Course Objective:
In this class we will be learning about revolutionaries and revolutions. We will focus on America’s founding and how the carefully constructed constitution comes into play hundreds of years later in the Civil Rights Movement. We will also see how these ideas play roles in Socialism and Communism as well as the Cold War.
As we finish the fall semester, we will study the unification of the thirteen colonies into a new nation. We will place particular emphasis on the period between 1763 and 1789 when leaders including John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin and George Washington defied British authority, declared independence and worked to establish a new U.S. Constitution.
In the spring semester, we will apply our knowledge about the freedoms intended by the founders to the civil rights movement in the mid 20th century and the efforts of black leaders spanning from W.E.B Dubois to Martin Luther King Jr. As a class we will discuss how the civil rights movement embodied the ideals of freedom and equality as outlined by the founding fathers and the constitution. Next, we will evaluate how a new perspective on freedom and equality gave rise to socialism and communism as led by Karl Max and Vladimir Lenin. As a class we will discuss the contrast of socialism and communism to the republican principles our founding fathers intended. Finally, we will study the clash of world views leading up to and resulting from the post WWII period of the Cold War.

Class Layout: By using mostly primary sources written during the time periods we study, the class will learn how to engage with the point of view and sentiment of the time to enter into a discussion about history. You will learn how to read historical documents for content, discuss historical concepts and causes, and write coherently and succinctly about history by citing primary sources. The majority of class time will be spent deciphering primary sources in discussion to help us understand, as a class, the sentiment and zeitgeist of the period. Students will be encouraged to internalize the order of events and contributing factors and causes rather than memorize dates.
Grading:
Your grade in this class is determined as follows. If you have any question about your grade at any time, please come see me or send me an email.

Class Participation: 25%
Since this class is discussion based, you are expected to be an active participant. In order to do so, you must complete the reading before hand and come to class on time with homework that has been marked up with your notations. Even in discussion, unless I indicate otherwise, raise your hand and wait patiently to be called upon. Do not taunt or disrespect other students. Take notes, contribute to group work, ask questions and take responsibility for seeking help if you are absent or feel confused. Disciplinary warnings will result in docked participation, pink slip referrals will result in a participation grade of zero for the day.

Respect: While all of Renaissance Public Academy’s Pillars of Character will be upheld in this class, the Pillar of Respect is paramount in my class.

Respect your teacher. Come to class prepared, on time and with assignments completed. Raise your hand and wait to be called upon. Participate.
Respect classmates: Distractions, taunting or interruptions interfere with the learning of others and will not be tolerated.
Respect your school: Be in dress code at all times. Do your own work.

Cheating: Any instance of cheating or plagiarism will be met with zero tolerance and result in disciplinary action as well as a grade of zero on the assignment.

Absences: If you are absent, you are responsible for getting notes from a classmate, approaching me for missed assignments and making sure to not fall behind. You will have two days from your return to school to make up a missed assignment. If the assignment is not handed in within two days, you will receive a zero for that assignment.

If you are sick on the day of a test, you are responsible for meeting with me and scheduling a make-up test within five days of your return to school. Test corrections on the make-up test will be due the day after you receive the graded test back. If you do not take the test within those five days, you will receive a zero on the test and no chance of test corrections.

Writing Assignments: 30 %
The ability to write clearly and concisely is a skill that will serve you in this class and throughout your life. To help you hone your critical writing skills, a large part of your grade in this class will be based off of short essays that you write on the material we are covering in class. Again, this class is not intended to be a memorization of dates, names and places. Instead, these assignments will challenge you to interpret and explain historical events in your own words and prove your understanding of the time period we are studying. Some writing assignments will be done within class and due at the end of the period while some will be sent home as homework to be handed in by a set due date.

**Quizzes: 15%**

To reward you for keeping astride of our material and class discussions, you will have review quizzes scheduled in advance. The quizzes will begin at the beginning of class time on the scheduled day and take between five and fifteen minutes. Quizzes will consist of a timeline, short sentences and potentially multiple choice questions. If you keep up with the reading and maintain a pulse during class, the quizzes should only help your grade. However, it never hurts to look over your notes the night before a quiz. Since geography plays a constant role in history, there will be a geography quiz as necessary. Unless indicated, geography quizzes will be separate from the review quizzes and you will be expected to fill in the blanks of a map. You will receive a map to study from in advance. Geography quizzes will be worth twice the value of a review quiz.

**Tests: 30%**

After we complete a unit, there will be a test. Typically, the test format will consist of a timeline, definitions, short answer questions and your choice of essay questions. Before the test, you will be assigned the task of creating a study guide as homework. You will be required to bring this study guide to the in-class review period the day before the test. Keep all of your notes, readings and quizzes to help you prepare for the test.

Test corrections will be available to students who received failing grades with the possibility of earning back partial credit. In certain instances, test corrections will be required. However, test corrections must be turned in by the specified due date for credit.

**Media:** History is often seen by students (and some adults) as being dull and disconnected from our modern experience. As your teacher, my goal is completely turn this misconception on its head by making history dynamic, relatable and tangible. One of the ways I intend to ignite a passion for the historical narrative is by incorporating as much media as possible into our curriculum and daily lessons. Our classroom lectures and discussions will be supplemented with archival video, relevant music and audio selections, documentary films and a wealth of visuals. Students will receive a media permission form that must be signed by a parent or guardian and returned for credit. Parents and guardians will be notified over email in advance of any media that may be considered borderline or require further discussion. Please see the media permission slip for more details.
Sensitive Topics: It is my honor and responsibility to guide my students through some difficult, brutal, and heart-wrenching periods of history. In the time I’ve spent teaching, I have been impressed and humbled by the ability of my students to give these subjects the gravitas they deserve. Whether we are dealing with the horrors of the Holocaust or the brutality of slavery and racism, we will broach these subjects in a mature, respectful discussion. As we approach more difficult topics, parents/guardians will be alerted to the upcoming subject matter via email and will be encouraged to participate in furthering the conversation with their students.

Check-ins: Once a week, you will be scheduled to visit me during study hall for a brief check-in as a part of your participation grade. It’s just a chance for us to chat about how class is going, your participation grade and give mutual feedback. I want to know how well the class is working for you. Again, my only goal is your success.

Class Schedule:

What follows is a tentative list of topics for the remainder of the school year. At the completion of every unit, there will be a test. Geography quizzes will occur near the middle of the unit. Adjustments will be made at my digression in relation to how quickly the class internalizes the subject matter.

Unit 1: Before the Colonies: Great Britain
   - Review: How to Read and Write History
   - The Magna Carta and the foundations of constitutional ideals
   - British Monarchy and Imperialism
   - The

Unit 1: American Revolution and Independence
   - Review: America’s Unique Attributes
     - Philosophy, Political Development, Demography, Economics, Religion
   - Geography: The Colonies
   - Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Paine (“Common Sense”) and Thomas Jefferson (Declaration of Independence), Edmund Burke
   - Mayflower Compact (1620)
   - Fundamental Orders of Connecticut (1639)
   - James Otis, The Rights of British Colonies Asserted and Proved (1764)
   - The Stamp Act and Townsend Acts
   - Declaration and Resolves of the First Continental Congress (October 14th, 1774)
• Self Government, Colonial Wars and Independence
• The Declaration of Independence

Unit 2: Constitution, Ratification and the Waiting Game
• Philadelphia Convention and The Virginia Plan
• Madison-Sherman Exchange
• The Connecticut Compromise
• Six Stages of Ratification

Unit 3: The Federalist Papers (1787-1789)
• The Anonymous Founding Fathers
• Federalist 1: The Challenge
• Federalist 2-14: “The Utility of the Union”
• Federalist 15-33: The “Insufficiency” of the Articles of Confederation
• Federalist 23-36: The Minimum Energetic Government Requirement
• Federalist 37-51: The Great Difficulty of Founding
• Federalist 52-84: The True Principles of Republican Government
• Post 1791 Amendments/Challenges facing Constitution
• Discussion: Avoiding The Lord of the Flies.

Unit 4: Interpreting and Amending the Constitution
• Vices of the Political System of the United States (April 1787)
• The Virginia and New Jersey Plans (1787)
• Constitution of the United States of America (1787)
• Thomas Jefferson, Letter to James Madison on the Constitution (December 20, 1787)
• Debate in the Virginia Ratifying Convention (June 4th and 5th, 1788)
• Federalist No. 10, 15, 45 & 47
• The Address and Reasons of Dissent of the Minority of the Convention of the State of Pennsylvania to Their Constituents
• Northwest Ordinance (1787)
• Marbury v. Madison (1803)
• Martin v. Hunter’s Lesse
• Washington’s Farewell Address
• Post 1971 Constitutional Amendments

Second Semester: The Civil Rights Movement, Socialism/Communism and Cold War

Unit 5:
• Roots of the Civil Rights Movement
• Review: History of Slavery in America
o Establishment of Slavery
o American Revolution Ideas on Slavery
o Constitution and Slavery

• Lincoln, Fredrick Douglas, the Civil War and Reconstruction.
• Late 19th Century Changes
  o Constitution
  o Darwinism/Progressivism
  o Key Figures: Booker T. Washington/ W.E.B. Dubois
• Early 20th Century Changes in Attitude
  o African Americans Returning from WWI
  o “To Kill a Mockingbird”
• Establishing the Civil Rights Movement
  o Post WWII “Walls of Segregation Begin to Crack”
  o Martin Luther King Jr.
  o White Resistance
  o Confrontations (Legal and Political)
• Splintering of the Movement
  o Rejection of Passive Resistance. (Slow vs. Quick Change)
  o Rosa Parks Vs. Malcolm X
• The Legacy of the Movement

Unit 6: Socialism/Communism
• Communist Theory and Program
• Leninism
• Stalin and After
• Reception in the West
• The Third World
• Looking Back

Unit 7: Cold War
• Origins of Cold War (1945-1950)
• The Global Confrontation (1950-1960)
• Crisis and Conflict (1961-1969)
• Era of Détente (1969-1979)
• The Renewal of the Cold War (1979 – 1985)
• End of the Cold War (1985 – 1991)
Acknowledgement of Syllabus

Student name: ___________________________

I have read and understood the course requirements for 8th Grade History. I am fully aware of the necessity of preparation each and every school night to be capable of participating fully in class, passing quizzes and tests and mastering the subject. I understand that I must bring all materials to class in order to participate and forgotten homework will receive zero credit unless brought in the following day for half credit. I accept full responsibility for writing down homework assignments in my planner as they are assigned in class. I will do all my own work and not accept help from classmates unless specifically instructed to do so by Ms. Dubler. I understand that cheating, even on homework, has very serious consequences.

_____________________________________________(Student’s Signature)
I have read the course requirements for 8th Grade History. I am fully aware of my daughter’s/son’s need for preparation each and every school night to be capable of engaging in discussion, passing quizzes and test and mastering the subject. If I have any questions for Ms. Dubler, I will feel free to contact her via email and/or check the homework and lesson listings on RenWeb.

_________________________________ (Parent’s/Guardian Signature)