



AP[®] World History

Syllabus

Course Description

AP[®] World History is a yearlong college-level course designed to prepare students for the Advanced Placement (AP) World History Exam. The goal of this course is to explore historical themes common to societies around the world and across time periods, from prehistory to the present day. Emphasis is placed on critical and evaluative thinking skills, essay-writing, interpretation of original documents, and historiography. Students will demonstrate their understanding and acquisition of skills through written work, document-based questions, project-based activities, and practice exams.

Historical Themes

Throughout this course, students will be exposed to five historical themes. These themes, which tap into the big ideas in world history, allow students to identify trends and make connections across six historical time periods.

Theme 1: Interaction between Humans and the Environment

- Demography and disease
- Migration
- Patterns of settlement
- Technology

Theme 2: Development and Interaction of Cultures

- Religions
- Belief systems, philosophies, and ideologies
- Science and technology
- The arts and architecture

Theme 3: State-Building, Expansion, and Conflict

- Political structures and forms of governance
- Empires
- Nations and nationalism
- Revolts and revolutions
- Regional, transregional, and global structures and organizations



AP[®] World History

Syllabus

Theme 4: Creation, Expansion, and Interaction of Economic Systems

- Agricultural and pastoral production
- Trade and commerce
- Labor systems
- Industrialization
- Capitalism and socialism

Theme 5: Development and Transformation of Social Structures

- Gender roles and relations
- Family and kinship
- Racial and ethnic constructions
- Social and economic classes

Key Concepts

Key concepts are used to organize the course by six time periods. This syllabus references the key concepts as identified by the College Board[®]. The key concepts help students understand, organize, and prioritize historical developments within each era.

Key Activities

Historical thinking skills acquisition: Throughout the course, students will be asked to complete key activities that tap into the four major historical thinking skills—analyzing historical sources and evidence, making historical connections, chronological reasoning, and creating and supporting a historical argument.

Primary and secondary source analysis: In these activities, students will examine primary and secondary sources, including maps, charts, speeches, diaries, letters, personal ideologies, official documents, traditional stories, and more. Students will analyze these sources to make connections across places and time periods and to identify common themes.

Essays and writing assignments: Throughout the course, students will have regular writing assignments that will require them to analyze primary and secondary sources; draw comparisons; argue and support opinions; identify similarities and differences among events, groups of people, and places; and identify causes and effects.



AP[®] World History

Syllabus

There are several long essays in the course that require students to compare and contrast, analyze cause and effect, analyze continuity and change over time, and evaluate for periodization. Throughout the course, students practice writing responses to AP World History style short-answer questions.

Document-based questions (DBQs): Students will also work through document-based questions (DBQs) as part of their writing and their historical analysis of primary and secondary sources. These questions will mimic the types of DBQs that students will experience on the AP World History Exam.

Projects: Students will complete two major research projects during the course.

In the first semester, students will create a multimedia presentation that compares and contrasts imperial governments from 600 CE to 1450 CE. Students will choose from a list of empires to analyze.

In the second semester, students will create a multimedia presentation that analyzes continuities and changes in gender roles across each of the six periods of AP World History. Students are expected to include evidence from societies and cultures from each region.

Course Materials

Textbook

Strayer, Robert W. *Ways of the World: A Global History with Sources for AP*. 2nd ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2013.

Reader

Reilly, Kevin. *Worlds of History, A Comparative Reader for Advanced Placement*[®]. 5th ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2013.

Primary sources

Students will read and analyze selected primary sources included in Strayer and Reilly, as well as individual selections from a wide variety of other sources. See course outline below for specific selections.



AP[®] World History

Syllabus

Secondary sources

Beard, Mary R. *Women as a Force in History: A Study in Traditions and Realities*. Persea Books, 1987.

Hochschild, Adam. *King Leopold's Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror, and Heroism in Colonial Africa*. Houghton Mifflin, 1999.

Kelly-Gadol, Joan. "Did Women have a Renaissance", from *Women, History, and Theory: The Essays of Joan Kelly-Gadol*.

Wiesner-Hanks, Merry E., et. al. *Discovering the Global Past: A Look at the Evidence, Vol. I*. Cengage Learning, 2011.

Other works of historical interpretation used in the course are taken from Reilly. See course outline below for specific selections.

Course Outline

Unit 1: Technological and Environmental Transformations to 600 BCE

Key Concepts

- Key Concept 1.1. Big Geography and the Peopling of the Earth
- Key Concept 1.2. The Neolithic Revolution and Early Agricultural Societies
- Key Concept 1.3. The Development and Interactions of Early Agricultural, Pastoral, and Urban Societies

Topics for Overview

- Human origins and the Neolithic Revolution
- Early peoples and civilizations of the Fertile Crescent
- Egyptian and Nubian cultures

Textbook Reading

- Strayer 2013, ch. 1–2

Examples of Key Activities

Essays and writing assignments:

- Short writing assignment: "The Agricultural Revolution marked a decisive turning point in human history." What evidence might you offer in support of this claim, and how might you argue against it?
- Short-answer question:
 - A) Identify and explain two specific technological developments that enabled the growth of complex civilizations (e.g., Mesopotamia, Egypt, etc.) from 3500 BCE to 1500 BCE.
 - B) Identify and explain one social effect of the development or growth of complex civilizations.



AP[®] World History

Syllabus

Primary and secondary source analysis:

- *Life and Afterlife in Mesopotamia and Egypt* (Strayer 2013, 92–107). Students will read this selection, which includes readings from *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, Hammurabi's Code, and the *Book of the Dead*. Then, they will respond to the following prompt.

What similarities and differences between ancient Mesopotamian and Egyptian civilizations can you infer from these documents? How might one account for these differences?

- Read *Women in the First Urban Communities* by Catherine Clay, Chandrika Paul, and Christine Senecal (Reilly 2013, 25).

Other Activities:

- Explore how archeologists have contributed to our understanding of ancient civilizations by creating an artifact poster. Choose one of these three civilizations to research: the Sumerian civilization of Mesopotamia, the Harappan civilization, or the Shang dynasty in China.

Unit 2: Organization and Reorganization of Human Societies, 600 BCE to 600 CE

Key Concepts

- Key Concept 2.1.The Development and Codification of Religious and Cultural Traditions
- Key Concept 2.2.The Development of States and Empires
- Key Concept 2.3. Emergence of Transregional Networks of Communication and Exchange

Topics for Overview

- Early civilizations: the Middle East, South Asia, East Asia, the Americas, Oceania, and Africa
- Government and society in Greece and Rome
- Major belief systems, religions, and philosophies

Textbook Reading

- Strayer 2013, ch. 3–6

Examples of Key Activities

Essays and writing assignments:

- Essay (document-based question):

This assignment includes selections from *Shu Jing (Classic of History)*, a sixth-century BCE story of an 18th century BCE Shang king, the *Xiao Jing (Classic of Filial Piety)*, ca 400. BCE, the Confucian *Analects*, the poem *Fasti* by Roman poet Ovid, 8 CE, Virgil's *Aeneid*, and letters from the Apostle Paul. After analyzing the documents, students will respond to the following prompt.

Using the documents and your knowledge of world history, compare and contrast the influences of religion and religious ideology in Rome and China before 600 CE.



AP[®] World History

Syllabus

- Short-writing assignment: *“The particular cultures and societies of Africa and of the Americas discussed in this chapter developed largely in isolation.” What evidence would support this statement, and what might challenge it?*
- Short-answer question:
 - A) *Explain one specific cause for the successful spread of Christianity in the Mediterranean region during the first two centuries CE.*
 - B) *Explain two specific effects of the spread of Christianity on the Roman Empire.*

Primary and secondary source analysis (such as but not limited to):

- *The Good Life in Eurasian Civilizations* (Strayer 2013, 198–207). Students will read this selection, which includes readings from Confucius's *Analects*, reflections from the Hindu scripture the Bhagavad Gita, and an excerpt from Plato's *Apology*. Then, they will respond to the following prompt.

In describing the “good life” or the “good society,” what commonalities do you see among these four documents? What differences are apparent? How might the authors of each text respond to the ideas of the others?
- *Patriarchy and Women's Voices* (Strayer 2013, 243–51). Students will read this selection, which includes readings from Ban Zhao's *Lessons for Women*, a selection of Buddhist scriptures from *Psalms of the Sisters*, and an excerpt from Livy's history of Rome. Then, they will respond to the following prompt.

Based on these documents, how might you compare the gender systems of China, India, and the Roman Empire? What common features of patriarchy did they share? In what ways did they differ?
- Analyze excerpts from the writings of Confucius, including *The Analects*, and Han Fei to assess the influence of Confucianism and legalism on Chinese culture and government.
- Read and compare *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, the Indian story “Manu and the Magic Carp,” and the story of Noah from the Torah.
- Compare the funeral oration given by Pericles following the Peloponnesian War to Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, analyzing for author's purpose and audience.
- Interpret maps and secondary sources to identify the importance of trade to the Kingdom of Axum.
- Read *Austronesian, Indo-European, and Bantu Migrations* by Patrick Manning (Reilly 2013, 280)
- Read *Greek and Indian Civilization* by William H. McNeill (Reilly 2013, 81).

Unit 3: Regional and Transregional Interactions, c. 600 CE to 1450 CE

Key Concepts

- Key Concept 3.1. Expansion and Intensification of Communication and Exchange Networks
- Key Concept 3.2. Continuity and Innovation of State Forms and Their Interactions
- Key Concept 3.3. Increased Economic Productive Capacity and Its Consequences



AP[®] World History

Syllabus

Topics for Overview

- The ancient global economy and the impact of expanding trade networks
- Civilizations in East and West Africa
- Imperial China
- The spread of Islam
- The Byzantine Empire
- The Early Middle Ages, including church authority in Europe
- Feudalism in Europe and Japan
- The impact of the Crusades
- Russia and Eastern Europe
- The Ottoman and Mughal Empires
- The Ming Dynasty

Textbook Reading

- Strayer 2013, ch. 7–12

Examples of Key Activities

Essays and writing assignments:

- Short writing assignment: *What were the causes and consequences of the Crusades? Consider political, economic, cultural, and social effects.*
- Short writing assignment: *How can you explain the changing fortunes of Buddhism in China?*
- Short writing assignment: *What were the causes and consequences of Islam's substantial religious and political/military success in its early centuries?*
- Short writing assignment: *What accounts for the different historical trajectories of the Byzantine and West European expressions of Christendom?*
- Short writing assignment: *In what ways do the civilizations of China, Europe, and the Islamic world in the fifteenth century seem to be moving in the same direction, and in what respects were they diverging from one another?*
- Short answer question:
Many historians view the rise of the Mongol Empire (1206–1368) as a major turning point in world history.
A) *Provide two pieces of evidence that support this argument, and explain how each piece supports the argument.*
B) *Provide one piece of evidence that undermines this argument, and explain how it undermines the argument.*



AP[®] World History

Syllabus

Primary and secondary source analysis (such as but not limited to):

- *Travelers' Tales and Observations* (Strayer 2013, 344–63). Students will read this selection, which includes excerpts from Huili's *Biography of the Tripitaka Master*, Xuanzang's *Record of the Western Region*, Ibn Battuta's *Travels in Asia and Africa*, and *The Travels of Marco Polo*. Then, they will respond to the following prompt.

Each of these documents was written by an outsider to the people or society he is describing. What different postures toward these foreign cultures are evident in the sources? How did the travelers' various religions shape their perception of places they visited? How did they view women of their host societies?

- *Perspectives on the Mongols* (Strayer 2013, 542–57). Students will read this selection, which includes excerpts from *The Secret History of the Mongols*, Chinggis Khan's letter to Changchun, and *The Chronicle of Novgorod*. Then, they will respond to the following prompt.

What are the strengths and limitations of these documents for understanding the Mongols? Taking positions of the authors into account, what exaggerations, biases, or misunderstandings can you identify in these sources? What information seems credible and what should be viewed more skeptically?

- Analyze passages written during the Tang and Song Dynasties by accomplished people, including Emperor Tang Taizong, Song Ruo Zhao, and Yuan Cai.
- Compare opposing accounts of the siege of Jerusalem—one from a Christian crusader who was an eyewitness, and one from a Muslim historian, to evaluate for reliability.
- Read excerpts from William of Rubruck's *Account of the Mongols*.
- Read *Were the Barbarians a Negative or a Positive Factor in Ancient and Medieval History?* by Gregory Guzman (Reilly 2013, 402).
- Read *The Comparative Communal Responses to the Black Death in Muslim and Christian Societies* by Michael W. Dols (Reilly 2013, 474).
- Read *Southernization* by Lynda Norene Shaffer (Reilly 2013, 286).
- Read *Rethinking the Fall of Easter Island* by Terry L. Hunt (Reilly 2013, 545).

Projects

Students will create a multimedia presentation that compares two societies. They will respond to the following prompt.

Compare and contrast the structure and authority of imperial governments between 600 CE and 1450 CE.



AP[®] World History

Syllabus

Choose two of the following four governments to analyze.

The Aztec Empire

The Byzantine Empire

The Mongol Empire

The Song Dynasty

Unit 4: Global Interactions, 1450 CE to 1750 CE

Key Concepts

- Key Concept 4.1. Globalizing Networks of Communication and Exchange
- Key Concept 4.2. New Forms of Social Organization and Modes of Production
- Key Concept 4.3. State Consolidation and Imperial Expansion

Topics for Overview

- The impact of global exchange and growing trade networks: voyages of exploration, the conquest of the Americas, and the meeting of three worlds
- The Atlantic slave trade
- The influence of cultural revolutions, including the Renaissance, the Protestant Reformation, the Counter-Reformation, the Scientific Revolution, and the Enlightenment

Textbook Reading

- Strayer 2013, ch. 13–15

Examples of Key Activities

Essays and writing assignments:

- Long essay question:
 - *Analyze the continuities and changes in labor systems between 1450 and 1750.*
- Short writing assignment: *In what ways did European empires in the Americas resemble their Russian, Chinese, Mongol, and Ottoman counterparts, and in what respects were they different?*
- Short writing assignment:
 - To what extent did the cultural changes of the early modern world derive from cross-cultural interaction?*
 - To what extent did they grow from within particular societies or civilizations?*
- Short-answer question:
 - “The Spanish have a perfect right to rule these barbarians of the New World and the adjacent islands, who in prudence, skill, virtues, and humanity are as inferior to the Spanish as children to adults, or women to men, for there exists between the two as great a difference as between savage and cruel races and the most merciful, between the most intemperate [lacking in self-control] and the moderate and temperate, and, I might even say, between apes and men.”*

– Juan Gines de Sepulveda, 1574.



AP[®] World History

Syllabus

A) Explain two examples of policies that the Spanish pursued in the Americas as a result of the views expressed above.

B) Explain one piece of evidence that would contradict the view of American Indians that Sepulveda holds.

[CR9]

Primary and secondary source analysis (such as but not limited to):

- *Voices from the Slave Trade* (Strayer 2013, 700–717). Students will read this selection, which includes excerpts from *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano*, King Affonso I's letters to King Jao of Portugal, and Thomas Phillips's *Journal of a Voyage Made in the Hannibal of London*. Then, they will respond to the following prompt.

What different experiences of the slave trade are reflected in these documents? How can one account for these differences? What perspectives are missing that might add other dimensions to one's understanding of this commerce in people?

- *The Conquest of Mexico through Aztec Eyes* (Strayer 2013, 660–67).
Based on the information in this section, write a brief description of the conquest from the Aztec point of view.
- Read an excerpt from Cervantes's *Don Quixote* to identify elements of humanism.
- Analyze the works of philosophers of the Enlightenment, including John Locke's *Two Treatises of Government* and Thomas Hobbes's *Leviathan*.
- Read *The Conquest of Paradise* by Kirkpatrick Sale (Reilly 2013, 597).
- Read "Vikings and Polynesians" by Merry Weisner from *Discovering the Global Past: A Look at the Evidence, Vol. I*.
- Read *Women and Marriage in Europe and China* by Mary Jo Maynes and Ann Waltner (Reilly 2013, 715).
- Compare and contrast two readings on women and the Renaissance by analyzing *Did Women have a Renaissance?* by Joan Kelly-Gadol and *Women as a Force in History: A Study in Traditions and Realities* by Mary R. Beard. Reflect by answering the following questions: *Think about the term "Renaissance", used by historians to describe the late medieval period. What are the limitations of the term "Renaissance Era" to describe this time period? Is this term appropriate for areas outside of Europe? Does it apply to members of the lower classes? What about women?* [CR1c] [CR7] [CR13]

Unit 5: Industrialization and Global Integration, 1750 CE to 1900 CE

Key Concepts

- Key Concept 5.1. Industrialization and Global Capitalism
- Key Concept 5.2. Imperialism and Nation-State Formation
- Key Concept 5.3. Nationalism, Revolution, and Reform
- Key Concept 5.4. Global Migration



AP[®] World History

Syllabus

Topics for Overview

- The Age of Revolutions, including the influence of the Enlightenment; the American, French, and Haitian Revolutions; and Latin American independence movements
- The abolition of slavery
- Industrialization and global economic systems
- Imperialism and its effects around the world
- The creation of the nation-state
- Early Japanese and Korean civilizations and the rise of modern Japan

Readings

- Strayer 2013, ch. 16–19

Examples of Key Activities

Essays and writing assignments:

- Essay (document-based question):

In this assignment, students will analyze a selection of documents that includes excerpts from a letter of advice and warning from William of Holland (Netherlands) to Shogun Tokugawa Ieyoshi, 1844; the Treaty of Kanagawa, 1854; the Constitution of Japan, 1889; a map showing Japanese expansion from 1875 to 1910; and a Japanese painting showing samurai rowing out to meet the arriving American naval expedition of Commodore Matthew Perry, 1853. After analyzing the documents, students will respond to the following prompt.

Using the documents and your knowledge of world history, analyze the causes and effects of Japan's Meiji Restoration (1868). Confine your response to the period from 1840 to 1920.

- Short writing assignment: *What did humankind gain from the Industrial Revolution, and what did it lose?*
- Short writing assignment: *In what different ways did the colonial experience reshape the economic lives of Asian and African societies? How were the lives of women affected?*
- Short writing assignment: *Compare and contrast industrialization in Japan, Russia, and the United States.*
- Short-answer question:

After analyzing a photo of the first meeting of the Indian National Congress, 1885, students will respond to the following prompt:

A) *Identify and explain two historical claims about India in the late 19th century that can be supported based on the image.*

B) *Identify and explain one limitation of the image as a source of information about India in the late 19th century.*



AP[®] World History

Syllabus

Primary and secondary source analysis (such as but not limited to):

- *Claiming Rights* (Strayer 2013, 812–25). Students will read this selection, which includes excerpts from The Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen, Simón Bolívar's Jamaica Letter, Frederick Douglass's "What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?," and Elizabeth Cady Stanton's *The Solitude of Self*. Then, they will respond to the following prompt.

In what different ways does the idea of "rights" find expression in these four documents? Which documents speak more about individual rights and which focus on collective rights? What common understandings can you identify?

- *Changing China* (Strayer 2013, 958–71). Students will read this selection, which includes excerpts from Sun Yat-Sen's "The Three People's Principles and the Future of the Chinese People," Qiu Jin's Address to Two Hundred Million Fellow Countrywomen, and Emperor Guangxu's Edict on Education. Then, they will respond to the following prompt.

To what extent do these proposals represent plans to "Westernize" China? Or, might they rather be considered "modernizing" efforts? What is the difference between the two concepts?

- Read Simón Bolívar's message to the 1819 Congress of Angostura to determine his purpose.
- Read an excerpt from *King Leopold's Ghost*, by Adam Hochschild.
- Analyze writings of Napoleon to identify both his support for and his rejection of Enlightenment ideals.
- Analyze Rudyard Kipling's "The White Man's Burden" as an explanation of new imperialism.
- Read *The Industrial Revolution outside the West* by Peter Sterns (Reilly 2013, 823) and *Asia and the Industrial Revolution* by Arnold Pacey (Reilly 2013, 801) to compare and contrast their interpretation of industrialization outside of the west.

Unit 6: Accelerating Global Change and Realignments, 1900–Present

Key Concepts

- Key Concept 6.1. Science and the Environment
- Key Concept 6.2. Global Conflicts and Their Consequences
- Key Concept 6.3. New Conceptualizations of Global Economy, Society, and Culture

Topics for Overview

- World War I, World War II, and the Holocaust
- The Cold War
- The legacy of imperialism
- Decolonization in Africa and Asia
- Indian independence
- Nationalism in the Middle East
- Globalization and its effects
- Challenges and changes in the modern world, including genocide, development, poverty, and disease



AP[®] World History

Syllabus

- The impact of science and technology, including the Green Revolution and its effects
- Demographic change, urbanization, and migration
- Environmental issues

Textbook Reading

- Strayer 2013, ch. 20–23

Examples of Key Activities

Essays and writing assignments:

- Long Essay Question:
Compare the economic transformations of China and Russia during the twentieth century.
- Short writing assignment: *What explains the disasters that befell Europe in the first half of the twentieth century?*
- Short writing assignment: *Why did the communist experiment, which was committed to equality, abundance, and a humane socialism, generate such oppressive, brutal, and totalitarian regimes and failed economies?*
- Short-answer question:
"One sometimes hears it said, 'Let us get the government of India in our own hands, and everything will be all right.' There could be no greater superstition than this."

–Mohandas K. Gandhi

- A) *Explain one example of how this sentiment is true of India after independence.*
- B) *Explain one example of how this sentiment is true of another Asian country after independence.*
- C) *Explain one example of how this sentiment is true of one African country after independence.*

Primary and secondary source analysis (such as but not limited to):

- *Contending for Islam* (Strayer 2013, 1120–35). Students will read this selection, which includes excerpts from Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's speech to the General Congress of the Republican Party (1927), *Sayings of the Ayatollah Khomeini*, and Kabir Helminski's "Islam and Human Values." Then, they will respond to the following prompt.
What historical circumstances might help to account for the different understandings of Islam that are reflected in these documents?
- *Voices of Global Feminism* (Strayer 2013, 1173–87). Students will read this selection, which includes excerpts from Alexandra Kollontai's "Communism and the Family," the Indigenous Women's Petition of the Maya women of Mexico, and Benazir Bhutto's "Politics and the Muslim Woman." Then, they will respond to the following prompt.
What aspects of global feminism were most revolutionary, liberating, or threatening to established authorities and ways of living? To what extent do you think the goals of these varying feminist efforts have been realized?
- Read Mussolini's speech about the invasion of Ethiopia.
- Analyze excerpts from Viscount Bryce's *Treatment of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire, 1915–1916*.



AP[®] World History

Syllabus

- Analyze excerpts from *The Gulag Archipelago* to identify how life changed in the Soviet Union under Stalin.
- Read Jomo Kenyatta's 1952 speech "The Kenya Africa Union Is Not the Mau Mau."
- Watch a documentary about globalization and cultural challenges in China.
- Analyze a variety of sources, including maps, charts, and graphs, to draw conclusions about the impact of coltan mining on the habitat of the eastern lowland gorilla.
- Analyze a secondary source to evaluate the impact of the Green Revolution on India.
- Read *Dollarization* by Sherif Hetata (Reilly 2013, 1091) and *Cultural Globalization Is Not Americanization* by Philippe Legrain (Reilly 2013, 1096) to compare and contrast the different views on globalization presented.

Project

In this second-semester research project, students will create a multimedia presentation that analyzes continuity and change in response to the following prompt.

- *Analyze continuities and changes in gender roles across each of the six periods of AP World History.*
- Be sure to address societies and cultures from each of the following regions: Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe, and Oceania.

Unit 7: Exam Prep and Review

This unit will help students prepare for the AP World History Exam. Students will learn exam strategies for success, practice test-taking techniques on exam-like questions, and review content covered in the six units.

- Exam Strategies
- Unit 1 Review
- Unit 2 Review
- Unit 3 Review
- Unit 4 Review
- Unit 5 Review
- Unit 6 Review

Essays and writing assignments:

- Students complete two practice Long Essay Questions.
- Students complete two practice Document-based Questions.
- Students complete two sets of short-answer questions.