

## AP US History Summer Assignment 2019

Your summer assignment consists of 2 parts.

**The first** is to familiarize yourself with the Cornell note taking and studying system. This will be on my website. This is the method that we will use to take notes during the course of the class. It is somewhat different than what you are used to using, but many have found this system helpful in retaining the material. We will go over all of this again once class begins.

**The second** is to read the monograph *A Fierce Discontent: The Rise and Fall of the Progressive Movement in America* by Michael McGerr. After you do that, please **write a 2 page minimum, double-spaced paper**, and **submit it through turnitin.com** on my website, [aburgamy4jma.weebly.com](http://aburgamy4jma.weebly.com). **Instructions for how to do this will be on my website. This is due by the FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL!** Late assignments will lose 10 points for each day that they're late. This counts as your very first daily grade!

We are going to read and write a lot in this class in preparation for the AP exam in May. You will see excerpts from newspapers, magazines, etc on the AP exam and our tests throughout the year that deal with topics and writings like the ones that will be found in your summer reading. College Board loves the Progressive Era and Gilded Age, so you will see a fair amount of this material again.

- Double space your paper. Size 11 or 12 font, in a NORMAL font, such as Arial, Calibri, Times New Roman, etc. Margins should be set at one inch. Please use good grammar, punctuation, avoid passive voice where possible, no contractions, etc. This is a formal essay, so please treat it as such! Turnitin.com will detect any plagiarism and will automatically generate a word count, so please don't try tricks such as enlarging the period size to get to 2 pages. You are all good students, so I know you're capable of great work! <http://www.hemingwayapp.com/> is a good website to use to help you identify and clear up issues with writing. <https://www.grammarly.com/> is another one.
- Remember to first have your name, date, etc, in the upper left corner like this:

Amazing Student (Insert Your Name)

August 15, 2019 (<-- **This is the Date Your Paper is Due - BY THE BEGINNING OF CLASS, ONLINE, NOT A HARD COPY**)

AP US History (Keep This)

Mrs. Burgamy (Also Keep This)

- Include a centered title underneath that. It doesn't have to be bolded, italicized, underlined, but if you use the book's title in your paper's title, it MUST be italicized, or you're going to lose points.
- Remember to indent each new paragraph; don't just skip lines.
- Finally, you don't have to use direct quotes, but you are welcome to if you so desire. If you need to cite a passage that you're quoting, please do it like this: "arrived in Philadelphia" (p 15).
- I will be quite fair since this is your first writing assignment, but don't mistake my kindness for weakness in grading. If you don't put in the work, I can tell, and your grade will reflect that. This writing assignment gives us a great baseline to work from in improving your historical writing for the AP exam. Historians love to write. It's what we do - research and write our interpretations on what we find, and WE LIKE IT. So that's why there's a lot of inferring from various sources and writing on the AP exam.

Okay, here's how to get started with the writing portion:

1<sup>st</sup>, summarize your book by:

1. Identifying the title and author of the book, including the publisher & the publication date.
2. Describe what the book is about.

**Example:** *In Nothing Like It in the World (Simon and Schuster, 2000), Stephen Ambrose describes the process of building the first transcontinental railroad in the United States of America. He discusses the technologies of the day, the difficulties of getting funding, and the role of immigrant groups in getting the railroad completed. Trains were a major component of both United States industry and a lifeline for those who immigrated to the American West.*

2<sup>nd</sup>, tell what the author is saying; his or her main point, their reason for writing the book, or his or her thesis.

**Example:** *Ambrose [remember, always call an author by his/her LAST name; we're not on a first-name basis with any of these people! That and it's just what we expect in formal essays] argues that the transcontinental railroad played a large role in the development of the American West.*

Note: An author's goal, reason for writing, or thesis typically appears in a book's "Introduction" or "Preface." Sometimes, though not usually, it is found at the end of the book.

3<sup>rd</sup>, describe how an author supports his or her thesis, reason for writing the book, or how well they drive home their main point/purpose for writing.

1. Has the author accomplished his or her goals? How?
2. Has the author logically supported their thesis or reason for writing the book? How?
3. Is the evidence that they give reasonable and sensible for supporting what they are trying to say?

Note: You can get more creative with your responses than "The author accomplished his goal of telling us why the transcontinental railroad was important. He accomplished this by research and writing. The author supported their thesis by giving some examples."

**Example:** *"Stephen Ambrose is a well-respected historian and author of American History." [Then describe his career, primary source materials he may have used in the back of the book to support his opinions; see how well-researched he was and what he used to prove certain points.] "These financial records proved just how costly iron was to obtain." OR "Cottonwood trees are notorious for being full of water, but not many other species grew close to the Great Plains that the railroad was being built through; in fact, most vegetation there was grassland" OR "Maps of the time show the four different routes that the railroad potentially may have taken. Ambrose uses these to show why this one works, and these three didn't. This one worked because...."*

4<sup>th</sup>, you get to write YOUR opinion of the book, but remember, keep it formal, not like a sloppy Amazon book review or a 2<sup>nd</sup> grade paragraph response to a book such as *Iguanas* (no offense to 2<sup>nd</sup> graders; I would be thrilled with this if I were a 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teacher): "I like iguanas. So I read a book about iguanas. Iguanas are great. They are reptiles and need a special aquarium tank with a warm light. This book tells you everything you need to know about iguanas." No, we've moved beyond that! We're now inferring ideas from the book about the author's intent, reasoning, fair treatment of the subject; basically now we're critically and objectively thinking. Yay high school!

**Example:** *Nothing Like It in the World is an exhaustively researched book that will enhance any reader's understanding of 1870s America. It covers topics including*

*geography, climate, engineering issues, and immigration. While occasionally bogged down in numbers, Ambrose is masterful at covering everything related to his topic so that the reader gains a complete understanding of the issues surrounding the building of the transcontinental railroad. If a person desires further understanding of post-American Civil War technology and advancement into the American West, Nothing Like It in the World will help them attain that knowledge.*

Good luck! Have a fantastic summer! If you have any questions, you can email me at [aburgamy@johnmilledge.org](mailto:aburgamy@johnmilledge.org) and I will generally respond within 24 hours. Please don't wait until the last minute to do this assignment! If you pace yourself over the summer, we will all be happier with the outcome.