United States History I Research Paper Assignment

Beginning with the New World “discovery” by Columbus, we have discussed the ample economic, political, religious and social changes within the newly developing United States. For your research paper, you may choose a significant moment or event from the discovery of the colonies through Westward Expansion.

Your research must ultimately address the following:

Justify what was one of the most defining moments or eras in early American history.

The Process

STEP 1: Pick a topic!

1. You get to choose a topic from the United States History I curriculum. I suggest you choose something that you are interested in; however, you should also make sure there will be enough information to write a 3-5 page paper. Here are your topic options:

- American Revolution
- Louisiana Purchase
- Ratification of the Constitution
- Abolition movement or Women’s movement
- Civil War
- George Washington’s Presidency

STEP 2: Research

1. You will create a Noodletools account to guide your research. Once you start researching, be sure to add it to a notecard and save the source.

2. You should be developing your thesis statement very early in your research process. By researching, you can determine what three pieces of evidence support your thesis statement. Having these three pieces of evidence can then guide the rest of your research.

3. Take notes from at least FOUR sources -- one source must be a book and one source must be a primary source. Wikipedia does NOT count as a source! Sources must be academic. Please ask if you’re concerned about the reliability of the source. Make sure when you are completing your notecards, you’re always writing down your source so you don’t forget it!

STEP 2 ½ : Thesis Statement

1. Your thesis statement should directly address the prompt and include three pieces of evidence to support your argument.

Your thesis may look like this:
(Insert your topic here) is the most defining moment in American history because ______, ______, ______.

STEP 3: Notecards

1. While you research, you should be making notecards on the important information. The more thoughtful your information is in your notecards, the easier it will be to complete your research paper.

2. You are required to have at least 30 notecards in Noodletools.
**STEP 4: Outline**

1. After your notecards are complete, you will need to create an outline. On Noodletools, there is an outline feature that can be created by dragging your notecards. I will show examples of this closer to the due date.

**STEP 5: Rough Draft**

1. After your outline is complete, you will begin with a rough draft of your paper. Your body paragraphs should put forth three strong arguments that support your thesis. **Your research paper should be 3-5 pages.**

2. Your research paper must be turned in by hard copy only. If you are absent the day it is due, you MUST share it with me by the due date, then bring a printed copy upon your return.

3. We will complete editing in class.

4. You must also have a teacher edit your rough draft. I am more than happy to edit your paper, but be sure to schedule a time with me. The Writing Center is also an excellent resource, however, make sure you show them your assignment so they have it to reference. Please have the teacher sign your rough draft. Your rough draft will be turned in with your final draft.

4. Do not use weak words: Good, bad, clearly, a lot, thing, stuff, and “this quotation shows” Your paper will be contraction free! NO “can’t,” “don’t,” “won’t,” etc. You must write out the words! There will also be no “I,” “we,” “us.” You are proving a point with evidence, not with opinion.

**STEP 6: Works Cited**

1. Complete a rough draft of your Works Cited page in MLA format. In Noodletools, there is a feature that can help you complete the Works Cited page.

2. Your paper will not be accepted without a Works Cited page and will be marked late for each day that there is not one attached.

**STEP 7: Final Draft**

1. I am seeking quality not quantity. Read, re-read, revise. I will use the rubric given to you in advance to assess your final draft. All papers must follow MLA format. Plagiarism will result in a failing grade and severe consequences.

3. Your paper will **NOT** be accepted via email. You must hand in a hard copy on the due date. It will be considered late until a printed copy is in my hand. Your edited rough draft must also be attached. If you’re absent the day it is due, you MUST share it with me by the due date, then bring in the hard copy upon your return to school.
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<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Submitting assignment</th>
<th>Due date</th>
<th>Points</th>
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**Assignment will not be accepted late**

**One letter grade off each day it is late**

**TOTAL POINTS: 223**