

7 Steps to the Great American History Course

By Maggie Hogan

History: an orderly and systematic study of humans' activities in the past.

<p>History</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What happened?• Whom did it affect?• What were the results?• How is it relevant to our lives today?• What does the Bible say about it? <p>Why Biblically?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bible stories or history stories?• Parallel universes or one universe?• Take Christ out of His Story? <p>Why chronologically?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• God created order• Cause and Effect• Faith Building <p>1. Make Your Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How long will you spend?• How much time per week?• What are your overall goals?• What are your specific goals?• How to teach all ages together?	<p>How will you divide the time periods? For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Age of Exploration• Colonization• Revolutionary War• Westward Ho• Civil War (War between States)• Reconstruction/Expansion• Industrialization• 20th Century <p>Or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Early Exploration/Native Americans• Colonial Times• American Revolution• Birth of a Nation/Expansion
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil War & Reconstruction • Industrial America/Immigration • World Wars • Modern Days
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One Possible Schedule

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Light	Heavy	Independent	Independent	Various
Timeline	Discussion day	Read	Read	Field Trips or
Maps	Tapes/talking	Read	Research	project or
Reading	Read Aloud	Read	Map work	speaker or
Catch up	Make plans	Research	Catch up	activities

This schedule might work for a family with younger students

Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Discussion	Read Aloud	Special Events or
Read Aloud	Maps or timeline	Catch up day

Goals

- Ignite interest in history & to develop a life-long love of learning
- Develop research and critical thinking skills

- Learn and understand basic facts
- Memorize basic information (states & capitals, etc.)
- Long-term retention of core information
- Recognize where event happened, why events happened, when events happened
- Develop an appreciation for our country's strengths
- Become familiar with current events and political processes

2. Resources and References

- *The Patriot's Handbook* by George Grant
- [*Rand McNally Atlas of American History*](#)
- *The Story of Liberty* by Charles Coffin (teens)
- Books by Catherine Millard (703.455.0333)
- [*Guides to History Plus*](#) by Kathryn Stout Design-a-Study
- [*Usborne Book of World History Dates*](#)
- *DK History of the World*
- D'Aulaire biographies
- Childhood of Famous Americans (series)
- *Landmark books (especially James Dougherty)*
- Books by Genevieve Foster
- Books by Jean Fritz
- Cornerstone of Freedom (series)
- YWAM books
- [*The Student History Notebook of America*](#) by Maggie Hogan

Tip: Buy core materials you'll draw from heavily: reference books, maps & atlases, audio tapes, high quality games, posters, "pretend" toys that will be enjoyed for years to come and items that hold special appeal to one or more of your children.

Web sites

www.4america.com
www.hyperhistory.com
www.thehistorynet.com
www.thehistoryplace.com
www.paulasarchives.com
www.abebooks.com a Canadian based consortium of thousands of antiquarian book dealers.
www.bibliofind.com Easy-to-use and well-designed site for finding that out-of-print book you want.

3. Tie in with Literature

It would seem that there are fictional books available for every time period imaginable. Be discerning, look for recommendations from sources you trust and don't try to read it all! Choose high quality - avoid "junk food" fiction.

Look for

- Appropriate reading level
- Appropriate interest level
- Appropriate thematic level
- World View
- Accuracy

Goals for choosing historical fiction

- Flavor of a period or place
- Gripping account of a specific event
- Opportunity to put oneself into a time period
- Exposure to Godly heroes and role models--inspiration

4. Everything Happened Sometime - Timelines

Ruth Beechik, in her excellent book *You Can Teach Your Child Successfully* says:

"For children, timelines are not for pulling together the scattered pieces of knowledge, as they do so well for adults; children haven't yet collected enough pieces to pull together. What timelines can do for children is to provide a framework into which they can put pieces of knowledge as they learn them. For this framework purpose, timelines should be very simple – so simple that children can memorize them."

- Information versus activity
- Strands ~ series of spirals
- Maximize your timeline - use in conjunction with maps

5. Everything Happened Somewhere - Maps

- Information versus activity
- Outline maps
- Atlases
- Research
- Communicate

6. Projects & Field Trips

Don't do every project you come across. Be choosy!

Choose projects and field trips that are:

- Appealing
- Illustrative
- Within budget
- Age appropriate
- Timely
- Fun & memorable

7. The Student Notebook – tie it all together

A notebook or journal emphasizes:

- Questions/curiosity
- Research
- Organization
- Processing
- Synthesizing
- Retention

What might you put in a notebook?

- assignments
- questions to answer
- map work
- timelines
- vocabulary
- scripture
- quotes
- resources
- field trips
- projects
- interviews
- essays
- reports
- diagrams
- drawings
- photographs
- video list
- book list
- memorization list

- ticket stubs
- post cards
- recipes

Looking for BEST EVER American history course? Brand-new! *All American History* by Celeste Rakes is just the thing for the busy family. This history course is perfect for 5th – 9th graders wanting structure and ease-of-use in a homeschool setting. Three books: Student Reader, Student Activity Book and Teacher Guide make this a thorough and enjoyable course. Highly recommended!