

AP U.S. History  
Summer Assignment

Welcome to AP U.S. History! This coming academic year proves to be an exciting one as you undertake an in-depth journey through United States History. Throughout the course, you will fine tune your writing skills, develop an increased knowledge of American History, and analyze history in regards to themes, morals, continuity, and change. It will certainly be a challenge, but we are confident that you will face it with resounding success.

As with any AP class in the humanities, there is a summer reading and writing assignment which serves a two-fold purpose. First, it allows for reading continuity. You need to continuously develop your reading comprehension skills, especially in history, and summer time provides a great opportunity for this. Second, it provides more time for the development of your writing and analytical skills which are essential to any success in an AP course. Therefore, the assignment should be approached with determination and, hopefully, some enthusiasm.

The assignment for this summer is to read ***Unbroken* by Laura Hillenbrand. (ISBN-13: 9780812974492)** As you are reading, pay attention to the amount of history which is included. The author does a good job blending history with narrative allowing for a page-turning novel. We would suggest reading thirty to forty pages per day. This would allow you to finish the book in ten to fifteen days. As you are reading, make annotations with a pen or highlighter. This will help you as you complete the accompanying writing assignment and allow you to contribute to a group discussion.

Writing Assignment:

Following MLA format, answer the following questions. Your responses should be typed, double spaced, and in 12 pt. font. You do not need to retype the questions on your paper.

1. In at least three, but no more than five, paragraphs, analyze Louis Zamperini. What type of person was he? What enabled him to survive the plane crash and the POW camps in Japan? What was his wartime journey and how did he display the courage and resilience that have helped so many Americans throughout difficult times in History? Please provide specific examples from the book.
2. In three paragraphs, analyze the depictions of the Americans and the Japanese throughout the book. In doing so, think about this question: “what accounts for mankind’s capacity for cruelty during times of war even among highly cultured societies like the United States and Japan?” Please provide specific examples from the book.
3. Finally, choose one specific passage from the book which stood out most to you and provide a short paragraph explaining why. Please quote the passage and page number before you begin your response.

Be ready to turn your assignment in on the first day of class. In total this assignment should come out to no more than three pages. Indeed, it could be completed in two. Overall, this assignment could be completed in two weeks!

We are very excited that all of you have chosen to partake in the journey that is AP U.S. History. Even if you are not a “history buff” or planning a career in history or the humanities, you will find that this course will help your reading, writing, analytical, and synthesizing skills.

Have a great summer break!  
*Mr. S. Schmidt*  
AP US History Teacher