HISTORY A LEVEL

Please use the following resources as part of a bridging unit from GCSE to A Level History. There are some useful activities and reading suggestions that will help you prepare for the A Level course before September.

The Tudors 1485-1603

Focus on Henry VII (1485-1509), creating a fact file about his reign.

You could use the following links:

- Henry VII | Biography & Facts | Britannica
- 10 Facts About Henry VII – the First Tudor King | History Hit
- Henry VII Facts, Information & Biography - Tudor Monarchs

Watch the following David Starkey documentary on Henry VIII Henry VIII: Mind of a Tyrant Part One with David Starkey and makes notes on the following themes:

- His early life
- Wars of the Roses
- Warbeck Rebellion
- Jousting

The USA pre-1900

The History of the USA is relatively recent. Following their independence from Great Britain in 1776, Americans began to settle into their new continent with amazing speed. By the mid nineteenth century, they had gained all land south of Canada and north of Mexico between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. This was achieved mainly through purchase and warfare.

The land mass was 3,022,000 square miles, in contrast with 94,525 square miles of the UK. It was settled so quickly that by 1890 the Census declared there was no longer any underdeveloped territory available for settlement.

The entire history of the USA until 1920 had happened in a space of 140 years. There was little time for development of tradition as there had been in Europe. The individual was thought to be of vast importance and the continent of America was there to be settled quickly. The fact that it was settled so quickly, and the country developed so rapidly led many people to believe in the 'American Dream'; that with hard work and initiative one could achieve anything without expecting much support from the government.

The USA was a land rich in natural resources, fertile for crops and populated by an energetic, dynamic people who were mainly descended from immigrants. The 19C had seen the biggest migration in history with millions leaving the old world of Europe and Asia and headed to America to find work, land and freedom from persecution. The USA was originally made up

of immigrants who had arrived not willingly but often forcibly as slaves from Africa. The Civil war had torn the union apart in the years 1861-
5. It had ended slavery but not the persecution of African Americans. The North had grown increasingly wealthy from industrial development, while the south had remained predominantly rural. The West was populated in mythology by pioneers who had tamed a wilderness largely by their own efforts. It had developed as a region of fierce independence with little toleration of government interference.

The USA had an economic structure in which people were free to make money with very little government interference. Industries grew wealthy because of three main factors:

- The relative abundance and cheapness of natural resources
- The availability of cheap, often immigrant labour
- The overwhelming demand in a continent developing so quickly.

Huge industrial concerns grew up in the great cities; but small-scale industry also thrived.

Complete the following three tasks using the information on the USA pre-1900.

Task one

True or false – is the following information true or false? If false, please correct it.

Information	**True/false**
America gained independence from Britain in 1873	
America was able to gain empire quickly	
America was bigger the Great Britain	
By 1890 there was no land available for settlement	
American people did not expect or want government intervention	
The American dream was about hard work and initiative	
America was mainly made of immigrants	
The Civil War lasted from 1860-64	
The Civil War ended slavery in America and persecution of blacks	
Taxes were kept low to encourage industry	

Task two - define the following key words

Word	Meaning
Census	
Government intervention	
American Dream	
Civil War	
Slavery	
Immigrant	
Industrial	

Rural	
persecution	

Task three - Your friend has written an essay describing America pre-1900. They are very proud of this; however, they may have made some mistakes. Read through, find the errors and correct them.

America is a relatively new country. They had been part of the British Empire and used for transportation but in 1783 they gained independence. By the 1850s they had taken over all of Canada and Mexico by buying them and through war. America soon became an attractive country with many people wanting to move there; the census of 1790 stated that there was no more room for settlement and immigration was decreased. Even so lots of people still wanted to move there because of the American Dream – the idea that if you worked hard and took matters into your own hands the government would support you and would give you advice. The government also believed in low taxes for business owners. Another reason to move to America in the 1900s was because of the end of the Civil War, the majority of Americans were pleased that in 1865 slavery was abolished and that America was now not a racist country. A good example of this was that the KKK died down. There were three reasons for American economic prosperity. Firstly, the fact the America had few natural resources meant that initiative was needed to create good and there were lots of opportunities. Secondly the number of immigrants led to cheap labour and lastly the demand for goods.

Correct the mistakes your friend has made in this essay.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

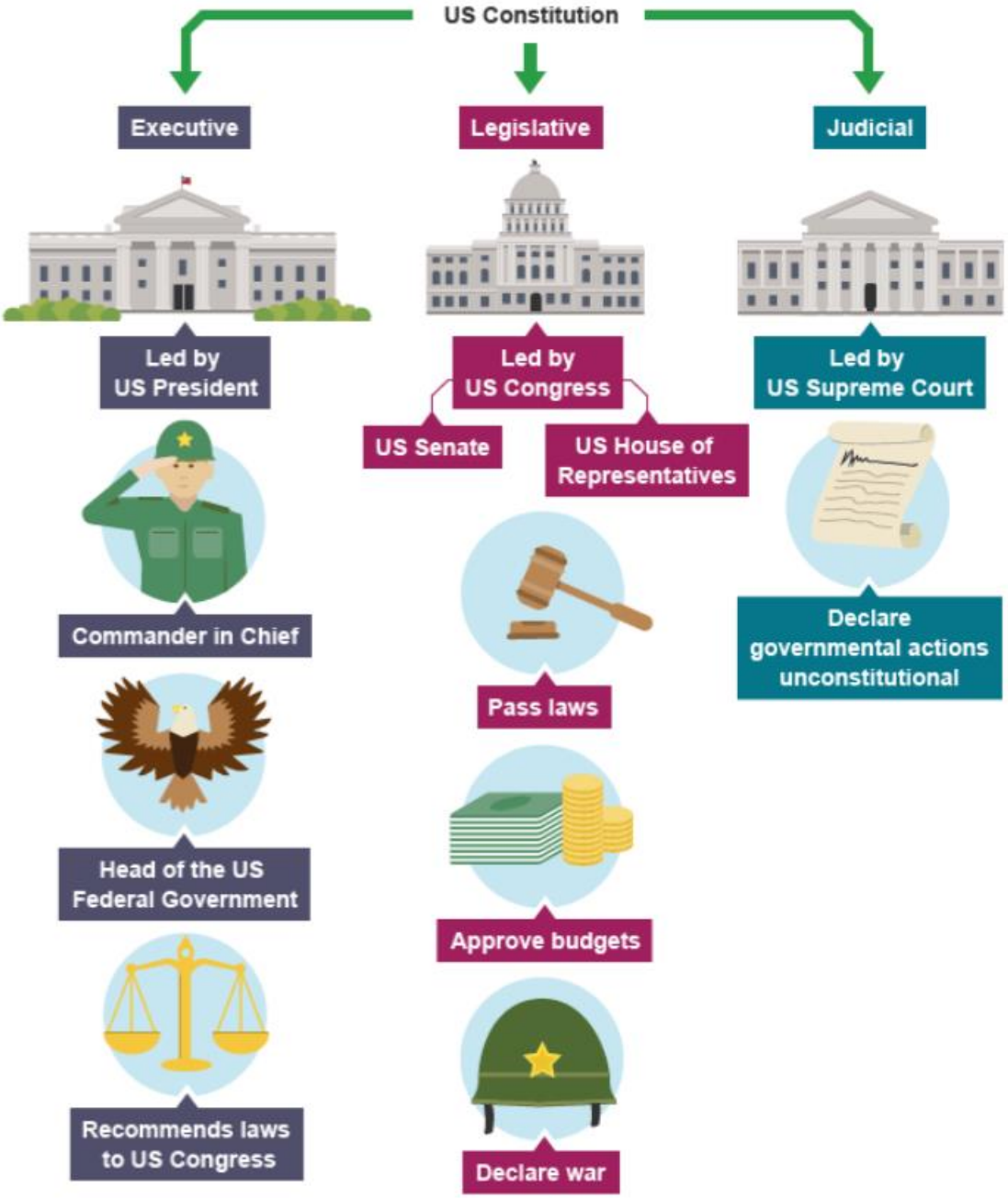
6.

7.

8.

The Political System of the USA.

The government of the USA is split into three sections.



1. Legislature – The group of people that make the laws and change existing laws
2. Executive - The branch in charge of enforcing the laws
3. Supreme Court - Responsible for interpreting the laws and deciding if they are fair

Task: Use the link to answer the questions

How is the US Government structured? - BBC Bitesize

1. What is the legislative branch known as and how is it split?

2. What are their responsibilities?

3. Give details on how the Senate operates.

4. Give details on how the House of Representatives operates.

5. In addition to leading the Executive branch of government what other responsibilities does the President have?

6. Who leads the judiciary and what do they do?

7. What power does the Federal Government have?

8. What are the shared powers between the states and Federal Government?

9. What are state governments responsible for?

America quick quiz

1. The capital of America is

   New York Washington New Orleans

2. How many original English colonies were established?

   11 12 13

3. The currency in America is

   The dollar the pound the euro

4. Who was president of America during the great depression of 1929 – 1933?

   Herbert Hoover Franklin Roosevelt Adolf Hitler

5. What natural resources did America have in the 19 century?

   Coal and gold Coal and oil Oil and gold

6. What was prohibition?

   Making alcohol highly taxed removing taxes from alcohol making alcohol illegal?

7. What percentage of alcohol did a drink have to contain for it to be defined as alcohol after prohibition?

   1.0% 0.25% 0.5%

8. The American Civil War made what illegal?

   Alcohol drugs slavery

9. How many branches of government in the USA are there?

   1 2 3

10. What is the land mass of the USA

    2,022,000 3,022,000 4,022,0000

Films as Evidence: Watch one of the following films:

Gangs of New York (2002)
Little Women (1994)
12 Years a Slave (2013)
Lincoln (2012)
The Butler (2013)

Write a summary about it in the box underneath concentrating on what it shows about American history. Please do not just copy a review from online –we will know if you do. We are looking for the use of film as evidence and what you can learn rather than story line or cinematography.