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Sample section from Introduction

Introduction

As Christian parents, our goal is to instill in our children and students an honest and Biblical perspective of overall history. This curriculum was designed to guide students in exploring our nation’s history from a Christian perspective without distorting the true character of the people included or the events which occurred. Over time, many academic renditions of our history, whether in text format or general non-fiction, have presented a skewed version of our country’s heritage, deleting God’s omnipotent role as the one true founder of the United States of America. Our goal is to present history using many **primary and secondary sources** (find out more about primary and secondary sources from the explanation on page 18), gleaned as much truth as possible and truly revealing this country as “One Nation Under God,” as our founding fathers originally planned.

Additionally, we find that using whole books greatly enhances the quality of a student’s grasp of history, so as with most of our curricula, this course utilizes whole books. This also improves a student’s reading skills and provides an abundance of opportunities for integrating writing, verbal skills, higher level thinking and projects. In order to use whole books and allow time for all of the previously mentioned learning opportunities, we have divided American History into two courses: *American History I (Colonization through the Civil War)* and *American History II (Immigration through Modern)*.

Due to the writing requirements for both courses, all students should complete the Train up a Child Publishing *Essays Styles for High School* course (visit www.trainupachildpub.com for more information) or a comparable course prior to or concurrently with *American History I*. If a student attempts this course without previous essay writing instruction, he may find the essay assignments overly challenging.

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How We Chose Books

As with all Train up a Child Publishing courses and curricula, we have personally read and evaluated each of the books. We struggled to narrow down the books for this course, but those chosen were selected based on the following criteria:

- *Authenticity of the source(s)*
- *Authors' qualifications*
- *Readability for most home school high school students*
- *Accessibility for parents and students*
- *Available options for writing assignments and other projects*
- *Overall content.*

Our Goals for Your Student

Our goals for the students who utilize Train up a Child Publishing history curricula include:

- A greater love for reading and history
- The capacity to comprehend the significance of historical people and events
- Enhanced knowledge of our nation's chronological history
- Increased skills related to researching, organizing, writing and editing
- Improved oral narration and verbal skills
- Overall confidence in reading and understanding historical works.

Course Features

As with all of our high school curricula, we have included distinctive and helpful components for both the student and the teacher. Some valuable highlights of this particular curriculum include:

- Ongoing assignments throughout the course including timeline, geography and mini-research topics.
- Assignment units divided by quarters or nine week periods, including booklists with reading levels, goals and objectives, time period overviews and step by step instructions for completing and evaluating each assignment.
- Detailed instructions offering a wide variety of activities and writing assignments directly related to the history reading and time period.
- Evaluation directions, rubric usage and recommendations for the teacher.
- The opportunity to utilize the course for Honors credit.
- Appendices are also included containing helpful tools such as:
 - Grading rubrics predesigned for all major assignments and instructions on how to calculate rubric grades
 - Timeline templates
 - List of mini-research topics organized by time period

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- Graphic Organizers and other tools
- Ideas for creating maps based on specific time periods
- General comprehension/discussion questions
- Grading keys for selected assignments
- Instructions for using Microsoft WORD's editing tools to grade your student's papers (located at the end of Appendix H)


As well as lessons and reading assignments, we have included historical overviews and evaluation guidelines designed to assist teachers with content and grading without adding the burden of you needing to read each book thoroughly. However, you may certainly desire to go even deeper into the content. If you should choose to further explore the materials using the Internet, we strongly warn you against assuming that web material is accurate. History and historical timelines are often distorted by well-meaning researchers. You should also be aware that a person's worldview and academic training, whether Christian or otherwise, directly affects that person's rendition of history. All of history begins with Creation, as noted in the Bible. If an academic researcher doesn't believe that, then his view of all history, including American, will be misdirected. American history is not an entity, alone in its standing. It must correlate with Biblical history to be true, as many of our founding fathers believed from the beginning of our colonization. As well, warn your student not to use a single encyclopedic site, such as Wikipedia, as his main research resource. Many of these sites are outdated or include incorrect and unverified information. As well, college professors expect to see more diligent research so your student would do well to get into the habit now.

The selections for this course are listed at the beginning of each quarter including author and ISBN. The appropriate edition of each may be ordered at www.trainupachildpub.com on the *Books!* page, including books for the Honors option. There may be some confusion with assignments and reading directions if a student is using editions different than the ones used to create this course.

Sample of Teacher's Notes

Understanding the Units

Each of the American History units covers one quarter (or nine weeks) of the school year. We chose this design to best execute assignments and related skills. The student will need to read more than one book at a time in order to complete American History I or II in a single year. The assignments may be chosen by the teacher and student, but note the abbreviations listed before each numbered assignment to determine when an assignment is best completed.

The abbreviation key is: **OG** – Ongoing, meaning that the assignment will be worked on throughout the unit or the year and completed by the end of the unit or the course; **PR** – Prior to Reading, **AR** – As you Read and **FR** – Following Reading. Pay particular attention to who is to read each section, as some sections are written to the teacher, some are to be read by both the teacher and the student, and some are written directly to the student. For clarity, the sections written directly to the student will be indicated throughout the curriculum by a light bulb  at the beginning of the section.

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Particularly in the evaluation sections, directions are often repeated, but they may vary by a few significant words and therefore, should still be read carefully. In fact, we strongly suggest that teachers adequately prepare to teach each unit by first reading it through several times.

Beginning of First Unit

First Quarter

Colonial America

Book List:

We recommend using the following books for the first three weeks:

1. *Everyday Life in Early America* by David Hawke - ISBN 0060912510

- Reading level: Less challenging, high interest and easy readability
- Amount of reading: 4-5 chapters per week

2. *Good Newses from New England* by Edward Winslow - ISBN 1557094438

- Reading level: More challenging due to time period language, although short in length
- Amount of reading: 2-3 chapters per week

We recommend using the following books for the last six weeks:

3. *Governor William Bradford's Letter Book* by Gov. William Bradford and John Kemp ISBN 1557095809

- Reading level: Challenging due to time period language although you may only use selections, if necessary.
- Amount of reading: 1-2 letters per week

4. *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin* by Benjamin Franklin - ISBN 0812219295

- Reading level: Challenging due to length and language usage, although you won't be reading everything printed in this edition as it also includes essays.
- Amount of reading: approximately 25 pages per week

5. *Beyond Stateliest Marble: The Passionate Femininity of Anne Bradstreet* by Douglas Wilson and George Grant ISBN 1581821646

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- Reading level: Less challenging, easy readability
- Amount of reading: 12 chapters per week including the *Foreword*, but the chapters are short.

Honors Selections

Note: these books are optional

1. *Of Plymouth Plantation* by William Bradford
2. *Poor Richard's Almanack* by Benjamin Franklin
3. *To My Husband and Other Poems* by Anne Bradstreet

Objectives

Historical:

1. Develop an ongoing timeline of events that occur in American History from Colonization through the Civil War, focusing on Colonization for this unit.
2. Research and write about appropriate topics for the Colonial time period that are not included in the history reading but may be found in Appendix B.
3. Create and/or collect maps that correlate with the history studied in this unit.
4. Comprehend the overview of the Colonial time period.
5. Learn about the importance of source documentation and the difference between primary and secondary sources.
6. Take notes from reading material.
7. Write a well formulated essay about what you have learned.
8. Discuss or answer pertinent questions based on your reading.
9. Examine the character qualities of a historical figure.

Language/Other Subject Connections:

1. Discover how English written during earlier time periods is different than our language today.
2. Write a friendly letter based on historical information.
3. Write an autobiography.

Honors Objectives:

1. Research and document the differences between the three different geographic regions of the colonies.
2. Examine and evaluate the value of *Poor Richard's Almanack*.
3. Evaluate and compare two works written by Governor William Bradford.
4. Read additional poetry written by Anne Bradstreet.

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Teacher’s Note: If you are assigning question number one under the General History assignments, do NOT have your student read the overview below until that assignment has been completed.



Colonial Period Overview (portion):

A treasure waiting to be claimed, the continent of North America was a land of untold and unexplored riches, representing hope for better lives for many Europeans. Spain, France and England eagerly laid claim to various sections of North America. Spain arrived first. During the time of the Protestant Reformation in Europe, Spanish colonies began in Florida, as Spain moved north from South and Central America where it had fairly easily displaced native populations. France and England followed soon after, desiring to find their share of gold and riches. France explored and settled in the far north, later to become Canada, and spread down into the Ohio Valley.

Nine years before the death of William Shakespeare, England founded its first permanent colony, called Jamestown, in Virginia. Founded by men considering themselves aristocracy, not interested in hard work, but very interested in acquiring gold, this colony was held together by the force of will of one of its first leaders, John Smith. Jamestown contrasted starkly with New England’s Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay colonies, which were founded primarily for spiritual reasons. Plymouth, established by passengers on the Mayflower, was founded in part by Separatists; a group of sincere Christians who felt there was no hope of reforming the Church of England and therefore chose to separate from it completely. It was William Bradford, the second governor of the colony, who applied the term “Pilgrims” to these men and women. Traveling close behind were the Puritans, who had hoped to “purify” the Church from within, but found themselves increasingly persecuted and therefore left to establish the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Many Quakers and Catholics also left England for religious reasons, and later found safe haven in Pennsylvania and Maryland. Huguenots, a French reformed Protestant group who had been persecuted for many years, also chose to emigrate.

In addition to the desire for freedom of worship, emigrants sought freedom from political oppression and greater economic opportunity. Many desired to avoid debtor’s prison by indenturing themselves, usually for a period of seven years, in exchange for their passage over the Atlantic. Later, others were persuaded to come by expert promoters, who offered free passage as well as land at the end of the agreed-upon indentured period. Initially, most of the new colonists were English, especially in the northern colonies; however, later settlers also came from France, Germany, Sweden, the Netherlands, Ireland, Scotland, and Norway.

Sample Books and Assignment Choices



History Assignments for *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin* by Benjamin Franklin

Book Notes: Benjamin Franklin wrote this autobiography in 1771 at the age of 65. He directs his writing to his son. Franklin’s personality is greatly revealed through his writing as he shares his opinions and his recollections of his life. For those students who have only studied Franklin from a textbook perspective featuring his many accomplishments, reading about his life from Franklin’s point of view will be eye opening and very interesting! Also note that the actual biography begins on page 7 of the

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book. The second half of the book is a collection of critical essays which may be used for Honors reading if your teacher assigns them.

AR, FR 1. Discussion questions – you can have a discussion with your teacher or another student, or use the questions and answers to create an oral presentation.

- How would you describe Franklin’s writing style in this book? Is he technical or conversational? Does he give plenty of detail or is he more general in his content? Is his writing readable or challenging to understand?
- What do you think Franklin thinks about himself? Is he humble, confident, arrogant, etc.? Give examples from the book to support your answer.
- What are some of the accomplishments that Franklin discusses in his autobiography?
- Based on what you knew about Benjamin Franklin before reading his autobiography, did you learn anything new about him? Be specific.

AR, FR 2. Imagine that you’re 65 years old and write an autobiography of your life. Obviously, you don’t know what you’ll have accomplished at that point, but just imagine what you’d want your autobiography to say about you. Keep it simple, about 2-3 pages, but be specific. Write it as if you are writing to your child who is grown, like Benjamin Franklin. What will your writing reflect about you? What about your attitude toward yourself? Will you be humble, confident or grateful? Before you begin your writing, look at the rubric in Appendix C to see exactly how you will be graded for this assignment and what your teacher expects of you.



History Assignments for *Beyond Stateliest Marble: The Passionate Femininity of Anne Bradstreet* by Douglas Wilson and George Grant

Book Notes: This biography reveals the life of a Puritan woman who embraced all that she held dear and expressed it through her poetry. Although not writing for the purpose of publishing, Bradstreet became known as the writer of America’s first great literary compilation. Her character qualities, as well as her biography, are examined in this book. To delve more deeply into her poetry, see the Honors assignment on page 27. If you are working on a timeline, don’t miss the timeline on pages 13-14 in this book.

AR, FR 1. Puritans have often been represented historically as cool, dispassionate people except for their religious fervor. As you read, take notes about Anne Bradstreet and her relationships with her family including her father, her husband and her children. Does Bradstreet fit the stereotypical mold assigned to the Puritan woman? In what ways was she different? In what ways was she very much a Puritan? Would you describe her as a passionate woman? Why or why not? Write 3-5 paragraphs exploring Bradstreet’s relationships and responding to these questions. Be sure to write an outline and at least two drafts before turning in your completed work. Before you begin your writing, look at the rubric in Appendix C to see exactly how you will be graded for this writing assignment.

AR, FR 2. Note the character qualities that the authors attribute to Anne Bradstreet. Choose another historical figure, man or woman, from the Colonial time period that has at least six of the same qualities listed for Anne Bradstreet in the book. For each character quality, write a 4-5 sentence paragraph describing how that quality is revealed in that historical figure.

Sample Evaluation Tips begin on next page

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Evaluation Tips for First Quarter – Colonial America

History Assignments - General

1. *Period Overview*

Just make sure that your student reads and understands the overview.

2. *Source Documentation*

This is an appropriate pass/fail assignment. If the student misses more than two, he should go back over what he missed and re-evaluate his answers. Be sure to talk with your student about any of these that he has incorrect. The student should list the books for this unit and note the source documentation as follows:

- *Everyday Life in Early America* – secondary (based on some primary and other secondary sources – look at the bibliography in the back of the book)
- *Good News from New England* - primary
- *Governor William Bradford's Letter Book* - primary
- *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin* - primary
- *Beyond Stateliest Marble: The Passionate Femininity of Anne Bradstreet* - secondary

History Assignments – *Everyday Life in Early America*

1. *Notes on previous knowledge*
2. *New notes*
3. *Essay – What I Learned*

These assignments may be combined for a single evaluation using the rubric in Appendix C. Since the first two assignments must be completed in order for the essay to be written, it only makes sense to evaluate them as a whole process.

4. *Comprehension Questions*

The answers for the comprehension questions are in Appendix G, Grading Keys. Each question should count as three points and ½ point may be taken off for grammar, punctuation and spelling errors.

History Assignments – *Good News from New England*

1. *Winslow's Pronouns*

There are plenty of examples in the text for the student to find concerning Winslow's odd use of pronouns. Be sure to look at the example given with the assignment. Criteria for grading this assignment, based on 100%, are:

- Eight appropriate examples written out 40%
- Page numbers included for each example 20%
- Unclear pronouns are highlighted 20%
- Pronoun references are included 20%.

This is the end of the sample of American History !! If you have any questions about this or any of our other courses, we would love to hear from you at the email address below.