

SOCIAL STUDIES DEPARTMENT ADVANCED PLACEMENT AMERICAN HISTORY SUMMER READING

Required Reading: *The Jungle* – Upton Sinclair

The goal of the summer reading program is to provide students with a broad reading experience to serve as a foundation to better understand the themes and time periods that will be covered during the course of study. Students will also be better able to analyze information, interpret historical sources, and write clear and concise essays on historical topics, all required skills for success on the A.P. exam.

The Jungle, written by Upton Sinclair in 1906, gives the reader insight into the horrible and unsanitary conditions in the meatpacking industry at the dawn of the twentieth century in the United States. It sent shock waves across a country that prided itself on being a modern land of progress and prosperity. Sinclair was a leading figure in a reform movement that spread across American society and became known as the Progressive Era.

Summer Reading Assignment:

Students are asked to read the book over the summer and to assess its content and meaning in a rich writing assignment when they return to school. This will be done during the first full week of school in September. Students will be allowed to reference only handwritten notes at the time of the assessment.

Guidelines:

While reading, students should pay particular attention to the following:

- the conditions in the meatpacking industry
- the overall social and economic conditions in America at the turn of the century
- the operation of the political machine of the day
- the progressive reforms that occurred during the time period