

June 2017

Dear Honors US History Student,

Welcome and congratulations for choosing to be a part of this class next year! I am very excited about continuing to create this class with you. The intention of this class is to challenge your academic skills while engaging you in relevant and interesting part of American history that you may not have studied before. It will require a lot of reading and quite a bit of writing, but you will become proficient in both of those areas, preparing you for AP classes your senior year as well as college.

If you are not in the habit of following the news, you need to start. Attached you will also find a guide to create a current events journal for the summer. You aren't expected to spend hours every day reading every newspaper available or glued to CNN or C-SPAN. My intention is for you to get used to following what's going on in the world around you. Consider adding news sources to your twitter feed or putting a news app on your phone. One of the easiest ways to make history more interesting is to be invested in the events of the world around you. The point of analyzing history is to help us all make sense of the world we live in today. Again, I will assume you are up-to-date and aware of major world events that occur over the summer.

Try to think of this summer assignment as not only a way to prepare you for Honors US History, but as a way to become a more sophisticated and aware American. Do a little bit each week and it should be an easy and gentle transition to next year. Save it all for August 30th (don't forget school starts the Thursday BEFORE Labor Day!) and you will be starting the year unnecessarily stressed and miserable.

I am so excited about this class and I hope you are as well. If you have questions, please email me at: Siobhan-reilley@scusd.edu

Sincerely;

Ms. Reilley

Following Current Events

You need to create a Current Events Journal in order to keep track of the news as it happens this summer. You need to have at least one journal entry for each week of the summer. That will be **12 entries total**.

For each week, please record the following information:

- 2-3 major events or news stories of the week. Please focus on national or international news. Celebrity news only counts as long as you balance it with other “real” political, social or economic issues. Provide a brief (1-3 sentence) summary of each one
- List the sources you used to follow the news (Websites, newspaper, twitter feeds, blogs, *The Daily Show*, etc.)
- Choose one story you find significant and write a paragraph explaining why you think this particular issue or event is important. If there is a story that covers more than one week, you can write about it more than once, focusing on how it changes over time.

Please find a format that is clear and organized. You may use bullet points to list the events each week. Below is a suggestion that might work for you.

We will talk about major events of the summer on the first week of school. I will expect you to be able to contribute to the conversation and be informed about what’s happening in this nation.

Some examples are likely to be the investigation into Russian interference in the election, President Trump’s foreign policy, the health care debate and terrorism.

I would recommend getting a small composition book or notebook to do this. If it’s easier, creating a running word document on your computer. **I will collect the journals the first week of school. We will also be discussing the events of the summer on the first day of school.**

Suggested Format

Week 1: June 18-June 24

- Title of important event of the week: 1-3 sentence summary of what happened
- Title of important event of the week: 1-3 sentence summary of what happened
- Title of important event of the week: 1-3 sentence summary of what happened

The most significant event this week was

Sources:

CNN website, accessed through twitter feed

NBC Nightly News

Huffington Post website