

## Honors Level World History I Syllabus

*“The best prophet of the future is the past.”* Lord Byron

### Course Description

Through World History I, students explore ancient civilizations and post-classical empires, analyzing their rise, their fall, and their legacies. The course offers a global perspective, investigating the geography, culture, socio-political ideas, and innovations of the Ancient Middle East and Egypt, Ancient Greece and Rome, the Middle Ages, the Muslim world, and the civilizations of Asia. Students end the course with an analysis of how the western world transitioned from medieval to modern based upon the ideas and innovations of the Renaissance, the Scientific Revolution, and the Enlightenment. Throughout the course, students are asked to make connections between regions and time periods, often tracing the evolution of a socio-political idea, cultural norm, or innovation from the ancient world to the modern. To access information and learn multiple perspectives, students read informative and narrative secondary sources. They also access relevant primary sources to learn how historians gather information and draw conclusions. Critical thinking skills are taught and reinforced throughout the course.

This course is directly aligned with the traits defined in the *Portrait of the Crusader*. Through the study of history, students observe the impacts of injustice and oppression versus justice and freedom, and they are encouraged to value and respect the rights and dignity of all people. This class encourages students to be inspired learners, faithful citizens, and honorable souls.

### Assessment Practices

Student knowledge and skills are measured in a variety of ways throughout the course, which may include the following:

- Written assessments that include terminology, short answers, and constructed responses to assess content knowledge and make connections.
- Essays that ask students to research, analyze and respond with sound reasoning and thoughtful insight.
- A project that may include a presentation or performative component.
- A creative connection assessment which asks students to put themselves into an historic situation and create a memoir, journal, or letters.
- A Socratic Seminar or other form of debate.

### Essential Questions for the Course

- Why do civilizations rise to power? Why do they fall?
- How does geography impact the growth and decline of civilizations?
- What effect does trade have on people, cultures, and places?
- What causes cultural practices to spread and thrive?
- How do a civilization’s government and social hierarchy reflect its values?
- What cultural norms, innovative ideas and discoveries began with early civilizations?
- Why did feudalism begin? Was it the best solution for the time?

- Why is the Renaissance considered a rebirth?
- How did the Scientific Revolution and the Enlightenment change the course of the world?
- How did the Enlightenment take the scientific method and apply it to socio-political thought?

## Course Curriculum

### Unit 1 - The Ancient Middle East and Egypt

**Pacing: 5-12 Classes**

#### Focus Questions:

- What challenges do historians face when the information they have is imperfect? How do they address gaps and contradictory information?
- How important is geography to the development of a civilization?
- What are the characteristics of a civilization? What makes a civilization a culture hearth?
- How do social classes develop? What function did they serve in the ancient world?
- What ancient innovations were most impactful?

#### Concepts/Skills:

- Explain how improved agricultural practices, a surplus of food, and a rise in trade fostered the development of ancient civilizations.
- Determine how geography, including the Tigris, Euphrates, and Nile Rivers impacted the development of early civilizations.
- Define the characteristics (traits) of civilization and analyze how each contributed to the growth of specific civilizations.
- Explain why specific civilizations are considered culture hearths.
- Analyze the government and the social hierarchy of the Sumerian and Egyptian civilizations. Determine the role that specific classes played in the growth/rise of these civilizations.
- Analyze the role of religion in ancient civilizations. Compare and contrast religious aspects of the Sumerian, Persian, and Egyptian civilizations.
- Describe the impact of iron and other innovation on the military strength of ancient empires.
- Evaluate which innovations were most impactful and defend this decision.

### Unit 2 - Topic 5 - Ancient Greece

**Pacing: 5-12 Classes**

#### Focus Questions -

- Why and how do governments change?
- How did democracy form in Athens?
- How did political concepts developed in Ancient Greece evolve to the American concept of government?
- How influential was Alexander the Great?
- What were the most impactful contributions of the Ancient Greeks?

#### Concepts/Skills:

- Analyze the impact of the Minoans, Mycenaeans, and Dorians on ancient Greek civilization.

- Explain how democracy formed in Athens and compare this to democracy in the United States, including mandatory participation and the definition of citizen.
- Explain the structure of a Greek polis.
- Determine the role of geography in the development of Greek city states and compare and contrast Athens and Sparta.
- Analyze the causes, effects, and outcomes of the Persian and Peloponnesian Wars.
- Describe the impact of the phalanx strategy on ancient warfare.
- Analyze the life and legacy of Alexander the Great and his role in creating the Hellenistic age.
- Analyze the contributions of the Greek to philosophy, mathematics, astronomy, medicine, architecture and the arts.

### **Unit 3 - Topic 6 - Ancient Rome**

**Pacing: 5-12 Classes**

Focus Questions:

- Why was the Roman Republic unique?
- What made the Roman Republic turn into the Roman Empire?
- What were the key achievements and advancements of Roman civilization?
- What were the reasons for the decline of the Roman Empire?
- What are the lasting impacts/influences of the Roman Empire?

Concepts/Skills:

- Describe how specific geographical factors allowed Rome to develop differently than Greece.
- Describe the structure of the Roman Republic's government.
- Compare/contrast this structure with other civilizations studied to date.
- Explain why Rome was considered a multicultural environment.
- Explain the causes and effects of the Punic Wars.
- Describe how Julius Caesar laid the foundation for the Roman Empire.
- Analyze the impact that various Roman Emperors had on Rome.
- Explain the architectural and engineering innovations of the Romans.
- Compare and contrast the strengths of the Greeks and the Romans.
- Analyze the factors that led to the Roman Empire's split and the factors that contributed to the fall of the western half of the Roman Empire.
- Investigate the impact of plague on the empire.

### **Unit 4 - Topic 7 - The Early Middle Ages**

**Pacing: 5-8 Classes**

Focus Questions:

- Why did feudalism arise after the fall of the Roman Empire?
- What cultures and ideas merged to create the medieval civilization?
- How did Christianity become the dominant religion in Western Europe after the fall of the Roman Empire?
- What were the technological, artistic and architectural contributions of the period?

Concepts/Skills:

- Explain Justinian’s role in the Byzantine Empire.
- Analyze the impact of the Franks on the early medieval civilization.
- Explain the causes and effects of Charlemagne’s empire.
- Analyze the reasons that feudalism arose during this time period and evaluate how well it worked.
- Analyze the impact of feudalism on trade and the spread of culture and innovation.
- Analyze life under the feudal system for specific social classes.
- Describe the power and influence that the Church had on the people and institutions of the early middle ages.

**Unit 5 - Topic 7 - The Late Middle Ages**

**Pacing: 5-8 Classes**

Focus Questions:

- What factors led to Europe reconnecting with the rest of the world?
- What role did the Crusades play during the time period?
- How did kings in England and France attempt to centralize power?
- What led to the development of cities in Europe?
- What was life like in early European cities?
- What were the causes and effects of the Hundred Years’ War?
- How did the Magna Carta, the Black Death and the Hundred Years’ War change European society forever?

Concepts/Skills:

- Analyze the causes and effects of the Crusades.
- Identify some significant French and English kings and describe the actions that they took to increase their influence.
- Describe the formation and development of the Holy Roman Empire.
- Describe unique aspects of the art, architecture, and literature of the Middle Ages.
- Describe the effects of the Black Plague outbreak that occurred in the middle of the 14th century.
- Explain the factors that led to Europe ultimately phasing out knights and castles.

**Unit 6 - Topic 8 - The Muslim World**

**Pacing: 5-12 Classes**

Focus Questions:

- How did Islam begin?
- What are the Five Pillars of Islam?
- What are the differences between Sunni and Shiite Muslims?
- What was the impact of the Islamic caliphates?
- How did the culture and technology of the Middle East affect the rest of the world during this time period and beyond?
- How was the slave trade transformed by Europeans? What was the impact on Africa?

Concepts/Skills:

- Describe the origins of Islam.
- Describe the significance of the Umayyad and Abbasid caliphates.
- Analyze the value of ancient knowledge to the Muslim caliphates.
- Describe the unique aspects of Muslim culture and technology.
- Explain the reasons for the rise and fall of the Ottomans and Safavids.
- Determine how the Ottoman Empire was a catalyst for European exploration.
- Analyze how the Middle East contributed to the European Renaissance.
- Describe the Middle Passage.
- Analyze how the Muslim Slave trade opened the door for the triangle trade.

### **Unit 7 - Topic 9 - Civilizations of Asia**

**Pacing: 5-12 Classes**

Focus Questions:

- What impact did Islam have on civilizations in India?
- What are the political and cultural elements of the Tang and Song dynasties?
- How did the Mongols reshape Asia?
- What role did China and Japan play in Korea's development?
- How did Japan devolve into feudalism?

Concepts/Skills:

- Describe the creation and impact of the Delhi Sultanate and the Mughal Empire
- Explain how China's bureaucracy and civil service system was critical to its development
- Analyze the impact that the Mongols had on global trade
- Describe aspects of the Koryo, Silla, and Choson dynasties.
- Describe the factors that led to the establishment of the Tokugawa Shogunate.

### **Unit 8 - Topic 10 - The Renaissance and the Reformation**

**Pacing: 8-12 Classes**

Focus Questions:

- Why is the Renaissance considered a rebirth?
- How did the concept of humanism originate?
- How did the evolution of Western thought challenge the foundations of monarchy and religion?
- What ideas and events led to the belief that the Church needed reform?
- What was the impact of the Protestant Reformation?
- How did the Scientific Revolution change Europe's intellectual foundations?

Concepts/Skills:

- Compare and contrast pre-Renaissance and post-Renaissance thought.
- Explain how the hardships of Medieval Europe contributed to the Renaissance.
- Identify the distinct style associated with the Northern Renaissance.
- Analyze the significant events associated with the reigns of Henry VIII, Mary Tudor, and Queen Elizabeth.
- Describe how Martin Luther came to lead the Protestant movement and analyze the impact of the Protestant Reformation.

- Analyze the impact of the Counter Reformation.
- Describe the major changes that occurred in both technology and thought during the Scientific Revolution.

### **Resources**

- Textbook – Pearson World History. Ellis, Elisabeth Gaynor., and Anthony Esler. Boston, MA: Pearson, 2016. An E-book is available for the text and is typically used.
- Varied websites and video documentaries are used throughout the course.

### **Grading**

The grading policy is:

- 50% - Mastery: Summative assessments that test knowledge of content and topic questions.
- 20% - Formative: Assignments that help develop knowledge and understanding between summative assessments.
- 15% - Student Preparation: Assignments typically include work completed to prepare for class.
- 15% - Participation: Participation in class and participation in assignments and group projects

Please refer to the Absence Make Up Policy in the student handbook