of the Cold War change the United States' role in global affairs? 2. In what ways did globalization and technology reshape the U.S. economy in the 1990s and early 2000s? 3. How did the U.S. response to terrorism (Afghanistan and Iraq wars) affect domestic and foreign policy? 4. How did the financial crisis of 2008 develop, and what were its effects on American society and politics? 5. To what extent did the election of Barack Obama represent a turning point in American history?	NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) September 11 attacks (2001) War in Afghanistan (2001–present context) USA Patriot Act (2001 Iraq War (2003) Bill Clinton Hillary Clinton George W. Bush Barack Obama Gulf War (1991) Rise of globalization (1990s) Clinton economic expansion (1994–2000) Hurricane Katrina (2005) Financial crisis / Great Recession (2008)

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