



T.C. Williams High School

World History and Geography

Mrs. Kelly Mayer

Room 207

The best way to contact me is by email.

Office hours: I am available during lunch and after school by appointment.

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Syllabus

Course Description:

This course correlates world history and world literature from the ancient time period to 1500 A.D. Through a study of world civilizations and their historical development, students gain an understanding of contemporary global issues. Students examine distinguishing characteristics of cultures through literature, art, architecture, music, religion, philosophy and geography. Honors sections include more reading intensive strategies and skills to help students prepare for AP World History and Geography II in 10th grade.

Course Essential Questions:

- Whose story is history?
- To what extent can we accurately interpret the past?
- How does where we live affect how we live?
- What does it mean to be civilized?
- Why do cultures grow and spread?
- How do organizational systems influence civilizations?
- How do systems result in shared cultures and beliefs?
- Why do civilizations rise and fall?
- How do ideas change and spread over time and space?
- How do people respond to changes?

Course Transfer Goals:

- Understand the relationship of people, places, and environments by analyzing how early humans adapted to their environments to meet their basic needs.
- Analyze time, continuity, and change by investigating how technological and social advancements gave rise to stable communities in river valleys.
- Understand the significance of culture in human experience by analyzing how political, social, and economic systems contributed to the growth of classical civilizations in Asia.
- Understanding the relationship of people, places, and environments by assessing the influence of geography on economic, social, and political development in classical civilizations.
- Understand power, authority, and governance by analyzing how political institutions evolved in classical civilizations and analyze their enduring impact.

- Understand the significance of culture in human experience by analyzing how political, social, and economic systems contributed to the growth of classical civilizations.
- Analyze time, continuity, and change by understanding the political and economic turmoil after the fall of the Roman Empire and the cultural institutions that endured.
- Understand and interpret information by using a range of sources to sequence events.
- Understand the relationship of people, places, and environments by analyzing cultural diffusion throughout Afro Eurasia from 700 to 1550 C.E.
- Understand connections and interdependence by analyzing trade networks and economic systems that developed during this period.
- Analyze time, continuity, and change by understanding the re-emergence of Greco-Roman culture and its impact during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.
- Understand the relationship of people, places, and environments by explaining the impact of physical geography, climate, and natural resources on the political, cultural, and economic development of the Western Hemisphere.
- Understand the significance of culture in the human experience by analyzing the similarities and differences in government, religion, and technology among the Meso-American civilizations.

Course At A Glance:

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| Q u a r t e r O n e | Introduction: <i>Doing History: Historical Methodology</i> (1-2 weeks) |
| | Students will be introduced to the methodology of “doing history.” They will begin to develop a toolkit for historical interpretation that includes analyzing primary and secondary sources, thinking from multiple perspectives, contextualizing people, ideas, and events, and using evidence to support an argument. Students will also review foundational geography skills and ideas that will be used throughout the year to support their understanding of World History. |
| | Unit 1: <i>Civilizations Emerge: From Pre-History to the First River Valley Civilizations</i> (6-7 weeks) |
| | What makes a civilization? In this unit, students consider the origins of human societies. They learn how the earliest humans adapted to their environment, and developed agriculture, tools, language, art, and the use of fire, and analyze the transition from the Paleolithic to the Neolithic Era. Students explore the world’s first civilizations, and how their development of political and religious institutions, economic patterns and systems, and inventions and innovations, shape the rest of world history. |

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| Q u a r t e r T w o | Unit 2: <i>Eastern Classical Civilizations:</i> Persia, India, and China (2-3 weeks) |
| | This unit introduces students to the classical civilizations of Asia. Each of these societies is shaped by religions/philosophies that are essential for understanding the area and time period, many of which are still present in the regions today. Students will learn about the achievements and contributions of these classical civilizations and how they impacted the development of Asia. |
| Q u a r t e r T w o | Unit 3: <i>Western Classical Civilizations:</i> Greece and Rome (6-7 weeks) |
| | The unit traces the evolution of Western Civilization from its nascent roots in Greece to its elaboration and decline in Rome. Students begin in Greece, with an exploration of the geographical impact of the Aegean basin on the social, political, and economic development of Greece. Students will study Greek mythology, social structure, and cultural contributions. The first strands of Western Civilization spun in Greece are enhanced and augmented in the Roman Empire. Students will study the impact of geography on the development of Rome. After studying Roman mythology, social structure, and unique cultural contributions to Western Civilization, students will explore the rise and fall of the Republic, and then the rise and fall of the Empire. |
| Q u a r t e r T h r e e | Unit 4: <i>Post Classical Civilizations: The Byzantine Empire and The Dark Ages</i> (3-4 weeks) |
| | In this unit, students will explore what happens when the Roman Empire loses its dominance over the western world. As Europe falls into the Dark Ages, classical tradition is kept alive in the Byzantine Empire and by Christian monks in the west. The Dark Ages are marked by frequent warfare and barbaric attacks, and vanishing of societies based in cities. Further, there is intellectual void that inspires the term “Dark Ages.” This unit also charts the emergence and diffusion of the Islamic faith, as well as the attendant political and economic effects resulting from the expansion of this new monotheistic religion. |
| | Unit 5: <i>Cultural Diffusion and Economic Interdependence</i> (5-6 weeks) |
| | This unit explains the importance of economic interaction that promoted cultural diffusion throughout Afro Eurasia from 700 to 1500 C.E. These growing trade routes contributed to the growth and spread of Islam and to the importing and exporting many Chinese and Indian technologies. The Kingdoms of Africa during the medieval period are among the civilizations which flourished due to regional trade patterns. During this unit, students also briefly learn about the civilization of Japan and important eastern hemisphere states, and the renewed connections between Western Europe and Afro-Eurasia. |

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| Q u a r t e r F o u r | Unit 6: High Middle Ages and Renaissance (3-4 weeks) |
| | During this period, Western Europe comes out of the dark and emerges as a political, economic, and socio-cultural region founded on Roman heritage, Christian beliefs and customs of German tribes. Roman Culture, including law and religion, were first preserved and then enriched, resulting eventually in the revival of classical culture. European History was also dominated by the dissolution and rebuilding of the economic systems in the region and redevelopment of urban life, in part due to trade routes being reopened to the east. |
| | Unit 7: The Americas (2-3 weeks) |
| | In this unit students explore the major civilizations of the Americas before 1500 C.E. Students will learn about the features that the Maya, Aztec, and Inca had in common, such as a polytheistic religion, vibrant economy, and achievements including calendars, mathematics, and writing and other record keeping systems. Students will also contrast the three civilizations and study how each was unique and important in the history of the Americas. |

Materials: Pen or pencil, binder (optional), glue stick, and highlighter

Supports Available:

- Before and after school tutoring (by request)
- Saturday Learning Academy
- Writing Center

Grading Criteria:

- Summative Assessments: 60%
- Formative Assessments: 40%

Class Specific Assessment Grading Policy:

- All assignments will have a due date, and a deadline. Items turned in at or prior to the due date will have the option for full credit. Items turned in after that due date will be considered late.
- Any test or quiz can be made up within the quarter it was originally assigned.

NOTE: All policies listed in the “Common Course Expectations” document posted on Canvas, including the ACPS Honor Code (<https://www.acps.k12.va.us/cms/lib/VA01918616/Centricity/Shared/documents/school-board-policies/jfc-r2.pdf>), apply to all classes at T.C. Williams High School.