

Guidelines For Taking the Competency Exams 2025

Students must be in the correct comp. room or skills room and settled down by 1:20 p.m. This provides ten minutes for getting settled, reviewing notes, announcements and getting to the bathroom before **1:30, when the exam will begin.** A rare but not regular exception will be made by pre-arrangement by a parent due to something like a doctor's (not a hairdressing or nail) appointment. **Students may stay to work on the exam after 3, but they must stay until at least 3. On Humanities Weeks, students can stay as long as the graders are working, which is usually past 6, and on math weeks, students may work until at least 4.**

The room MUST be silent from the moment the tests are distributed to the first person and throughout the exam period. Students who cannot be silent will be warned once and then told to leave if noise continues, and their test for that day won't be graded. **They will have to turn in their phones at school for 3 days the next week on *the first offense* for making noise and/or using devices.**

Proctors may only answer questions about the mechanics of the exam. They may not give hints or provide actual information that could help on the exam or answer "Does this look right?" They may not look at the student's answer and then indicate that more work would be a good idea.

Students may bring light snacks (candy/health bar, piece of fruit) and drinks, but this is not the time or place to eat lunch. Food may never be ordered or delivered into the comp.

To prevent cheating, **students may not use any electronic devices** other than calculators specifically approved for the purpose during either exam. The ban includes music players, headphones and phones. **All electronic devices must be stored out of sight, and phones will be deposited in the phone holders in the classroom until the student leaves for good. If a student is seen handling a phone during the exam, the proctor MUST ask the student to hand it over and sit without the test until 3, and the student's test won't count for that taking, so students may not check texts or who called.** If a student's device goes off (rings) during the exam, the student must turn it off without consulting it and hand it to the proctor for the rest of the exam. In either case, **it's a loss of the phone in school for three days the next week** on the 1st offense and having to sit right in front of the proctor in the future.

Students may not leave the room during the test and return to take the exam. This includes bathroom emergencies as they can consult anyone or anything in the bathroom nowadays. **They should use the bathroom or get drinks or supplies before they begin. If a student must use the bathroom before 3, the student must turn in the exam before going and then return to wait until 3 to leave. The student may read a book quietly until 3, but that is the only activity allowed. Bathroom breaks longer than five minutes will result in 3 day phone loss the next week.**

Everyone must stay until at least 3. Failure to stay until 3 at either the comp. or the help session will result in the loss of one's phone during school for three days the next week on the first offense and notification of parents on the first infraction and escalating penalties from that point. The exception is a rare absence pre-arranged by the parents. This is designed solely to help students pass the exam. Students who only have one section left should bring a book to read when they have handed in the exam.

Tutorials: Students who have completed one exam will have tutorial sessions during the other exam. Check with the coordinator of that department for more information.

Students must be in the room to which they are assigned. They don't get to choose their rooms. There are no exceptions unless made by the Academic Support Coordinator or the department chair well in advance as a specific accommodation based on documented special needs.

Students may put their heads down and relax during the exam, but they may not read any non-test materials during the exam *unless they have handed in the exam* and are just waiting until 3. **Reading a book the student brings or just sitting quietly are the only acceptable activity during this time.**

Students should read directions carefully and proofread. Failure to do these two things lead to most of the section failures that occur.

Students are encouraged to look at their graded exams on the Monday after the test before school, during lunch or after school. This is the best way to begin the process of passing sections one didn't pass this time.

Specific to the Humanities Comp.: Students must do the history section first when they arrive if they wish to do it. **Students may not use dictionaries or thesauruses on the history section (on which spelling doesn't count),** but they are encouraged to use these books for the other sections. **They may keep a dictionary at their desks once they are done with the history section.**

Some points of emphasis on comp. grading

Job application:

Must be per hour or /hour (or hr.): can't be an hour; also, be sure the \$ is there in salaries.

Language questions: must be None, None, None or Spanish, Spanish, Spanish or whichever language.

Read directions: must use order indicated for Former Employers

When a prompt begins with ***IF***, leave it blank if it doesn't apply.

Business Letter:

Print for signature is okay as long as there is a separate "signing" and "printing" line; i.e., they can be identical, but there must be two.

Must use a colon in the salutation, as in Dear Mr. Hayes:

Punctuation:

Brand name capitalization

Colon can't follow or precede a verb: sentence must stop short before the colon.

Oxford comma is acceptable either way: with or without (as long as it's used ((or not)) consistently)

English Competency Exam: Grading Standards Revised: Summer, 2015

Section 1: Job Application

This section tests the student's ability to fill out basic forms, in this case a job application. Students must read directions. Failure to use N.A. or N/A appropriately or to list previous jobs in the correct order on side two automatically cause failure. Students are allowed up to five mechanical errors.

Section 2: Business Letter

This section tests the student's knowledge of the format of a business letter as well as his/her basic writing and persuasive skills. Students must use the proper format. Errors in placement of or lack of essential items or a comma instead of a colon in the salutation are automatic failures. Students are allowed up to four mechanical errors though the size of the letter will be taken into account here. The letter must be effective in making its point and providing all necessary information.

Section 3: Editorial Reading

This section tests the student's ability to find specific facts in a newspaper article. Grading here is totally objective. Students must record at least five correct answers out of six to pass this section. Any questions marked with more than one answer or that are unmarked are considered incorrect.

Section 4: Spelling and Usage

This section tests the student's knowledge of basic usage and his/her ability to utilize a dictionary. It is also totally objective. Students pass if they record two or fewer errors. Students who leave blanks or who mark more than one answer per choice will be marked incorrect.

Section 5: The Essay

This section tests the student's ability to write a clear, well-structured essay and to support two sides of an issue. The essay must contain four complete paragraphs, meaning at least six sentences apiece. Each must be structurally sound. The first paragraph must conclude with a thesis statement. The final paragraph must summarize and explain the author's point of view and the reasons for it. The body paragraphs must both explain one point of view. All paragraphs must be a minimum of six sentences. The essay must deal with the topic on the test. Mechanically, the student is allowed up to ten mechanical errors. Syntax or sentence structure errors count as two errors apiece. On the other hand, if the student writes an excellent essay that is much longer than required, the grader may allow an additional error for every three additional sentences over the minimum as long as they don't highlight a major punctuation gap. For students who are diagnosed as dyslexic, allowance may be made for spelling only if it is clear that the student tried to use the dictionary and has otherwise written a strong essay.

Section 6: U.S. History

This section tests students' retention of basic knowledge of key concepts of U.S. history and government. Spelling does not count on this section as students may not use a dictionary while doing it. The student must have at least three completely correct answers. If three are completely correct, one may be generally accurate but contain minor errors. A student may **not** pass with two correct answers and two mediocre answers or with one that is absolutely wrong or uninformative. **Vague answers or things true of everything (famous, important, in the past) do not count as correct answers.**

Section 7: Reading Analysis

This section tests the student's reading, analytical and writing skills. To pass, students must provide accurate, clear and thorough answers to at least three of the four questions and do all four. Each answer must constitute one clearly written, well-supported paragraph that responds effectively to the question.

Students who complete four full paragraphs are allowed up to ten mechanical errors with the same grader discretion as was described under the essay.

Section 8: Punctuation

This section tests the student's ability to utilize basic punctuation and edit carefully. For the first part, students must write sentences about the topic noted on the page to prevent memorization of sentences. Sentences must be complete. Students must do four of these five sentences correctly in order to pass. If there are no errors in part 1, the student will receive an extra error in part 2. Students are allowed five errors in part two, and if they do the first side perfectly, they are allowed one more for a total of six. There is no grader discretion allowed beyond that number.

Section 9: Dictionary and Thesaurus

This section tests the student's ability to utilize these two basic reference books. Students are allowed to get one of the questions wrong and still pass. There is no grader discretion for these rules.

Competency (Senior) Essay: Grading Standards

The competency essay is at maximum a 650 word essay that successfully and thoroughly explores one aspect of the student's life or personality on topics tied to those of the Common Application for the student's senior year. The basic standards for a passing competency essay include logical, well defined organization including a fully developed introduction and conclusion, a clear theme that is laid out in the thesis statement and that remains consistent throughout the essay, use of evidence to support the main point of each body paragraph, and excellent mechanics. The essay also needs to represent the student in an effective and positive way. There should be no remaining syntax, usage, punctuation or spelling errors. Most students end up revising a number of times, but the more help they seek, the fewer the revisions on most occasions. The expectations for passing will vary from student to student based on individual ability, but the standards stated above are the minimum standards for all students. (For a further explanation, see the assignment sheet.)

General trouble areas with grammar:

Apostrophes:

's when the word it's attached to is singular: Siobhan's love for Sarah
s' when the word it's attached to ends in s because it's plural: the teachers' disdain for Sarah
's follows a singular word ending in S to show possession: Carlos's car

Colons:

Only use a colon before a list when the sentence stops short: never after a verb (is or are)
Here are Kailee's favorite people: Sarah, Lucy and Siobhan.

Commas:

Use one to connect two complete sentences right before **and, but, so** or **or**.
Sarah needs a shower, **but** I'm still her friend.
Sarah is crazy, **and** she's quite amusing.

Don't use a comma before those same words if they're not followed by a complete sentence:
Sarah hasn't showed up **and** isn't pleasant to be near.
Sarah didn't have her work **but** tried a lame excuse.

When beginning a sentence with a phrase of more than 3 words telling when or where, you need a comma:
After leaving Lucy's class, Kailee was relieved.
When she met Sarah in the bathroom, Kailee was up to no good.
At Sarah's house yesterday afternoon, we both got in trouble.

When beginning a sentence with an adverb (ending in ly), it's followed by a comma:
Accidentally, Sarah tripped and fell.
Naughtily, Sarah snuck out of the house.

Quotation marks:

Punctuation always goes **INSIDE** the closing quotation mark unless there is a note:
Sarah asked, "Can I go to the bathroom again?"
Kailee said, "I can hear people screaming in Hell."
Shakespeare said, "To be, or not to be" (Hamlet 3:2).

Capitalize:

Brand names, people's names, days of the week, months, cities, states, countries.

1. READ THE INSTRUCTIONS TO THE SECTION AND ON THE APPLICATION CAREFULLY AND FOLLOW THEM.

2. Answer questions. If a question asks for a number and it is zero, put down zero. If it asks about something that doesn't apply to you (for example, an activity in which you don't participate, write N.A. or N/A for Not Applicable.

Here are examples of the difference:

Number of children _____ Put 0 or None here to answer the question (if that's the answer).

Have you ever been arrested? _____ Answer Yes or No here.

College _____ Put N.A. because this doesn't apply to you yet.

Are you married? _____ Answer Yes or No.

Husband's/Wife's name _____ Answer N.A. if you're not married.

BE SURE THAT ALL ABBREVIATIONS END WITH PERIODS

BE SURE YOU KNOW HOW TO USE COMMAS IN DATES AND ADDRESSES

Place a comma in an address between the street address and the city IF the two are on the same line BUT not if they are on separate lines.

CHECK YOUR SPELLING IN THE DICTIONARY. IT COUNTS!

BE SURE TO LIST AT LEAST THREE PREVIOUS JOBS ON THE EXAM EVEN IF YOU HAVE TO MAKE THEM UP! PLACE THEM IN THE PROPER ORDER ACCORDING TO THE INSTRUCTIONS. Also, read directions carefully at the start of this area as not following them mean automatic failure of the section.

WRITE OUT YEARS FULLY UNLESS YOU KNOW HOW TO ABBREVIATE THEM PROPERLY.

CAPITALIZE THE FIRST LETTERS OF NAMES, COMPANY NAMES, SCHOOLS, ORGANIZATIONS, STREET NAMES, CITIES, STATES, MONTHS, ABBREVIATIONS (except a.m. and p.m.) AND ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

PROOF READ VERY CAREFULLY. YOU HAVE VERY LITTLE ROOM FOR ERROR!

IF YOU DON'T PASS THE FIRST TIME, BE SURE TO REVIEW WITH A TEACHER

Section 1: Job Application

APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT

PERSONAL INFORMATION

DATE _____

NAME _____

LAST

FIRST

MIDDLE

PRESENT ADDRESS _____

STREET

CITY

STATE

PERMANENT ADDRESS _____

STREET

CITY

STATE

PHONE NO. _____ CELL _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____ FAX _____

COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP _____

IF RELATED TO ANYONE IN OUR EMPLOY,
STATE NAME AND DEPARTMENT

REFERRED
BY _____

EMPLOYMENT DESIRED POSITION **DATE YOU CAN START** **SALARY DESIRED**

ARE YOU EMPLOYED NOW? EVER APPLIED TO THIS COMPANY BEFORE? **IF SO, MAY WE INQUIRE OF YOUR PRESENT EMPLOYER?** **WHERE?** **WHEN?**

EDUCATION **NAME AND LOCATION OF SCHOOL** **YEARS ATTENDED** **DATE GRADUATED** **SUBJECTS STUDIED**

HIGH SCHOOL _____

COLLEGE _____

TRADE OR BUSINESS SCHOOL _____

LIST SUBJECTS OF SPECIAL STUDY OR RESEARCH _____

WHICH FOREIGN LANGUAGES DO YOU SPEAK FLUENTLY? READ? WRITE?

U.S. MILITARY OR NAVAL SERVICE RANK ARE YOU A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL GUARD OR RESERVES?

PLEASE LIST RELEVANT COMMUNITY OR INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITIES _____

FORMER EMPLOYERS (LIST BELOW LAST FOUR EMPLOYERS STARTING WITH LAST ONE FIRST)

DATE: MONTHNAME AND ADDRESS REASON FOR
AND YEAR OF EMPLOYER SALARY POSITION LEAVING

FROM _____
TO _____

FROM _____
TO _____

FROM _____
TO _____

FROM _____
TO _____

REFERENCES (GIVE THREE NAMES OF PEOPLE NOT RELATED TO YOU WHO KNOW YOU WELL)

NAME ADDRESS BUSINESS YRS. ACQUAINTED

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

PERSONAL HISTORY

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY,
PLEASE NOTIFY _____

NAME PHONE NUMBER(S)

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN CONVICTED OF A CRIME? IF YES, PLEASE PROVIDE DETAILS

ARE YOU WILLING TO SUBMIT TO A DRUG TEST TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR EMPLOYMENT? IF YOU ANSWERED NO, YOU NEED NOT CONTINUE WITH THIS APPLICATION.

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN FIRED FROM A JOB? IF YES, PLEASE PROVIDE DETAILS

I AUTHORIZE INVESTIGATION OF ALL STATEMENTS CONTAINED IN THIS APPLICATION. I UNDERSTAN
MISREPRESENTATION OR OMISSION OF FACTS REQUESTED HEREIN IS CAUSE FOR DISMISSAL.

DATE SIGNATURE

Business Letter Format

This is the only format that will be acceptable on the School One Competency Exam. It is the format authorized by the Modern Language Association.

88 Elm Street	(NO NAME HERE)
Providence, RI 02906	(Your street address)
November 5, 1998	(Your city, state, zip)
	(Date of the letter)
Bev Vileno	(Addressee's name if applicable)
Assistant Head	(Addressee's title if applicable)
School One	(Business name if applicable)
220 University Avenue	(Addressee's street address)
Providence, RI 02906	(Addressee's city, state, zip)
Dear Ms. Vileno:	(Don't use first name.)
or	
Dear Sir/Madam:	(if you don't have a name)

Here's where you write the body of the letter. You don't indent anything in a business letter. If you have more than one paragraph, don't indent, but leave a space between the paragraphs. In your letter's body, be sure to explain the situation clearly and explain what you want. Be sure to tell the reader all of the information s/he will need to know to help you. Close by saying thank you or otherwise expressing appreciation as part of this paragraph.

Sincerely,	(Yours Truly, is an option too)
Signature here	(Your signature makes it official)
Bruce Wayne	(Your printed name is legible.)

Common Errors To Avoid:

1. Don't forget the colon after the salutation (Dear _____:).
2. Don't put your name at the top of the letter.
3. Don't forget to both sign and print your name in the proper order.
4. Don't indent anything.
5. Don't forget the date.

Section 2 Writing A Business Letter

Practice A

Directions: Using the information given below, write a business letter. Be sure to use the *proper format*. Write with complete sentences, checking over your work for proper spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Note: If you do not know the proper format, skip this section today and review the format with an English teacher before the next exam. You will not pass this section without learning this format.

Information: You recently purchased a sofa from Mike's Furniture Mart. One day after it was delivered, one of the legs broke off. You feel that the merchandise was defective and would like to have a new sofa delivered to your home. You would also like to have the broken sofa removed. Write to Richard Runaround in the Customer Service Department of the store. The address is 26 Exeter Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02116.

Directions: Read the article printed below. Then, on the next page, circle the best answer for each of the multiple choice questions.

S. Africa Inaugurates Mandela As President

Tina Susman

Nelson Mandela was sworn in as South Africa's first black president today in a celebration ending the agony of apartheid and marking the country's return to the world community. "Let freedom reign!" he proclaimed. Completing his transformation from political prisoner to president of Africa's richest country, Mandela eagerly began his oath of office even before the chief justice asked him. "I do hereby swear to be faithful to the Republic of South Africa," he declared, standing on an outdoor podium enclosed in seven tons of bulletproof glass. Shouts of "Viva!" rang out from the crowd, which included heads of state and heroes of the liberation struggle. Mandela took over from F.W. de Klerk, who dismantled the brutal apartheid system his National Party codified four decades ago. Mandela's African National Congress had won a landslide victory last month in the country's first election to include the black majority.

In his inaugural speech, Mandela, 75, called apartheid "an extraordinary human disaster that lasted too, too long." "We shall build the society in which all South Africans, both black and white, will be able to walk tall, without any fear in their hearts, assured of their unalienable right to human dignity - a rainbow nation at peace with itself and the world," Mandela vowed. "Never, never and never again shall it be that this beautiful land will again experience the oppression of one by another and suffer the indignity of being the skunk of the world," he declared.

In the first session of a multiracial parliament yesterday, the 400 legislators chose the unopposed Mandela as president. Moments before his swearing-in, de Klerk and Thabo Mbeki, national chairman of the African National Congress, took oaths of office as Mandela's deputy presidents in a government of national unity. Mandela has vowed to provide housing, jobs, education and health care to the millions of black South Africans impoverished under white rule.

If he keeps enough of his promises to satisfy blacks, and maintains economic prosperity to assuage whites, Mandela's reign will be seen as a near miracle in a continent filled with black-ruled nations struggling to overcome the effects of colonialism. Mandela has warned constituents it will take time to undo the inequities of a system that deprived the nation's 30 million blacks of the right to vote, to own property in most of the country and to travel freely.

However, during a ceremony as ethnically diverse as the country Mandela was chosen to lead, the future seemed bright. Where once only white men in grey suits trod, joyous guests of every hue mixed in shimmering African robes and lustrous turbans. A choir kept the waiting dignitaries swaying, and a singer from Mandela's Xhosa tribe exhorted the crowd.

Mandela's swearing-in marked something more than an inauguration - it was the coming-out party for South Africa after decades of isolation. Representatives of more than 200 governments and organizations, who five years ago would either have been barred from visiting or would not have considered it, were invited. Those attending included U.S. Vice President Al Gore, who called the event "a celebration for the entire world." He was accompanied by first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton. Also in the audience were U.N. Secretary-General Boutros-Boutros Ghali, Palestinian Liberation Organization Chairman Yasser Arafat, and Cuban leader Fidel Castro. Major names in the worldwide fight against apartheid, including Archbishop Trevor Huddleston of Britain and South Africa's Nobel laureate author, Nadine Gordimer, also attended. The public received thousands of tickets for admission to the grassy slopes around the stately Union Buildings, where huge television screens were set up. A massive security operation was in place, with only the dignitaries getting close to Mandela.

Mandela's ascension to the presidency was never in doubt since the date for the country's first multi-racial election was announced last year. Mandela's 27 years in prison made him a hero to millions of South African blacks. Despite apartheid-era laws that banned Mandela's photograph and quotes from reaching the public, his aura never faded and he became a worldwide symbol of the struggle against white-minority rule. Mandela's ANC, which waged a 30-year underground war against the apartheid system of racial segregation, won more than 62 percent of the vote in last month's election and claimed 252 parliament seats. De Klerk's National Party was second.

As a boy growing up in the apartheid-era black homeland of Transkei, Mandela was being groomed for tribal chieftainship. But he left his remote village, rejecting the role the white government had carved out for the black majority, and became active in student politics. After his election yesterday, Mandela stood on the same ornate Cape Town City Hall balcony from which he addressed crowds after his release from prison on February 11, 1990. At his

inaugural, he stood in the same columned structure where white rulers before him imposed the laws that put Mandela and much of the new government in prison, in exile or in guerrilla gear.

1. Which of the following is true, according to the article?
 - a. Nelson Mandela did away with apartheid when he became president.
 - b. F.W. de Klerk did away with apartheid though his party began it.
 - c. F.W. de Klerk began the system of apartheid in South Africa.
 - d. F.W. de Klerk is the president of the African National Congress.

2. What did President Mandela promise in his inaugural speech?
 - a. He promised revenge on the whites who had oppressed the black majority.
 - b. He promised that all South Africans would have rights and dignity.
 - c. He promised immediate distribution of South Africa's enormous wealth.
 - d. He promised to exile all members of the previous government.

3. Which of the following is true of the new South African government?
 - a. The former president is a deputy-president in the multi-racial government.
 - b. The new government has only black officials.
 - c. Whites no longer hold any positions of real power in this government.
 - d. The government includes only members of the African National Congress.

4. Which of the following people was a leader in the fight against apartheid?
 - a. Vice President Al Gore.
 - b. First Lady Hillary Clinton.
 - c. Novelist Nadine Gordimer.
 - d. Cuban President Fidel Castro.

5. According to the article, how did Nelson Mandela become a hero in South Africa?
 - a. He had a reputation as one of the most honest members of Parliament.
 - b. He had been a hero in the army in World War II.
 - c. He spent almost three decades in prison.
 - d. He was a powerful tribal chieftain.

6. According to the article, which choice did Nelson Mandela make as a youth?
 - a. Whether to stay in South Africa or go to a more tolerant country.
 - b. Whether to be a comfortable tribal chief or to fight against apartheid.
 - c. Whether to run for office or become a teacher.
 - d. Which of the best colleges in South Africa he would attend.

Section 4 B
SPELLING AND USAGE

Directions: Circle the correct word in each set of parentheses. Note that some sentences have more than one set of parentheses.

1. This is Sam's (fourth forth) year (hear here).
2. Now (its it's) easy to (except accept) new people.
3. He should (of have) slammed on the (brakes breaks) at the red light.
4. Tonight (were we're where) going to the (Smiths Smiths' Smith's) pool party.
5. Randy and Susan have (knew new) clothes.
6. If (your you're) very well behaved, I'll let you go (to too) the concert.
7. (Wednesday Wensday Wednesday) was (our are) first day of school.
8. (There Their They're) style is (to too) formal for my tastes.
9. I didn't (lose loose) (your you're) address; I just forgot (were wear where) I put it.
10. I (passed past) in my homework over (there their they're) in her mailbox.
11. I have met several (knew new) students (all ready already) this year.
12. (Whose Who's Whom's) car is that? (Its It's) very quiet.
13. The dog was chasing (its it's) tail. Meanwhile (Bob's Bobs Bobs') cat had run up the nearest tree.
14. I didn't know (weather whether) I should stay and work on my competency a little longer. The exam is (to too) important to brush off.

Competency Exam Essay Format

This is the basic format for any essay or term paper. The only difference is the length and the amount of evidence. Once you master this, you can write a Ph.d thesis if you do the research.

Be sure you fully cover both points of view: Don't just criticize one and praise the other.

Introduction

Imagine that you are writing to someone who doesn't know anything about your subject.

- Provide **background** that person would need to understand the subject.
- **Define terms** the reader might not know.
- **Provide title and author** if it is about a book or books.
- **Introduce characters or people** if any are central to the essay.
- **End with a thesis statement**, which is your overall opinion in the essay.

The car rule is the most commonly broken rule at School One. **The car rule states that students may not be in another student's car from the time they arrive at school in the morning until they leave school for the day.** Many students hate this rule because they would like to go to Thayer Street or beyond for lunch. Staff members don't enjoy having to keep track of their advisees' punishments when they break this rule. Despite these feelings, the school has kept the rule in place for more than twenty years. As inconvenient as it might be, **I believe the car rule must be retained.**

Body Paragraph 1: This is where you explain the point of view of people with whom you disagree. You don't argue against them in this paragraph.

- Begin with a **topic sentence**.
- For paragraph 2, begin with "Some people think . . ." and then discuss the point of view with which you agree less. Explain why people who support this point of view support it.
- **Make statements and try to back them up with evidence or logic.**
- **Discuss points; don't just make them and go on to something else.**
- **End with a sentence that sums up** the paragraph's main point.

Some people believe that this rule is unfair and should disappear. Many of the students and some of the staff members feel this way. The main objection to this rule is that it infringes on students' lunch and recreational options. School One provides students with more freedom than other schools, so this rule seems to run counter to the school's atmosphere of freedom. Students argue that there is a far wider variety of lunch options on Thayer Street than there are within walking distance for a forty-five minute lunch. They also point out that on rainy or very cold days it would be pleasant to be able to drive to Wayland Square. This would cut down on illness and lateness to class and thereby raise student attendance overall. Staff members have to spend precious lunch time checking up on advisees who have been caught breaking the rule and have lost the privilege of leaving the building during lunch for a week. Staff members are already overworked, and this is an inconvenience for them. **All of these reasons to drop the car rule are worth considering.**

Body Paragraph 2: This is where you make and prove your case.

- Begin with a **topic sentence**.

- For paragraph 3, begin with “On the other hand, . . . “ and then discuss the point of view with which you agree more. Explain why people who support this point of view support it.
- **Make statements and try to back them up with evidence or logic.**
- **Discuss points; don’t just make them and go on to something else.**
- **End with a sentence that sums up** the paragraph’s main point.

On the other hand, the car rule protects the future of School One. The rule prevents the school from being sued. If a student were to be in another student’s car when an accident occurred during the school day, the student’s parents would have the legal right to sue the school. Faced with major medical bills, even loyal parents would be likely to do this. The school has checked with a lawyer to see whether parents could waive their rights under this rule, but the lawyer advised School One to retain this rule to avoid liability. Because School One is not wealthy, it could not survive losing such a lawsuit, and the result would be that School One would have to close for good. **While none of its supporters actually enjoy the car rule, their support is based on their desire to keep the school in business so that generations of future students can have the School One experience.**

Conclusion

- Assess the **difficulty of the decision**.
- **Sum up!**
- Tie your main points together.
- **Predict** what will happen based on how the decision is made.
- Be sure this paragraph agrees with your thesis statement.
- **End with your overall point of view.**

While there are good arguments on both sides of this issue, I think there is only one possible decision. Students who oppose the car rule argue for more freedom while proponents of the rule argue the school’s preservation. While I strongly support letting students have privileges and freedom if they can utilize them responsibly, the preservation of the school is vital. **If the school were to close because of a lawsuit once the car rule was dropped, students would have to return to their previous schools where they would have far less freedom and far fewer privileges than at School One.** Therefore, while the car rule infringes on one privilege some students would enjoy, it protects the many freedoms they enjoy at School One that they wouldn’t at other schools, which is why **I strongly support retention of this rule.**

Essay paragraphs must contain at least 6 sentences on this exam.

Section 5: OPINION WRITING A

Directions: Read the question written below. In the space provided, write a response of at least **four full paragraphs** expressing your opinion. You must explain **both sides of the argument**: the side you agree with and the side you think is wrong. You do not have to choose one side. You can show the strengths and weaknesses of both sides and explain which way you are leaning and why. While you

must state some sort of an opinion, you are not being graded on what it is but on how well you explain and provide support the two sides and your own reasoning. Remember, you are being tested on your writing skills, so be sure to use **complete sentences, correct spelling and proper punctuation. Paragraphs need at least 6 sentences each.**

Question: Should voting in Presidential elections be made mandatory for all U.S. citizens over 18 years of age?

Section 6 is U.S. History. Those materials are at the end of the packet.

Section 7: READING INTERPRETATION

Practice A

Directions: Read the article printed below and answer the following questions, citing evidence from the article. You are being tested for *both reading and writing* skills. Be sure to answer each question fully, and remember to use complete sentences, correct spelling and proper punctuation.

The Heterosexual Revolution

By STEPHANIE COONTZ

July 5, 2005

THE last week has been tough for opponents of same-sex marriage. First Canadian and then Spanish legislators voted to legalize the practice, prompting American social conservatives to renew their call for a constitutional amendment banning such marriages here. James Dobson of the evangelical group Focus on the Family has warned that without that ban, marriage as we have known it for 5,000 years will be overturned.

My research on marriage and family life seldom leads me to agree with Dr. Dobson, much less to accuse him of understatement. But in this case, Dr. Dobson's warnings come 30 years too late. Traditional marriage, with its 5,000-year history, has already been upended. Gays and lesbians, however, didn't spearhead that revolution: heterosexuals did.

Heterosexuals were the upstarts who turned marriage into a voluntary love relationship rather than a mandatory economic and political institution. Heterosexuals were the ones who made procreation voluntary, so that some couples could choose childlessness, and who adopted assisted reproduction so that even couples who could not conceive could become parents. And heterosexuals subverted the long-standing rule that every marriage had to have a husband who played one role in the family and a wife who played a completely different one. Gays and lesbians simply looked at the revolution heterosexuals had wrought and noticed that with its new norms, marriage could work for them, too.

The first step down the road to gay and lesbian marriage took place 200 years ago, when Enlightenment thinkers raised the radical idea that parents and the state should not dictate who married whom, and when the American Revolution encouraged people to engage in "the pursuit of happiness," including marrying for love. Almost immediately, some thinkers, including Jeremy Bentham and the Marquis de Condorcet, began to argue that same-sex love should not be a crime.

Same-sex marriage, however, remained unimaginable because marriage had two traditional functions that were inapplicable to gays and lesbians. First, marriage allowed families to increase their household labor force by having children. Throughout much of history, upper-class men divorced their wives if their marriage did not produce children, while peasants often wouldn't marry until a premarital pregnancy confirmed the woman's fertility. But the advent of birth control in the 19th century permitted married couples to decide not to have children, while assisted reproduction in the 20th century allowed infertile couples to have them. This eroded the traditional argument that marriage must be between a man and a woman who were able to procreate.

In addition, traditional marriage imposed a strict division of labor by gender and mandated unequal power relations between men and women. "Husband and wife are one," said the law in both England and America, from early medieval days until the late 19th century, "and that one is the husband." This law of "coverture" was supposed to reflect the command of God and the essential nature of humans. It stipulated that a wife could not enter into legal contracts or own property on her own. In 1863, a New York court warned that giving wives independent property rights would "sow the seeds of perpetual discord," potentially dooming marriage.

Even after coverture had lost its legal force, courts, legislators and the public still cleaved to the belief that marriage required husbands and wives to play totally different domestic roles. In 1958, the New York Court of Appeals rejected a challenge to the traditional legal view that wives (unlike husbands) couldn't sue for loss of

the personal services, including housekeeping and the sexual attentions, of their spouses. The judges reasoned that only wives were expected to provide such personal services anyway. As late as the 1970's, many American states retained "head and master" laws, giving the husband final say over where the family lived and other household decisions. According to the legal definition of marriage, the man was required to support the family, while the woman was obligated to keep house, nurture children, and provide sex. Not until the 1980's did most states criminalize marital rape. Prevailing opinion held that when a bride said, "I do," she was legally committed to say, "I will" for the rest of her married life.

I am old enough to remember the howls of protest with which some defenders of traditional marriage greeted the gradual dismantling of these traditions. At the time, I thought that the far-right opponents of marital equality were wrong to predict that this would lead to the unraveling of marriage. As it turned out, they had a point.

Giving married women an independent legal existence did not destroy heterosexual marriage. And allowing husbands and wives to construct their marriages around reciprocal duties and negotiated roles - where a wife can choose to be the main breadwinner and a husband can stay home with the children- was an immense boon to many couples. But these changes in the definition and practice of marriage opened the door for gay and lesbian couples to argue that they were now equally qualified to participate in it.

Marriage has been in a constant state of evolution since the dawn of the Stone Age. In the process it has become more flexible, but also more optional. Many people may not like the direction these changes have taken in recent years. But it is simply magical thinking to believe that by banning gay and lesbian marriage, we will turn back the clock.

Stephanie Coontz, the director of public education for the Council on Contemporary Families, is the author of "Marriage, a History: From Obedience to Intimacy, or How Love Conquered Marriage."

Questions

A

Read the questions carefully, so you understand clearly what is being asked. **Each answer must be at least five sentences and include specific evidence from the article.** You may quote once or twice in each answer, but at least three of the sentences must be completely your own.

1. To what extent does the author agree and to what extent does the author disagree with James Dobson? Explain clearly.

2. According to the author, in what specific ways have the reasons for marriage changed over the last thousand years?

3. According to the article, which rights have wives gained during the last two hundred years?

4. Explain clearly and specifically the author's argument about gay and lesbian marriage based on her articulation of the history of marriage.

Section 8: **PUNCTUATION AND CAPITALIZATION**

Punctuation section tips:

Model sentences for side one: **Be sure they all end in periods and that your sentence use the week's topic.**
One comma:

I like _____, and I hate _____.

I like pizza, and I hate anchovies.

Two commas:

I like _____, _____, and _____.

I like pizza, ice cream, and hot dogs.

Quotes with speaker:

Elliott said, "I like _____."

Elliott said, "I like pizza."

Semi-colon:

I like _____; I hate _____.

I like pizza; I hate anchovies.

Don't capitalize the letter after the semi-colon unless it's a word that needs to be capitalized like I or a name.

Colon:

Here are my favorite _____s: _____, _____, and _____.

Here are my favorite foods: pizza, ice cream, and hot dogs.

Side 2 things to watch for:

a.m./p.m.

City, State: I'm going to Cranston, Rhode Island.

Sentences beginning with an **adverb** get a comma: Suddenly, Elliott went to Mars.

Capitalize days of the week, months, brand names, names, holiday names, names of organizations

Only use a comma before and, but, so or or if there is a complete sentence after it.

Do separate proof reads for capitalization, apostrophes and commas.

Directions: This section contains two parts, one on this page and one on the following page. You must complete both parts to pass this section. If you do part of this section this week, it will not carry over to the next exam. If you do not know how to use some of these forms of punctuation, see an English teacher next week for explanation/exercise sheets and review. Follow each set of directions very carefully.

Part I: You will be writing five separate sentences, each calling for a specific type of punctuation. **This week, each sentence must be related to dogs.** Make sure that each sentence is clear, grammatical, spelled correctly, and punctuated properly.

1. Write a complete sentence using a comma properly.
2. Write a complete sentence using two commas properly.
3. Write a complete sentence identifying a speaker and using quotation marks properly.
4. Write a complete sentence using a semicolon properly.
5. Write a complete sentence using a colon properly. (Time doesn't count.)

(PUNCTUATION/CAPITALIZATION continued. -- You must complete Part I and Part II satisfactorily to pass this section of the exam.) (Practice A)

Part II: Correct this paragraph by adding proper punctuation and capitalization. You may either add corrections or rewrite the paragraph correctly. Make your corrections clear and dark. If we are not sure what you've done or exactly where you've done it, we will mark it wrong.

on the evening of june 11 1990 school one held its second annual prom this great event began at 8 pm and lasted until midnight it was held at club images in pawtucket rhode island almost one hundred people attended this prom which was a smashing success students expectations are that even more people will attend this year the students had better come denise said if people dont show up theyll have to answer to me

style and attitudes are major issues at school ones prom here are some things to look out for purple hair tattoos mohawks dreds and hackysacks some students are hoping to hear a lot of heavy metal but others hope to hear lots of hip hop or techno the teachers first choice would probably be a bit quieter

You can use a dictionary and thesaurus while doing this (and all but the history) section(s).

Section 9: Practice A

DICTIONARY/THESAURUS SKILLS

Directions: Use the dictionary entry below to answer the following questions. Read each question carefully.

cry (krai) v. 1. to make a loud or shrill sound, especially to express pain, grief, etc.; 2. shed tears, weep; 3. (followed by for) appeal, demand or show a need for: cry for help; 4. (by an animal, especially a bird) make a loud call;
n. 5. loud shout or scream of pain, grief, etc.; 6. spell of weeping: he had a long cry;
7. loud excited utterance; 8. urgent appeal; 9. call of an animal
(Latin **quirito**).

1. Which definition is best illustrated by the sentence: "Phil cried for days when he got his ring back." ?

2. How many of the definitions are verbs?

3. Which definition is best illustrated by the sentence: "The bird gave a shrill cry that lingered in the forest."?

4. Using the thesaurus, provide a synonym for **cry** as a noun.

5. What does the information in parentheses at the very end of the entry tell you?

6. What does the information in parentheses at the beginning of the entry tell you?

7. Create a sentence that illustrates definition 6 of the word.

Section 6: U.S. History and Government

There are no practice tests for this section as you need to know all of the 23 items in the list to be sure of passing. Just scramble them to make practice tests.

The format of the section is a two-sided sheet of paper. On the front, there are two items from the U.S. Government list. The student must successfully answer these to pass. On the back, there are four items from the overall lists, at least two of which are from the U.S. Government section. Students need only choose two of the four on the back to answer successfully. Therefore, knowing the 23 U.S. Government items is enough to pass each version of the exam.

How to approach this section: Students should turn to the middle of the following study guide to the section titled **U.S. Government**. **There are 23 items there, and these are the ones they MUST know. At least 4 will be on every test, and you only have to answer four items to pass.**

The study guide provides lengthy explanations of each of these 23 items if the students don't know them. All they need for the exam are five facts about each one. This should include the main fact if there is one. For example, an answer for The Constitution should include something like the fact that The Constitution is the blueprint for the government (or lays out how the government is set up). An answer for the Declaration of Independence must indicate that it is creating a new country and/or breaking away from England. They also have to be historically/governmentally meaningful and not vague. "It's a really important document." won't be acceptable as that's obvious from the fact that it's on the exam.

The best way to study for this section for a student without a great history background and/or memory is to make note cards or sheets for each of the 23 items. The student should put 7 or 8 facts on each card (for each item) so that if s/he forgets one or two, it's no problem. The student should consider what types of things s/he has trouble remembering: if someone is bad at dates, s/he shouldn't put dates on the cards. This approach has two advantages: writing things down helps one remember, and the cards can be reviewed regularly and right before the exam. They also allow students to quiz each other and thus study with their friends.

The study guide is followed by a chronology of U.S. history that gives a brief overview for a student for whom this would be helpful in fitting events and people into their time periods.

There is also a chart of the branches of government that I will attach separately as it is oriented differently. This is especially helpful with the government items for students who are visual learners.

Another helpful page is one about numbers and our government, reviewing which votes require a majority, which require $\frac{2}{3}$ s of Congress and the one that requires $\frac{3}{4}$ of the state legislatures.

U.S. History Study Guide This exists as a separate document just above this on the Comps. page of the Homework Hub.

Section 6: U.S. History and Government

There are no practice tests for this section as the items couldn't appear on the test if they were on the practice test. **The best way to practice is to be quizzed on the 23 U.S. government items until you know them intimately.**

The format of the section is a two-sided sheet of paper. On the front, there are two items from the U.S. Government list. The student must successfully answer these to pass. On the back, there are four items from the overall lists, at least one of which is from the U.S. Government section. Students need only choose two of the four on the back to answer successfully.

How to approach this section: Students should turn to the middle of the following study guide to the section titled **U.S. Government**. **There are 23 items there, and these are the ones they MUST know. At least 4 will be on every test, and you only have to answer four items to pass.**

The study guide provides lengthy explanations of each of these 23 items if the students don't know them. All they need for the exam are five facts about each one. This should include the main fact if there is one. For example, an answer for The Constitution should include something like the fact that The Constitution is the blueprint for the government (or lays out how the government is set up). An answer for the Declaration of Independence must indicate that it is creating a new country and/or breaking away from England.

The best way to study for this section for a student without a great history background and/or memory is to make note cards or sheets for each of the 23 items. The student should put 7 or 8 facts on each card (for each item) so that if s/he forgets one or two, it's no problem. The student should consider what types of things s/he has trouble remembering: if someone is bad at dates, s/he shouldn't put dates on the cards. This approach has two advantages: writing things down helps one remember, and the cards can be reviewed regularly and right before the exam. They also allow students to quiz each other and thus study with their friends.

The study guide is followed by a chronology of U.S. history that gives an overview for a student for whom this would be helpful in fitting events and people into their time periods.

There is also a chart of the branches of government that I will attach separately as it is oriented differently. This is especially helpful with the government items for students who are visual learners.

U.S. GOVERNMENT

These are the key items to know. Two of these will be on the front side of every test, and you have to get them right. There will be one or two more on the back. On some tests, these 23 things are all you need to know. On the others, these will give you at least 3 of the 4. You MUST know these 23 items very well!

Declaration of Independence	Constitution	Bill of Rights
First Amendment	Fourth Amendment	Fifth Amendment
Fourteenth Amendment	Executive Branch	Legislative Branch
Judicial Branch	Supreme Court	Judicial Review
Checks and Balances	Veto & Override	The Cabinet
The Electoral College	Social Security	The President
House of Representatives	Senate	Amendment
Impeachment	How a law is made	

There are two others that could show up that are just easier versions of these as they include several of them: They are **Major Constitutional Rights** and **The Branches of Government**. If you know the 23, you know these, but if you know they can show up, you won't be surprised.

These 23 items are explained at length in the following pages. A good way to study them is to make a note card for each one with six or seven facts that you will remember. Writing them down will help you remember, and it will give you something to study right before the test. If you know these, you should pass the section easily.

U.S. GOVERNMENT

DOCUMENTS:

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE: This document was **written primarily by Thomas Jefferson** of Virginia with help from a committee of his fellow members of the **2nd Continental Congress** in May and June of 1776 in Philadelphia. The other committee members were John Adams (MA), Benjamin Franklin (PA), Robert Livingstone (NY) and Roger Sherman (CT). Adams insisted Jefferson write it because he was a very skilled writer and because it was important to have a Virginian do it because it might bring other southern colonies around to independence. **The document declared the 13 English colonies (Canada, the 14th, didn't join) in North America independent of Great Britain** and its king, George III, **using a new theory that government is a contract between the government and the governed and that when the government oversteps its role, the governed may dissolve the contract.** This idea is based on the English philosophers Thomas Hobbes and John Locke and the Swiss philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau. The Declaration **states that all men are created equal and are given by God certain "inalienable rights": life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.** (The Constitution substitutes Locke's "property" for Rousseau's "pursuit of happiness.") The Declaration goes on to list the crimes of George III against the colonies so that other countries (all ruled by kings at this point) will understand why this step of revolution was necessary and, in fact, appropriate. Jefferson's original draft included a clause critical of the slave trade, but he had to remove it in order to get southern states to sign the document. This was a terrible choice as the men on the committee opposed slavery (although Jefferson owned slaves until the end of his life). They decided to get a country first and then work to end slavery. **The Declaration was approved on July 2, 1776 and read publicly on July 4, 1776. At this point, the colonies considered themselves a new nation.**

THE CONSTITUTION: The Constitution was written by the Constitutional Convention of 1787 in Philadelphia to draw up **a written blueprint for the new country's government.** This was four years after the war formally ended. Among the main writers were James Madison (VA) and Judge James Wilson (PA).

The Convention was called largely due to a desire for more social and financial order by the wealthier colonists, and before the Bill of Rights was added, the Constitution largely saw to their concerns. In 1803, Chief Justice John Marshall in his opinion in *Marbury v. Madison* would describe the Constitution as **the fundamental expression of American government**, and in fact it lays out the general outline for how the federal (national) government will function. As Marshall stated in that case, the Constitution stands above all other laws, and if a law disagrees with the Constitution, Chief Justice Marshall said that judges have the power to declare the law void under the power of **judicial review** (see below) to protect the supremacy of the Constitution over any other laws. This was not in the Constitution but was a crucial interpretation made by the Supreme Court in 1803. The Constitution sets up a series of **checks and balances** (see below) **among the three branches of government: legislative, executive and judicial** (see below). This system was designed to prevent any part of the government from becoming too powerful. **The Constitution also delineates which powers are held each branch and which are held by the federal (national) government and, in the 9th Amendment, which are reserved to the states.** While the Constitution can be changed, this can't be done by an ordinary law, and the process is difficult and time-consuming. It must be done by passing an **Amendment** (see below). This power was used immediately in 1790 to create **The Bill of Rights** (see below), which is now part of the Constitution and consists of the first ten amendments.

AMENDMENT: An Amendment to the Constitution is a change, addition or deletion from that document. The Constitution specifically lays out the procedure for creating an amendment in Article 5. The procedure is difficult but not impossible. The difficulty is intentional to make the Constitution stable over time and hard to change on the spur of the moment due to an emotional reaction to an event. Ten amendments (the Bill of Rights) passed with the original Constitution. Since that time, only sixteen amendments have passed (for a total of 26) in about 230 years, and most of those occurred right after the Civil War (13, 14 and 15) or during the Progressive Era (16 – 20). Number 21, passed in 1932, repealed number 18, which was the prohibition amendment, making the sale of alcohol illegal. That only lasted for about a dozen years. An amendment can be started by either a 2/3 vote of both houses of Congress or by the calling of a Constitutional Convention by 2/3 of the states. Once this step has been reached, 3/4 of the state legislatures must approve the amendment for it to pass. The Constitution specifies that no amendment can change the equal representation of the states in the Senate unless all of the states approve.

THE BILL OF RIGHTS: A number of popular colonial leaders, notably Patrick Henry of Virginia, found the Constitution inadequate in protecting citizens' rights when they read the initial document. To remedy this and win their support for the Constitution, James Madison, the main author of the Constitution, changed his mind about laying out people's rights in the document, and he wrote **ten amendments (the Bill of Rights) that were added to the Constitution at the time that it was adopted in 1790.** This helped to get the Constitution adopted in some states, particularly in Rhode Island, which was the last hold-out because it was the most libertarian of the new states. The major rights found in The Bill of Rights include the freedoms of **speech, religion, press, assembly and petition** (1st); right to **bear arms** (2nd); protection **against the quartering of troops** in one's house (3rd); rights against **searches and seizures without a warrant issued by a judge based upon probable cause** (4th); various rights of **criminal defendants** including right to an **attorney, to a trial by jury, to refuse to testify against one's self, to a speedy trial, to know the charges against one's self, against excessive bail or cruel and unusual punishments** (5-8); the right of **state government to handle all matters not given specifically to the federal government** in the Constitution (9th); and that **The Bill of Rights should not be read necessarily to include all of the rights of U.S. citizens:** others might exist and be acknowledged in later laws, judicial decisions or amendments, and their absence in The Bill of Rights is not an argument against this. **The rights in The Bill of Rights are against the federal government, and they aren't against your parents, friends, enemies or, in most cases, even against your employer or school unless that is part of the government.** The Bill of Rights were applied to state governments through the Fourteenth Amendment (see below), but this was only recognized for various amendments between 1940 and 1965. **None of these rights is absolute even against the federal government:** the government does limit speech, right of assembly and many other rights in some ways that

court decisions have delineated as reasonable. For example, you have a right to assemble for a protest but not in front of my house at 3 a.m. If you do this, the police will stop the protest immediately because you don't have a permit and it's an unreasonable time and place. The courts decide these questions of Constitutional interpretation.

FIRST AMENDMENT: “Congress shall make no laws” to inhibit (lessen, prevent) freedom of speech, the press, assembly or the right to petition the government to make changes. It also prohibits Congress from making laws that either establish one or more religions as officially sanctioned by the government (the establishment clause) or that prohibit the free exercise of any religion. This means that you have these rights against the federal government (and, since the 1940s, against state governments as well). You do not have these rights against your parents, friends or anyone else. These rights are not absolute. For examples, you can't yell fire in a crowded building (if there's no fire) because it creates “a clear and present danger” (US v. Schenk), and you can't break laws because your religion says to and escape punishment. This clause has been interpreted to say that you can believe whatever you want, but you must act within the law.

FOURTH AMENDMENT: This Amendment **prevents searches and seizures by the government** (police, F.B.I., C.I.A.) **unless the government officials first obtain a warrant from a judge based upon probable cause.** In other words, before it is able to violate your privacy, the government must show a neutral judge evidence that there is “probable cause” to think you violated the law. **Probable cause must be something that specifically indicates your involvement (i.e., not just race or gender), but it doesn't have to be absolute proof.** It must be enough for a reasonable judge to think there is good specific reason to suspect you. The warrant must be specific about time and place so that you can't be harassed more than is necessary. The main exception to this rule is that if a police officer sees you committing a crime or sees a situation that indicates to a reasonable person immediate or continuing danger (like you're holding a weapon or covered in blood), the officer may proceed without a warrant as minimally as possible to be sure that no one is in danger. People can waive this or any other Constitutional right and allow the police to search without a warrant. In some cases (such as if you're a minor in your parents' house), another person can waive your right even if you don't want to.

FIFTH AMENDMENT: This is the first of several amendments that deal with the **rights of defendants** in criminal cases. Its most famous right is that **you can't be forced to testify against yourself** (“taking the Fifth”). Other rights included in this amendment are the **right to a Grand Jury** to decide whether there's enough evidence against you to put you on trial (to prevent prosecutors from harassing you with pointless trials), **protection against being prosecuted twice for the same criminal act** (double jeopardy), the **guarantee of due process** (full judicial process that everyone else gets) of law before being deprived of life, liberty or property and the **requirement that the government provide you with just compensation if it must take your property for government purposes** (like building a super highway through your house or, more likely, widening the road in front of your house).

FOURTEENTH AMENDMENT: This is one of the 3 amendments (13th – 15th) passed after the Civil War with specific reference to the newly freed slaves, but this one has had the most general application to all U.S. citizens. **It gave anyone born in the United States, especially, at the time, the freed slaves, U.S. citizenship** (birthright citizenship). **It extends our basic Constitutional rights against the federal government, including speech, rights of defendants, due process and equal protection to restrain state governments as well.** It first declares that the states may pass no laws that “abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States.” **This means that states cannot pass laws that take away any fundamental rights granted by the Constitution or U.S. law.** However, this wasn't enforced until the mid-20th century after a lag of about 80 years, in part because this would have interfered with segregation. It is now read to extend the Bill of Rights and other Constitutional rights to state governments, thereby significantly increasing their value. The next clause says that **no state may “deprive any person of life, liberty or property without due process of law.” This clearly extends our Fifth Amendment due process right** (see above) **against the states.** This is especially crucial because most criminal trials in this country

are in state courts. This was crucial during the Civil Rights Movement because it allowed federal courts a basis to overturn discriminatory state prosecutions against civil rights workers. The third clause **prevents states from “denying to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.”** Had the Supreme Court had the guts to uphold this clause before 1954, we wouldn’t have had segregation for most of the 90 years following the Civil War. However, the Court didn’t follow this clause when it ruled in Plessy v. Ferguson in 1896 when these laws were challenged that “separate but equal” was okay. **This amendment, and the equal protection clause in particular, were the basis for many of the main court decisions in favor of the civil rights movement in the ‘50s and ‘60s.** This indicates how important the membership of the Supreme Court is to the maintenance of rights in this country. It’s not automatic! Remember this when you are voting for President and Senators.

BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT

LEGISLATIVE BRANCH: This Is the branch of government that **makes laws**. In our federal government, it consists of two law-making bodies: **the House of Representatives and the Senate**. Together, these two bodies make up **Congress**, and they work in the **U.S. Capitol building**. **House members are elected every two years**, and there are 435 of them from separate districts, so they are closer to the people. Each state gets a **number of representatives based on its population**, so this is the more representative body. **Senators are elected for six year terms** (one third of the Senators every two years), and **every state, regardless of its size or population, has two Senators**. The Senate tends to be made up of wealthier and more famous people. Both bodies have many committees that hold hearings and draft bills (potential laws). Both bodies must have **a majority of those present** vote for a bill for it to become a law. If both bodies vote by a majority for a bill to become a law, it must still go to the President. **If the President vetoes the bill after both houses of Congress have passed it, it can only become a law if it passes both houses by a 2/3 vote** (overriding a veto). In Rhode Island’s state government, the legislative branch has a State Senate and an Assembly, and Rhode Island’s legislative branch has more power than in the federal government.

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES: The House is one of the two parts of the Legislative Branch that meets in the Capitol and currently consists of 435 members. Each state gets at least one and at the moment up to 53 (California) representatives. This is based on population. There are seven states with only one rep. due to low population, and RI is just ahead of them with 2 reps. The number of representatives per state is refigured every ten years after the U.S. Census. The House works with the Senate to make laws, which is its most central job, but it also has the sole power to impeach judges or the President. (If impeached, they would then go on trial before the Senate, who would have to vote by 2/3s to throw the impeached person out of office.) Money bills must begin in the House. House members are elected every two years, making them closest to the voters of all federal elected officials. The House joins with the Senate in the power to declare war. This is a key check and balance on the President, who is Commander-in-Chief, but Congress has increasingly given up this right to President over the past 62 years. The House and Senate together can override a Presidential veto of law by a new 2/3 vote.

THE SENATE: The Senate is one of the two parts of the Legislative Branch that meets in the Capitol and currently consists of 100 members. Each state gets 2 Senators, making each state equal in votes in the Senate despite population. The House works with the Senate to make laws, which is its most central job, but it also has the sole power to sit as the jury if judges or the President have been impeached by the House. The Senate would have to vote by 2/3s to throw the impeached person out of office. Senate members are elected every six years, with one third of the Senators elected every two years. The House joins with the Senate in the power to declare war. This is a key check and balance on the President, who is Commander-in-Chief, but Congress has increasingly given up this right to President over the past 62 years. Another key exclusive right of the Senate is that it has to confirm Presidential appointments of federal judges, cabinet members and ambassadors by a majority vote. This is a key check and balance between the branches, although it has

weakened considerably in 2025. The House and Senate together can override a Presidential veto of law by a new 2/3 vote.

IMPEACHMENT: This is one of the main checks (see above) on the executive and judicial branches by the legislative branch. **Impeachment technically means the formal accusation of a member of the executive (like the President) or judicial branch (a federal judge) by the House of Representatives. When the House votes to impeach someone, there is a trial in Senate, which sits as the jury with the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court presiding but not making the decision. If two thirds of the Senators vote that the impeached official is guilty, s/he is removed from office with no appeal possible.** Otherwise, s/he stays in office. Three Presidents have been impeached (Andrew Johnson, Bill Clinton and Donald Trump twice) but were not removed. (Johnson survived by one vote in 1868.) Richard Nixon resigned before being impeached in 1974. He would likely have been removed by the Senate had he not resigned. Several federal judges have been impeached and later removed from office, but this power is rarely used.

HOW A LAW IS MADE: This is a good example of **checks and balances** (see above). **The process of making a law starts in Congress.** The President can suggest a law, but s/he can't formally propose a bill in Congress. To begin, **a bill (proposed law) must be introduced in one of the houses of Congress.** If it is money bill, it must begin in the House of Representatives. It will go through **a committee, where it is studied and sometimes changed.** If the committee votes its approval, it goes to the full body for a vote. If it **wins a majority vote of those present,** it goes to the other house of Congress for the same process. If the House and Senate pass different versions of the same bill, it must go to a **conference committee** made up of Representatives and Senators to work out a compromise bill to present to the President. Once Congress has approved the bill, it goes to **the President, who has 3 choices. If the President signs the bill, it becomes a law. If the President ignores it for 10 business days, it also becomes a law. If the President vetoes it (says no), it goes back to Congress. If both bodies of Congress can pass the bill with a 2/3 majority, it will become a law.** This is called overriding a veto, but it rarely happens. **If Congress can't override the veto, the bill dies** and can be re-introduced later and go through the same process.

VETO AND OVERRIDE: Once Congress has approved the bill, it goes to **the President, who has 3 choices. If the President signs the bill, it becomes a law. If the President ignores it for 10 business days, it also becomes a law. If the President vetoes it (says no), it goes back to Congress. If both bodies of Congress can pass the bill with a 2/3 majority, it will become a law.** This is called overriding a veto, but it rarely happens nowadays because the parties are so internally consistent. **If Congress can't override the veto, the bill dies** and can be re-introduced later and go through the same process.

EXECUTIVE BRANCH: This is the branch that **enforces laws** (makes sure they are carried out). In effect, **it runs the government based on the Constitution and laws** (just a like a business executive runs a company). This branch includes the **President, the Vice President** and the **Cabinet** (the Secretaries who preside over the various departments that run the government and advise the President – see below). The President and Vice President are **elected together every four years by the Electoral College** (see below) after everyone votes, and since a Constitutional Amendment that took effect in 1953, they cannot run for a third elected term. The Cabinet officers (Secretaries and the Attorney General) are appointed by the President but must be approved by the Senate, which is an example of a check and balance (see below). This branch works out of the **White House**, the executive office building and department office buildings like the Pentagon (defense) and the Justice Department. The Governor leads the state executive branch.

THE PRESIDENT: The President is the chief executive of the federal government. The President is elected every four years (along with the Vice President) through the Electoral College process, which isn't always the same as winning the most votes overall. The President is the Commander in Chief of the military but cannot

declare war. The President lives and works in the White House and has the power to either sign or veto laws passed by both houses of Congress (or ignore them, in which case they become law in ten business days). The President gets to appoint federal judges, cabinet members and ambassadors, but they must be approved by the Senate. The President can use the Cabinet as advisors on an individual or group basis. Many of the President's policies are carried out by the Executive Departments, which are headed by the members of the Cabinet. For example, the State Department will carry out the President's policies with other countries and in making treaties. These departments are often also bound by laws and money appropriations passed by the Congress.

THE CABINET: While not specifically referred to in the Constitution by name, the Cabinet includes the Secretaries and the Attorney General who lead the main departments of the government. The Cabinet's primary role is to **advise the President**. The departments currently include the **State Department** (handling relations with other countries), the **Defense Department** (the military and war planning), the **Justice Department** (headed by the **Attorney General**, it prosecutes federal crimes and advises the President on legal matters) and the departments of **Education, Agriculture, Housing and Urban Development, Health and Human Services, Commerce** (business), **Labor** (unions and working conditions), **Transportation, Energy, Treasury** (money and financial policy) and **Interior** (parks and the environment). When the Cabinet gets together, it meets in the **Cabinet Room** at the White House, but the Secretaries spend most of their time at their departments.

THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE: When the Constitution was written, many of the leaders were worried about democracy. They put the Electoral College in the Constitution as a check on the poorer property owners. (At this point, even white men with no property couldn't vote.) We still have this system because it would take an Amendment to change it, and that is very hard to do. When we vote for President, we are actually voting for **Electors, who are people chosen by the candidate to represent him/her at the Electoral College, which is a meeting in December after a Presidential election to select the President**. The number of Electors from a state is **the number of Senators** (always 2 per state) **plus the number of Representatives** (currently ranging from 1 to 55 per state based on population). This means some states have only 3 Electors while California has 57. **In all but two states, whoever wins the popular vote, even if it's by one vote, wins all of the Electors, which makes it possible to win the national popular vote but lose the vote in the Electoral College** if you lose some of the big states very narrowly. This has happened in four Presidential elections: 1824, 1876 (when the unfortunate deal resulted in the end of Reconstruction), 1888 and 2000 (when the Supreme Court decided not to recount Florida despite a margin of only 500 votes, thereby giving George W. Bush Florida's Electors and the election). Most recently, in 2016 Hillary Clinton won the popular vote by over two million votes, but Donald Trump won the Electoral College and became President. **Electors usually vote as expected, but they don't have to. They could theoretically change the result if they thought the people made a bad choice**, which was the original intent of the Electoral College, but they have never done this. If one candidate doesn't win a majority of the electoral votes (if there is a tie or if a third candidate wins some electoral votes), the election is decided in the House of Representatives with each state getting one vote, but this hasn't happened since 1800.

JUDICIAL BRANCH: This branch is made up of the federal courts. **Its job is to interpret the laws and the Constitution and to resolve any dispute among them and among the states and to hear criminal and civil cases under federal laws**. There are two main court systems in the United States. The federal court system is the judicial branch of the United States. Each state also has a judicial branch to interpret its laws and constitution and to hear criminal and civil cases. **Most trials occur in the state courts** because most civil and criminal matters are determined by state law. The federal judicial branch and most state judicial branches have three levels. The lowest level is the **trial court**. In the federal system, this is known as the U.S. District Court. There are more than 90 judicial districts across the country. This is the court where cases are first tried and evidence and witnesses are presented. These cases are usually decided by juries. The next level is the **Appellate Court**. In the federal judicial branch, this is called the **Circuit Court of Appeals**. There are fewer circuit courts around the country, and each circuit consists of nine judges who usually meet in

groups of three. Rhode Island is part of the 1st Circuit, which meets in Boston. These courts hear appeals about errors made by judges in the trial courts. The lawyers argue before the judges about laws and previous cases (precedents). There is no new evidence and there are no witnesses presented in these courts. **The highest level of the U.S. judicial branch is the U.S. Supreme Court. The Supreme Court has nine justices including one Chief Justice. Like other federal judges, they are appointed by the President when there is an opening with the approval of the Senate (another check and balance – see below). Federal judgeships are lifetime appointments: there is no term limit. When the Supreme Court rules on an issue, all other courts must follow its ruling, which is called a precedent. The greatest power of this branch is to remove (void) unconstitutional laws using Judicial Review (see above).**

THE SUPREME COURT: The highest level of the U.S. judicial branch is the U.S. Supreme Court. The Supreme Court has nine justices including one Chief Justice. Like other federal judges, they are appointed by the President when there is an opening with the approval of the Senate (another check and balance). Federal judgeships are lifetime appointments: there is no term limit. **When the Supreme Court rules on an issue, all other courts must follow its ruling, which is called a precedent. The greatest power of this branch is to remove (void) unconstitutional laws using Judicial Review (see above).** When the Court is divided, the majority rules, although the minority can issue a dissent, which is an opinion that lays out its objections. However, only the majority opinion has the force of law. In cases of a 4-4 tie (if a judge is absent or is recused from the case), the ruling from the lower court remains in place.

JUDICIAL REVIEW: In the 1803 case of **Marbury vs. Madison**, Chief Justice **John Marshall** declared the Constitution superior to all other laws. He said this meant that when a law is passed that disagrees with the Constitution, it must be declared void (not in force), and that it is the courts' job (the judicial branch – see below) to do this. This created Judicial Review, which is **the idea that courts have the power to declare laws unconstitutional, thereby getting rid of them despite being passed by Congress and the President, if the court feels the law is contrary to the Constitution.** This is a crucial check and balance that isn't in the Constitution, and it made the Judicial Branch (see below) much more powerful than it had been in the Constitution, where it had appeared to be the weakest branch. Judicial Review wasn't used too frequently until the mid-20th century, when **it was used to strike down segregation laws (as violating the 14th Amendment), anti-contraception and other anti-privacy laws (based on the privacy concept in the Bill of Rights) and anti-abortion laws (based on the same privacy concept) to name three important uses.**

CHECKS AND BALANCES: This is the idea ingrained in the Constitution that **each branch needs ways to limit the others' powers so that none can have full control of the government.** The Judiciary has **Judicial Review (see above), which wasn't in the Constitution, but the other two branches appoint and approve judges, giving them a check on the judiciary. Congress can also impeach (see below) and remove judges and members of the executive branch, including the President. The President can veto bills passed by Congress, but Congress can sometimes override that veto. The Senate must approve of the President's appointments of Cabinet members, judges and ambassadors. The legislative bodies can hold hearings to investigate the executive branch's execution of the country's laws and government. These are just a few of the main checks and balances in our government.**

SOCIAL SECURITY: This **social insurance program** was created during the Depression (in 1936) by **President Franklin Roosevelt as part of the New Deal.** It provides **monthly payments to individuals who are retired or who have no source of income** for other specified reasons like being orphaned as a child. Social Security is **funded by a tax on all workers.** It ensures that people have a minimum amount of income to survive and pay basic bills, which wasn't the case before this program. One problem looming over the next half century is that when the Baby Boomers retire, the retired population, already increasing due to longer life expectancies than in the 1930s, will get much bigger compared to those still working. This will make it much harder to fund unless the tax is raised or the benefits are lowered.

Key numbers for the history section

Things that take a majority (things that shouldn't be too hard):

House and Senate to pass a law

House and Senate to declare war against another country

House to impeach the President or a judge

Senate to approve the appointment of a judge, ambassador or cabinet member

Electoral College (270 votes) to elect a President

Things that take a 2/3 vote (things Madison wanted to be much harder):

House and Senate to override a veto of a law by the President

House and Senate to approve a Constitutional Amendment

Senate to throw an impeached official out of office after the trial before the Senate

The thing that takes a 3/4 vote (another thing Madison wanted to be really hard):

3/4 of the state legislatures must approve a Constitutional Amendment in addition to 2/3 of the House and Senate.

Required ages:

18 to vote (since the 26th Amendment)

25 to serve in the House of Representatives

30 to serve in the Senate

35 to serve as President and Vice President

Key Dates:

1775 Revolutionary War Begins

1776 Declaration of Independence

1787 Constitution is written in Philadelphia

1789 Constitution goes into effect with first Congress and President

1790 Bill of Rights added to the Constitution and final states ratify the Constitution

1803 Chief Justice John Marshall creates Judicial Review in the case of Marbury vs. Madison

1868 14th and 15th Amendments: 13th ending slavery passed in 1865 after Civil War ends

1929-1940 The Great Depression: The New Deal programs begin in 1933

1935 Social Security Created

Questions to ask oneself while doing the history section:

(These won't apply to every one, but they will apply to many of them. You don't have to use these except for the first one if you can think of other things.)

Question that you must answer for all of them:

What is its main job/purpose?

Questions that apply to many but not all of them:

Where is it?

Who created it?

Where is it/where was it created?

What are its parts/what is it made up of?

How does it work/occur?

What are some examples of how/when this was used?

How long does someone serve in this position/part of government?

What powers does this position/part of government have?

Question that applies to a few things:

Was there a specific event at the time that made this happen?

The following pages are not necessary to study in depth for this section but may provide some context:

School One

U. S. History: A Brief Chronology

(Items in **bold** may appear on the comp. as an optional choice, but only the 23 above are needed to pass.)

You don't need this to pass, but if you remember some of it, it might help with the other two options on the back side of the section. I would focus more on the 23 things above.

100,000 - 20,000 years ago: People from Central Asia migrate across land bridges over what is now the **Bering Strait** into Alaska and North America. This pre-dates any civilizations on Earth. These people slowly spread out across the American continents, becoming the people we call **Native Americans**. Among their greatest civilizations were the **Mayans** and the **Aztecs** in Mexico and the Incas in Peru. Many nations with distinct languages and customs shared the North American continent when the Europeans arrived.

1492: Though Europeans and Africans may have been to the Americas earlier, with the Vikings having the most likely claim to date, **Columbus's** voyages to America (mostly the Caribbean) are widely reported and begin exploration of the "New World." At first, Spain takes the lead, conquering much of Central and South America.

1609: First permanent settlement by the English in Virginia (**Jamestown**). The first slaves in the English colonies arrive there in 1619. Until the time of the revolution almost 200 years later, groups of colonists will gain charters from England to create 13 English colonies in North America. They are all along the east coast, and during this period there is little exploration and almost no settlement further west by the English. The French and Spanish are active in exploration further west. bind them together loosely and give the states most of the power.

1620: First permanent settlement by the English in **Plymouth**, Massachusetts. New England is basically ruled by the theocracy (rule by religion) of the **Puritans** until their power begins to wane after the **Salem Witch Trials** in 1692. Among the liberal dissenters whom they exile are **Roger Williams** and **Ann Hutchinson**, both of whom move to Rhode Island. **Roger Williams** founds the colony of Rhode Island when he creates the city of Providence with his followers in 1636 and proclaims religious liberty there.

1692: Tensions between old line **Puritans** and their more secular neighbors as well as land disputes come to a head during the **Salem Witch Trials**. Young girls claim they are being attacked by witches, and twenty people are executed, some of them prominent citizens, before Massachusetts comes to its senses. **Puritanism** fades quickly after this event, and is supplanted by the Great Awakening of the 1720s, which offers a more affirming and less negative religious viewpoint.

1713: The Treaty of Utrecht gives England the monopoly on the Atlantic slave trade. This helped to institutionalize the **Triangle Trade**: sugar from the West Indies (Caribbean islands) to New England where it was made into rum, rum from New England to Africa where it was traded for slaves, and slaves from Africa to the West Indies, from whence they are dispersed throughout the Americas. The slaves had to endure horrible, densely packed conditions during this **Middle Passage** from Africa to the West Indies, and many died from the conditions, were killed or jumped overboard during these voyages.

1756-1763: As part of the Seven Years War in Europe, the English defend their colonies against the French and their Native American allies. The Native Americans tend to favor the French because they have traded with them rather than taking their territory. This war is known here as the **French and Indian War**, and the English victory drives the French out of the Ohio Valley and Canada. England also trades to get Florida from Spain. **George Washington** gains his first military experience and learns that European tactics don't work in American forests.

1763 - 1775: After its expensive victory in the Seven Years War, England needs cash and wants peace. It decides to tax the colonists and to pacify the Native Americans by stopping westward expansion by the colonists. Both policies anger colonists. While some of their gripes are about restrictions on liberties after protests begin, the colonists' main complaints are economic. Radical groups like the **Sons of Liberty** form to protest English policies. Boston is a center of this activity, and the **Boston Massacre** (1770: English soldiers firing into an angry rock-throwing crowd and killing several colonists including **Crispus Attucks**, who is half African-American and half Native American) and the **Boston Tea Party** (1773: colonists disguised as Native Americans throw English tea into Boston Harbor to protest tea taxes) raise the tension level. Radical leaders during this period are Samuel Adams and James Otis in Boston and **Patrick Henry** in Virginia. Ironically, Sam's cousin **John Adams** is the defense attorney for the British soldiers in the **Boston Massacre** trial. On the eve of war, the colonists are split into three roughly equal groups: **Tories or Loyalists**, who are pro-British; **Radicals**, who want Independence from England; and those who are undecided or want compromise. Approximately one fifth of the people in the colonies and more than one third of the people in Virginia are slaves.

1775-1783: American Revolution. The second Continental Congress meets and is split on a number of issues, but in 1776, the 13 colonies break away from England under the leadership of **John Adams**, **Benjamin Franklin** and young **Thomas Jefferson**. In eloquent letters from Quincy, Mass., **Abigail Adams** reminds her husband that while he's establishing basic human rights, he shouldn't forget the ladies, but he doesn't take this advice too seriously. **The Declaration of Independence** declares the colonies free of England on July 4, 1776 after a compromise with southern leaders that removes an **anti-slavery clause** Jefferson wrote. The colonies are governed by the **Articles of Confederation**, which provided a weak link between the colonies from 1781-1789. Some key battles in the Revolution are the defense of **Lexington and Concord** by the **Minutemen** in April, 1775; key American victories at **Saratoga** and **Trenton** and the discovery of former hero **Benedict Arnold's** plan to hand over West Point to the English, all of which kept the English from accomplishing their plan of splitting the colonies in half along the Hudson River; and the final surrender of the English forces at **Yorktown** in 1781 when surrounded by the American army and the French fleet. Assistance by the French under **Lafayette** after the battle of Saratoga was crucial in the colonists' victory. Virginia aristocrat **George Washington** leads the American forces. Many of the **Tories** are forced to flee the country, usually to Canada. Some who remain are tarred and feathered.

1787-1799: Writing and ratification of the **Constitution** and the Bill of Rights (the first 10 amendments to the Constitution). The 3/5ths Compromise makes slaves count as 3/5ths of a person when calculating the number of Congressmen each state gets. Future President **James Madison** is considered the father of the Constitution, and **Patrick Henry** is a major advocate of the Bill of Rights, which is mainly written by Madison. Rhode Island is very slow to ratify the Constitution, in part due to fear that it favors the upper class. **George Washington** is elected the first President. Two parties begin to form: **the Federalists**, who are mainly from New England, mainly wealthy and who believe in a strong national government with few decisions made by states and most power in the hands of the upper class, and the **Democratic Republicans** (ancestor of today's Democratic Party), who are mainly from the south and believe in a weak federal government and strong state governments. **John Adams** and **Alexander Hamilton** lead the **Federalists**; **Thomas Jefferson** leads the **Democratic Republicans** (hereafter Democrats). **George Washington** warns against political parties, but his advice isn't heeded. **Jefferson** sees the country's future as agriculture while **Hamilton** believes the future will be in manufacturing and trade.

1800-1808: In the election of 1800, the **Democrats** win for the first time. They take control of the Congress by a large majority, and **Thomas Jefferson** defeats **John Adams**, the incumbent Federalist President. To protect against "mob rule" like what had just occurred in the French Revolution, **Adams** creates many new courts and fills them with **Federalists**. The most important of these appointments goes to **John Marshall**, who becomes the new Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and who soon, in the case of **Marbury vs. Madison**, proclaims the right of the federal courts to cancel laws that Congress and the President pass that are

contrary to the **Constitution**. This right of the courts is known as **Judicial Review**, and it remains vital in today's government. Key discrimination cases as **Brown v. Board of Education** (see 1954) utilized this principle to protect the rights of minorities that are promised in the Constitution. During his administration, **Jefferson** provides French leader Napoleon needed money for land known as the **Louisiana Purchase**. This gives the U.S. land from Louisiana to Minnesota. The slave trade from abroad is officially ended, but slavery continues with the large number of slaves already in the U.S. Jefferson sends a Corps of Discovery under **Meriwether Lewis and William Clark** to explore the new territory. They are helped (and saved) by a Shoshone woman named Sacajawea. They reach the Pacific Ocean in Oregon and send back massive samples of animal and plant life to the scientifically curious **Jefferson**. Jefferson hopes the Indians will adopt white customs and become prosperous members of society, and some tribes, especially the Cherokee, do this.

1812-1814: England invades the U. S. again and is again repelled, though Washington is burned. **Federalist** opposition to spending on the war lead to the party's demise during the patriotic feelings as the **War of 1812** is won. **Andrew Jackson** rises to fame as a general and wins the bloody Battle of New Orleans after the treaty has been signed in Paris. **James Madison** is President during this war.

1817: President James Monroe takes office. He will eventually proclaim the **Monroe Doctrine**, spelling out the fact that the United States will resist interference by any foreign power in the Western Hemisphere (North, South and Central America).

1820: **The Missouri Compromise** is reached in Congress. It attempts to deal with slavery in the **Louisiana Purchase** lands. Maine is admitted as a free state with Missouri as a slave state to keep the number of Senators balanced between slave and free states, and slavery is banned in the **Louisiana Purchase** lands north of a certain point. New Hampshire's Daniel Webster, South Carolina's John C. Calhoun and Tennessee's Henry Clay are the main Congressional brokers of this compromise.

1828-1836: **Andrew Jackson** is elected President over incumbent John Quincy Adams. He is the first "backwoods" lower class type of President, having risen to prominence as a general and land speculator. He provides the middle and lower classes with a little more political power than they previously had (property-less white men can now vote for the first time) and he opposes big business, but he is extremely cruel to Native Americans. The expulsion of Native Americans from east of the Mississippi River is nearly completed during this time period and includes the forced marches known as the **Trail of Tears**. Even the **Cherokee** who did everything possible to assimilate to U.S. culture are forced on this march. The Native Americans are promised permanent possession of western lands in return for their eastern homes. Late in his administration, American colonists take Texas away from Mexico and declare an independent republic under **Sam Houston**, their general. These "Texicans" use their defeat at **the Alamo** (San Antonio) (where 187 defenders including former backwoods Congressman Davy Crockett were massacred by a large Mexican army) as a rallying cry in their later victories. Many of the Texicans wish to become part of the United States.

1845-50: **The Mexican War**. The U.S. wars with Mexico to annex Texas, which wants to become a state. President **James Knox Polk** instigates this war by sending troops into Mexican territory and claiming they've been fired on. The theory behind this expansionism is labeled **Manifest Destiny**. It basically holds that it is apparent by the increasing power of the U.S. that its destiny is to control the entire continent all the way to the Pacific. The U.S. victory provides the country with many new territories, including California. This leads to increasing debates about whether or not slavery will be permitted in new states. The Wilmot Proviso would stop slavery in the new territories but is defeated in Congress. Among the critics of this war are Henry David Thoreau, who writes his essay on Civil Disobedience in disgust at this war and slavery, and a young congressman named **Abe Lincoln**. Though compromises are reached in Congress, no one is satisfied, and the division between **Abolitionists** and pro-Slavery forces widens. Immigration to the west increases dramatically due to the opportunity to own land. **The Donner Party**, which gets trapped in the Sierra Nevada for the winter of 1846-7 and resorts to cannibalism, briefly cuts immigration, but it increases enormously after

gold is discovered at **Sutter's Mill** north of San Francisco in 1848. Escaped slave and **Abolitionist** speaker **Frederick Douglass** publishes his first autobiography and a newspaper, The Northern Star.

1850: As tensions over slavery rise, Webster, Calhoun, Clay and Illinois's Stephen Douglas propose **the Compromise of 1850**. In return for admitting California as a free state and ending the slave trade in the District of Columbia, the south gets the **Fugitive Slave Act**, under which all escaped slaves must be returned even if they reach free states. The **Abolitionist** novel **Uncle Tom's Cabin** by Harriet Beecher Stowe appears in 1852 and increases tensions. Escaped slave **Harriet Tubman** returns south for the first of some 300 trips leading slaves to freedom on the **Underground Railroad**, a system of safe houses for fleeing slaves that reaches all the way to Canada and safety from their masters.

1855-60: Congress lets Kansas decide its own slave/free status. This begins years of virtual war over the slavery issue known as **Bleeding Kansas**. Pro-slavery forces massacre their opponents, and **John Brown** and his family retaliate. In **Dred Scott vs. Sandford**, the Supreme Court upholds the **Fugitive Slave Law** and denies blacks the standing to sue for rights because they have none and are property, not citizens. It also says that Congress can't prohibit slavery in the territories. This speeds the division of the nation. It helps **Abe Lincoln** win a three-way battle for president in 1860 at the head of the new anti-slavery **Republican Party**. Democratic President James Buchanan's pro-slavery stance in Kansas splits his party and effectively makes the Democrats a solidly southern and pro-slavery party. In 1859, **John Brown** and 21 others raid a government arsenal at **Harper's Ferry**, Virginia to get weapons for a slave rebellion he plans to lead. He takes the arsenal but then everything goes wrong, and he is captured by **Robert E. Lee**. He is hanged for treason by Virginia, further incensing people on both sides.

1861-1865: The Civil War. Incensed by the election of Republican **Abraham Lincoln**, who is saying he will limit the expansion of slavery, southern states starting with South Carolina begin to **secede** from the U.S. even before Lincoln's March inauguration. They plan to set up a country with a weak national government and strong state governments, but this theory of government makes it hard to win a war. They elect **Jefferson Davis** President. They begin the war by taking **Fort Sumter** from Union troops. Though the South wins many major battles (Bull Run, Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville), the Union's superior numbers and technology finally win out. In early July of 1863, the war turns with **Grant's** victory at Vicksburg while **Lee** barely loses his gamble to win the war at **Gettysburg**. **Lincoln** frees the slaves only in the Confederate states in 1863 with **the Emancipation Proclamation** and is assassinated just after **Robert E. Lee** surrenders to **Ulysses S. Grant** at **Appomattox** in 1865.

1865 - 1876: Reconstruction. White northerners (**carpetbaggers**) and blacks hold political power in the south, and the possibility of blacks living in real freedom exists. The **13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments** to the Constitution are passed, outlawing slavery (13), **providing equal protection of the law and due process for all citizens (14)**, and providing blacks with the right to be citizens and vote (15). Many African Americans were elected to office in the south during these years. The **Klu Klux Klan** is founded by Confederate veterans. The west becomes increasingly popular with the transcontinental railroad in 1869, and the government spends these years taking away all of the remaining free Native American land and putting down wars against this policy. Civil War hero and Indian fighter **George Armstrong Custer** is killed with his men when attacking an Indian village at **Little Big Horn** in 1876, but the main Indian wars end when Sitting Bull is killed and the U.S. army massacres 200-300 unarmed Sioux at **Wounded Knee** in 1890. By this point, most Indian land has been seized by the government or settlers, and the Native Americans are forced onto reservations. They didn't receive the vote until 1924.

1876-1900: In the extremely close election of 1876, Republican candidate Rutherford Hayes offers to end Reconstruction in return for southern electoral votes. Although Samuel Tilden had more popular votes, Hayes won in **the Electoral College**, where electors cast each state's votes for president. (The Constitution originally provided the **Electoral College** as check on the public voting for a dangerous candidate. The candidate who won the most popular votes did not become President in 1824, 1876 1888 and 2000.) The

south returns to an oppressive society for blacks as the **Carpetbaggers** are ejected and the “**Jim Crow**” system is installed to deprive blacks of equal rights and to segregate them from mainstream society. This system is made legal by the 1896 Supreme Court ruling **Plessy v. Ferguson**, which said that a system of “**separate but equal**” facilities is legal. The “**robber barons**,” rich industrialists like John Rockefeller and Andrew Carnegie, build and monopolize industries like railroads and steel mills. They make huge fortunes, live excessively (Newport), and exploit their workers, who begin to form **unions**. Unions are at this time illegal, and strikers are often beaten and even killed by thugs and sometimes the police. The 1886 **Haymarket Riots** in Chicago are an example of police violence against union workers protesting previous police violence against union workers. Immigrants from Europe and Asia sweep into the U. S., providing cheap labor, more labor unrest, and more targets for hate groups like the Klan. Women like **Susan B. Anthony** continue to seek more rights, but in *Bradwell vs. Illinois* (1873), the Supreme Court upholds a law barring women from becoming lawyers because their gender makes them unfit for this profession.

1901-1914: Liberal Republican Theodore Roosevelt is President and seeks to weaken the monopolies. **The Panama Canal** is built (without much consultation with Panama), giving U.S. shipping a major boost. **Muckrakers** (crusading journalists exposing what they see as the ills of society and government) help bring on **The Progressive Era**, a period during which there is a lot of reform of government, both local and national, begins. These writers include Upton Sinclair and Ida Tarbell. Due to **the Progressives**, the Senate is elected more directly than before, and women are calling for the vote. Safety regulations are passed after the fatal **Triangle Shirtwaist Company Fire** in Manhattan. The first laws giving **unions** some protection are passed. In addition to the more mainstream **A.F.L.** (American Federation of Labor), the **I.W.W.** (Industrial Workers of the World), often called the Wobblies, are a rapidly growing socialist union that seeks to give workers more rights AND put them in charge. This union, unlike most others, does not discriminate based on race or gender. Socialists like **Emma Goldman** and **Mother Jones** scare the government. African-American writer, socialist and educator **W.E.B. Dubois** and others begin the **N.A.A.C.P.** (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) in 1909 to help improve conditions for blacks, but little racial progress is made at this time.

1914-1919: **Progressive Democrat Woodrow Wilson** is President. The first laws protecting workers in terms of health and safety are passed. Child and female labor laws are passed. Union activity increases. As **World War I** begins in Europe in 1914, most Americans want to stay out. Former three-time Democratic Presidential candidate William Jennings Bryan and Socialist leader Eugene Debs lead the anti-war movement, and Wilson is re-elected in 1916 promising to keep us out of the war. We finally enter in 1918 and help England and France to defeat Germany, Turkey and Austria-Hungary. The tough conditions of the Treaty of Versailles lead to resentment that helps Hitler to take power in Germany a decade later. Lynchings increase as do prosecutions for what we would now consider free speech. Socialist candidate **Eugene Debs** runs for President from prison and gets a sizeable number of votes. Wilson helps found the League of Nations to prevent wars, but Congress refuses to join.

1919-1932: The 18th Amendment begins **Prohibition**, which makes all alcoholic beverages illegal until repealed in 1932. This leads to a rise in crime and gangsterism, and illegal alcohol becomes big business at speakeasies. The 19th Amendment gives women the vote for the 1920 Presidential election. The 1917 Russian Revolution leads to fear of Communists and therefore of European immigrants, and the Klan becomes a powerful anti-immigrant as well as anti-black organization. Government and private attacks lead to the decline of the **I.W.W.** in this anti-socialist atmosphere. As the south remains oppressive for African-Americans, there is a large movement of blacks from the south to the northern cities during this period. **The Harlem Renaissance**, a gathering of black writers and artists, begins in New York, producing such artists as Zora Neale Hurston and Langston Hughes. Intellectuals **Marcus Garvey**, who advocates a return to Africa, and **W.E.B. Dubois** and many jazz musicians are part of this flowering of African American culture. Native Americans become citizens and receive the right to vote in 1924. The Republicans become the party of big business and the stock market soars until 1929, when the **stock market crashes** in October. **The Depression** begins, and the economy grinds to a halt. Banks close and financiers jump out of windows.

Drought in the mid-west destroys many farms and creates “the dust bowl.” President Herbert Hoover resists "big government" solutions, and the situation doesn't improve. Unemployment is massive, and as people lose their homes, they camp out in shantytowns called Hoovervilles.

1932-1941: Democrat **Franklin Delano Roosevelt** becomes President and starts the “**New Deal**.” The government creates jobs for the unemployed, working on bridges, schools, roads, dams, and power plants. This is designed to put people back to work and improve the country by providing things it needs. Roosevelt institutes **Social Security**, bank and securities regulation and labor negotiation rules to try to protect the average citizen. The economy slowly improves. The Supreme Court strikes down some early **New Deal** provisions like the N.R.A. (National Recovery Act), and President Roosevelt attempts to "pack the court" by adding enough justices to get his measures through. Congress rejects this plan. He eventually remakes the court anyway through his normal power to replace retiring or dying justices over his twelve years as President. The Depression isn't as bad, but it isn't entirely over when World War II begins. Disgust over war profiteering and heavy losses in World War I lead to an isolationist mood in the U.S. as World War II looms. The war breaks out in Europe when Hitler invades Poland in September 1939 and gets more worrisome when Hitler's forces smash France in May of 1940. We are also worried about Japan, which has been expanding into China since the early 1930s. Roosevelt wants to help Britain and France and oppose Hitler, but the public wants to stay out of it. Roosevelt moves slowly to increase aid to the Allies through programs like Lend-Lease.

1941-1946: We enter **World War II** in December 1941 after the Japanese surprise raid on **Pearl Harbor**. Hitler has taken over most of Europe and is trying to conquer England and the Soviet Union. We help them defeat Hitler while also fighting Japan in the Pacific. Women take factory jobs as men leave for the war. The army is still segregated by race. On **D-Day**, June 6, 1944, Allied forces regain a foothold in France and begin to move relentlessly toward Germany. Roosevelt dies at the beginning of his fourth term in office in April 1945 just as the war in Europe is ending. New President Harry Truman decides to use the brand new atomic bomb to end the war. After explosions in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan surrenders in August 1945. Russian Premier Stalin annexes Eastern Europe and **the Cold War** begins, with increased fear of Communists.

1947-1950: President Truman orders the army integrated in 1946. **Jackie Robinson** becomes the first African American to play major league baseball in about fifty years in 1947. The **Congress of Racial Equality** (C.O.R.E.) begins a series of **freedom rides** and **sit-ins** based on ideas of non-violence imported from Gandhi in India. **The Marshall Plan** gives economic aid to western Europe keep it capitalist. It works and helps to rebuild many European countries. In 1949, Mao Tse Tung and his Communist Party take control of China. Right wingers like Congressman **Richard Nixon** and **Senator Joseph McCarthy** begin seeking scapegoats in our State Department.

1950-54: **The Korean War** is the first war in which troops are integrated. Senator **Joseph McCarthy** claims our government is full of Communists. Hearings begin to hunt them out. Many lives are ruined. The hunt spreads to Hollywood where those who refuse to name Communists are **blacklisted** (refused jobs). Former actors' union president **Ronald Reagan** has no trouble naming names. The East Asian wing of the State Department is decimated, leaving us without good intelligence about this part of the world (including **Vietnam**) for years to come. **General Eisenhower**, who commanded the Allied forces in Europe during World War II and ran D-Day, is elected President with **Richard Nixon** as Vice President in 1952. In 1954 the Supreme Court issues its ruling in **Brown v. Board of Education**, stating that separate but equal schools cannot provide equal protection under the **14th Amendment** and thus are unconstitutional (against the Constitution and therefore illegal). This invigorates the **Civil Rights Movement**.

1954-1960: **Brown vs. Board** jump starts the **Civil Rights movement**, along with **Rosa Parks**'s refusal to sit at the back of a bus and the ensuing year-long **Montgomery bus boycott**. This non-violent protest leads to the integration of buses in Montgomery, Alabama and the rise to leadership of the youthful Rev. **Martin**

Luther King, Jr., who had come to Montgomery just in time to lead the bus boycott. After the Brown vs. Board decision, some southern states grapple with plans to integrate their schools as ordered, but resistance to integration is strong. Arthur Miller writes The Crucible, a play about the **Salem Witch Trials**, which he aims at the **McCarthy** hearings. **Senator McCarthy** is eventually discredited by CBS reporter Edward R. Murrow and others when he tries to find communists in the U.S. military. France loses **Vietnam** as a colony to a nationalist force led by Ho Chi Minh. In 1956, we postpone elections in **Vietnam** in which the people would have voted to become Communist under Ho Chi Minh. We divide the country into North and South and make the southern country democratic. The Civil Rights movement gains from the 1957 school stand-off in **Little Rock** that forces Eisenhower to send in federal troops to help integration and the first lunch counter **sit-ins**. In 1957, the Soviets launch Sputnik, an unmanned satellite, beginning the “space race.” America is embarrassed and places new emphasis on education in math and science. In 1959, Fidel Castro defeats the corrupt government of Cuba and eventually becomes Communist.

1960-1963: John F. Kennedy is President. He promises to aid the **Civil Rights Movement** but is cautious. His intervention when James Meredith tries to enroll at the University of Mississippi in 1961 is awkward and leads to violence, though he finally sends in troops and Meredith does register. **Lunch counter sit-ins** and **Freedom rides** by members of **S.N.C.C.** (Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee) integrate lunch counters in national chain stores like Woolworths and interstate buses after a violent response by southern segregationists, and voter registration activity picks up for southern blacks. **Rev. King's** Southern Christian Leadership Council (S.C.L.C.) runs into fierce opposition in 1963 in trying to integrate Birmingham, Alabama. Four little girls are killed in a church bombing, and **Rev. King** is jailed and writes a famous letter explaining why he is carrying on with the protest. The **March on Washington** in 1963 includes **Martin Luther King, Jr.'s** “I Have A Dream” speech. The **Bay of Pigs** invasion in 1961 fails to recapture Cuba. The Cold War picks up in Europe with the building of the Berlin Wall by the communists. Kennedy airlifts in food and supplies and visits Berlin. In 1962, Kennedy “wins” the **Cuban Missile Crisis**, forcing the Soviets to remove nuclear weapons from Cuba after a tense ten day stand-off. Kennedy allegedly prepares to withdraw advisors from Vietnam and to press a Civil Rights Bill that will ensure more rights for blacks, including voting rights in the south, but he is killed in Dallas on November 22, 1963.

1964-5: President **Lyndon Johnson** passes the Civil Rights and Voting Rights bills and steps up the war in Vietnam. He declares war on poverty as well, but the war in Vietnam drains the money. It's **Mississippi Freedom Summer**, and concerned students and activists pour into the south to support the movement, though they face violence and death. The Beatles arrive in America, and so do the '60s.

1965-1967: After the major legislative victories of 1964, the Civil Rights Movement splits between those who like **Dr. King's** non-violent approach and more aggressive leaders like **Malcolm X** and **Stokely Carmichael** seeking faster results. Riots flare in several major cities including Newark, Detroit and Watts (Los Angeles). Betty Friedan publishes The Feminine Mystique, and the women's liberation movement is underway with bra burnings and attempts to integrate male-only institutions. Robert Kennedy becomes a Senator from New York and moves increasingly to the left as he thinks about a run for the Presidency. **The Warren Court** (the Chief Justice is **Earl Warren**) issues a series of liberal rulings including *Miranda v. Arizona* (1967), which guarantees criminal defendants procedural rights upon arrest, and *Griswold v. Connecticut* (1966), in which the court overturned a law banning the use of contraceptives and proclaimed for the first time that there is a Constitutional right to privacy. **The Warren court** also bans prayer in public schools while expanding speech and press rights. **Thurgood Marshall**, the main N.A.A.C.P. lawyer in *Brown vs. Board*, becomes the first African American Supreme Court justice.

1968: The year opens with the **Tet Offensive**, in which North Vietnam launches a surprise attack during a religious holiday. To many Americans, it is the first indication that we might not win easily. The anti-war movement picks up steam. Anti-war Senator Eugene McCarthy challenges President Johnson in the New Hampshire primary, and his strong showing convinces Johnson not to run for re-election. Robert Kennedy enters the race, also opposing the war, a move many McCarthy supporters see as a betrayal. **Martin Luther**

King is killed in April, and after a primary win in California that probably gave him the nomination, Robert Kennedy is killed in June. **Richard Nixon** becomes the Republican nominee, promising to less crime and a secret peace plan. The Democratic convention in Chicago includes police pounding demonstrators and delegates screaming insults at one another on national T.V. The party bosses give the nomination to Hubert Humphrey, who is liberal but who must support the administration's war policy as Vice President. Despite this, Humphrey makes a huge comeback, and Nixon barely wins.

1969-1972: 1969 has its high points: Joe Namath predicting the Jets' Super Bowl upset, the first moon landing, the Amazing Mets, the first **moon landing**, a surprisingly peaceful if muddy **Woodstock**, but the country is divided over the **Vietnam War**, and **Nixon's** plan to end it continues to be secret. He carpet bombs Hanoi (the North Vietnamese capital), but it doesn't work. Moratorium Day shuts down most colleges and schools in October of 1969. We invade Cambodia and Laos in 1970, and four students are shot by National Guardsmen at **Kent State**. The almost universally beloved Beatles break up. 18 year olds receive the right to vote by the 26th Amendment. George McGovern wins the 1972 Democratic nomination (with unsuspected help from the Nixon campaign, who judge him easy to beat) and is trounced by **Nixon**. In June, Nixon campaign officials are caught burglarizing the Democratic offices at the **Watergate** Hotel. No one pays too much attention at the time. After the election, **Nixon** proclaims "Peace with Honor" in **Vietnam** and withdraws our troops. The gay rights movement is usually traced to the **Stonewall Riots** in Greenwich Village outside a bar called the Stonewall Inn whose patrons protested harassment by the police.

1973-1976: In 1973, Senate hearings into the **Watergate** break-in reveal that Nixon taped all of his conversations. Courts order him to turn over the tapes, and we find out that 18.5 crucial minutes were "accidentally erased." Vice President Agnew resigns due to financial crimes in 1973, and Nixon resigns in 1974 after articles of **impeachment** have been voted by the Judiciary Committee of the House of Representatives but before a trial in the Senate. After resigning, **Nixon** is pardoned by his successor, Gerald Ford, whose short presidency features lots of amusing tumbles and verbal gaffes, a gas shortage and a bad economy. Gas prices double from about 50 cents to about a dollar per gallon. In 1973, the Supreme Court decides **Roe vs. Wade**, which gives women a Constitutional right to have an abortion in the early stages of a pregnancy. This opinion was based on the privacy rights first granted in **Griswold vs. Connecticut** in 1966. Rather than ending this divisive debate, anti-abortion forces sought to overturn the decision. President Nixon had good relations (detente) with the Soviet Union and also opened up relations with the Communist Chinese. President Nixon cleverly played these two enemies off against one another, knowing they feared one another more than they feared us. Congress passed a law to have **Independent Prosecutors** investigate charges against future Presidents. Ruth Bader Ginsburg begins her strategy to have the courts recognize that gender equality is part of the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendments, significantly expanding women's rights.

1977-1980: Jimmy Carter becomes President. He helps make peace between Israel and Egypt in the Camp David Accords, but as an outsider, he doesn't know how to work with Congress, and the economy weakens with terrible inflation. In 1979, the new Islamic government of Iran takes the people in the U.S. Embassy in Teheran, Iran hostage and demands that the U.S. turn over all assets belonging to the Shah, the former ruler who fled the Islamic government. President Carter is unable to get the hostages back by diplomacy or force, and **Ronald Reagan** easily wins the election of 1980 and is able to get the hostages released within the hour, leading some to think he had made a pre-election deal to stall the release until after the election.

1981-1988: **Ronald Reagan's** presidency is marked by tense relations with the Soviet Union as we build up our military. By cutting taxes at the same time, **President Reagan** makes wealthy people happy but runs up a huge **deficit** so that a big part of the U.S.'s current budget is spent on paying the interest on the money Reagan borrowed. By 1984, however, the economy has improved and the deficit hasn't affected the majority much, so Reagan easily wins re-election. During Reagan's second term, a new Soviet leader, **Mikhail Gorbachev**, appears and slowly but surely moves toward liberalizing conditions in the Soviet world. Republicans claim this is due to President Reagan's tough policy while Democrats tend to give the credit to Gorbachev and a

fairly consistent forty-year U.S. policy. President Reagan appoints **Sandra Day O'Connor** as the first woman on the Supreme Court in 1981. She was a far more pivotal and unpredictable justice than anyone suspected at the time.

1989-1992: Reagan's Vice President George Bush wins the election of 1988 with a lot of name-calling and racially divisive commercials. During his first year as President, amazing changes occur across the globe. Soviet leader Gorbachev institutes a policy of glasnost (openness) that allows freer discussion of politics in the Soviet Union and Eastern European countries. Once this has happened, people rise up in country after country to demand freedom and an end to the communist governments. East Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Romania, Hungary, Yugoslavia and finally the Soviet Union get rid of their communist governments and institute democracies over the next couple of years. The great roll stops when the Chinese government cracks down on pro-democracy demonstrators in Tienanin Square in Beijing. When Iraq's Saddam Hussein invades neighboring Kuwait in 1990, President Bush sends troops to the area and eventually leads a multi-national attack on Iraq, winning **the Persian Gulf War** decisively and protecting oil supplies of industrial countries. This war helps General Colin Powell, who headed the Joint Chiefs of Staff, rise to prominence on the American political scene. Bush and Powell decide to let Saddam survive rather than take over Iraq and create a new government. After this war, President Bush's popularity is about 90%, but after he breaks his campaign promise that there would be no new taxes because money is needed to begin dealing with Reagan's deficit and a new recession, his popularity decreases rapidly. Despite problems of his own related to his lack of military service and his relationships with women other than his wife and a marijuana cigarette that he didn't inhale, William Jefferson Clinton is elected President in a three-way race with Bush and independent businessman H. Ross Perot in 1992.

1992-1998: Bill Clinton's first couple of years in office are rocky, as he fails on his major proposal for a government health care system and seems hesitant and unsure in foreign policy. In 1994, the Republicans take over Congress for the first time in almost fifty years, led by a long-term campaign by Congressman **Newt Gingrich**, who becomes Speaker of the House. This marks a significant shift away from the Democrats being the majority party in the country, which they had been since President **Roosevelt's New Deal** eased the **Depression**. The south had been turning increasingly Republican based on racial and cultural issues since the late '60s, and Gingrich finds ways to appeal to middle class and lower class voters who had been die-hard Democrats in the past. In addition, the rise of the religious right registers many conservative voters who had never been active in politics before. This seems like the end for Clinton's presidency, but it somehow helps him improve. He stands up to the Congress and then works with them to balance the U.S. budget for the first time in thirty years. This is a positive step to beginning to work on the budget, and the voters reward both the President and Congress with re-election in 1996. A long stock market rally throughout the '90s and low unemployment make Clinton a popular President in the middle of his terms, but a sex scandal revives uneasiness about Clinton's honesty, and he becomes the second President to be impeached. (Remember: Impeachment is just a formal accusation that leads to a trial. It is not removal). Clinton wins his trial before the Senate easily, but this episode further divides the country, and several Republicans have to resign, including **Gingrich**, when their own scandals come to light after they go after Clinton.

Election of 2000: The economy continues to improve solidly, and the country debates how to use the surplus money the government is taking in each year. Republicans favor tax cuts while Democrats favor more government services, especially for the poor. Many people favor paying off the national debt and putting money away to prevent a future crisis in **social security** that looms when the Baby Boom generation begins retiring in about ten to fifteen years. This debate becomes central to the 2000 Presidential election. George W. Bush, the governor of Texas, is the Republican favorite to oppose likely Democratic nominee and Vice President Al Gore. Republican Senator John McCain comes close to taking the Republican nomination with a straight-talking style and a war hero resume, but while he is wildly popular across the country, Republican primary voters favor Bush. Gore leads narrowly through the summer, but Bush passes him in September when Bush kisses Oprah and Gore is awful in the debates he was supposed to dominate. Complicating Gore's strategy is Ralph Nader, who is running on the Green Party to Gore's left. This forces Gore to commit time

and money to more liberal states that he would otherwise win easily and keeps him from moving his rhetoric to the center as Bush is able to do. Gore picks up steam in the polls over the last weekend, and on election night, Gore wins the popular vote by a significant margin while Bush eventually wins **the Electoral College** narrowly when the Supreme Court quashes a recount of the pivotal vote in Florida. It is clear that more people in Florida intended to vote for Gore when they went to the polls, but a poorly designed ballot in Palm Beach county and discriminatory treatment of black voters hold down Gore's totals, and he loses by about 500 votes statewide. Those 500 votes determine the Presidency, so NEVER say your vote doesn't matter! Hilary Clinton becomes the first First Lady ever elected to office when she becomes a Senator from New York.

2000 – 2004: In the spring of 2000, the stock market begins to head down, and this unexpectedly continues through 2002. Bush sticks to his promise to provide a tax cut, and the combination of this cut and new spending on the military leads the country back into deficits with no plan for **social security**, prescriptions or paying off the debt. This is the main event of Bush's presidency until **September 11, 2001** when Al Qaeda terrorists hijack four planes simultaneously and destroy both towers of the World Trade Center in New York and crash one plane into the Pentagon. Passengers on the fourth plane stop the hijackers from carrying out another attack in Washington as the plane crashes in Pennsylvania. About 3000 people are killed during these events, a number of them rescue personnel in the act of trying to save victims. Bush's popularity soars despite a very shaky first day performance, and he soon launches a War on Terrorism to go after the Al Qaeda forces and their allies, the Taliban rulers of Afghanistan, but the problems in the Middle East complicate U.S. policy in the War on Terrorism. In 2003, claiming that Iraq is building an arsenal of "weapons of mass destruction" and hinting that the government of Iraq was involved with the September 11 attack, President Bush attacks Iraq. Bush outlines a policy under which it is okay for the U.S. to attack other countries even if they aren't attacking us and no treaties are violated if we think they might eventually pose a threat if we don't attack. There is a swift military victory followed by more than a year of attacks on both Iraqis and U.S. soldiers. The standing of the U.S. in most other western countries diminishes due to this war. This and the finding that there were no weapons of mass destruction and that there was no link between Iraq and 9/11 has the country pretty evenly divided about Bush's abilities heading into the 2004 election against Democrat John Kerry of Massachusetts, which Bush wins narrowly.

2004-2017: The war in Iraq becomes increasingly unpopular, and so does President Bush, who has little effectiveness in getting programs he wants in his second term. His one significant achievement (from a Republican point of view) is appointing two young and conservative justices to the Supreme Court to replace Chief Justice Rehnquist (who died) and Justice O'Connor (who retired). While new Chief Justice Roberts is no more conservative than Rehnquist. The new justice, Samuel Alito, is much more conservative than the swing vote of O'Connor, thus pushing the court to the right for the foreseeable future. In the last year of the Bush presidency, the surge policy in Iraq is successful in finally stabilizing the country and setting the stage for withdrawal, but by now most of the nation sees the war as a mistake. This helps fuel the candidacy of first term Illinois Senator Barack Obama for the Presidency. Despite long odds against heavy favorite Hilary Clinton, he wins the nomination and the easiest Democratic presidential victory since 1964, taking states like Virginia, Indiana and North Carolina that hadn't been in the Democratic column since then. He becomes the nation's first African-American president only 55 years after the beginnings of the Civil Rights Movement. During the campaign, the economy implodes, ensuring a change of party leadership, and Obama is faced with the worst economic situation since the Depression for his first year in office. During his first year, he appoints Justice Sotomayor to replace Justice Souter (retiring), but as a liberal for liberal swap, it doesn't change the conservative tilt of the court. During his second year, he appoints Elena Kagan to the Supreme Court replacing Justice Stevens, but this again doesn't change the tilt of the court. It is the first time 3 women serve on the Court at once. President Obama is re-elected in 2012. In early 2016, long time conservative Justice Antonin Scalia dies unexpectedly, and the Republican Senate refuses to consider President Obama's nominee, Merrick Garland, even though he is very moderate and old for a nominee from a Democratic president. They know that even given his moderation, he would shift the court considerably to the left as he's replacing Scalia. The Republicans' ploy unexpectedly worked when Donald Trump won the electoral college, became

President in 2017 and appointed conservative Neil Gorsuch to the Supreme Court, retaining the conservative edge from before Scalia's death.

2017-25: While it was a very divisive time overall, the most important long-term product of the Trump presidency is the appointment of two more very conservative justices on the Supreme Court after Gorsuch (Coney-Barrett and Kavanaugh), so that the Court has five very conservative justices, one who is slightly less but still quite conservative (Roberts) and three remaining liberals. All but one of the conservatives are still young, so this is likely to remain the case for decades, giving conservatives an important check on any liberal legislation through Judicial Review. Covid, alternative facts and hardening political divides based on news sources were other key aspects of these years. Trump refuses to admit he lost the election and spreads "the Big Lie" to his fans, some of whom attack and ransack the Capitol on January 6, 2021 to try to stop the 2020 election from being followed. House hearings reveal Trump and his aide's responsibility through testimony of Trump's appointees, and Republicans Liz Cheney and Adam Kinzinger sacrifice their Congressional career to insist on the truth because orderly change of administrations is crucial to maintaining democracy. President Biden gets to appoint Ketanji Brown Jackson to the Supreme Court when Justice Breyer retires, having learned from Justice Ginsburg's error in refusing to retire. This doesn't change the political balance on the court, however, which in its 2022 term signals that it will overturn longstanding precedents and remove existing rights by overturning Roe v. Wade. The Supreme Court continued to remove rights, including abortion and affirmative action, but the abortion decision has seemed to help Democrats in elections since 2022. In the summer of 2024, President Biden did very poorly in the first debate with Trump, and in July he withdrew from the election in favor of V.P. Kamala Harris, which immediately tightened up the race. Nonetheless, Trump won and began to pursue aggressive policies on tariffs and against immigration, diversity programs and educational institutions immediately upon taking office.