

## AP World History Greeting and Summer Reading Assignment

Mr. Haynes

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Dear prospective AP World History students,

Greetings and congratulations for registering for what will be a challenging but also exceptionally interesting course! It will be our task this coming school year to cover roughly 10,000 years of human history in a little less than two semesters. In order to prep you for a rigorous year, you will see below both an optional summer reading assignment and a list of themes that we will cover. You will notice throughout the course that these themes overlap with multiple historical periods and help us to weave a pattern of commonalities throughout all of human history. These themes will function as the broad structure of the course and will serve as an aid in tying together the historical eras and events we will discuss in detail.

I must emphasize again that this course will be demanding and challenging, however, take comfort that I will provide you with the knowledge and tools you need to not only succeed in the course, but also pass the AP exam!

I wish each of you a rejuvenating, safe, and exciting summer vacation, and I look forward to working with you next year. Feel free to contact me at the email above if you have any questions about the summer reading assignment.

**Ben Haynes**

### Summer Assignment:

You are to read *This Fleeting World: A Short History of Humanity* by David Christian (ISBN 978-1-933782-04-1). This book can be ordered through any major bookstore chain or found online via Amazon.com and many other retail sites. The Lake Nona High School library also has several copies.

This text is a great read because it functions as a concise look at the big, overarching themes that we will be exploring together throughout the class this coming school year. **Your assignment is to compose a minimum 750 word essay detailing and discussing at least three of the five themes listed below. Your essay will be due on Friday, August 24th.** Answer the following questions in your discussion of each theme:

- How has reading *This Fleeting World* expanded your knowledge of the selected theme?
- What arguments and assertions (inferences) did the author make in discussing the theme?
- How has learning about the theme expanded your knowledge of human history prior to taking this course?
- What questions do you still have about the theme after reading the text?

You may indirectly or directly cite the book material to aid you in completing your essay. **Direct citations will NOT count towards the 750 word minimum.** Please use APA format for citations. An effective essay will contain thoughtful conclusions, will demonstrate a basic understanding of the book's themes, and will relate the knowledge gained from reading to future studies in AP World History. The following website will aid you in correct APA citing:

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>

**As mentioned earlier, this assignment is completely optional.** I understand and value the importance of a restful summer vacation. You will not be penalized for not completing this assignment. However, completing this assignment will not only make you better equipped to tackle course material in the fall, but will also function as a substitute for an essay grade (if you score poorly on an essay in the course and have completed this assignment, you can replace that essay score with full credit).

## World History Themes:

1. Interaction between humans and the environment
  - Demography and disease (How does illness affect people, based on their geographic location, social status, race, or other defining factors?)
  - Migration (How is movement important to human history?)
  - Patterns of settlement (How do a society's surroundings impact its development?)
  - Technology (What changes can new technologies have on humans' environments?)
2. Development and interaction of cultures
  - Religions (What role does religion play in shaping cultures?)
  - Belief systems, philosophies, and ideologies (How do key ideas/ideals impact societies?)
  - Science and technology (How can new scientific and technical discoveries change the culture of a society?)
  - The arts and architecture (How does art/architecture both drive and reflect social change?)
3. State-building, expansion, and conflict
  - Political structures and forms of governance (How does a society's government both reflect and impact its culture?)
  - Empires (What effect do large empires have upon the multitude of diverse racial and ethnic groups living within them? How can the size of an empire affect its fate?)
  - Nations and nationalism (How are countries with one predominant ethnic or cultural group affected by this circumstance? How are countries with multiple ethnic or cultural groups affected by this circumstance?)
  - Revolts and revolutions (How do these contribute to changes in society? How can they contribute to continuity?)
  - Regional, transregional, and global structures and organizations (How do agreements between societies affect members of all societies involved in the agreements?)
4. Creation, expansion, and interaction of economic systems
  - Agricultural and pastoral production (What impact does the food supply – both what is produced and how much – have on a society?)
  - Trade and commerce (How does trade – or lack thereof – affect the societies involved?)
  - Labor systems (What effects does the structure of a society's workforce have on that society?)
  - Industrialization (What impact does the ability to produce more goods at a lower cost have on the availability of natural resources, the availability of manufactured products, the division of wealth in a society, the standard of living in a society, etc.)
  - Capitalism and socialism (How have each of these economic models, as well as the competition that has existed between them, impacted the societies that have adopted either – or neither?)
5. Development and transformation of social structures
  - Gender roles and relations (How have the changing roles of men and women throughout place and time affected the way societies operate?)
  - Family and kinship (What impact does family structure have on the nature of a society?)
  - Racial and ethnic constructions (How do artificially constructed racial and ethnic hierarchies both shape individual societies and direct the interaction of societies?)
  - Social and economic classes (How are occupation, wealth and power interconnected in a society?)