

11th Grade American History Research Topic Suggestions

This list is by no means all-inclusive. These are simply topics, not research questions or thesis suggestions. These topics are meant to spark your thoughts.

Political History

American Loyalists/Tories –Impact during the war
Evaluate the Articles of Confederation – strengths and weaknesses
Constitutional Convention- debate, arguments and compromises
The role of the Federalist Papers in constitutional ratification
The constitutional debate over the Alien and Sedition Acts
The development and legacy of Hamilton and Jefferson’s political philosophies
The significance of Shays’ Rebellion and/or the Whiskey Rebellion
Evaluating the extent of Jefferson’s domestic and foreign policies. Did he live up to his own Jeffersonian philosophy?
The significance of the War of 1812
The United States policy towards Native Americans- Research of a specific tribe or nation
John Marshall and the development of the Supreme Court.
Evaluate the significance of a specific Supreme Court decision: *Marbury vs. Madison*, *Gibbons Vs. Ogden*, *Brown vs. Board of Education*
The causes, consequences and controversies of the Mexican American War
Evaluate the philosophy and Manifest Destiny and its impact on American development
Evaluate the causes of the Civil War- Was it inevitable?
The legacy of Reconstruction? – To what extent was it a success or failure?
The origins and significance of any third party
The significance of a specific political election: presidential, congressional etc.
Compare and contrast presidential policy of a specific issue: Ex: Hoover and Roosevelt’s response to the Great Depression
Evaluate the foreign policy and legacy of Woodrow Wilson: idealist or realist?
Evaluate the significance and legacy of a political scandal (Ex: Teapot Dome, Iran-Contra, Credit Moblier)
Evaluate the impact and effectiveness of the Republican presidents of the 1920’s.
Evaluate the impact and legacy of FDR’s New Deal – To what extent did it bring about positive change?
Research the causes of the Great Depression
How did the United States of America dig itself out of the Great Depression?
The origins and development of the American welfare state
The internment of Japanese Americans during World War II
The rise of McCarthyism
The dropping of the atomic bombs on Nagasaki and Hiroshima
The causes and consequences of the Reagan Revolution
President _____ and the Civil Rights Movement

Presidential policy towards the Vietnam conflict
The 1st amendment in the 20th Century
The legacy of the 1968 Democratic National Convention
Watergate: causes, consequences, legacy

Social and Intellectual History

Analyzing art, literature, music and or fashion of certain times: Use this theme to discuss a larger political, economic or social issue. **Example:** How did music during the Vietnam era reflect the sentiment of the population? How did Women's fashion during the 19th century reflect gender norms and values?

An examination of the evolution of ideal beauty across time periods

The effect of a war on the American populace- Choose a war, examine popular culture

Capital Crime and Punishment in early America

Contributions of the Lewis and Clark Expedition

Jacksonian Era reforms (temperance, education, prisons, suffrage)

The Hudson River School and cultural nationalism

The significance of Nat Turner and/or John Brown's slave revolts

Racial attitudes of antebellum north

Compare and contrast the goals, tactics and impact of two abolitionists

The role of women on southern plantations

Compare and contrast the philosophies of Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. DuBois

The Women's Suffrage Movement: compare/contrast two suffragettes or feminist activists

The significance of the Seneca Falls Convention of 1848

The significance of the prohibition of alcohol

Progressive Era Reforms: trust busting, muckrakers, temperance etc.

The development of the labor movement: Knights of Labor, AFL,

The changing role of women during the 1920's

Significance of **The Gospel of Wealth**, Social Darwinism

Nativism during the 19th or 20th centuries

The rise and impact of the Ku Klux Klan (Pick one time period: 1870's, 1920's, 1960's)

The significance of the Sacco and Vanzetti trial and conflict during the 1920's

The significance and impact of the Harlem Renaissance

Origins of Jazz and/or The Blues

How did the Great Depression change the social fabric of American life?

Contribution of blacks, women or Natives Americans during World War II

The role of women in America in the post WWII period

The impact of World War II on politics, economics, social issues

The Red Scare: compare and contrast the one in the 1920's and 1950's

McCarthyism's impact on the U.S.

Popular culture and mass media during the 1950's

Jackie Robinson's contribution to Major League Baseball desegregation and Civil Rights Movement

The Civil Rights Movement- Choose one (significant legislation, impact of a particular political leader, impact of a particular event or activist, success and failures)

The impact of the Black Panthers on the Civil Rights Movement. Were they a help or hindrance?

The Nation of Islam – origins, goals, impact on the Civil Rights Movement

The effect of Kent State on public opinion

The evolution of the women's movement 1950-1970 – Goals, successes, challenges, activists.

The impact of Betty Freidan's "The Feminine Mystique"

The rise of the American suburb and changes its significance on U.S. geography, demography etc.

The African-American northern migration of the 1950's

The environmental movement

Significance of Cesar Chavez and the Migrant Farm Workers Movement

Effectiveness of Title IX on equal rights for women in education and the professional spheres.

Religion in America

The legacy of Puritan Philosophy in America

The Quaker experience

The Great Awakening

The Mormons in 19th century America

Anti-Semitism in American History

The significance of the Scopes Monkey Trial

The rise of conservative religious fundamentalism and its impact

Military History

The causes of the war of 1812 or Mexican War– Was it a justified war?

Contribution of black soldiers during the Civil War

Civil War draft policies and riots

The Indian Wars

The causes and impact of the Spanish American War

Teddy Roosevelt and the Rough Riders

US Military intervention (Panama, Grenada, Dominican Republic etc.)

Was the use of the atomic bomb necessary to defeat the Japanese in World War II

Examine the roles of women during the Civil War, World War I or World War II

The Truman –MacArthur debate during the Korean War

The Bay of Pigs fiasco

Significance of the Cuban Missile Crisis

The significance of the Mai Lai Massacre on U.S. public opinion

The evolution of the Peace Corps

Choose a war, and examine the impact of the American Home front

The causes, outcome and significance of a particular battle in U.S. History (e.g., Battle of Saratoga - Revolution, Battle of Gettysburg - Civil War, The Battle of Midway and Coral Sea - WWII)

Foreign Policy

The significance of French Aid in the American Revolution

The Louisiana Purchase

The impact of the Monroe Doctrine

Evaluation of Teddy Roosevelt's "Big Stick Diplomacy"

American Imperialism at the dawn of the 20th century- Empire building

The Open Door Policy and Asia

Wilson's foreign policy at the end of World War I – Fourteen Points

Why did the U.S. engage in World War I?

Successes, failures and long term impact of the Treaty of Versailles

American foreign policy during the 1920's

An evaluation of the Marshall Plan

An evaluation of Yalta Agreement

An evaluation of the containment policy in Europe

Origins of the Cold War

Impact of the Cold War on America's relations in Latin America, the Middle East, Asia or Europe

The origins of the Vietnam War

United States involvement and policies regarding the creation of Israel

American-Chinese relations 1949-2000

Economic History

New England and the slave trade

Economics of slavery

Economic factors contributing to American sectionalism

The impact of the cotton gin

The operation of the plantation system

The tariff issue of 1828

The significance of the Transcontinental Railroad

The rise of Industry and its impacts in the late 19th century

Labor protest in the 19th century

The origins and impact of the Great Depression

Evaluate the successes and failures of the New Deal: Did it snap the U.S. out of the Great Depression?

Evaluate the short and long term impact of the LBJ's Great Society.

Evaluate the economic philosophy of President Reagan. Were "Reaganomics" a success or failure?