

Social Studies Department

2026 Summer Reading, Podcast & Movie Requirements & Recommendations

Required Readings for AP Courses:

AP US History

1 - *I Wish I'd Been There: **Book 1 (American History)*** edited by Byron Hollinshead

- Each chapter is written by an historian recounting dramatic events in American history. Focus on the big picture themes, historians' arguments, and major events/people discussed vs. the minute details.
- There will be a quiz during the first full week of school.

2 - APUSH Period 1 Prep Work - details will be posted on Google Classroom toward the end of the summer when rosters have been established (due the first full week of school).

AP Economics

Naked Economics by Charles Wheelan

- “Big Picture” Question: Can we (or the government) use incentives to change our own behavior? The behavior of others? What works and what doesn't work?.
- There will be a short quiz on the book sometime in the second week of school.

AP European History

1 - *I Wish I'd Been There: **Book 2 (European History)*** by Byron Hollinshead & Theodore Rabb

- Read the Introduction and then begin with the chapter “Ten Thousand Brutes in Florence” (ch. 7, pg. 93) to the end
- Each chapter is written by an historian recounting dramatic events in European history. Focus on the big picture themes, historians' arguments, and major events/people discussed vs. the minute details.
- There will be a quiz during the first full week of school that also includes a **map quiz** of European countries!

2 - Middle Ages Prep Work - details will be posted on Google Classroom (**code:** eqibvyhj) over the summer (due sometime during the first full week of school).

AP Human Geography

Factfulness: Ten Reasons We're Wrong About the World - and Why Things are Better Than You Think by Hans Rosling

- BEFORE reading the book, take the following survey:
<https://forms.gle/hbkwFrqGaq6HAeYv6> Make note of your score as we will talk about it in class the first week of school.
- As you are reading, think about how we view the world and whether or not you agree with Rosling's contention that things are better than you think.
- After you are finished reading, write a 2-3 paragraph reflection discussing what you believed before reading the book and how that might have changed. The written assignment will be due the Tuesday after Labor Day and will count as your first quiz grade. It is expected that this will be your own ideas and words and not that of a generative AI program.
- If you are looking for a fun, AP Human Geo adjacent show to watch, I recommend *This is a Gardening Show* starring Zach Galifianakis on Netflix.

AP Psychology

Myers' textbook sections [Psychology's History and Approaches](#) and [An Introduction to Psychological Science Practices](#)

- Read the two textbook sections and take notes using the [key terms and essential questions](#) as a guide
- Notes will be collected, and there will be an assessment on the material during the first week of school

Recommended Reading - These books are not required; they are just suggestions for students who are interested in diving into some of the topics that will be addressed in these classes

9th Grade US History I Recommendations:

David McCullough, *1776*

Ira Berlin, *In Human Bondage: The Rise and Fall of Slavery in the New World*

David Blight, *Frederick Douglass: Prophet of Freedom*

Stephen Puleo, *The Caning*

Doris Kearns Goodwin, *Team of Rivals and The Bully Pulpit: Theodore Roosevelt, William Howard Taft and the Golden Age of Journalism*

Jay Winik, *April 1865*

Eric Foner, *A Short History of Reconstruction*

Eric Foner, *Gateway to Freedom: The Hidden History of the Underground Railroad*

Candace Millard, *Destiny of the Republic*

Sarah Vowell, *Assassination Vacation*

Fred Anderson and Andrew Cayton, *The Dominion of War, Empire and Liberty in North America, 1500-2000*

Stephen Kinzer, *True Flag*

Stephen Kinzer, *Overthrow: America's Century of Regime Change from Hawaii to Iraq*

Paul Buhle & Steve Max, *Eugene V. Debs: A Graphic Biography*

Dwight Jon Zimmerman, *Saga of the Sioux*

Timothy Egan, *A Fever in the Heartland: The Ku Klux Klan's Plot to Take Over America, and the Woman Who Stopped Them*

10th Grade Birth of the Modern World Recommendations:

Mikhail Sholokhov, *And Quiet Flows the Don*

Anatole France, *The Gods Must Have Blood*

Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*

Pearl Buck, *The Good Earth*

David Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace*

Alexander Solzhenitsyn, *The Gulag Archipelago*

Anna Ornstein, *My Mother's Eyes*

Kristin Hannah, *The Nightingale*

Jung Chang, *Wild Swans*

Timothy Snyder, *Bloodlands*

Peter Frankopan, *The Silk Roads*

George Orwell, *The Road to Wigan Pier*

Robert Massie, *Peter the Great*

Art Spiegelman, *Maus* (graphic novel)

Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*

Deborah Swiss, *Tin Ticket*

11th Grade Contemporary Global & US History Recommendations:

Lillian Smith, *Killers of the Dream*

Deborah Ellis, *The Breadwinner*

Kevin Baker, *Paradise Alley*

Alex Haley, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*

Jaime Ford, *Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet*

Trevor Noah, *Born A Crime*

James Bassett, *In Harm's Way*

V. S. Naipal, *In a Free State*

Tim O'Brien, *The Things They Carried*

Robert Dallek, *Nixon and Kissinger*

Erik Larson, *Isaac's Storm*
 J. Anthony Lukas, *Common Ground*
 Edward P. Jones, *The Known World*
 John Lewis, *The March* (graphic novel)
 David K. Johnson, *The Lavender Scare*
 Julie Otsuka, *When the Emperor was Divine*
 Dennis Lehane, *The Given Day*
 Seng Ty, *The Years of Zero*
 Isaiah Berlin, *Russian Thinkers*
 James Toll, *The Origins of the World War*
 Ha Jin, *War Trash*
 Tony Judt, *Postwar; Ill Fares the Land*
 Hyeonseo Lee, *The Girl with Seven Names: A North Korean Defector's Story*
 Fred Anderson & Andrew Cayton, *The Dominion of War, Empire & Liberty in N. America, 1500-2000*
 Stephen Kinzer, *Overthrow: America's Century of Regime Change from Hawaii to Iraq*
 Michael Bronski, *A Queer History of the United States*
 Lun Zhang, *Tiananmen 1989: Our Shattered Hopes* (graphic novel)
 Art Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus* (graphic novel)
 Rich Daniels, *Blood Brother: Jonathan Daniels and His Sacrifices for Civil Rights*
 Steve Sheinkin, *Fallout: Spies, Superbombs, and the Ultimate Cold War Showdown*
 Timothy Snyder, *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century* (graphic novel)
 John Lewis, *Run: Book One* (graphic novel)
 Derf Backderf, *Kent State: Four Dead in Ohio* (graphic novel)

Current Issues Recommendations:

Tracey Kidder, <i>Mountains Beyond Mountains</i>	Nicholas Kristof, <i>Half the Sky; A Path Appears</i>
<i>Food Inc</i> , created by filmmaker Robert Kenner	Miles Howard, <i>The Early Voters</i>
Jonathan Kozol, <i>Amazing Grace</i>	Bryan Stevenson, <i>Just Mercy</i>
Alex de Waal, <i>Mass Starvation</i>	Cathy Park Hong, <i>Minor Feelings</i>
Steven Levitsky & Daniel Ziblatt, <i>Tyranny of the Minority</i>	
Timothy Snyder, <i>On Tyranny</i>	

Economics Recommendations:

Michael Lewis, <i>The Big Short</i>	Malcolm Gladwell, <i>The Tipping Point</i>
Michael Lewis, <i>Moneyball</i>	Rana Foroohar, <i>Makers and Takers</i>
William Cohan, <i>Money and Power</i>	Thomas Piketty, <i>Capital in the 21st Century</i>
Levitt and Dubner, <i>Freakonomics</i>	Daniel Kahneman, <i>Thinking, Fast and Slow</i>
Todd Buchholz, <i>New Ideas from Dead Economists</i>	
George Akerlof & Robert Schiller, <i>Phishing for Phools</i>	
Daron Acemoglu & James Robinson, <i>Why Nations Fail</i>	
Malcolm Harris, <i>Kids These Days: Human Capital and the Making of Millennials</i>	
Abhijit Banerjee & Esther Duflo, <i>Good Economics for Hard Times</i>	

Financial Literacy Recommendations:

Spencer Johnson, <i>Who Moved My Cheese?</i>	Suze Orman, <i>The Road to Wealth</i>
Steven Covey, <i>The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People</i>	Beth Kobliner, <i>Get a Financial Life</i>
Cary Siegel, <i>Why Didn't They Teach Me This in School?</i>	
Erik Wecks, <i>How to Manage Your Money When You</i>	
Tina Hay, <i>Napkin Finance: Build Your Wealth in 30 Seconds or Less Don't Have Any</i>	

Psychology Recommendations:

Suzanna Kassen, *Girl Interrupted*

Victor Frankl, *Man's Search for Meaning*

US Government and Politics Recommendations:

Kathleen Sears, *American Government 101: From the Continental Congress to the Iowa Caucus, Everything You Need to Know About US Politics*

Michael G. Trachtman, *The Supremes' Greatest Hits: The 44 Supreme Court Cases that Most Directly Affect Your Life*

AP European History Recommendations

Ross King, *Brunelleschi's Dome*

Ronald Rosbottom, *When Paris Went Dark*

Tony Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe since 1945*

Andrew Roberts, *Napoleon: A Life*

Robert K. Massie, *Catherine the Great: Portrait of a Woman*

Christopher Clark, *The Sleepwalkers: How Europe Went to War in 1914*

William Manchester, *The Arms of Krupp 1587-1968*

Richard Holmes, *The Age of Wonder*

John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War: A New History*

AP Human Geo Recommendations:

Tom Standage, *History of the World in 6 Glasses*

Tim Marshall, *Prisoners of Geography*

Tim Marshall, *The Power of Geography*

Tom Standage, *An Edible History of the World*

Trevor Noah, *Born a Crime*

Jared M. Diamond, *Guns, Germs & Steel*

Ishmael Beah, *A Long Way Gone*

Dierdre Mask, *Address Book*

Personal recommendations for "great reads" from the Social Studies Department:

from Kenny Artigues

Timothy Snyder, *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century* (also the new graphic version)

Daniel Quinn, *Ishmael*

Jostein Gaarder, *Sophie's World*

Michael Pollan, *The Omnivore's Dilemma* (there's also a version for 'young' readers)

from Suzanne Bolles

Eleanor Roosevelt, *The Autobiography of Eleanor Roosevelt*

from Mark Chase

Jonathan Lethem, *Fortress of Solitude*

Marlon James, *A Brief History of Seven Killings*

Steven Levitsky & Daniel Ziblatt, *How Democracies Die*

David Foster Wallace, *Infinite Jest*

from Shanti Steckel Cooper

Jason Mott, *Hell of a Book*

Percival Everett, *James*

Clint Smith, *How the Word is Passed: A Reckoning with the History of Slavery Across America*

Ta-Nehisi Coates, *Between the World and Me*

from Christina Costas

Kristin Hannah, *The Women*

Kate Quinn, *The Diamond Eye*

Mark Sullivan, *All the Glimmering Stars*

from Anne Marie Edenhofner

Art Spiegelman, *Maus 1* and *Maus 2*
Louisa May Alcott, *Little Women*
Laura Ingalls Wilder, *Little House on the Prairie* series
Betty Smith, *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*
John Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath*

from Chris Kurhajetz

Hanif Abdurraqib, *There's Always This Year: On Basketball and Ascension*
James Baldwin, *Collected Essays*
Omar El Akkad, *One Day, Everyone Will Always Have Been Against This*
Alex Haley and Malcolm X, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*

from Andrew Langlois

Yuval Noah Harari, *Sapiens*
Reza Aslan, *Zealot*
Barbara Kingsolver, *Demon Copperhead*
Madeline Miller, *The Song of Achilles*

from Michael Lee

Hampton Sides, *Hellhound on His Trail: The Electrifying Account of the Largest Manhunt in American History.*
Steve Kornacki, *The Red and the Blue: The 1990s and the Birth of Political Tribalism*

from Anna Malmede

Isabel Wilkerson, *The Warmth of Other Suns*, and *Caste*

from Melissa Peduto

Tom Standage, *History of the World in 6 Glasses*
Oliver Sacks, *The Man who Mistook his Wife for a Hat*
Merve Emre, *The Personality Brokers: The Strange History of Meyers-Briggs and the Birth of Personality Testing*

from Melissa Pham

Evan Thomas, *Robert Kennedy: His Life*
V.S. Ramachandran & Sandra Blakeslee, *Phantoms in the Brain: Probing the Mysteries of the Human Mind*

from Scott Spencer

Philip Dwyer, *Napoleon: Path to Power/Citizen Emperor/Passion, Death & Resurrection* (3 volume biography)
Ross King, *Brunelleschi's Dome*
Benny Morris, *1948: A History of the First Arab-Israeli War*

from Adam Weiss

Don Munton & David Welch, *The Cuban Missile Crisis: A Concise History*
Mary Beard, *SPQR: A History of Ancient Rome*
Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*

For those who would like to listen, some podcasts...

America at 250: [Yale History Podcast](#)

Back Story [Episodes | BackStory with the American History Guys](#)

Constitutional (Issues surrounding the Constitution- Washington Post): [Constitutional](#)

Epic History([YouTube](#)): military history

Family Ghosts (family history): [Family Ghosts](#)

The Happiness Lab (psychology of happiness): [The Happiness Lab with Dr. Laurie Santos | Pushkin Industries](#)

Hardcore History (history): [Dan Carlin](#)

Hidden Brain (Psychology) [Hidden Brain : NPR](#)
History Hit with Dan Snow [Dan Snow's History Hit | Podfollow](#)
History on Fire (history): [EPISODE 99](#)
Making Gay History (LGBTQ history) [Making Gay History](#)
In Our Time (history of ideas): [BBC Radio 4 - In Our Time](#)
The Lonely Palette (art history): [The Lonely Palette](#)
The Memory Palace [the memory palace](#)
Ministry of Ideas (history of ideas): [Ministry of Ideas](#)
More Perfect (Supreme Court cases) [More Perfect: Season 4 | WNYC Studios | Podcasts](#)
Presidential (Washington Post) [Presidential on Apple Podcasts](#)
Radiolab (current events & investigative journalism): [Radiolab](#)
Revisionist History (history): [Revisionist History - Malcolm Gladwell Podcast](#)
Revolutions (history): [Revolutions](#)
Slow Burn (in-depth history): <https://slate.com/slow-burn>
Soonish (the future): [Soonish](#)
Stuff You Missed in History Class (history): [Stuff You Missed in History Class | iHeart](#)
30 for 30 (Sports, History & Culture): [30 for 30 Podcasts](#)
The Age of Napoleon: [Age of Napoleon Pod](#)
The Rest is History: [The Rest is History](#)
Throughline (History behind the Headlines) [Throughline : NPR](#)
Tides of History: [Tides of History with Patrick Wyman - Wondery | Premium Podcasts](#)
Who Makes Cents (history of capitalism): [Who Makes Cents](#)
Worklife (organizational psychology): [Podcasts – Adam Grant](#)

Movies & Documentaries - Please explore these lists to find some of the best history-related movies

Documentary collections - [American Experience](#), [Frontline](#)
[Smithsonian Magazine's Best History Movies of the 2010s](#)
Town and Country Magazine - [55 Must-watch Movies Based on True Stories](#)
The Week - [Relive 238 years of American History with these 42 movies](#)
[Fordham University's Internet Sourcebook - Modern History in the Movies](#)
[Vogue - 87 best documentaries of all time](#)
[I Watch Films For A Living - and these Historical Movies are at the top of my list](#)