Advanced Placement U.S. History  
Summer Assignment 2019

Reading Assignment Selection:

10 Days That Unexpectedly Changed America by Steven M. Gillon

This book pinpoints pivotal days in history that transformed our nation. The History Channel challenged a panel of leading historians, including author Steven M. Gillon, to come up with some less known but historically significant events that triggered change in America. Together, the days they chose tell a story about the great democratic ideals upon which our country was built. This book has been a top seller, and I hope you find it to be an engaging read.

Writing Assignment:

Choose five (5) of the following quotes and explain each in your own words. Establish the context for your quote in a sentence or two. Explain the quote and analyze its historical significance and effect on American history in one to two clear, concise paragraphs. This is due by Friday, August 16th and is worth 10 percent of your grade for term 1. Work can be submitted to the THS main office or electronically to lrichards@tivertonschools.org. Good luck with your reading and I look forward to working with you in the upcoming school year!
“Massacre at Mystic,” May 26, 1637
“The battle at Mystic lasted less than one hour but it cast a long shadow over future relations between Indians and English settlers (pg. 19).”

“Shays’ Rebellion: The First American Civil War,” January 25, 1787
“Shays’ Rebellion exposed the fragility of the new American democracy, but it also highlighted its possibilities (pg. 42).”

“The Gold Rush,” January 24, 1848
“The spirit of the gold rush did not end with the Civil War. It extended well into the twentieth century. The audacious forty-niner spirit is reflected in modern-day high-tech Argonauts who mine the rich veins of science and technology (pg. 77).”

“Antietam,” September 17, 1862
“By the end of the Civil War, Lincoln spoke of a nation, rarely of a union. After 1865, the new usage ‘the United States is’ symbolized a fundamental shift in how Americans saw themselves (pg. 98).”

“The Homestead Strike,” July 6, 1892
“The strike made clear that in labor disputes government would intervene decisively on the side of capital (pg. 123).”

“Murder at the Fair: The Assassination of President McKinley,”
“[Roosevelt] urged Progressives to recognize that only a strong federal government could protect the public’s interest. Democracy was not incompatible with increased government; indeed, only government could guarantee true freedom and democracy (pg. 145).”

“Scopes: The Battle over America’s Soul,” July 21, 1925
“Unlike most turning points in history, the Scopes trial is important for the questions it raised, not for the answers it provided (pg. 174).”
“Einstein’s Letter,” July 16, 1939
“The threat of nuclear annihilation permanently altered America’s role in the world, forcing the nation to abandon its instinctive isolationism and assume the responsibilities of a global superpower (pg. 196).”

“When America Was Rocked,” September 9, 1956
“Elvis did more than sell records – he defined an era. He gave voice to a youth revolt that touched off a social revolution in the 1960s and 1970s (pg. 224).”

“Freedom Summer,” June 21, 1966
“Highlighting the brutality of southern racism, these murders set the stage for America’s ‘Second Reconstruction.’ Southern whites had always used violence to suppress their black population, but now television cameras projected into the homes of millions of Americans disturbing images of police dogs mauling elderly black women and fire hoses knocking innocent children to the ground (pg. 247).”