

## THEMES IN PARTICIPATION IN DEMOCRACY

**Themes in Participation in Democracy:**<sup>1</sup> Themes enable students to create meaningful connections across units of study and supplemental readings (current events and scholarly articles). They are often broader ideas that become threads that run throughout the course. Revisiting them and applying them in a variety of contexts helps students to develop deeper conceptual understanding. Below are the themes of the course and a brief description of each.

### **Theme 1: American and National Identity (NAT)**

This theme focuses on how and why definitions of American and national identity and values have developed among the diverse and changing population of North America as well as on related topics, such as citizenship, constitutionalism, foreign policy, assimilation, and American exceptionalism.

### **Theme 2: Work, Exchange, and Technology (WXT)**

This theme focuses on the factors behind the development of systems of economic exchange, particularly the role of technology, economic markets, and government.

### **Theme 3: Geography and The Environment (GEO)**

This theme focuses on the role of geography and both the natural and human-made environments in the social and political developments in what would become the United States.

### **Theme 4: Migration and Settlement (MIG)**

This theme focuses on why and how the various people who moved to and within the United States both adapted to and transformed their new social and physical environments.

### **Theme 5: Politics and Power (PCE)**

This theme focuses on how different social and political groups have influenced society and government in the United States as well as how political beliefs and institutions have changed over time.

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<sup>1</sup> These eight themes are taken from the AP College Board's *AP United States History: Course and Exam Description*, Effective Fall 2020.

**Theme 6: America In the World (WOR)**

This theme focuses on the interactions between nations that affected North American history in the colonial period and on the influence of the United States on world affairs.

**Theme 7: American and Regional Culture (ARC)**

This theme focuses on the how and why national, regional, and group cultures developed and changed as well as how culture has shaped government policy and the economy.

**Theme 8: Social Structures (SOC)**

This theme focuses on how and why systems of social organization develop and change as well as the impact that these systems have on the broader society.

**Abbreviations:**

**(NAT):** American and National Identity

**(WXT):** Work, Exchange, and Technology

**(GEO):** Geography and Environment

**(MIG):** Migration and Settlement

**(PCE):** Politics and Power

**(WOR):** America in the World

**(ARC):** America and Regional Culture

**(SOC):** Social Structures