

## AP US HISTORY EXAM THEMES



**1. American National Identity** This theme focuses on the formation of both American national identity and group identities in U.S. history. You must be able to explain how various identities, cultures, and values have been preserved or changed in different time periods of US History, with particular attention to gender, class, racial, and ethnicity.

**2. Work, Exchange, and Technology** This theme focuses on the development of American economies based on agriculture, trade, and manufacturing. You must be able to examine ways that different economic and labor systems, advances in technology, and government policy have shaped American society.

**3. Migration, Settlement, and Peopling** This theme focuses on why and how the various people who moved to, from, and within the United States adapted to their new social and physical environments. Within this theme, you will examine migration across borders and long distances, including the slave trade and internal migration, and how both newcomers and native inhabitants transformed North America. You will also explore the ideas, beliefs, traditions, technologies, religions, and gender roles that migrants/immigrants and conquered peoples brought with them and the impact these factors had on both these peoples and on U.S. society.

### 4. Politics and Power

This theme focuses on the debates over the role of the government in society and its potential as an active agent for change. Topics of focus include the role of individual Americans in the political process, attaining individual rights, the evolution of American citizenship, the changing relationships between the branches of the federal government, and the interactions between local, state, and the federal government

### 5. America in the World

In this theme, students should focus on the global context in which the United States originated and developed as well as the influence of the United States on world affairs. Within this theme we will also investigate how American foreign policies and military actions have affected the rest of the world as well as social issues within the United States itself.

### 6. Environment and Geography (Physical and Human)

This theme examines the role of environment, geography, and climate in both constraining and shaping human actions. Students should analyze the interaction between the environment and Americans in their efforts to survive and thrive. Students should also explore efforts to interpret, preserve, manage, or exploit natural and man-made environments, as well as the historical contexts within which interactions with the environment have taken place.

### 7. Ideas, Beliefs, and Culture

This theme explores the roles that ideas, beliefs, social mores, and creative expression have played in shaping the United States. Within this theme you will examine the development of aesthetic, moral, religious, scientific, and philosophical idea/principles and consider how these ideas/principles have affected individual and group actions.