



BHS COURSE COMPARISON GUIDE

HONORS WORLD STUDIES & AP WORLD HISTORY

Social Studies

H. World Studies Course Description

This course examines modern world history from Europe's Renaissance and the First Global Age through present day. Students develop skills in expository speaking, writing, and historical analysis. Students are expected to come into the course with strong reading and writing skills as well as the ability to work independently. Students endeavor to answer essential questions of history, such as why some countries are rich while others are poor and what causes the rise and fall of societies. Students successfully completing this course may go on to either United States History or AP United States History.

Comparing Course Content & Expectations

H. World Studies

- ◆ Covers world history from the Enlightenment to present day
- ◆ Uses textbook and occasional primary source readings
- ◆ Focuses on major themes, key vocabulary, and concepts of modern world history to develop a basic understanding of historical background to the world today.
- ◆ Homework will focus on developing basic skills of analysis and retention of significant terms and concepts.
- ◆ Class will use lecture, discussion, debate, group-activities, independent work, and other strategies to teach important ideas and concepts.

AP World History

- ◆ Covers world history from pre-history to present day
- ◆ Requires extensive outside reading in textbook, in primary sources, and of articles.
- ◆ Develops in-depth knowledge of the major course themes: interaction between humans and the environment, the development and interaction of cultures, state building, expansion and conflict, creation, expansion and interaction of economic systems
- ◆ Homework will require extensive reading and note-taking every night to identify important ideas and concepts.
- ◆ There is a great deal of writing in this course, both in the form of take-home and in-class essays
- ◆ Class focuses on lecture, discussion, and debate. Students will need to be able to take notes quickly and efficiently.
- ◆ Students will need to embrace new ways of learning material as well as reflecting on the 'big picture' of the course material as oppose to very specific, individual facts.



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AP World History Course Description

This course is a survey of world history from 1300 to the present, with particular emphasis on the following themes: interaction between humans and the environment; the development and interaction of cultures; state building, expansion, and conflict; and the creation, expansion, and interaction of economic systems.

Similar to two additional Advanced Placement history courses (AP U.S. History and AP European History), this course is designed to teach critical, historical thinking skills: crafting historical arguments from historical evidence; chronological reasoning; comparison and contextualization; and historical interpretation and synthesis.

Eighth grade students considering this freshman-only, college-level course must carefully decide if it is appropriate for them. Students must have particularly strong reading and writing skills, as well as mature academic and coping habits. A recommendation from the student's eighth grade teacher is required. Students successfully completing this course may go on to either United States History or AP United States History.

Habits of Mind: While it is not expected that you necessarily begin the course with these habits fully formed, students are expected to commit to developing them as an essential part of building success in this AP class as well as future AP course work:

- Students must develop reading skills that are well-developed enough to:
 - Read material quickly and efficiently while finding main ideas and important points
 - Comprehend higher-level vocabulary that is used in both secondary and primary sources
- Students must develop writing skills enough to:
 - Quickly and efficiently organize and craft a coherent, concise, and persuasive essay
 - Take notes efficiently from both primary and secondary sources
- Students must be willing to make a time commitment to A.P. World that includes:
 - Devoting at least 45 minutes to reading and study nightly
 - Balancing life and family commitments with other academic requirements
 - Long-range planning to prepare for tests and assignments
- Students will also develop their abilities in:
 - Identifying the thesis of an argument
 - Probing the logical errors of an argument
 - Analyzing and assessing the usefulness of primary sources for constructing arguments
 - Investigating bias and point-of-view in sources
 - Comparing and tracing the development of long-term trends over large chunks of time
 - Identifying different historiographic interpretations of events – recognizing that there are multiple ways to explain large-scale events and patterns of behavior
 - Sorting through a large amount of detail in order to separate trivial from significant

Course Materials

Textbooks, outside readings, and primary sources will be at the college-level. The vocabulary level will be sophisticated and the depth of content presented will be challenging. Materials will change students to see historical events and persons from multiple perspectives.

Tests will be derived using A.P.-style questions. The reading level of the tests is also college-level and will require students to make fine discrimination among several answers that sound alike but differ in key, specific ways.