Common Core Social Studies Learning Plan Template

**Lesson Title:** Understanding Puritanism: A contemporary look at Puritan America

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**Appropriate for Grade Level(s):** 11th AP US History or for short review in 11th Grade U.S. History

**History Standard(s)/Applicable CCSS(s) (RI, W, S&L, L):**

**US History Standard(s)**

*H4.[9-12].10* Explore the influence of various world cultures on the United States

**CCSS Reading Standards**

*RH11-12.1* Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.

*RH11-12.2* Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

**CCSS Writing Standards**

*WH11-12.1* Write arguments focused on *discipline-specific content.*

*WH11-12.9* Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

**Type of Lesson:** Reading with Text Dependent Questions, Jigsaw Discussion Strategy

**Student Readings (list):**

*Our Inner Puritans: America may still be a Puritan Nation,* Matthew Hutson, August 10, 2012

*Jobs in America: Puritan values must replace MBA values,* Kenneth and William Hopper, April 8, 2010

*Puritan Influences on Modern American Culture and Thought,* Nicole Smith, December 7, 2011

*Still Puritan After All These Years,* Matthew Hutson, August 3, 2012

**Total Time Needed:** 1.5 – 2 hours plus time to write essay

**Lesson Outline:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Time Frame**  **(e.g. 15 minutes)** | **What is the teacher doing?** | **What are students doing?** |
| 5 minutes | Teacher will divide the class into four groups. Depending on the size of the four groups the teacher may choose to break students down into smaller groups within the four groups. Each of the four main groups will be given one of the four selected articles and the close reading guide that accompanies it. Every student should have their own copy of the article and the close reading guide. | Students will physically relocate into their groups. |
| 30-45 minutes | Teacher should be monitoring the reading and analysis of the articles as each group reads and discusses the question. The teacher is available to answer questions and to redirect students who may be off topic or need clarification on misinterpretations.  \*The teacher can scaffold the assignment by requiring specific annotations. | Students will read their article individually first, making annotations if necessary. Students will then read through the article together in their group and respond to the close reading questions. Students should be dialoguing about each question as they work through the document. When the group has finished, all students should feel confident discussing and explaining their article to other members of the class from different groups who had not read the same article. |
| 5 minutes | Teacher will ask students to number off within their four groups in order to create groups of four students each for the Jigsaw Activity. Each of these four students in the new groups will have read a different article. | Students will move into their new group. There will be four students who have each read and analyzed a different article. Students should literally move desks so that they are facing each other for their discussions. |
| 10-15 minutes | Teacher should be monitoring the discussions. If necessary the teacher can intervene to make clarifications or to correct misinterpretations. | Each of the four students will summarize the main claims of the essay that they read. |
| 20 minutes | Teacher should continue to monitor student discussions. | Students will then discuss with each other the two questions listed at the bottom of their close reading guide. Students will respond to the questions by citing specific textual evidence from each of the four different articles. |
| 10-15 minutes | Teacher will facilitate a whole class debrief in which students discuss their responses to the two primary questions. | Students will discuss as a whole group their claims about Puritan culture and Puritanism in America today. |
| Optional | The teacher may choose to add an optional writing assignment. |  |

**Description of Lesson Assessment:** Students will be assessed informally throughout the lesson as the teacher monitors and facilitates small and whole group discussions. Formal assessment will occur when the teacher reviews student responses on the close reading guides and student use of textual evidence to support their argument. If the teacher chooses to extend the lesson to include an argumentative writing component then that essay will serve as formal assessment as well.

**How will students reflect on the process and their learning?** Students will reflect on both content and the process during the whole group debrief facilitated by the teacher at the end of the lesson.

***Our Inner Puritans: America may still be a Puritan nation***

[Matthew Hutson](http://www.psychologytoday.com/experts/matthew-hutson), August 10, 2012

The Puritans often serve as a punch line—the kind of people who would outlaw dancing—but their history is complex, and as Americans we may carry their candle to a larger degree than you think. In Sunday’s *New York Times* I wrote about their influence on our modern culture and [morality](http://www.psychologytoday.com/basics/morality), but there’s more to the story than could fit in the final article:

The Puritans may not have been as prudish as conceived—they considered [sex](http://www.psychologytoday.com/basics/sex) a gift from God—but they did consider sex outside of [marriage](http://www.psychologytoday.com/basics/marriage) an abuse of that gift.

Bottom of Form

Protestant teachings have such a hold on our culture in part because so many Americans are so outwardly [religious](http://www.psychologytoday.com/basics/religion); it shapes how the rest of us think. Typically countries become more secular as they develop economically. We haven’t. According to the World Values Survey, when asked in 2006 how important God is in their lives, 58 percent of Americans answered 10 out of 10. By comparison, 38 percent of Canadians and 23 percent of British gave that response.

Francis Bremer, a historian with expertise in Puritanism, says that our separation of church and state—implemented by the Puritans who fled the Church of England—ironically strengthens the influence of religion in the United States. “The Constitution basically thrusts religion into a [competition](http://www.psychologytoday.com/basics/sport-and-competition),” he told me. Without state funds, congregations have to proselytize, “and this actually makes religion more vital in America than is it in some other countries.”

The famous “Protestant work ethic” led the German sociologist Max Weber to thank Protestantism for the rise of capitalism—a system, one might note, currently dominated by the United States of Guess Where. (The sociologist Richard Swedberg told me, “Weber’s thesis is very suggestive, and the final verdict is still not in.”)

The Protestant work ethic may also explain the appeal of the self-made man. “In America the ideal is the guy who came from nothing,” says Eric Luis Uhlmann, the researcher whose work formed the backbone of the article. “But in a lot of other parts of the world the new rich are actually seen as inferior. Meaning that it’s not just about having money, it’s about having this aristocratic pedigree.” Here, being a Hilton might get you a reality TV show but it doesn’t guarantee you respect.

According to several studies, we are the most individualistic people in the world; this may be a remnant of the Protestant rejection of church hierarchy and emphasis on a personal relationship with God.

We’re also highly meritocratic, a possible reflection of the Protestant work ethic. Compared to other countries, the U.S. has consistently been late to introduce public welfare programs such as nationalized health care. We choose equality of opportunity over equality of outcome—even though opportunities aren’t always equal.

The participatory element of Puritan congregationalism has led to a more participatory [government](http://www.psychologytoday.com/basics/politics), Francis Bremer says, with ordinary people making decisions in both church meetings and town meetings, as well as in elections. (A high number of our officials are elected.) This participation also means that our culture is dominated by middle-class values to a larger degree than other nations.

“The idea that everyone should be educated is a remnant of the Puritan emphasis” on [education](http://www.psychologytoday.com/basics/education), Bremer says. They wanted to spread their culture and their faith. “And I think even the idea now that everyone should have the right to a college education is sort of a continuation of that.”

Some scholars have seen a moral absolutism in American affairs—suggested by our huge prison population and our denigration of other nations as “evil”—and laid it at the feet of Puritanism.

But the Puritans can’t be blamed for everything. We might also see the fingerprints of the Victorians on our prudishness and social Darwinists on our meritocracy.

In any case, as the Frenchman Alexis de Tocqueville wrote in the 1830’s after coming to the U.S., “I think I can see the whole destiny of America contained in the first Puritan who landed on those shores.” And he might say the same thing if he were to revisit these shores. Unless he landed in Jersey

***Still Puritan After All These Years***

Matthew Hutson, August 3, 2012

“I THINK I can see the whole destiny of America contained in the first Puritan who landed on those shores,” the French political thinker Alexis de Tocqueville wrote after visiting the United States in the 1830s. Was he right? Do present-day Americans still exhibit, in their attitudes and behavior, traces of those austere English Protestants who started arriving in the country in the early 17th century? – Trenton Duerksen

It seems we do. Consider a series of experiments conducted by researchers led by the psychologist Eric Luis Uhlmann and published last year in the Journal of Experimental Social Psychology. In one study, they investigated whether the work habits of today’s Americans reflected the so-called Protestant work ethic. Martin Luther and John Calvin argued that work was a calling from God. They also believed in predestination and viewed success as a sign of salvation. This led to belief in success as a path to salvation: hard work and good deeds would bring rewards, in life and after.

In the study, American and Canadian college students were asked to solve word puzzles involving anagrams. But first, some were subtly exposed to (or “primed” with) salvation-related words like “heaven” and “redeem,” while others were exposed to neutral words. The researchers found that the Americans — but not the Canadians — solved more anagrams with salvation on the mind. They worked harder.

Professor Uhlmann and his colleagues also conducted an experiment to see if Americans shared the prudishness of the Puritans. They found that American students judged promiscuous women more harshly than British students did.

In a third experiment, the researchers asked Asian-Americans to rate their support for a school principal who had canceled a prom because of sexually charged dancing and also to rate their support for a school that had banned revealing clothing. But first, the researchers primed the participants with thoughts of either their Asian or their American heritage, as well as with thoughts of work or another topic. They found that the participants showed increased approval of the prudish school officials when primed with thoughts of work — if they had *also* been primed with their American heritage, but not when primed with their Asian heritage. These results suggest a tight Puritanical intermingling of work, sex and morality in the American mind.

In none of these studies did the results hinge on the participants’ religious affiliation or level of religious feeling. Whatever these Americans explicitly believed (or didn’t believe) about God, something like Puritan values seemed to be guiding their moral judgments.

Protestant attitudes about work may also influence how Americans treat their co-workers. Calvin argued that socializing while on the job was a distraction from the assignment God gave you. The psychologist Jeffrey Sanchez-Burks has found that Protestants — but not Catholics — become less sensitive to others’ emotions when reminded of work, possibly indicating a tendency to judge fraternizing as unproductive and unprofessional. He and collaborators have also found that Americans have a culturally specific tendency to view family photos and other personal items as unprofessional presences in the office.

Not all of the legacy of Puritanism suggests moral uprightness. Studies since the ’70s have also found that Americans who score high on a Protestant Ethic Scale (emphasizing self-reliance and self-discipline) or similar metric show marked prejudice against racial minorities and the poor; hostility toward social welfare efforts; and, among obese women, self-denigration.

Why the persistence of Puritanism in American life? “New England exercised a disproportionate influence on American ideals,” the historian John Coffey says, “thanks to a powerful intellectual tradition disseminated through its universities, its dynamic print culture and the writings of its famous clergy.” He also notes the power of Evangelicalism as a carrier of Puritan values and America’s resistance, compared with other largely Protestant nations, to secularization.

It’s hard to say for sure that any given element of the American psyche results from our Puritan founders. “The direct lines are few,” stresses David D. Hall, a professor of New England church history, “mostly because of industrialization and immigration” and other factors that have led to immense social change.

But were Tocqueville to land on our shores today, with a bit of squinting he would probably see some of the same evidence of our Puritan destiny as he did nearly two centuries ago.

***Puritan Influences on Modern American Culture and Thought***

Nicole Smith, Dec. 7, 2011

The ideas put forth by the Puritans are not simply an important starting point for American culture because they were the first in the country, but because they offered ways of thinking that are still ingrained in our culture today. Although many of the thoughts of Puritans have gradually dissipated or become less meaningful over time, it is important to note that Puritan writers and thinkers such as [John Winthrop](http://www.articlemyriad.com/puritan-ideology-sinners-hands-angry-god/) and Roger Williams offered ideas that were new at the time that stayed with the American consciousness—culturally, socially, and politically.

Notions of freedom, liberty, and the role of religion within the state have long since been at the forefront of national debates. When the Puritans considered such ideas, their thoughts and writings on the matter were never quite forgotten, only shifted and modified to suit the taste of contemporary concerns. In “The Journal of John Winthrop” and Williams’ treatise, “The Bloody Tenet of Persecution for the Cause of Conscience” many ideas that are still present in modern American life and culture are brought forward and explored. By examining these writings, it becomes more possible to trace the [philosophical development of America](http://www.articlemyriad.com/influence-enlightenment-formation-united-states/) from the colonial to the modern period.

The idea of government and the meaning of liberty have been questions plaguing Americans since the time John Winthrop wrote in his journal in 1648. In many ways, the issues he addresses, most notably in the section of his journal containing his speech to the General Court, are the same that are alive in contemporary debates about the role of the government and what moral liberty means. In the beginning of his speech he states, “The great questions that have troubled the country are about the authority of the magistrates and the liberty of the people” and the modern reader cannot help but think about how such a statement resonates today. This shows that the Puritans paved the way for constantly questioning the political and moral foundations from the very beginning.

In addition to this more general notion about Puritan culture in early America, Winthrop brings forth the question of what true liberty means. While it differs from more contemporary notions, he does provide a valid starting point for American culture’s obsession with an ever-broadening and changing definition of liberty and freedom. For instance, Winthrop writes that there are two types of liberty; natural and civil. In terms of nature Winthrop writes in one of the important quotes from The Journal of [John Winthrop](http://www.articlemyriad.com/200.htm), “man, as he stands in relation to man simply hath the liberty to what he lists; it is a liberty to evil as well as to good.” By making this claim he is building the foundations for later American ideas such as what freedom is and to what extent personal liberty should be allowed, particularly if the possibility of evil exists. Aside from this early allusion to more modern debates in America, Winthrop also puts forth the related idea about how liberty is something that is God-given.

John Winthrop says that “This liberty is maintained and exercised in a way of subjection to authority; it is of the same kind of liberty wherewith Christ has made us free.” In other words, Winthrop views the liberty of the Puritans as something that is loving and nurturing, but also something that has the potential to be abused. Winthrop was quite ahead of his time in many aspects, especially in terms of how he thought critically about the meaning of liberty and the individual’s right to act according to moral (or immoral) principles. These ideas were a crucial starting point for American culture because they set forth the questions about the personal sense of free will and liberty; both in terms of the state and the self.

A more specific contribution to later American culture was put forth by Roger Williams who, although steeped in some Puritan ideals, was something of an outcast among his peers because of his somewhat radical religious and political views. In his piece entitled, “The Bloody Tenet of Persecution for the Cause of Conscience” he discusses the very modern issue of the separation between the church and the state. His comments in this piece are remarkable because they offer an early argument on the topic thus building the groundwork for later American cultural notions of the separation of religious and civil matters. They are also revolutionary in terms of their later effects because although he makes an argument for the separation, it does not seem to be the same one put forth by the eventual creators of the Constitution. For instance, he states, “an enforced uniformity if religion throughout a nation or civil state confounds the civil and religious, denies the principles of Christianity and civility, and [denies] that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh.” In essence, what he is suggesting is not the modern rationale for the separation, but that the two should be kept apart because one is too sacred (the church) to be mixed up with the other. This was an important thought for later American ideas and culture, even if the separation eventually was for the reason of keeping power balanced and without interference. Despite the ways these ideas might have changed from Williams’ initial assertions, it is worth noting that he laid the groundwork for such a debate—even if it caused him to become a pariah in the Puritan community. In addition to this progressive idea from the Puritan period, Williams also makes another forward-thinking point when he says in one of the important quotes from “The Bloody Tenet of Persection” that “God requireth not an uniformity of religion to be enacted and enforced in any civil state.” Such a statement is very similar to the eventual American creed of allowing the free practice of any religion without state interference. By using the intentions of God in his statement, Williams is saying that there is no one religion that should be mandated. Out of the many ideas put forth that would later go on to influence all aspects of the [development of American culture and politics](http://www.articlemyriad.com/influence-enlightenment-formation-united-states/), this is perhaps the most important and still one of the most resonant.

***Jobs in America****:* ***Puritan values must replace MBA values.***

Kenneth Hopper and William Hopper, April 8, 2010

What caused the great recession? Theories abound. Some argue that poorly designed government policies and artificially low interest rates created a bubble, while others blame Wall Street's reckless lending practices.

Almost all, however, look to current or recent developments, not long-term historical trends. Yet the real story of the massive meltdown of 2008 starts not in the late 20th century but in the early 17th.

It was in the 1630s that the Puritan migration to America set the cornerstone for US economic prosperity -- and it was our falling away from Puritan values in the 1970s that sowed the seeds of destruction.

This migration endowed the Bay Colony of Massachusetts with four core beliefs: (1) a conviction that the purpose of life, however vaguely conceived, was to establish the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth; (2) an aptitude for the exercise of mechanical skills; (3) a moral outlook that subordinated the interests of the individual to the group; and (4) an ability to assemble and use financial, material, and human resources to a single purpose, on a massive or a lesser scale.

These four beliefs created a powerhouse. The genius of America's inherited "hands-on," "can-do," "up-the-ladder" managerial culture cannot be overstated. In the course of three centuries, it turned a handful of small colonies into the greatest economic and political power on earth.

The perversion of this culture -- spurred by the rise of the "professional manager," often with an MBA degree -- has hollowed out the US economy and undermined American thrift and self-reliance. Forty years ago, the net national savings rate was 10 percent. Last year, it reached minus 2.5 percent.

The Puritans loved to get their hands dirty

The Puritan journey to America was a masterpiece of organization. Two substantial earlier attempts had failed. Of the 144 people who had sailed for Virginia in 1606, only 38 remained alive by the end of 160 7. Of the roughly 100 Pilgrims who had sailed on the Mayflower in 1620, barely half survived until March 1621.

By way of contrast, 200 ships brought 14,000 migrants to the Bay Colony of Massachusetts between 1630 and 1640 -- and nearly all survived. Only one ship was lost at sea. This third attempt succeeded because its organizers had mastered the logistics of travel. In 10 short years, they also laid the social, legal, political, religious, and commercial foundations of the future United States.

The Puritans equated godliness with craftsmanship. From the outset, a willingness to become involved in menial tasks, to "get one's hands dirty," distinguished American society from older and more stratified European societies. Managers rose to senior positions only after demonstrating ability at lower levels. Puritanism is, essentially, an attitude of mind and an associated series of practices which, in the right circumstances, can be, and have been, transferred between races, tribes, nations, and even religions.

This way of doing things would evolve to reach a peak of ability in what we call the Golden Age of Management (1920-70). The rise of the professional manager.

Sadly, under the influence of top-tier business schools, America would walk away from its inherited managerial culture after 1970. This lowered the quality of manufactured goods. And it contributed to disasters as diverse as the savings and loan crisis, the Enron debacle, and today's global credit crisis.

Before 1970, management was regarded as a craft to be learned "on the job" under the eye of an experienced executive. As a junior manager climbed the ladder, he would also acquire what General Electric CEO Jeff Immelt has called "domain knowledge." As a result, banks in the mid-20th century were run by people who knew a lot about banking, engineering companies by people who knew a lot about engineering, and so on.

Under the new dispensation, management was reclassified as a profession to be practiced by holders of a special academic degree (the MBA) -- just like medicine or the law. It was no longer considered necessary for an executive to learn the craft of management or to acquire "domain knowledge." The holder of an MBA was deemed capable of exercising control over any kind of organization through the medium of its accounts department. "Financial engineering" replaced mechanical engineering. The effect on the quality of decision making in both the public and the private sectors was catastrophic.

**Text Analysis**  Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Period \_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Source(s):**

*Our Inner Puritans: America may still be a Puritan Nation, Matthew Hutson, August 10, 2012*

**Directions:** Read the article and respond to the following questions in the chart below.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Question | Response – Use specific line numbers to identify the evidence |
| Why does Protestantism have such a “hold on America”? |  |
| What is the result of the Puritan idea of the separation of church and state on American culture? |  |
| What does Hutson contribute the rise of capitalism to? |  |
| Describe how the Protestant work ethic is exemplified in the United States. |  |
| What was the impact of, “ordinary people making decisions in both church meetings and town meetings”? |  |
| Why did Alexis de Tocqueville believe, “the whole of destiny of America contained in the first Puritan who landed on those shores”? |  |

**SOCRATIC JIGSAW ACTIVITY**

**Directions:** You will now be grouped with 3 other students. Each of you have read a different article and have answered different questions regarding the impacts of Puritanism on American culture. You will now share your articles and responses to those questions.

After sharing your articles, discuss and respond to the following questions as a group using evidence from each of your readings. Cite line numbers.

1. What are the core elements of Puritan culture?
2. To what extent did Puritanism shape American culture?

**Text Analysis**  Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Period \_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Source(s):**

*Jobs in America: Puritan values must replace MBA values, Kenneth and William Hopper, April 8, 2010*

**Directions:** Read the article and respond to the following questions in the chart below.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Question | Response – Use specific line numbers to identify the evidence |
| In your own words, describe the four core beliefs of Puritanism. |  |
| What do the authors mean by “can-do” and “up-the-ladder”? |  |
| What do the authors mean when they say, “the Puritans loved to get their hands dirty”? |  |
| What role did organization play in the success of Puritan migration? |  |
| Use specific evidence from the text to compare and contrast Puritan values with MBA values. Create a venn diagram in the space provided for this task. |  |

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**Source(s):**

*Puritan Influences on Modern American Culture and Thought, Nicole Smith, December 7, 2011*

**Directions:** Read the article and respond to the following questions in the chart below.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Question | Response – Use specific line numbers to identify the evidence |
| What impact did Puritan ideas of freedom, liberty, and the role of religion have in the formation of American consciousness and modern American debates? |  |
| According to the authors, what was John Winthrop’s idea of liberty and freedom? |  |
| In what way was John Winthrop “quite ahead of his time”? |  |
| What was radical about Roger Williams’ religious and political ideas? |  |
| How does Williams’ argument for separation of church and state differ from more contemporary arguments? |  |
| Why is the “American Creed” such an important part of American culture? (Line 63) |  |

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**Source(s):**

*Still Puritan After All These Years, Matthew Hutson, August 3, 2012*

**Directions:** Read the article and respond to the following questions in the chart below.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Question | Response – Use specific line numbers to identify the evidence |
| According to Martin Luther and John Calvin; what is the relationship between religion and work? |  |
| Describe the first three studies explained in the text. In your own words, what research questions were being asked and what were the results? |  |
| How do American Protestants demonstrate their views at work? |  |
| Why did Puritans have such a lasting impact on American culture? |  |
| Why did Alexis de Tocqueville believe, “the whole of destiny of America contained in the first Puritan who landed on those shores” (Line 1-2)? |  |

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