PROFESORES DE ENSEÑANZA SECUNDARIA · INGLÉS · JUNTA DE EXTREMADURA

TEMA

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The Political, Social and Economic Evolution of the United States since 1945. Its Significance in International Politics. A Panoramic View of Current Literature in the United States

Evolución política, social y económica de Estados Unidos desde 1945. Su significación en la política internacional. Panorama literario actual en los Estados Unidos.

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Material de elaboración propia a partir de las fuentes oficiales que se citan al final del tema. No es un temario oficial ni sustituye a la normativa publicada.

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1. INTRODUCTION

On 12 March 1947 President Harry Truman told a joint session of Congress that it must be 'the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures.' With that sentence a country that had traditionally avoided entanglements beyond the Western Hemisphere in peacetime accepted a global role that it has never since abandoned. The sentence is a good key to this topic: since 1945 the United States has changed internally almost as much as it has changed the world around it, and the two stories cannot be told apart.

The topic covers eighty years, so selection is essential. I will first examine the political evolution of the country, from the Truman presidency to the present. I will then turn to its social transformation, centred on the struggle for civil rights, and to its economic evolution, from post-war prosperity to the Great Recession and beyond. Fourthly, I will consider its significance in international politics, from containment to the present day. Fifthly, I will offer a panoramic view of American literature from the post-war decades to our own time, through drama, prose and poetry. Finally, I will consider the pedagogical and didactic implications of this content for the Secondary English classroom.

Before moving on, I would like to mention the sources consulted for the preparation of this topic: James T. Patterson's Grand Expectations: The United States, 1945–1974, Eric Foner's Give Me Liberty! An American History, and The Norton Anthology of American Literature, edited by Nina Baym, together with institutional sources such as the Office of the Historian of the U.S. Department of State, the U.S. National Archives, the Federal Reserve History website, the Bureau of Economic Analysis, the Nobel Prize website and the Academy of American Poets. As for the legal framework of the classroom, I will refer to Organic Law 3/2020 (LOMLOE), Royal Decrees 217/2022 and 243/2022 and the Extremaduran Decrees 110/2022 and 109/2022.