

# — eduprojects: social studies —

All of our projects are built to the Common Core State Standards to help educators teach the skills students need for success in college, careers and life. Educators, students, and experts team up on project work and incorporate 21st-century learning with today's technology.

## AMERICAN HISTORY MYTHBUSTERS

*How do we know what really happened in American History?*

Today we tell stories of this country's history for many different reasons.

Sometimes these reasons have more to do with the present than the past: to entertain, to persuade others of our opinion, or to get them to join our cause, and even to teach a moral lesson. This project encourages a critical reading of history and allows students to differentiate between the actual historical record, and the myth, folklore and romanticized stories that sometimes develop around historical figures and events. In this project, students will produce a digital vodcast (visuals + podcast) 'episode' of MythBusters — American History Edition.



## IT'S A FREE COUNTRY

Through a series of Socratic seminars highlighting texts expressing foundational ideals of democracy (especially the US Constitution), students will ponder questions like: *Why do we need governments?* They will author an opinion paper, delve into where the ideas behind the US form of government came from, and discuss why we are still arguing about the US Constitution today.

## POINT COUNTERPOINT

*Can the United States make up for the injustices suffered by Native Americans during the founding of this nation?* After learning background information about the settling of the American West, students will engage in the 'Structured Academic Controversy (SAC)' style of discussion. Not a debate, the SAC is designed to help students practice argumentation skills while seeking to deeply understand all sides of a controversial issue. They will also author an opinion paper citing quotations and examples from articles as support for their arguments.

## "I WAS THERE" PROJECT

*How can we know what it was truly like for everyday people to experience the American Civil War?* After studying the American Civil War and reading journals, letters, and other writings from people of that era, students will create a fictional character in the Civil War era and develop a story about that person. Any role they wish — a confederate or union soldier, a slave, a wife of a soldier. Their piece will be written in first person in the form of letters, diary entries or a story.

## WORKERS VS. INDUSTRIALISTS

In a mock trial format along with a trial reflection paper, students will come to understand that technological advances paved the way for the American Industrial Revolution, but at a high cost. Students will grapple with the fact that in the year 1900 alone, 35,000 workers were killed and another million injured on the job and an estimated two million children under the age of 16 were employed in mills, factories and mines across the United States. In a mock trial students will argue whether the pain and suffering, lost childhood, poverty and early deaths of millions of workers during the industrial revolution in the US was a necessary sacrifice to build the powerful American economic engine we enjoy today, or *Were industrialists like Carnegie, Rockefeller and Morgan motivated by greed to take advantage of immigrants and workers?*

## PROJECT AMERICA

In this capstone project, students will take all they have learned of American history — from the colonial period to after the civil war. Students will employ the skills they have practiced: how to closely examine historical evidence; how to separate myth from fact; how to ask questions and make arguments from different perspectives; and how to put yourself in someone's shoes who lived through historical events. Combining students knowledge and skills, they will connect the early history of this country and what is going on today. Through a multi-media storytelling project, students will answer questions like: *If the US is a 'great experiment' how is the experiment going? What does it mean to be an American today versus 200 years ago? Are we going in the right direction? What are your hopes for your future and the future of America?*

