



8th Grade U.S. History – Mrs. Megan VanGorder

Dear students, parents, and guardians:

Welcome to 8th grade U.S. History! I hope that you will find this class interesting, informative and fun! You will be working diligently to develop new skills and understand historical thinking. I strongly believe in challenging students through a variety of activities that will make history “come alive.” I’m looking forward to a great year!

HOW TO REACH ME

Email: megan.vangorder@olympia.org

Phone Number: (309) 379-5941 ext. 9371

Class Website: vangoms.weebly.com

- Get attachments of homework assignments!

Remind 101: <https://www.remind.com/join/mrsvangous>

- Sign up to receive *safe* text reminders of upcoming assignments, tests, projects, or eighth grade team events.

CONTENT

Please be reminded that eighth grade is when *you will successfully complete the Illinois and U.S. Constitution Tests* by mandate of the State of Illinois.

Units of Study will include:

- Historical Thinking
- Colonial America
- Revolution!
- U.S. and Illinois Constitution
- Antebellum America
- Civil War and Reconstruction
- The Gilded Age
- The Progressive Era
- Great Depression/WWII
- Cold War/Civil Rights Movement
- Vietnam

CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

What you can expect from me as a teacher:

- I believe **all** students can learn and succeed in my classroom.
- I have high expectations for myself as a teacher. I work hard to engage you as a student.
- I expect effort and cooperation from students in the process of learning history.
- I am deliberate in building relationships with all my students.
- I do not allow disrespect, inattention, or sleeping in class.
- I apply consequences consistently and equitably.

GRADING

Grades are based on a total point percentage scale. Grades will be based on a combination of assignments, projects, and exams. Projects and authentic assessments (work that shows meaningful learning) will be worth more than tests and quizzes. I use tests as a measure to assess how well students understand information in class and as a way to discover areas that need more attention from me as an instructor.

Grade	Percentage	Rating
A	94-100	Superior
B	86-93	Above Average
C	77-85	Average
D	70-76	Below Average
F	Below 70	Failing

LATE WORK POLICY

In eighth grade, it is the expectation that students complete their homework by the due date. The 8th grade homework policy at Olympia Middle School states that no unexcused late work will be accepted. However, students are encouraged to request an extension on the assignment. Extensions that are requested appropriately and in a timely manner will always be granted. The extension must be requested by 8:25 a.m. on the day the assignment is due.

PINK SLIPS

- If a student neglects to complete his or her homework or request an extension, he or she has the opportunity to fill out a pink slip.
- The pink slip is a way to receive **temporary partial credit** for incomplete or forgotten homework. The student then fills out a pink slip, which explains why the student was unable to complete an assignment or ask for an extension.
 - The pink slip also includes a **goal setting** piece that requires a student to write a personal goal to complete his or her missed assignment within a week of the original due date.
- After a week from the original due date if the assignment is not turned in, the student will receive a **failing grade** on the assignment.
- Students eligible for homework club will have an alternative procedure.

TEACHER PHILOSOPHY

“You cannot avoid the responsibility of tomorrow by evading it today.” – Abraham Lincoln