

U.S. History Syllabus (2026–2027)

Instructor: Zachery Peppers

Classroom: Room 122

Email: peppersz@cocke.k12.tn.us

Preferred Contact Method: ParentSquare

Learning Platforms: Microsoft Canvas, Mastery Connect, Kahoot!, ASPEN

Course Description

United States History and Geography is a survey course that examines the development of the United States from Reconstruction to the present day. Students will investigate the political, economic, geographic, social, and cultural events that have shaped the nation while developing the historical thinking skills necessary to analyze evidence, evaluate multiple perspectives, and communicate informed conclusions.

This course follows the Tennessee Academic Standards for United States History and Geography and is designed to prepare students for the Tennessee End-of-Course (EOC) Assessment. Throughout the school year, students will engage with primary and secondary sources, historical documents, maps, political cartoons, photographs, charts, graphs, multimedia resources, and historical scholarship to deepen their understanding of the American experience.

Course Outcomes

By the conclusion of this course, students should be able to:

- Analyze historical events using primary and secondary sources.
- Evaluate the reliability, perspective, and purpose of historical evidence.
- Explain cause-and-effect relationships throughout United States history.
- Compare and contrast differing historical interpretations.
- Construct evidence-based historical arguments.
- Identify patterns of continuity and change over time.
- Interpret maps, charts, graphs, political cartoons, photographs, and other historical sources.
- Demonstrate an understanding of significant political, economic, and social developments in United States history.
- Develop historical thinking, research, communication, and writing skills.
- Successfully prepare for the Tennessee U.S. History End-of-Course Assessment.

Curriculum Standards

Instruction follows the [Tennessee Academic Standards for Social Studies \(U.S. History and Geography\)](#) and prepares students for the Tennessee End-of-Course Assessment.

Standards-based instruction and assessments are used throughout the school year to monitor student progress and ensure mastery of required content.

Materials Needed

Students should bring the following materials to class each day:

- Charged Chromebook
- Notebook or binder
- Folder
- Pens or pencils
- School-issued U.S. History textbook
- Access to Microsoft Canvas

Instructional Resources & Technology

Instruction throughout the year may include the use of McGraw-Hill U.S. History Textbook, primary source documents, secondary readings, historical maps, political cartoons, photographs, government documents, Library of Congress resources, National Archives resources, Crash Course U.S. History, Kahoot!, Microsoft Canvas, Mastery Connect, and teacher-created instructional materials compliant with state law on adopted materials.

Platform / Tool	Purpose
Microsoft Canvas	Assignments, study guides, digital resources, supplemental materials, and classroom announcements.
Mastery Connect	Weekly standards-based quizzes, benchmark assessments, and standards mastery tracking.
Kahoot!	Guided practice, vocabulary review, chapter review, and formative assessment.
Crash Course U.S. History	Supplemental instruction and review of historical concepts.
ParentSquare	Parent and teacher communication.
ASPEN	Official district grade posting, attendance tracking, and academic reporting.

Weekly Classroom Routine

Monday – Chapter Introduction & Guided Notes: Students will be introduced to the weekly Tennessee standards, chapter objectives, and essential questions. Guided chapter notes, vocabulary instruction, and interactive Kahoot! activities will be used to introduce and reinforce new concepts.

Tuesday–Thursday – Practice, Analysis & Review: Students will participate in a variety of instructional activities designed to reinforce the Tennessee standards, including

primary/secondary source analysis, document analysis, reading and annotation, DBQ-style questions, maps, political cartoons, charts/graphs, classroom discussions, debates, small group activities, Canvas assignments, and Crash Course review videos.

Friday – Standards Assessment: Students will complete a Mastery Connect standards-based quiz covering the Tennessee standards taught during the week. Additional intervention, enrichment, and review activities may also be provided as needed.

Assessment & Grading Policy

Student grades are intended to reflect both daily engagement with the course and mastery of the Tennessee U.S. History standards.

Category	Percentage	Description
Daily Work	40%	Bell ringers, guided notes, vocabulary, source analysis, reading assignments, writing activities, maps, DBQ-style questions, discussions, Canvas assignments, exit tickets, and study guides. Specific timelines and due dates are provided for all assignments.
Weekly Quizzes & Projects	40%	Weekly Mastery Connect standards-based quizzes administered every Friday, plus research projects, historical presentations, DBQ assignments, timelines, essays, and digital projects assigned throughout the year. Detailed instructions and grading rubrics are provided through Canvas.
Tests	20%	Nine Weeks Tests at the conclusion of each grading period, cumulative Semester Assessment, and preparation for the state-required End-of-Course (EOC) assessment.

Grade Posting Policy

Student grades will be updated regularly in **ASPEN** (the official district grade reporting system) as well as Microsoft Canvas. Parents and students are encouraged to monitor ASPEN regularly.

Make-Up Work & Late Work Policy

Absent students have five (5) school days, or one week, after returning to school to complete and submit make-up work unless the instructor has approved other arrangements, following Cocke County School Board guidelines. Alternative assignments may be provided for interactive activities such as debates or discussions that cannot reasonably be recreated outside of class.

General Expectations & Classroom Discipline

Students are expected to:

- Come to class prepared each day with required materials.
- Participate actively in classroom activities and discussions.
- Complete assignments on time and demonstrate academic honesty.
- Respect classmates, teachers, and school property.
- Follow directions promptly and maintain a positive learning environment.

Attendance Policy

Regular attendance is vital to success in this course. Students are expected to attend class daily and on time in accordance with Cocke County Schools Board Attendance Policy.

Honor Code, PBIS & Reward Trips

Students are expected to adhere to the school Honor Code and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) plan. Demonstrating integrity, respect, and positive behavior is required for student privileges, including eligibility for reward trips and extracurricular activities.

District & Board Policies

Academic Integrity, Plagiarism & Generative AI

Academic integrity is essential. Students may use AI only when specifically authorized by the instructor for tasks such as brainstorming or reviewing concepts. Submitting AI-generated work, writing essays with AI, plagiarism, copying another student's work, or cheating is strictly prohibited.

According to the *Harbrace Handbook, 15th edition*:

Plagiarism is defined as "presenting someone else's ideas, research, or opinions as your own without proper documentation, even if it has been rephrased." This includes but is not limited to:

- Copying verbatim all or part of another's written work;
- Using phrases, figures, or illustrations without citing the source;
- Paraphrasing ideas, conclusions, or research without citing the source;
- Using all or part of a literary plot, poem, or film without attributing the work to its creator.

Consequences of Plagiarism: Plagiarism is a form of stealing and academic fraud. Students

who are found guilty of plagiarism have the option of either redoing the assignment within a specified time period and accepting a letter drop or taking a zero on the assignment. Parents are to be involved in making this decision.

Religion in the Classroom

The Board affirms that it is essential that the teaching about religion — and not of a religion — be conducted in a factual, objective, and respectful manner in accordance with the following guidelines:

Cocke County Board Policy 4.804:

Educational content which consists of religious themes shall be presented in a factual, objective, and respectful manner in accordance with the following guidelines:

1. Religious themes may be a part of the curriculum for school-sponsored activities and programs provided it is essential to the learning experience in the various fields of study and is presented objectively.
2. The inclusion of religion shall be for educational purposes only.
3. The emphasis on religious themes should be only as extensive as necessary for a balanced and comprehensive study of the curriculum. Such studies shall never be used to proselytize, establish, foster, or demean any particular religion, religious tenets, or beliefs.
4. Student-initiated expressions to questions or assignments which reflect their beliefs or non-beliefs about a religious theme shall be accommodated.

Flagged Objectionable Content & Alternative Assignments

If a student or parent/guardian finds any assigned instructional content or material objectionable, please contact the instructor. Procedures will be provided to request an equitable alternative assignment that fulfills the same academic standard without penalty.

Student Support & Intervention

Students needing additional academic support, tutoring, or assignment assistance can access intervention opportunities before or after school by appointment, as well as during designated classroom intervention times.

Curriculum Outline

- **Unit 1:** Reconstruction, Westward Expansion & Industrialization (1860–1901)
- **Unit 2:** Imperialism, Progressivism & World War I (1890–1919)
- **Unit 3:** The Roaring Twenties & The Great Depression (1920–1939)
- **Unit 4:** World War II (1939–1945)
- **Unit 5:** Cold War & Postwar America (1945–1960s)
- **Unit 6:** Civil Rights & Social Change (1960s–1970s)
- **Unit 7:** Modern America & 21st Century (1970s–Present)

Course Philosophy

History is more than learning dates, names, and events. Studying history allows students to

understand how the actions, decisions, and ideas of the past continue to shape the world today. Throughout this course, students will learn to analyze evidence, evaluate multiple perspectives, think critically, communicate effectively, and become informed citizens.