



# Eleanor Roosevelt High School

411 East 76th Street • New York, NY 10021 • Tel: 212.772.1220 • Fax: 212.772.1440  
Dimitri Saliani, Principal www.erhsnyc.org

## AP US History Summer Assignment

Congratulations! By electing to participate in an AP US History course, you are to be commended. It is important to note, however, that the AP experience is designed to be a college level, challenging course. Simply put, there is a massive amount of content that we need to cover in a short space of time. The pace of this college level course is quite fast, so falling behind can quickly lead to problems. It is important that you commit yourself to the course now in order to avoid difficult and/or embarrassing situations later. This is a demanding and (hopefully) rewarding course that will require you to do some preparation before you arrive in September. This assignment will be collected at the first full class meeting and count as **Your First Test Grade**

There are four general purposes for this preparatory work:

1. The topic of the assignment, the American Revolution, is a defining moment in U.S. (and *World*) History. A thorough understanding will make much of what we study next year more coherent.
2. To accelerate our movement through this topic. As you will come to learn, this course is simply too big for one school year. We will battle this reality all year through various means. Therefore, this assignment will allow us to move quickly without missing important points.
3. To acquaint yourself with the workload you will have this year. Reading is your primary “homework” all year long (expect 10-12 pages a night). It is essential that you analyze, summarize and process the readings in order to engage in the daily activities. This assignment will give you a taste of this.
4. To get you to start thinking like an historian. How do we know what we know about the past? What evidence do we use to understand history, and how reliable is that evidence? How do Historians construct arguments using events from the past?

## Assignment

**Step One:** Read *The American Revolution: A History* by [Gordon S. Wood](#). This book is only 224 pages but don't let that fool you. Gordon Wood is one of the preeminent historians on the American Revolution and early Republic. It is filled with important and interesting concepts.

Read this book (including the *preface*) with a pencil in hand and a notebook and dictionary nearby. Summarize what you think are the main arguments being made by the author, the ideas and concepts you find confusing, and words that need explanation (then look them up). Use the notebook (or post-its if you prefer) to write questions that you have about what you are reading. Do not be discouraged if you need to read a paragraph more than once to understand it, this is part of the process of learning (***everyone*** needs to do this sometimes).



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**Step Two:** After you have read the book, write a book report that answers the following questions:

The first three sections of the book deal generally with the causes of the American Revolution.

- How does the author describe the relationship between the Colonists and the British Crown?
- What, essentially, were the causes of the American Revolution? Does Wood believe that this conflict was inevitable? Why or why not?
- Assess the validity (legitimacy) of the arguments made by the colonists for revolution. Do you find them to be persuasive, exaggerated, etc? How does Wood address their legitimacy?

The last four sections deal with the consequences of the Revolution on America and the world.

- How does the author describe the effects the war **and** its aftermath had on the American people.
- How did “Republicanism” stimulate change in American society?
- Did the creation of the Constitution represent a betrayal of the ideals of the Revolution?
- How does Wood assess the revolution in terms of its influence and impact? Do you agree with this assessment? In what ways might someone disagree?

### Format

When answering the above questions, you must cite specific points in the book to support your answers. A simple page number in parentheses after the point is fine. The book report must be written in essay format (that means introduction, body paragraphs and conclusion). The report must be typed, double-spaced, times new roman font. The report should be **3-5 pages** in length **but not more than 7**. Summarization is a crucial skill in effective historical analysis. Limit your responses to the questions to only what is essential. I **will not** accept papers over the limit. **No Exceptions.**

### Assessment:

	Score of 5	Score of 4	Score of 3	Score of 2-1
<b>Summary/Content</b>	Answers consist of major themes, ideas and arguments from the sections with at least 4 relevant excerpts from the book	Answers consist of major themes, ideas and arguments from some of the sections with at least 3 relevant excerpts from the book	Answers consist of some major themes ideas and arguments from the book with at least 2 relevant excerpts from book	Answers consist of mostly an outline of the book without discussion of major themes ideas and arguments. May include quotes that are not relevant to topic
<b>Analysis</b>	Thoroughly analyzes major points in a	Thoroughly analyzes major points but	Somewhat analyzes major points but	Limited analysis that demonstrates a poor



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	balanced and accurate way. Allows for multiple points of view using valid historical observations.	does so unevenly. Shows strong opinions that fail to allow for alternative perspectives.	shows a lack of thorough understanding of the arguments made.	understanding of the key ideas or invalid historical observations
<b>Grammar/Structure</b>	Structure of paper flows and is easily read with smooth transitions from section to section. No major grammatical or formatting errors	Structure of the paper flows but one or two transitions may be faulty or missing. Minor grammatical errors that do not detract from the paper and no formatting errors	Structure of paper struggles to follow a logical order. May “jump” around within and between sections. Some grammatical errors and/or one or two formatting errors	Structure does not follow a logical order and transitions are absent making it difficult to follow. Major grammatical and formatting errors

## Plagiarism

It is a serious academic offense. Plagiarism is a form of dishonesty that occurs when a person passes off someone else’s work as his or her own. This can range from failing to cite an author for ideas incorporated into a student’s paper to cutting and pasting paragraphs from different websites to handing in a paper downloaded from the Internet. **All are plagiarism.**

If you share your work with another student and he or she plagiarizes it, you are considered **as guilty** as the one who has plagiarized your work, since you enabled the plagiarism to take place.

*Under no circumstances should a student make his or her coursework available to another student unless the instructor gives explicit permission for this to happen.*

Any student found guilty of plagiarism will be given a failing grade for the work, no make-ups and no exceptions.

Have a safe and rewarding summer break and I look forward to seeing you (*with your assignments*) when we meet in September.

Mr. Curran