

*High School Honors World History*

**Course Syllabus 2014-15**

**Course Description**

Honors World History is a fascinating course that helps us understand the forces that shaped the world as we know it today. It traces the evolution of the modern world from the Renaissance to the present. The emphasis in the course will be on understanding the broad political, economic, and cultural developments that culminated in the destructive events of the 20th Century, which in turn are examined in considerable depth. The course is also intended to foster conceptual understanding and skill development, such as document analysis, critical and historical thinking, research, and argumentative essay writing. Successful students will gain a strong grounding in modern world history as well as the analytical skills necessary for Advanced Placement courses.

**Course Expectations**

Honors World History is a challenging course. Given the rigorous nature of the curriculum, thorough preparation for class is absolutely essential and will be strongly predictive of one’s final results. You are expected to complete all assigned readings and assignments prior to class and to participate constructively.

**Course Assessment and Grading**

Students will be required to submit all work online in one of two formats, depending on the assignment. Many written assignments, such as chapter outlines, essays and drafts, and so on, will be submitted using **Google Documents via Google Drive**. Assignments will not be accepted using other document formats (e.g., .doc, .pdf., etc.). Students will also be expected to create and continually update a **website**, which will be used to publish essays, video projects, a reflective blog, and document analyses. Students will receive detailed instructions in class as to how exactly work will be submitted. The website will be worth 20% of the course grade.

Student **participation** in a course of this nature is crucial and will comprise 10% of the course grade.

**Tests and quizzes**, worth 20% of the grade, will be regular features of classroom life and will be structured to help students develop their critical thinking skills, primarily through in-class essay writing. Small **projects**, such as (but not limited to!) maps, posters, presentations, and so on, will make up 20% of the grade. A **Quarterly/Semester Exam** will be worth an additional 10%.

The largest portion of the quarterly mark, 25%, will be based on a **Culminating Activity** that will require considerable research, analysis, critical thinking, and creativity. This assignment will take several weeks to complete each quarter and will challenge students to demonstrate deep understanding of the course curriculum. It will be scaffolded to be submitted in at least three stages, and students will receive and be expected to incorporate descriptive feedback to improve their final product. In Quarters 1 and 3, the Culminating Activity will be a **research essay**, and in Quarters 2 and 4 it will be a **video project**.

All student work is expected to be completed in a timely manner, respecting all stated deadlines. **Work that is submitted late will lose 10% per school day, and will receive a zero after three days**. Late work will only be excused if a medical or compassionate explanation has been accepted by the school administration. In such cases, it will be the student’s responsibility to get a note from the school office justifying the late submission. Of course, any and all writing may be required to be submitted to [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com). **Plagiarism** is a serious academic offense and will automatically result in a zero grade as well as further administrative penalties.

In summary, the mark scheme for the course is as follows:

**Tests/Quizzes: 20%**

**Website: 20%**

**Projects: 20%**

**Participation: 10%**

**Quarterly Exam: 10%**

**Culminating Activities: 25%**

**Course Materials**

Students will be expected to use multiple print and online sources. Each student must purchase the following two books at the beginning of the course.

**Text**: Ramirez et al. (2008). *Human Legacy: Modern Era*. New York: Holt.

**Supplemental Readings:** Many additional readings and videos will be assigned throughout the year.

**Course Outline**

**Unit 1—Birth of the Modern Era**

*Weeks 1-4: August 25 – September 19*

This unit will explore the decline of feudalism in Europe, the birth of the Renaissance, the Reformation, and the age of exploration and colonial expansion. The events will be contrasted with those in Central and East Asia. Students will develop skills in understanding historical significance, historical evidence, and argumentative reasoning.

* Ramirez et al., Ch. 1, “Renaissance and Reformation: 1300-1650”
* Ramirez et al., Ch. 2, “Exploration and Expansion: 1400-1650”
* Ramirez et al., Ch. 3, “New Asian Empires: 1200-1800”

**Unit 2—Absolutism and Enlightenment**

*Weeks 5-7: September 22 – October 9*

This unit examines absolutist monarchies, the development of constitutionalism, and the transformations brought about by the Scientific Revolution and the Age of Reason. Students will develop skills in understanding continuity and change, and cause and consequence.

* Ramirez et al., Ch. 4, “The Monarchs of Europe: 1500-1800” (selected sections)
* Ramirez et al., Ch. 5, “Enlightenment and Revolution: 1550-1800 (selected sections)

**Unit 3—The Tide of Revolution in America and France**

*Weeks 8-9: October 13 – 23*

This unit compares and contrasts the causes, events, and effects of the American and French Revolutions. Students will develop historical skills of perspective taking and ethical analysis.

* Ramirez et al., Ch. 5, “Enlightenment and Revolution: 1550-1800 (selected sections)
* Ramirez et al., Ch. 6, “The French Revolution and Napoleon: 1789-1815”

**Week 10 Quarter 1 Exam: October 24 - 31**

**Unit 4—The Industrial Revolution and Social Upheavals**

Weeks 10-13: October 27 – November 21

This unit explores the causes, developments, and impacts of the industrial revolution in England and its spread throughout the Western world. It also examines cases of social unrest in select locations during the 1800s in Europe and the Americas. Students will develop skills of historical document analysis.

* Ramirez et al., Ch. 7, “The Industrial Revolution: 1700-1900”
* Ramirez et al., Ch. 8, “Life in the Industrial Age: 1800-1900” (selected sections)
* Ramirez et al., Ch. 9, “Reforms, Revolutions, and War: 1800-1900” (selected sections)
* Supplementary primary source documents

**Unit 5—Nationalism and Imperialism**

Weeks 14-17: November 24 – December 18

This unit uncovers the geopolitical foundations of the 20th Century through an a analysis of nationalist movements, state unifications and fragmentations, and the scramble for imperial extensions of power and territory. Students will continue to develop skills of historical document analysis.

* Ramirez et al., Ch. 10, “Nationalism in Europe: 1800-1920”
* Ramirez et al., Ch. 11, “The Age of Imperialism: 1800-1920”
* Supplemental primary source documents

**Week 18 Semester 1 Exam: January 5 – 9**

**Unit 6—The Great War and its Aftermath**

Weeks 18 – 21: January 5 - 30

This unit explores the multiple, intersecting causes of WWI, its key international events, and its national and global consequences. Throughout Semester 2, students will deepen their level of attention to historical detail through both primary and secondary source readings.

* Ramirez et al., Ch. 12, “World War I: 1914 – 1918”
* Supplemental Readings

**Unit 7—The Great Depression and Rise of Dictatorships**

*Weeks 22 – 25: February 2 – 27*

This unit examines the breakdown of peace in the interwar years, the economic collapse and global contagion of the Great Depression, and the rise of extremist ideologies and dictatorships in Europe and Asia.

* Ramirez et al., Ch. 13, “The Interwar Years: 1919-1939”
* Supplemental Readings

**Unit 8—World War II**

*Weeks 26-28: March 2-19*

This unit gives students a strong understanding of the events and outcomes of WWII, including the Jewish Holocaust and the postwar settlement.

* Ramirez et al., Ch. 14, “World War II: 1930-1945”
* Supplemental Readings

**Week 29 Quarter 3 Exam:** *March 20-26*

**Unit 9—The Cold War**

*Weeks 29 - 32: March 20 – April 24*

In this unit, students will examine the development of the Cold War superpower rivalry and its global effects with a focus on Europe, North America, and Asia.

* Ramirez et al., Ch. 15, “Europe and North America: 1945-Present”
* Ramirez et al., Ch. 16, “Asia: 1945-Present”

**Unit 10—Postwar Decolonization and Conflict**

*Weeks 33-35: April 28 – May 15*

This unit explores the key events and developments in postwar de-colonization in the context of the Cold War. Particular emphasis is placed on understanding the roots of ongoing conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa.

* Ramirez et al., Ch. 17, “Africa and the Middle East: 1945-Present”
* Ramirez et al., Ch. 18, “Latin America: 1945-Present” (selected sections)
* Supplemental Readings

**Unit 11—The Post-Cold War**

*Weeks 36 - 37: May 18 – 29*

The course culminates with an overview of the post-Cold War world in the context of American hegemony and economic globalization.

* Ramirez et al., Ch. 17, “Today’s World”
* Supplemental Readings

**Week 37-38 Semester 2 Final Exam:** May 27 – June 2