

AP United States History Summer 2017 Assignment: A Critical Analysis of *The Radicalism of the American Revolution*

Welcome to AP US History and your Summer Assignment. ☺ As you know, AP US History is a rigorous course. You are expected to read and perform at a college-level throughout this course and your assignment, an analysis of Gordon S. Wood's *The Radicalism of the American Revolution*, will introduce you to these expectations.

Using this Pulitzer-Prize winning work, you will practice historical thinking skills; namely, analyzing, interpreting, and evaluating primary and secondary sources. In addition, this assignment should provide a foundational understanding of the ideas that inspired early Americans and have continually shaped the politics, culture, and society of the nation.

This assignment will take time to complete and is meant to be completed as you read the book. Do not wait until the last minute to start. Pace yourself and complete the assignment step-by-step. You may handwrite or type the assignment. If the assignment is handwritten, it must be legible. A notebook may be a good way to organize your assignment. All writing should be grammatically correct. Please use complete sentences and proper paragraph structures in your writing. While you do not have to use a formal citation method in this analysis, this is a book analysis, so you do need to cite and refer to the text-- often.

Assignment: READ CAREFULLY AND THOROUGHLY

1. Purchase Gordon S. Wood's *The Radicalism of the American Revolution*. This book has been around since 1991, so there are many inexpensive copies available through companies like Amazon. You may want to buy a hard copy so that you can easily annotate as you read. Do this right away!
2. Introduction—Read the introduction to the book. Identify the author's thesis and summarize the arguments he will use to prove his thesis. (one to three paragraphs)
3. Choose FIVE chapters and complete the following tasks. The chapter do not have to be in consecutive order. Please be sure to indicate which chapter you are discussing in your answers.
 - a. Explain, analyze and evaluate how the chapter supports the author's thesis. *Does the evidence support the book's thesis?* (one to two paragraphs)
 - b. Explain how the author uses primary sources to support his claim. Analyze the effectiveness of this. *How do the primary sources' points of view, formats, intended audiences, or contexts add to its usefulness and reliability in supporting the author's thesis?* (one to two paragraphs)
 - c. Identify and define, in your own words, at least seven terms/people/events/works you needed to look up in order to understand the chapter. If you don't need to (you will), identify seven terms you think your peers would need to identify. There will be words that will be used differently than what you are used to hearing (republicanism, conservative, radical, etc.). Don't assume that you know all meanings for all words. If a word is not making sense, look it up. (This can be a bulleted/numbered list.)

4. Consider the chapters you read. Briefly analyze and evaluate how well the author supported his thesis throughout the work. *Was he convincing? Where there holes in his argument? Was he logical? Etc.* (three paragraphs)

5. Listed below are a few of the learning objectives you will be expected to master during the AP US History course. Using Gordon Wood's book as a reference, answer **one or two** of the following questions. Your response should be a total of three to five paragraphs in length and should be written properly. You should have an insightful thesis and it should be well-supported with evidence from the text. (three to five paragraphs)

Number four should be completed once you've completed your chapter readings; however, it is a good idea to keep these questions in mind as you read and analyze the book. This will enable you to find and plan for the question that will work best for you.

- Explain how ideas about democracy, freedom, and individualism found expression in the development of cultural values, political institutions, and American identity
- Explain how interpretations of the Constitution and debates over rights, liberties, and definitions of citizenship have affected American values, politics, and society.
- Analyze relationships among different regional, social, ethnic, and racial groups, and explain how these groups' experiences have related to U.S. national identity
- Explain how different beliefs about the federal government's role in U.S. social and economic life have affected political debates and policies
- Explain how and why political ideas, beliefs, institutions, party systems, and alignments have developed and changed.
- Explain how artistic, philosophical, and scientific ideas have developed and shaped society and institutions.
- Explain how different group identities, including racial, ethnic, class, and regional identities, have emerged and changed over time.

Once again, please pace yourself so that you do not become frustrated. This assignment is meant to introduce you to the types of assignments and thinking we will do all year. Let this assignment show how capable you really are. As an AP student, you are expected to give your best efforts on all assignments. This assignment should be completed before the first day of school.