

8th Grade US History & Civics

Room# 726A | efdesousa@wrschool.net
Mr. Flores, Teacher | 928-729-6811 x6882



WELCOME BACK TO SCHOOL!

Dear Future Leaders and Changemakers,

Welcome to **U.S. History & Civics**—where we don't just study the past, we learn how to shape the future! This year, we'll uncover the dramatic story of America: from the fight for independence to the battle for civil rights. You'll analyze the Constitution, debate landmark Supreme Court cases and discover how ordinary people, like you, changed history. Whether we're dissecting the Revolution, examining the Civil War's legacy, or connecting Reconstruction to modern voting rights, this class is your toolkit to understand *and* improve the world around you. Let's make this year meaningful, eye-opening, and full of hard questions. Your voice matters here, let's get started!

— Mr. Flores

What Is US History? And why study US History?

U.S. History examines the people, events, and ideas that shaped America—from revolutionary ideals to civil rights struggles—while Civics explores how our government works and how citizens can participate. Together, we'll analyze founding documents, pivotal conflicts, and social movements to understand how America's past influences our lives today.

Why Study U.S. History & Civics?

1. **Know Your Rights** – Learn how the Constitution, laws, and amendments (like the 15th) protect freedoms—and how citizens can shape them.
2. **Critical Thinking** – Evaluate historical decisions (e.g., slavery compromises) to make informed choices about modern issues.

3. **See Diverse Perspectives** – Study Indigenous, immigrant, and marginalized voices often left out of traditional narratives.
4. **Become an Active Citizen** – Gain skills to vote, debate, and advocate responsibly in a democracy.

Curriculum

- **My World Interactive: American History**
- **An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States**
- **OER Project: Big History**
- **Crash Course: US History**
- **Crash Course: Government**
- **Crash Course: Native American History**

Class Progression

Quarter 1: Revolution & Founding (1763–1789)

- Enlightenment ideas (Locke, Montesquieu)
- Causes of Revolution (taxes, Boston Massacre)
- Declaration of Independence analysis

Quarter 2: Early Republic & Expansion (1789–1848)

- Washington's presidency, Jeffersonian democracy, Louisiana Purchase, Lewis & Clark (Indigenous perspectives)
- Jacksonian Era (Trail of Tears, suffrage expansion)

Quarter 3: Division & Civil War (1848–1865)

- Slavery debates (Compromises, Dred Scott)
- Sectionalism (Lincoln-Douglas debates)

Quarter 4: Reconstruction & Rights (1865–1877)

- 13th–15th Amendments (limitations & backlash)
- Freedmen’s Bureau, sharecropping

Grading Policy

***It is the student’s responsibility to email me or access the teacher web page for Classroom assignments for missed work**

1. Late Work:
 - Accepted until the end of the current unit, but -10% per day deducted.
 - No exceptions after the unit test/closure date.
2. Homework:
 - Due when class begins—late submissions (even on the same day) follow the late-work policy.
3. Cheating/Plagiarism:
 - Zero on the assignment + disciplinary referral. No rewrites or appeals
4. Readings & Quizzes:
 - Readings are required and checked via quizzes, annotations, or cold calling.
 - No quiz retakes for unexcused absences or unpreparedness.
5. Absences*:
 - 1 extra day per excused absence to submit work (per school policy).
 - Unexcused absences = no makeup rights.

Behavior Expectations

This classroom is a place of TRUST and MUTUAL RESPECT. I expect a lot of participation and discussion from each of you, but you must respect each other’s opinions. There will be no verbal outbursts in class.

1. Be present and on time
2. Be prepared
3. Be respectful
4. Be responsible
5. Be Helpful

Simply put, the class rules are to come to class on time, prepared to learn, prepared to participate, and prepared to respect yourselves, your classmates, and your teachers. When in doubt, ask. The policies and procedures adhered to by the school community, as detailed in the handbook, will be the overarching guide to the consequences of choices made in this classroom regarding attendance, phones, food in class, etc.

Who is Mr. Flores?

Mr. Flores is a dedicated social studies educator with a Master's in Curriculum & Instruction and a Bachelor's in History. His teaching experience spans middle and high school, specializing in World History, U.S. History, and Civics with an emphasis on Indigenous perspectives and primary source-based learning. He has a proven track record of student success, including high proficiency rates on standardized EOC exams, and has developed district-wide curricula aligned to state standards. Beyond the classroom, Eric has served as a coach, mentor, and committee leader, drawing on his military background and multilingual skills (English, Spanish, Portuguese) to foster inclusive, structured, and engaging learning environments. His approach emphasizes critical thinking, differentiated instruction, and real-world connections to help all students achieve their potential.

Mr. Flores Class Syllabus (Receipt)

Student Name: _____ Student Signature: _____

Period: _____ Date: _____ Parent Phone: _____

Parent Name: _____ Parent Signature: _____