Course Description: This week is loosely constructed around essential Social Studies skills like practicing inquiry, analyzing primary sources and visuals, reading effectively, and bringing it all together to write a reasonable argumentative thesis. (We might go really crazy and outline a basic essay if the spirit so moves.) Our focus will be on practical, usable classroom-ready ideas, both those aimed at effective content crunching and those designed to help shift the responsibility for learning back into the students’ hands. We’ll attempt to balance discussions of pedagogy and Pre-AP philosophy with a scattershot of actual activities, with more ‘doing’ than mere listening on the part of participants. In our Pollyanna fervor, we’ll explore the ways in which digging in a bit more deeply on some subjects, skills, and historical touchstones can help make the rest of what we want our little darlings to learn a bit ‘stickier’ (so that while what we care about most is their long-term academic, professional, and personal success, maybe they’ll also remember enough other content to pass a state test or two and not embarrass us with next year’s history teachers). In short, we’ll try to do lots of usable stuff while collaborating over pretty much anything we can try to unlock the signs of life and smartness our little darlings work so hard to bury and deny.

What To Bring:
- Please bring your best lesson plan or idea, in hopes we’ll have time to share
- Your greatest challenge, insecurity, or weakness in the classroom (don’t worry—we’ll be gentle)
- Something to write with and on for various activities

BIO

Dallas Koehn has taught various Social Studies and History classes of various ability levels at Union Public Schools in Tulsa, OK, for 15 years. He has been a consultant for the College Board for 10 of those years and has helped lead his department in implementing Pre-AP strategies for all students (a work always "still in progress"). Dallas has worked with both the State Social Studies and Fine Arts Conference and numerous school districts in Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Texas to throw as many starfish back in the ocean as possible - whether they wish to go or not. He is National Board Certified and is fairly tolerable after enough caffeine