

***Middle School***

***American History***

Yearlong 2022/23

**Instructor:** Justin Woodside

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**Eligible Students:**

**Rising 6th–8th graders**.Students are expected to have proficient reading and emerging writing skills as well as the interest and willingness to grow in discussion skills about literature and history. Students suited for this course will also be cultivating the following scholarship skills:

• Actively engage in notetaking

• Learn annotation of text

• Practice outlining

• Adhere to deadlines

• Be responsible for class and project preparedness

• Take initiative to ask questions for understanding and comprehension

• Participate in Socratic discussion

**Course Description:**

*Scholé Academy’s Middle School American History and Literature courses are designed to offer a flexible yet integrated introduction to the study of American History and develop the skills necessary for independent scholarship in a restful and supportive learning environment. These middle-school courses will invite students to take a closer look at a various works to provide context and understanding of the broad strokes of American History and Literature. Like other Schole´ history courses, this class will blend “surveying the landscape (considering the whole) and deep dives into great books from American History.*

*Our study of American Literature and History will teach students to cultivate historical thinking through the engaging study of real people and events that have helped shape the nation they call home. Beginning with Socratic style discussion of the previous day’s readings, students will be challenged to engage with the material in a more than cursory manner. I have a firm belief that depth is more important than breadth when it comes to the study of History. Learning how to summarize, complete outlines, and write papers will help them connect information, seeing causes and effects.*

*Students are asked to consider and engage carefully crafted questions as their window into “the Great Conversation.” Occasionally, the teacher will present historical context through brief lectures, but all other classes are seminar-style discussions on the American texts.*

*Students are assessed for their curiosity, participation, and diligence during discussions, as well as by means of short response papers, essays, projects, quizzes.*

* **Integrated**—Both classes are taught by the same teacher and meet in back-to-back sessions
* **Flexible**—students may take one or both modules (either simultaneously or successively)
* **Introductory**—no background knowledge is assumed or required
* **Survey**—students will gain a broad perspective on civilization
* **Restful**—a modest selection of texts read slowly and carefully; *multum non multa*

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**Required Course Texts:**

**I chose these particular books for 2 reasons. The first is that I wanted to save families money (purchasing two books instead of 10.) A second, more important reason is pedagogy. I thought that using a smaller main textbook would provide more time in class to look at and analyze primary source documents, bringing a rich learning experience.**

American History:

Guerber, H.A. *Story of the Thirteen Colonies and the Great Republic*. (Memoria Press edition)

Bauer,Susan Wise. *The Story of the World Vol4: The Modern Age*

Various Primary source documents (supplied by teacher)

**Schedule for American History:**

**Class Sessions Dates:**

**Class Times:** Monday & Wednesday

Literature: Section 1- M/W 3:30-4:45 pm EST, 60–75 min

**Class Dates:** Mondays and Wednesdays 5:00 ET/2:00 Pacific

*\*The above classes will be provided by me or occasionally by a substitute teacher. In the unforeseen event that I cannot find a substitute teacher and must cancel a class (e.g. due to illness or family emergency), then I will record and post a make-up session, offer the class at an alternate time, or assign appropriate work for the class-time.*

OFFICE HOURS: *By appointment*. (Please include time zone in your appointment request. Many thanks!)

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**American HistoryCourse Map:**

**Quarter 1: Early Americans and Colonization**

Early settlers and Explorers, Colonialization, Development of American Political Thought, Religious freedom, Civil liberties (Guerber, H.A. *Story of the Thirteen Colonies and the Great Republic*. (Memoria Press edition)

**Quarter 2: Continue Revolutionary America (1735- 1791)**

War for Independence, Westward Expansion, Gold Rush, Manifest Destiny, Rising Tension in the States in Regards to the Slavery question ((Guerber, H.A. *Story of the Thirteen Colonies and the Great Republic*. (Memoria Press edition); Bauer,Susan Wise. *The Story of the World Vol4: The Modern Age)*

**Quarter 3: Industrial Revolution (1871-1920)**

The Civil War: Its Causes and Consequences, Reconstruction, Railroad Mania, The Rise of Big Oil and Steel, Jim Crow, Spanish American War, The Causes of WWI, The Fallout of WWI (Bauer,Susan Wise. *The Story of the World Vol4: The Modern Age)*

**Quarter 4: Continue New Deal & WWII (1933-1945)**

The Great Depression, WWII, The Baby Boom, New Inventions, The Cold War, Korea and Vietnam, The Civil Rights Movement, The 1980s, The First Persian Gulf War, 9/11 (Bauer,Susan Wise. *The Story of the World Vol4: The Modern Age)*

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**Scholarship Skills**

Students of Middle School History and Literature practice a variety of complex skills which normally take many years to fully develop. Here are the skills which successful students of the course will develop at an age-appropriate level: General scholarship skills Socratic Discussion: Formulate questions, define terms, offer examples, compare, contrast, and discover relationships between ideas Inspectional Reading: Skim, preview books, study the table of contents, search for information

**Analytical Reading**: Identify key passages, terms, and definitions; outline a passage or short chapter; determine an author’s message; evaluate key arguments

**Mark a text:** Underline key terms; add marginal notes; annotate

**Composition:** Keep a reading journal, compose a short narrative, respond in paragraph form to a prompt

**History Skills Geography**: Identify important information on historical maps

**Timeline:** Follow a timeline of events which tells the story of the development of the United States of America

**Research:** Become familiar with the methods of primary research used by historians and archaeologists Literacy: Learn the vocabulary of the specific period (names of people groups, political entities, wars, places, and artifacts) and general historical inquiry (especially economic, religious, and political concepts)

**Appreciation:** Cultivate a sense of gratitude for the rich inheritance of Civilization which we enjoy today: art, architecture, science, religion, medicine, literature, philosophy, mathematics, law, ethics, education, and so much more

**Literature Skills Reading comprehension**: Practice reading and narrating passages from intermediate and moderately difficult texts from or inspired by classical antiquity

**Literature Skills**

Reading comprehension: Practice reading and narrating passages from intermediate and moderately difficult texts from or inspired by classical antiquity

Annotation: Learn to actively read and annotate literature using these steps:

1. circle any vocabulary words that you are unfamiliar with or that you’d have trouble explaining to others
2. underline key phrases
3. keep track of the story or idea as it unfolds through a timeline or summary
4. note word patters and repetitions or anything that strikes you as confusing or important
5. write down questions in the margins or in your notebook

Literary Analysis: Interpret texts using tools of literary analysis: character, theme, setting, plot development

Moral Philosophy: Weigh the decisions of literary characters according to standards of classical and Christian virtues and vices

Stylistic Development: Study and imitate the poetic and literary styles of classical authors

**Student Assessment Categories**

Reading and Written Expression(~50%)

* Reading log/Annotation- Submit brief log of key terms, notes, quotes, outline, or short answer questions.
* Reading journal- Write sentences or paragraphs in response to a reflection question 1 per week

Quizzes (~20%)

Participation (~10%)

* Based on Class discussion and interaction
* Memory work

Composition (~20%)

* Essay, or narration- 5 per semester