

IB Summer Reading Assignment:

Read Chapters 1 through 5 in Howard Zinn's *A People's History of the United States* and answer the following the questions. This assignment will be due the second day we get back from summer break (it looks like August 9th). We will be reading from Howard Zinn's book throughout next year (it's one of my favorites and I think it's accessible for high school students) so if you want to buy a copy, great. If not, go to www.historyisaweapon.com, enter the website, click on Chapter 1, and click on A People's History of the United States for the online version (same as the book, just free). You may want to look up Howard Zinn online to understand his agenda.

I look forward to working with you over the next two years, enjoy your summer, and if you have any questions, email me at dss22279@hotmail.com.

- Mr. Smith

Chapter 1 Exercises

1. Before reading the chapter: write down all that you think you know about Columbus, including myth as well as reality. Examples: Columbus sailed in 1492; people believed the earth was round; Columbus sailed on 3 ships.

While or after reading the chapter: write down passages in the text that either support or contradict each item generated by the assignment above, then identify those events and actions discussed in the text that had not been part of your thinking about Columbus originally. How has your thinking changed?

2. For each of the suggested phrases below that complete the sentence, identify the passage(s) in the book that either supports or challenges each assertion. Identify irrelevant phrases with NP (no passages applies). When choosing a relevant passage, note its page number and whether the passage supports, challenges, or doesn't apply.

Zinn thinks that Morison...

- a. omits the truth.
 - b. believes that all readers share a common interest.
 - c. writes the kind of history that allows atrocities to continue to be committed.
 - d. is critical of Columbus.
 - e. idealizes Columbus.
 - f. is as accurate as a mapmaker.
3. If communities share common interests, did Columbus and Las Casas belong to the same community? If so, what are their common interests? (What was Columbus in the Caribbean for? Las Casas?) If not, what interests separate them into different communities? Did Las Casas have more in common with Arawaks than he did with Columbus?

Chapter 2 Exercises

1. Why did Virginians massacre Indians instead of enslaving them? How does the answer explain the choice to import black slaves? Why were Africans vulnerable to enslavement?

2. Page 27: "...where whites and blacks found themselves with common problems, common work, a common enemy in their master, they behaved toward one another as equals."
 - What were the "problems" that blacks and whites shared? What was the "work" that blacks and whites did? Was it the same? Did they work together? How did the "master" treat his indentured servants? How did the "master" treat his slave? To what degree was the treatment the same?

3. Below are three versions of one essential question. Choose ONE of the three to respond to.
 - a. Zinn argues that racism is not natural but a product of human choice and historical circumstances. Given the forces that created racism, what choices need to be made to undo it?
 - b. What were the historical forces that caused white plantation owners to choose black slaves as their labor source? Was it a "decision" to make a profit, or were Englishmen forced to do it? Would the Powhatans have accepted wages to labor in the fields of plantation owners? Does that constitute a historical force?
 - c. Zinn argues that racism is not natural. Does he mean that it is caused by human decisions or historical forces? Explain your answer by first defining the difference between historical forces and human decision. What is a "historical force"? Do such forces compel humans to make decisions they would otherwise not have made?

Chapter 3 Questions

1. Copy and fill in the chart below. Expand the chart by adding to the given criteria of comparison.

	African Slave	Indentured Servant
Period of Servitude		
Conditions / Rights During Servitude		
Conditions of Voyage		
Reasons for or cause of servitude		
Forms of resistance		
Methods by which they were controlled		

2. Which of the following is the most accurate characterization of the colonial economy, and WHY? Consider the following criteria: closeness to actual event; how far removed from witnessing the event; degree of possibility of being an isolated event; degree of safety in generalizing from the specific; relevance of detail to question; how much detail actually says about the entire colonial society.
- a. In Boston, by 1770, the top 1% of property owners owned 44% of the wealth.
 - b. In New York [around 1750], the city almshouse, built for 100 poor, was housing over 400.
 - c. In 1757, Boston officials spoke of “a great Number of Poor...who can scarcely procure from day to day daily Bread for themselves & Families.”
 - d. According to the present day historian Gary Nash, “Outbreaks of disorder punctuated the last quarter of the 17th century, toppling established governments in Massachusetts, New York, Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina.”
 - e. In Boston in 1713, a town selectmen said that the “threatening scarcity of provisions” had led to such “extravagant prices that the necessities of the poor in the approaching winter must needs be very pressing.”
 - f. In New Jersey in 1745, Sam Baldwin was arrested for nonpayment of rent. “The People in general, supposing the Design of the Proprietors was to ruin them...went to the Prison, opened the Door, took out Baldwin.”
3. What was the greatest threat to the elite’s control over the colonists – a fear that was realized in Bacon’s Rebellion? What tactics did the wealthy elite/rich rulers adopt to prevent another Bacon’s Rebellion?

Chapter 4 Questions

1. Research: What role did each of the events listed below play in causing conflict between the colonial elites and England (or their representatives in America); the colonial people (the lower order) and colonial elites; OR the colonial peoples (the lower order) and England (or their representatives in America).
 - a. French & Indian War
 - b. Growth of trade between England and its American colonies
 - c. Proclamation Line of 1763
 - d. "...six black rebellions...and forty riots" all occurring between 1676 and 1760.
 - e. Stamp Act of 1765
 - f. Mechanics' demand for political democracy in the cities
 - g. Private committee's bill of rights
 - h. Tenant riots from the 1740s through the 1760s
 - i. Regulator Movement
 - j. Townshend Act of 1767
 - k. Quartering of British troops in 1768
 - l. Impressment of sailors
 - m. Impounding of ships in admiralty courts under the specifications of the Sugar Act
 - n. Tea Act of 1773
 - o. Boston Port Act of 1773
 - p. Massachusetts Government Act of 1774
2. The American Revolution was a war not for independence but consolidation. Do you agree or disagree? Why?

Chapter 5 Questions

1. Which of the following is the most appropriate thesis for this chapter:
 - a. The Americans won the war only with the help from the French.
 - b. The war was a struggle for power between members of an upper class.
 - c. Rich men ran the war.
 - d. General enthusiasm for the war was not strong.Defend your choice and give your reasons for having eliminated the rest.
2. The U.S. Constitution was: (Defend your choice with detail.)
 - a. "a work of genius put together by wise, humane men who created a legal framework for democracy and equality"
 - b. a work of genius put together by rich men to benefit their economic interests
 - c. a work of genius which balances the interests of slaves, indentured servants, women, men, without property, and men with property.
 - d. a compromise between slaveholding interests of the South and monied interests of the North
 - e. all of the above