Words of wisdom from the AP US History kiddies of 2014-2015 for the students of 2015-2016…

The below is a collection of thoughts offered by this year’s AP students, after the AP test in May, to next year’s students, in response to the following ‘prompt’…

“As you sit here on your first day of AP US history, we offer you these words of wisdom…”

* Don’t drop the class. It is tough, it is time consuming, but you will adjust and it will be worth it.
* Do all the Spirits yourself, do not split the work with others. This will allow you to share your thoughts in class more easily.
* Work together whenever possible – study partner/group.
* Talk in class – makes it more interesting.
* I didn’t know it at the time… but the work is valuable.
* Don’t prograstinate (sic) (Yes some AP students still have spelling issues…)
* Don’t worry about the test at the end of the year, just take one step at a time. It is all worth it.
* Just another class.
* Don’t get behind work in your **other** classes.
* Always participate. You’ll be surprised with how much knowledge you obtain from conversation and debate with your peers.
* Put down your phone and get stuff done.
* Get the APUSH test prep book that you used last year.
* Signs of sleep deprivation only start occurring at around 5 ½ hours, so you will be perfectly fine at only 6.
* Walking out of the AP test in May will be the best feeling in the entire world.
* Try to connect themes/ideas from Tocqueville/Cohen and understand why and how our country has changed/stayed the same.
* Don’t assume what you’re learning/learned in the past is correct. Interpret things how you see it and develop your own ideas of why this country has changed. Challenge the different ideas you are introduced to.
* This class is unlike other classes where you’re just doing it for the grade. Enjoy it, don’t panic and realize that your perspectives could change throughout the year…
* History’s a lot more subjective than you were initially taught.
* It’s better to review the content all year and go watch Jimmy Fallon and sleep!!, than become some panda-looking, I-haven’t-showered-because-I’m-studying-500+years-of-history-in-24-hours, creature who reeks of regret and desperation (the night before the AP test in May). So just do your work… it’s all for your benefit.
* Do not drop. Academically this class has buffed up my resistance to work. When I hear that we have to write an essay in another class I think nothing of it because of what we do here. (Mental weightlifting…)
* You may want to scream and drop the class because the tests are so hard and the work load throughout the entire year is massive, but don’t. This class will be hard, but also very fun. Just sit down and think of the future. I can promise you that you will dread many assignments, but also they will help you immensely. All that studying, writing Spirits, free responses, DBQ’s, games and reading (historiography) will absolutely pay off by over-preparing you for the AP test. (He) really does care about his students and wants them to achieve great things. He isn’t there to purposely make you suffer with too much homework.
* Take good notes – write down anything emphasized, underline anything that could be an ID.
* YouTube videos! (Adam Norris)
* The projects you will often do are called “Games.” Just a heads up, they are not fun games like sports or video games.
* If you cram an entire game into one night, you will not retain any of the information and the games will not help you. When you take the AP test in May you are going to reflect on your games in order to answer the questions. Also, have fun! Things like the Imperialism debate can be a hunk of fun!
* You have probably heard that this class is difficult and a lot of work, but in the end, the more effort you put into it the more proud of yourself you are going to be after the AP exam. …know that all of the activities are worth it. Most of the projects allow you to be creative, so don’t stress about them and have fun putting your opinions into them
* Taking this course has been a positive experience for me and it will be the same for you. Through this year you’ll see history in a whole new way and when you take the AP test, you’ll be amazed by how much information you know. Take a deep breath and have a wonderful year!
* You will ‘circle up’ every day and instead of being taught you will discuss. It is a different environment and you will learn a lot. Overall, don’t stress, you will do well in the class and enjoy it!
* Dive in and get comfortable as soon as possible. Unlike other classes things at the beginning of the year will be just as relevant as the things at the end.
* Work will seem less intimidating if you can make yourself start before the last minute. In class, I recommend to talk as much as possible. This is a very successful way to reinforce your own info and verify that you are on the right track. Many topics in class are identical to test topics. It is also crucial to pay attention, take good, attentive notes. We cover everything you will need and having good notes will be extremely important.
* …So do not stress out over taking this class. Take your time, do not rush through any of your work. Do not think that you can BS any of your work either. Be genuine and be creative.
* The work load is intense but doable. For me the best way to not get distracted was hiding my phone. However, sometimes I hid it too well and couldn’t find it… but point is stay off your phone.
* … You shouldn’t feel intimidated by someone who has a 15 page Thesis Thing (Josh) when yours is only 6 or 7. Quality over quantity seems to rule in this class and if you can talk about the main ideas and a few specifics of a topic then you are golden.
* Time management…
* This is most likely one of the first AP classes you’re going to take at Mainland, and you’re probably very nervous. But you shouldn’t be! You belong in this class because you’re bright, hardworking, and willing to challenge yourself…. Be proud and keep your efforts up all year. Participate in class and don’t be afraid to share your thoughts – it’ll help you in the long run! … Do your American Spirits! Although you may not realize it at first, that book will help you a ton in your understanding and thoughts on history. …Enjoy your time in this class while you have it, because time will fly by very quickly and before you know it you’ll be finished… and more than ready for summer break. This course and school year will be very rewarding for you, so make the most of it! Don’t worry, have fun, you’ll do great! :)
* Try to enjoy the class. It’s all worth the experience in the end…
* This room is freezing, maybe bring a sweatshirt.