

## 2 Ways to Use American History Explorer

The possible uses for **American History Explorer** are virtually endless. Students, parents, teachers, historians, and anyone with an interest in America's rich history can use the program in a variety of ways to meet their specific needs--or simply for fun.

As a historic reference tool, the program provides several exciting new ways to learn about American history between 1492 and 1870.

**Take a Time Trek:** These eight time lines serve as chronological "ports of entry" into the program's database. Articles that mark each year on a time line serve as a beginning point for study. The articles, maps, presidential profiles, and documents that branch off the main line help put people and events into perspective. The videos that accompany each time line bring a segment of history to life.

**Research a Topic:** Just enter the name of a person, place, or event in the program's Finder feature and the program will present a Search Results List with all the maps, articles, videos, slide shows, and pictures that contain information on your subject. Just double-click on any item in the list to open it on screen.

**Explore for Fun:** View any of the 93 detailed color maps and nearly 1,400 associated articles containing detailed information on historical events, people, places, and more. Among the articles are many historic documents such as the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States, and 21 presidential inaugural addresses. You can also view slides from the Picture Album or use the special glasses included with the program to view stereo images in the 3-D Gallery.

**Quiz Yourself:** After studying **American History Explorer** (or even before), use the 5Ws Game to take a multiple choice test of your knowledge. If you don't select the expected answer at first, the program encourages more research by suggesting articles, maps, and other information that will give you the answer.

**American History Explorer** is also a dynamic mapping tool that allows you to create and manipulate maps to suit your specific needs. You can start with maps included with the program and modify them according to your preference, or you can create maps from scratch using the regular or topographic background maps as your foundation. As you add items to your maps, you can write your own articles to accompany them and/or link any articles that were included with the program. You can even create links between your articles and existing articles or slides.

### Some Typical Uses

Listed below are some examples of typical ways people use **American History Explorer**. These may give you some ideas about how to use the program yourself, either now or in the future. Once you get started, you're certain to discover many ways the program can work for you. Note that the features mentioned in the following descriptions will be covered fully in the chapters that follow and in the extensive online Help system, so don't worry about the procedural details for now.

*We're planning a vacation to the East Coast next summer and would like to find out about Civil War battles sites in that area.*

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**American History Explorer** contains a number of maps pertaining to the Civil War. Sort the map list in the Select Map dialog alphabetically and locate the Civil War maps. Several of them contain the sites of the major Eastern campaigns. You can merge these maps with the modern U.S. Political map to include modern cities for reference.

*I'm teaching a class unit on the Revolutionary War and want to learn as much as possible about that period of American history.*

Click the Time Trek icon and select the American Revolution time line. Once you're in the time line, you have quick access to program data on that period of history. Just click on any date on the main time line to open a Year article with links to all articles relating to that year. Be sure to access the maps, documents, presidential profiles, and videos associated with the time line, too.

*My class is learning the state capitals. What can I use as classroom aids?*

The Modern Political Map of the U.S. displays the states and capital cities. Print it as a hand-out study guide for your students and to use as a presentation graphic. Then edit this map, replacing the capital city names with blanks or numbers, to use as a test.

*I'd like to know more about Ulysses S. Grant.*

Use the Finder option and enter his name in the Search dialog. Check the categories you'd like to view such as articles, maps, slides, slide shows, and videos. Then let the program find every feature that refers to Grant. Once you have the program's list, you can choose which items to view.

*I'm studying my family's genealogy and am interested in determining where my ancestors first settled in the United States.*

If you know your ancestor's ethnic group, religion, and/or approximate dates of their immigration, you can use the Colonization maps to locate the regions they most likely first settled. (Sort the map list alphabetically and look for "colonization.") Genealogy libraries in these areas might be a source of immigration or other records on your ancestors.

*I'd like to know what Native American tribes were located in my area.*

Merge the Native American Tribes map with the Modern Political Map to see what tribes lived in what states. (After merging the maps, you may want to swap backgrounds to eliminate the topographical features, so it's easier to read map items.) Add cities from the database to the same map. Then use the map distance feature to measure the tribes proximity to those cities. Reading the articles associated with the tribes will also give you information on where they lived.

*I need to review the Declaration of Independence for a classroom report.*

Click the Source Book icon and select Declaration of Independence from the list in the Select Articles dialog box. The complete text of the document will appear on screen. You can also print a copy, if you like, or copy it to the Windows Clipboard to paste into your word processor as a text file.

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*My class is studying Christopher Columbus. What can I teach them that they don't already know?*

**American History Explorer** supplements its maps and articles with the text of historic documents, such as the letter from King Ferdinand promising rewards to Columbus and excerpts from the journal Columbus kept about his journey. Use the Finder to locate items that refer to Columbus.

*Our class is studying President James Madison. What information can American History Explorer provide?*

Click the Hall of Presidents feature to access detailed information about Madison or any of the other early presidents. From the gallery of presidential portraits, click on the president you want. Click on his portrait again to access three features about the selected president: a map illustrating his election results, an article profiling his life, and a slide show about him. You can also use the Compare Presidents feature for a quick biographical sketch of the selected president and a comparison with the other president.

*My brother claims the words originally written for the song "Dixie" are not the same as the words we use today. Is he right?*

Click the Song Book feature and make your choice to hear a version of the original Dixie. You can also play other songs from the Civil War period or select from those that were popular in the Colonial period of American history.

*I would like to prepare a map for a local history group showing the sites of Civil Rights events in my area in the 1960s.*

Although **American History Explorer** contains historic reference information spanning the years through 1870, you can use various background maps to create your own map and plot any map items you like.