

## A Level History



### Transition Booklet

1 – Chronology

2 – Causation and Consequence

3 – Significance

4 – Interpretation of sources.

**Please complete all tasks and bring to the opening lesson in September.**

## **PART 1 - Chronology**

During you're a Level course, you examine the development of American history from the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War in 1945, to the election of Ronald Reagan as president in 1980. This is a depth study – and you will be expected to have a good understanding of the whole period. One of the key ways you can assess the events you are going to study is by using a TIMELINE. This will allow you to see the chain of events. Your first transition task is about CHRONOLOGY and the order of events.

### **Step 1**

Find a timeline of American history from 1945 to 1980. Download it and study it. Try and create the timeline on A3 size for ease of study.

### **Step 2**

On your timeline, investigate FOUR EVENTS in more detail. For example, you may choose the assassination of John Kennedy in 1963 or the Journey of Reconciliation of 1947. For each event, write a brief DESCRIPTION of what happened and what the consequences were. Include dates, details of people, specific detail and location.

### **Step 3**

When you have done that, try and make a judgement if the event is a POLITICAL, SOCIAL or ECONOMIC event. Explain why the event was SIGNIFICANT?

Remember – significant can be because it changed history, had impact in a big way, affected many people or was remembered.

### **Challenge**

Can you summarise the strengths and limitations of using timelines as part of your studies. How far are timelines USEFUL for you as an historian.

Add the completed work to your folder.

## **PART 2 – Causation and Consequence.**

Many of your essay answers and investigations in 6<sup>th</sup> Form are based upon the concepts of CAUSATION and CONSEQUENCES – why do events happen, and what are the implications of them? This section is about you addressing these two skills in some research.

### **Step 1**

You need to choose 5 key events from the 9 in the table below. Create a MIND-MAP with the event in the middle, divided into two sections – causes and consequences. These are events you will study in your course.

The Truman Doctrine 1947	The Korean War 1950-53	The Montgomery Bus Boycott 1954-55
The building of the Berlin Wall 1961	The 1965 Voting Rights Act	The Tet Offensive in Vietnam 1968
The Moon Landing of 1969	Watergate and the scandal 1972-74	The incident at Three Mile Island 1979

### **Step 2**

In the causes section, try and categorise why the event happened. Use a coding system and assess whether it was POLITICAL, SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, SHORT-TERM and LONG-TERM. The last two are where you examine things that have been happening for a long time; and also whether there were TRIGGERS for the event happening.

CHALLENGE – Try and make a judgement about the most important CAUSE of the event.

### **Step 3**

In the consequence section, try and categorise the consequences of the event. Again, code and assess the POLITICAL, SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, SHORT-TERM and LONG-TERM. The consequences can also affect countries, organisations and individuals in both a POSITIVE and NEGATIVE manner. Can you also LINK some of the consequences?

CHALLENGE – Try and make a judgement about the most important CONSEQUENCE of the event.

Use this as practice. An event does not 'just happen'. Examine the background in detail. Remember – complete five events.

### **PART 3 – Significance**

As you study the USA between 1945 and 1980, you will examine many key individuals who played a role in shaping the history develop over this period. You will be asked to assess their significance in the period, how did they contribute to the United States? In what ways were their contributions more/less significant than others? Were they a positive or a negative part of the history of the United States? You are expected to make these judgements from a position of knowledge and academic judgement. This section is about you investigating an individual AND making a judgement on their significance to American history between 1945 and 1980.

#### **Step 1**

Chose 5 individuals from the list of 9 below.

Harry Truman	Joseph McCarthy	Emmitt Till
Rosa Parks	Robert MacNamara	Ray Kroc
Gloria Steinem	Lyndon Johnson	Larry Flynt

For each individual write a brief (100 word) summary of who they were and what aspect of American history (social, political or economic) they were involved in.

#### **Step 2**

For each individual you have chosen, please complete the following grid.

In what ways was the individual's actions or ideas remarkable – both at the time and with benefit of hindsight?	Did the actions of the individual create a positive or a negative consequence? Was this seen at the time; and has this perspective altered over time?
What do the actions and ideas of this individual reveal to you about the values, concerns and attitudes of the time period in which they lived?	How was this person viewed by both contemporaries and/or historians? Have views on them changed over time?

The idea of this challenge is to help you understand that individuals in history are constantly being appraised and re-appraised depending on what the attitudes of society. Try and be analytical in your work and do not just describe the individual and their achievements.

## **PART 4 – Interpretation**

A Level will not only require you to study the past, but will also ask you to engage critically with the interpretations of different historians about the past: historiography. You have a list of suggested texts for the American unit; and also some suggested texts for the Year 13 Personal Study. I would like you to choose ONE text and write a short (1-2 side of A4) review that address the questions below.

- 1 – What are the key focus points of the book?
- 2 – What the key arguments of the historian?
- 3 – How does the historian create his argument? Is it convincing to you as a reader?
- 4 – Are there any points that surprise you in the text?
- 5 – What does this text reveal to you about GOOD HISTORICAL WRITING?
- 6 – Is this historian and this text valuable to you? Explain your answer.

All these books are available on Amazon or from the 6<sup>th</sup> Form Library

<u>Specific American texts</u>	<u>General history texts.</u>
1 – The Presidents by Stephen Graubard.	1 – Hope and Glory by Peter Clarke
2 – American Caesars by Nigel Hamilton	2 – The Pursuit of Power: Europe 1815-1914 by Richard Evans.
3 – Empire of Liberty by David Reynolds	3 – The Pity of War by Niall Ferguson.
4 – The Penguin History of the USA by Hugh Brogan	4 – The History of Modern Britain by Andrew Marr
	5 – Sapiens by Yuval Noah Harari
	6 – A short History of England by Simon Jenkins
	7 – The Holocaust by Laurence Rees
	8 – The reign of Henry VIII by David Starkey
	9 – Ages of Extremes by Eric Hobsbawn
	10 – Roller Coaster – Europe since 1950 by Iain Kershaw

Remember that reading is crucial to A Level study