

American Studies

U.S. History

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The Puzzle Pieces of America

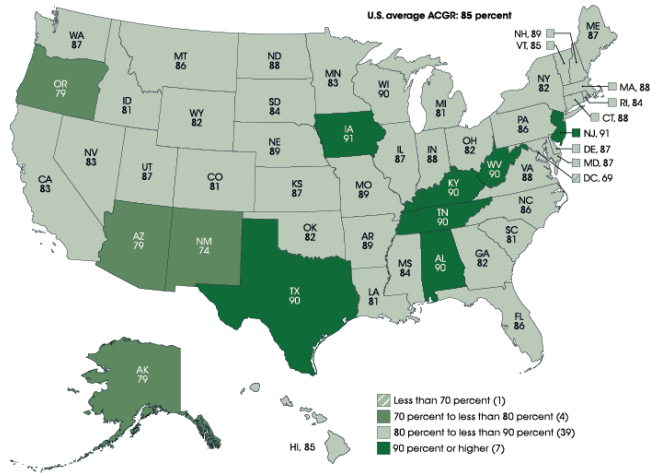
Since the year 1776, many core values have been passed on through generations and have been integrated into the American culture. The United States was founded on principles and beliefs to be better than before and to keep growing. Many values were put into place since the starting of the colonies, and some even continue to be used today. Two core American values, leadership and hard work, date back to the creation of the Declaration of Independence, and leadership can even be seen in John Winthrop's speech called *City Upon a Hill*. In his speech, Winthrop expresses how he feels that the new colonies will be leaders by saying, "For we must consider that we shall be as a city upon a hill. The eyes of all people will be upon us" (*City Upon a Hill*). These core values that have been passed along and have been relevant to ancestors in the past, like the Founding Fathers and many other important figures. America is currently living up to its core values of hard work and leadership, and these two values continuously flow in and out of society and are seen as stepping stones towards success.

To this day, America is fulfilling its value of hard work in many different ways. The United States has been built on this belief when it comes to its individuals and practices. Hard work is highly appreciated when it comes to many daily tasks in the American life. According to the USNews "*See High School Graduation By States*," "the nation's graduation rate is up to approximately 88%," and this shows that about 88 out of every 100 students graduate on time

each year in the US (See High School Graduation Rates By State). This shows improvement and hard work because these rates are the highest that they've been since 2010-2011. Hard work, as defined by Your Dictionary, is known as "something requiring lots of effort to do, either physically, mentally, or emotionally" (Hard Work Definition). This definition can be used to show how hard work is used when students put effort into school and endure the lengthy tasks to be able to graduate. This is just one small example of how hard work still exists today and will continue to be a core belief. Even though hard work does not come naturally, Americans have been taught this core value from youth when it comes to any task ahead.

Secondly, America is still supporting and upholding its value of leadership. To be a leader, one must guide others and help others accomplish their goals. According to the article from concernusa.org, titled "*Foreign Aid By Country: Who Is Getting The Most - And How Much?*", "Globally in 2017, the United States spent over \$46 Billion in foreign aid," which proves how the US has contributed money to other countries that were struggling. This then allowed these countries to succeed (Foreign Aid By Country: Who Is Getting The Most-And How Much?). Leadership in the United States has been established all the way back from the founding fathers and the Declaration of Independence and this value is viewed as a positive and helpful quality that is still lived up to in many ways.

Many beliefs and values have been practiced since the founding of America. These beliefs are highly appreciated today and are used throughout the average American's life. Two of these values that continue to be used today are leadership and hard work. These beliefs flow in and out of everything that an American does for themselves and for others. These traits not only are the base of the US, but allow America as a whole to become a better place for all.



(ACGR for public high school students)

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