

# 11<sup>th</sup> Grade United States History Student Information Sheet

## Course Description

There is no prerequisite for enrolling in the course. U.S. History is designed for students who are performing at the eleventh grade level. It is a one-year course of study based on the 11th grade California Social Science Standards. The objectives of this course include the study of the development of U.S. political, economic and social institutions from progressivism to present, and preparation for competency as citizens in a democratic society through an understanding of American political traditions.

## Course Requirements

**Reading:** Students in United States will be required to read roughly 15 - 20 pages of text per week throughout the entirety of the year. Please note that the text utilized in the course is a High School-level textbook.


**Writing:** Students in United States History will be required to master a number of writing-based assignments including document analysis, GPERSIA analysis, in addition to traditional essay writing assignment. Students should expect to write a minimum of 2-3 essays per semester.

**Assessments:** Students in United States History will be required to take periodic reading quizzes on the assigned readings. There also will be either chapter or unit tests throughout the semester. Each semester will have cumulative Final Exams.

## Why take United States?

Successfully completing United States History will help students develop reading, writing, and analytical skills necessary for high school graduation. This class is required to graduate high school.

**KEY PLAYER**



**WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN  
1860–1925**

William Jennings Bryan might be considered a patron saint of lost causes, largely because he let beliefs, not politics, guide his actions. He resigned his position as secretary of state (1913–1915) under Woodrow Wilson, for example, to protest the president’s movement away from neutrality regarding the war in Europe.

Near the end of his life, he went to Tennessee to assist the prosecution in the Scopes “monkey trial,” contesting the teaching of evolution in public schools. He is perhaps best characterized by a quote from his own “Cross of Gold” speech: “The humblest citizen in all the land, when clad in the armor of a righteous cause, is stronger than all the hosts of error.”

Investments declined, and consumer purchases, wages, and prices also fell. Panic deepened into depression as 3 million people lost their jobs. By December 1894, a fifth of the work force was unemployed. Many farm families suffered both hunger and unemployment. **D**

**SILVER OR GOLD** Populists watched as the two major political parties became deeply divided in a struggle between different regions and economic interests. Business owners and bankers of the industrialized Northeast were Republicans; the farmers and laborers of the agrarian South and West were Democrats.

The central issue of the campaign was which metal would be the basis of the nation’s monetary system. On one side were the “silverites,” who favored **bimetallism**, a monetary system in which the government would give citizens either gold or silver in exchange for paper currency or checks. On the other side were President Cleveland and the “gold bugs,” who favored the **gold standard**—backing dollars solely with gold.

The backing of currency was an important campaign issue because people regarded paper money as worthless if it could not be turned in for gold or silver. Because silver was more plentiful than gold, backing currency with both metals, as the silverites advocated, would make more currency (with less value per dollar) available. Supporters of bimetallism hoped that this measure would stimulate the stagnant economy. Retaining the gold standard would provide a more stable, but expensive, currency.

**BRYAN AND THE “CROSS OF GOLD”** Stepping into the debate, the Populist Party called for bimetallism and free coinage of silver. Yet their strategy was undecided: should they join forces with sympathetic candidates in the major parties and risk losing their political identity, or should they nominate their own candidates and risk losing the election?

As the 1896 campaign progressed, the Republican Party stated its firm commitment to the gold standard and nominated Ohioan **William McKinley** for president. After much debate, the Democratic Party came out in favor of a combined gold and silver standard, including unlimited coinage of silver. At the Democratic convention, former Nebraska congressman **William Jennings Bryan**, editor of the *Omaha World-Herald*, delivered an impassioned address to the assembled

**MAIN IDEA**

**Analyzing Causes**  
**D** What caused the panic of 1893?

<b>Gold Bugs and Silverites</b>		
	<b>Gold Bugs</b>	<b>Silverites</b>
<b>Who They Were</b>	bankers and businessmen	farmers and laborers
<b>What They Wanted</b>	gold standard less money in circulation	bimetallism more money in circulation
<b>Why</b>	Loans would be repaid in stable money.	Products would be sold at higher prices.
<b>Effects</b>	<b>DEFLATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prices fall.</li> <li>• Value of money increases.</li> <li>• Fewer people have money.</li> </ul>	<b>INFLATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prices rise.</li> <li>• Value of money decreases.</li> <li>• More people have money.</li> </ul>