

Rockingham County Public Schools

Virginia and United States History Benchmarks

A Guide for Parent Involvement

1st Nine Weeks

Describe how early European exploration and colonization resulted in cultural interactions among Europeans, Africans, and American (VUS.2)

- Characteristics of early exploration and settlements in the New World
- Interactions among Europeans, Africans and American Indians

Describe how the values and institutions of European life took root in the colonies and how slavery reshaped European and African life in the Americas (VUS.3)

- Economic characteristics of the Colonial Period
- Social characteristics of the colonies
- The development of indentured servitude and slavery

Demonstrate knowledge of events and issues of the Revolutionary Period (VUS.4)

- Analyzing how the political ideas of John Locke and those expressed in *Common Sense* helped shape the Declaration of Independence
- Describing the political differences among the colonists concerning separation from Britain
- Analyzing reasons for colonial victory in the Revolutionary War

Demonstrate knowledge of the issues involved in the creation and ratification of the Constitution of the United States of America and how the principles of limited government, consent of the governed, and the social contract are embodied in it (VUS.5)

- Explaining the origins of the Constitution, including the Articles of Confederation
- Identifying the major compromises necessary to produce the Constitution, and the roles of James Madison and George Washington
- Examining the significance of the Virginia Declaration of Rights and the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom in the framing of the Bill of Rights

Demonstrate knowledge of the major events during the first half of the nineteenth century (VUS.6)

- Explaining the principles and issues that prompted Thomas Jefferson to organize the first opposition political party
- Identifying the economic, political, and geographic factors that led to territorial expansion and its impact on the American Indians
- Examining the reasons why James Madison asked Congress to declare war on Great Britain in 1812 and how this divided the nation
- Relating the changing character of American political life in “the age of the common man” (Jacksonian Era) to increasing popular participation in state and national politics
- Describing the cultural, economic, and political issues that divided the nation, including tariffs, slavery, the abolitionist and women’s suffrage movements, and the role of the states in the Union

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2nd Nine Weeks

Demonstrate knowledge of the Civil War and Reconstruction Era and its importance as a major turning point in American history (VUS.7)

- Identifying the major events and the roles of key leaders of the Civil War Era, with emphasis on Abraham Lincoln, Ulysses S. Grant, Robert E. Lee, and Frederick Douglass
- Analyzing the significance of the Emancipation Proclamation and the principles outlined in Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address
- Examining the political, economic, and impact of the war and Reconstruction, including the adoption of the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments to the Constitution of the United States of America

Demonstrate knowledge of how the nation grew and changed from the end of Reconstruction through the early twentieth century (VUS.8)

- Explaining the relationship among territorial expansion, westward movement of the population, new immigration, growth of cities, and the admission of new states to the Union
- Describing the transformation of the American economy from a primarily agrarian to a modern industrial economy and identifying major inventions that improved life in the United States
- Analyzing prejudice and discrimination during this time period, with emphasis on “Jim Crow” and the responses of Booker T. Washington and W.E. B. DuBois
- Identifying the impact of the Progressive Movement, including child labor and antitrust laws, the use of labor unions, and the success of the women’s suffrage movement

Demonstrate knowledge of the emerging role of the United States in world affairs (VUS.9)

- Explaining the changing policies of the United States toward Latin America and Asia and the growing influence of the United States in foreign markets
- Evaluating United States involvement in World War I, including Wilson’s Fourteen Points, the Treaty of Versailles, and the national debate over treaty ratification and the League of Nations.

Demonstrate knowledge of key domestic event of the 1920s and 1930s (VUS10)

- Analyzing how radio, movies, newspapers, and magazines created popular culture and challenged traditional values
- Assessing the causes and consequences of the stock market crash of 1929;
- Explaining the causes of the Great Depression, its impact on the American people, and the ways the New Deal addressed it;
- Describing how Franklin D. Roosevelt’s New Deal relief, recovery, and reform measures addressed the Great Depression and expanded the government’s role in the economy.

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3rd Nine Weeks

Demonstrate knowledge of World War II (VUS.11)

- Analyzing the causes and events that led to American involvement in the war, including military assistance to Britain and the Japanese attack of Pearl Harbor
- Describing the major battles and turning points of the war in North Africa, Europe, and the Pacific, including Midway, Stalingrad, the Normandy landing (D-Day), and Truman's decision to use the atomic bomb to force the surrender of Japan
- Describing the role of all-minority units, including the Tuskegee Airmen and Nisei regiments
- Examining the Geneva Convention and the treatment of prisoners of war during World War II
- Analyzing the Holocaust (Hitler's "final solution"), its impact on Jews and other groups, and postwar trials of war criminals

Demonstrate knowledge of the effects of World War II on the home front (VUS.12)

- Explaining how the United States mobilized its economic, human, and military resources
- Describing the contributions of women and minorities to the war effort
- Explaining the internment of Japanese Americans during the war
- Describing the role of media and communications in the war effort

Demonstrate knowledge of United States foreign policy since World War II (VUS.13)

- Describing outcomes of World War II, including political boundary changes, the formation of the United Nations, and the Marshall Plan
- Explaining the origins of the Cold War, and describing the Truman Doctrine and the policy of containment of communism, the American role of wars in Korea and Vietnam, and the role of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in Europe
- Explaining the role of America's military and veterans in defending freedom during the Cold War
- Explaining the collapse of communism and the end of the Cold War, including the role of Ronald Reagan on foreign policy
- Explaining the impact of U. S. presidents since 1988

Demonstrate knowledge of the Civil Rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s (VUS.14)

- Identifying the importance of the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, the roles of Thurgood Marshall and Oliver Hill, and how Virginia responded
- Describing the importance of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the 1963 March on Washington, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Voting Rights Act of 1965

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4th Nine Weeks

Demonstrate knowledge of economic, social, cultural, and political developments in recent decades and today (VUS.15)

- Analyzing changing patterns of immigration, the reasons new immigrants choose to come to this country, their contributions to contemporary America, and debates over immigration policy
- Explaining the media influence on contemporary American culture and how scientific and technological advances affect the workplace, health care, and education
- Examining the impact of the "Reagan Revolution" on federalism, the role of government, and state and national elections since 1988
- assessing the role of government actions that impact the economy;
- assessing the role of the United States in a world confronted by international terrorism

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Application of previous topics

***** Standard VUS.1 will be incorporated into the above units

Demonstrate skills for historical and geographical analysis, including the ability to: (VUS.1)

- Identifying, analyzing, and interpreting primary and secondary source documents, records, and data, including artifacts, diaries, letters, photographs, journals, newspapers, historical accounts, and art to increase understanding of events and life in the United States
- Evaluating the authenticity, authority, and credibility of sources
- Formulating historical questions and defending findings based on inquiry and interpretation
- Developing perspectives of time and place, including the construction of maps and various time lines of events, periods, and personalities in American history
- Communicating findings orally and in analytical essays and/or comprehensive papers
- Developing skills in discussion, debate, and persuasive writing with respect to enduring issues and determining how divergent viewpoints have been addressed and reconciled
- Applying geographic skills and reference sources to understand how relationships between humans and their environment have changed over time
- Interpreting the significance of excerpts from famous speeches and documents
- identify the costs and benefits of specific choices made including the consequences, both intended and unintended, of the decision and how people and nations responded to positive and negative incentives