

8th Grade

World History

Mr. John Agricola

Syllabus

Course Summary:

World History will cover the time periods of early civilizations in the Fertile Crescent of Mesopotamia up until early Renaissance in Italy. This huge swath of time may seem daunting to the uninitiated, but beyond content my teaching style seeks to activate background knowledge. I make a concerted effort to teach students why history still matters today. With purpose comes drive, and hopefully understanding. As preparation for later history classes we will look at the structure of the text, and dissect the author's craft. Why did he or she set something up the way they did is a central question that allows us to better remember facts. Class discussions will be a component of this course, and I will grade students on their participation in the classwork category of the grading rubric. Writing is vital to the historical process, and students will often be faced with essays about primary and secondary sources. Most importantly, students will receive some modeling of my brand of study skills; note taking, and diagraming are learned skills that must be taught.

The content we will cover is ten different civilizations. Therefore there will be ten tests and two projects. We will cover in order the following chapters: "First Civilizations," "Ancient Egypt," "Ancient Greece," "Greek Civilization," "Early China," "Rise of Rome," "Roman Empire," "Rise of Christianity," "Medieval Europe," Renaissance and Reformation." I also reserve the right to add chapters if needed.

Most importantly, this class will be an important foundation for future history learning. Even more importantly it will be a "fun" class aimed at maximizing reading, and writing potential with an ever present eye towards training warriors for Christ.

Christian Values:

Please remember that our priorities are God, Family, School, and athletics in that particular order. If you need special consideration on some school work please let me know after class. I am very reasonable if you specify a need or issue at home.

Preparedness:

My best advice to students is to keep up with your assignments. The greatest learning tool ever invented is the notebook. When your mind is full and weary, you can always go to your notes in your binder. Your notes will indicate what you are expected to know and master. Review the day's notes each evening and focus on your notes in preparation for quizzes and tests.

The pen and highlighter are your tools for understanding. Bring them faithfully every day.

Plus Portal:

I encourage students to access my class in the portal daily through the URL link provided here (<https://www.plusportals.com/WestbrookChristianSchool>). Homework, Tests, Quizzes, Projects, and Essays will be posted as columns that will have brief descriptions inside. Know the assignments by listening in class, but if you miss something check the portal. Feel free to email message me at jagricola@westbrookchristian.org, or parents may message me through the portal. Please form the habit of viewing my class portal on Monday as a heads up on the week's schedule. If you are absent, this is a great source to keep up with your assignments.

Grading structure:

Homework
(10%)

The majority of homework consists of reading the textbook. Nonfiction reading requires students to think while they read. Make sure you check your comprehension by asking why an event happened and be sure you can explain causes and effects! The goal is not to read quickly, but to understand and remember what you read. You will notice a huge emphasis this year on close reading of complex text. The goal is to challenge you to read and reread complex text to promote increased comprehension and deeper analysis of the text. If you don't remember what you have read, that's a sign to reread.

Class work, Quizzes (review of notes & textbook reading) RWAs (Reading & Writing Assessments) & DBQs (Document Based Questions) (40%)

The goal of class work is to review important concepts and skills as well as to assist students with organizing concepts so that students can better understand how the concepts are related and connected. Keeping good notes is the key to being academically successful. Students are therefore expected to make a copy of missing notes when absent.

A quiz serves as an opportunity for the student to reinforce concepts and to determine content mastery. If you miss something on a quiz, you need to go back to the textbook or your notes to review the information. Some quizzes will be posted ahead of time but students should expect pop quizzes as well. DBQs and RWAs include essay styled formats. This is where good reading and writing skills are of critical importance.

Tests and performance assessments (40%) are cumulative in nature. That means that students will be expected to demonstrate mastery of content by their ability to analyze and synthesize information. In other words students should be able to explain how and why our government has remained flexible enough to meet and overcome new challenges and obstacles. Furthermore, I encourage students to explore how past events continue to impact our lives today. I want students not only to demonstrate mastery of content but to make meaningful sense of World History and its role in shaping our future. Therefore, students will be given an extended period of time, usually including a weekend, in which to

investigate, create, and design a “finished” product representing their best effort. There will be one final exam worth (10%).

Class Rules:

Treat everyone as you wish to be treated. The golden rule applies especially to class discussions. Do not speak out of turn, or cut each other off mid-sentence. If someone is speaking please let them finish. You can disagree with their point of view, but all views (generally speaking) are seen as equally valid. Do not touch anything on my desk, or even venture behind the desk. This is my area and anyone doing this will be disciplined immediately. Do not write on my board unless I specifically ask you to do so.

Discipline:

Every student will receive a warning before disciplinary action. I will typically have a student write sentences during break if they receive another admonishment after a warning. The third offense will result in a trip to the office.

Missing Work Due to Absences: Missing Tests, Quizzes, Classwork and Homework due to absences will be looked at according to the situation. If a student missed a day of school they will be given one day to complete the missed work. If they miss two days they will receive two days to make up the work missed. IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE STUDENT to utilize either my portal, ask a reliable student, email me to keep up with assignments and make arrangements to take missed tests or quizzes. Preferable makeup times are after school in order to avoid further out-of-classroom time. I expect you to take responsibility for your education and to make up all assessments and assignments.

As an 8th grade student I expect you know the basic rules. I want you to be successful and I expect you to take an active role in this process by taking responsibility for your education. Students are here to learn and that happens in an environment where everyone commits to creating a cooperative, caring classroom. I neither appreciate nor tolerate those who consistently disrupt the educational process and opportunity for others to learn. I don't expect anyone to be perfect, but I expect you to take responsibility for your choices and actions. I am here to help you be successful and am willing to work with you and provide whatever assistance I can. All I ask is that if you make a mistake, make an honest effort to correct the situation.

Plagiarism:

Do not cheat or engage in any form of academic dishonesty. This is a serious issue to me. If I suspect cheating I will discuss your work with you and try to determine if it is yours, but it is very easy to find something lifted off the web. The best solution is to always do your own work. I would much rather read your unique responses than duplicate versions of one student's attempt. Cheating is tantamount to lying, and it will not be tolerated. Be true to yourself, and God will be pleased. After all he made you in his image. Get your shine on, and let His light be yours upon the world.

A note to parents:

I look forward to working with you and your student to experience an exceptional school year. Please feel free to contact me with your concerns at any time before 9:00 P.M. You may contact me by email or portal message.

Faithfully,

John Agricola

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Student signature:

Parent signature: