

PETERS TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT

CORE BODY OF KNOWLEDGE

HISTORY OF WESTERN CIVILIZATION ACADEMIC

GRADE 12

For each of the sections that follow, students may be required to analyze recall, explain, interpret, apply or evaluate the particular concepts being taught.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The purpose of this overview course is to provide students with an understanding of the influence of the ancient Greek and Roman civilizations, and subsequent eras (the Renaissance, The Age of Absolutism and the Enlightenment, the French Revolution, and the Modern Era from 1800-the present) upon the development of western civilization to this day, which includes the United States. Topics will include social, economic, and political issues and institutions, some of which have influenced the development of democracy, as well as important people, and cultural achievements, which have influenced western thought and practice to this day. Students will be able to trace the origins of democracy, and the struggle to reinstate its freedoms throughout the last two millennia. Students will be challenged to discover and analyze connections from past history to the world today. Students will review and analyze original source documents, evaluate and synthesize textbook material, engage in written and objective assessments which require extensive knowledge of the subject material and the ability to apply and evaluate learning, draw conclusions from the analysis of document-based questions, integrate technology for the creation of projects, research investigations, and tracking project requirements on the teacher website, predict outcomes and formulate generalizations based on past learning, synergize with group members to problem-solve or create a product.

STUDY SKILLS

- the dedication to independently read the textbook nearly daily and to evaluate and synthesize the material therein.
- memorizing considerable amounts of detailed historical information.
- time management capabilities for the preparation of daily and long-term assignments and assessments.
- independently organizing historical content in preparation for written test essays which require detail and clarity.
- the willingness to engage in daily class discussions and analysis of the reading material.

1.) UNIT ONE: THE FOUNDATION OF WESTERN CIVILIZATION (ANCIENT GREECE & ROME)

- Students will understand that...
- The growth of city-states in Greece led to the development of several political systems, including democracy.
- Democratic principles and classical culture flourished during Greece's Golden Age.
- Alexander the Great conquered Persia and Egypt and extended his empire to the Indus River in northwest India.
- Hellenistic culture, a blend of Greek and other influences flourished throughout Greece, Egypt and Asia.
- Greek achievements in culture, the arts, science and government influenced the development of Western Civilization.
- The early Romans established a powerful republic.
- The creation of the Roman Empire transformed Roman government, society, economy, and culture.

- Christianity arose in Roman-held Judea and spread throughout the Roman Empire.
- Internal social, economic, military and political problems led to the division and fall of the Roman Empire.
- Roman achievements in culture, the arts, science and government influenced the development of Western Civilization.
- Britain would incorporate Celtic and Roman traditions that would lead to a more democratic civilization as time progressed.

2.) UNIT TWO: THE AGE OF CHANGE IN WESTERN CIVILIZATION (RENAISSANCE, REFORMATION, AND EXPLORATION)

- Feudalism declined in the later Middle Ages as agriculture, trade, finance, towns and universities developed, and Europe suffered due to the bubonic plague, and the Hundred Years' War.
- The Italian Renaissance was a rebirth of learning that produced many great works of art, literature, and science which have influenced western culture and continue to do so.
- Renaissance beliefs, such as the importance of the individual, increased secularism, and scientific methodology changed European culture.
- Martin Luther's protest over abuses in the Catholic Church led to the founding of many Protestant churches that are present today; the Catholic Church also reformed.
- Thousands died in religious persecutions and wars for power. The common man often suffered confusion and loss when mandated to change faiths at the whim of his ruler.
- The Reformation ended the Christian unity of medieval Europe, and with the power of churches declining, monarchs and states gained greater power.
- The Reformation ideal of questioning authority and traditional beliefs laid the groundwork for the Age of Enlightenment.
- Advances in sailing technology enable Europeans to explore other parts of the world, and exploration and colonization led to global interaction and wealth for Europeans.
- Portugal and Spain led the movement to explore the New World; conquistadors enslaved the native populations and millions died from western diseases.
- Throughout North and South America during this period, and still today, the Spanish people, language, and culture greatly affected society.
- The Dutch, Spanish, English and French all competed to settle and control North America, with the English emerging victorious for the most part.
- English settlers left a legacy of law and government that greatly influenced the establishment of the United States government.
- Millions of Africans were enslaved for farm labor in the Americas, and slavery led to social and political ramifications that remain with us today.
- Due to the new global trading markets, mercantilism and capitalism grew, along with societal expectations for new foods, plants, and animals from both hemispheres.

3.) UNIT THREE: AGE OF ENLIGHTENMENT AND REVOLUTION (ABSOLUTISM, THE ENLIGHTENMENT AND REVOLUTIONS)

- Philip II of Spain ruled during a time of economic and religious instability, but led Spain to a Golden Age.
- The powers of the monarchies, absolutism, in Europe grew due to crises caused by economic, political, or religious strife.

- The theory of the Divine Right of kings made it possible to consolidate all power within a state under direct rule of the sovereign.
- Spanish art and literature flourished, along with Dutch art and trade.
- Religious wars afflict Europe continually during this period, as only fleeting attempts towards religious toleration are enacted.
- The Reign of Louis XIV consolidates absolutism in France, and the Sun King becomes a great patron of the arts.
- France is considered the leading military power in Europe, and holds a vast colonial empire.
- Skepticism was a French intellectual movement that encouraged questioning of traditionally held beliefs in order to seek truth.
- Louis XIV abuses of power, especially towards the poor, would lay the groundwork for the French Revolution and democratic reforms worldwide.
- After a period of great turmoil, absolute monarchs ruled Austria and Prussia.
- The Prussian trend to a strong militaristic tradition led, in part, to World Wars in the 20th century.
- After the Seven Years' War, France lost colonies in America, leaving Britain as the major power and Britain gained sole economic domination of India, which would lead to expansion of British power.
- After being cut off from the Renaissance and Age of Exploration due to Mongol rule, Peter the Great westernized Russia and brought it into the European sphere of influence.
- In contrast to France and Spain, absolute rulers in England were limited in power as Parliament gained power.
- Many of the democratic government reforms in England contributed directly to the move towards American independence from England and the formation of the Constitution of the United States.
- In the mid-1500's scientists began to question accepted beliefs and make new theories about science and the universe based on experimentation. Theories based on experimentation led to the development of the scientific method, still in use today.
- An intellectual revolution profoundly changed Europe's view of government, society, and the arts.
- Many freedoms of democratic societies today, including those of the United States, were rooted in Enlightenment thinking.
- The Enlightenment spurred western man to aim for social progress, take a more secular outlook, and focus on individual reasoning.
- An "enlightened" problem-solving approach to government, science, and social issues prevails in modern society today.
- Enlightenment ideas helped inspire the American colonies to declare independence from England and become a new nation, and inspired other European colonies to try to do the same.
- The American Revolution created a republic, that became the model for many nations around the world, and also helped inspire the French Revolution.
- Economic, political, and social inequalities in the Old Regime caused the French Revolution.
- The common man can feel powerless or driven to revolt without proper channels for representation.
- The revolutionary government of France made reforms but also used terror and violence to retain power.
- Military genius, Napoleon Bonaparte, seized power amidst the turmoil in France, and made himself dictator and emperor.
- Napoleon sold the Louisiana Territory to the United States, greatly extending its territory.
- Napoleon's conquests aroused nationalistic feelings across Europe and contributed to his downfall.
- Nationalistic feelings led to many revolutions during this period on the European continent and in the colonial possessions of European powers, and remain a source of conflict to this day.
- After Napoleon was exiled, leaders of Europe met at the Congress of Vienna to restore order and monarchies, establish peace, and maintain a balance of power in Europe, foreshadowing international institutions such as the United Nations today.
- As a result of the Enlightenment and American and French Revolutions, more and more people in the world sought democracy as the best way to ensure equality and justice for all.




4.) UNIT FOUR: IMPERIALISM AND WORLD WARS




- Peoples controlled by European powers on the continent as well as in other places in the world experienced the rise of nationalism which led to revolution against their colonial masters in the 1800's. The monarchical order established throughout Europe in the previous millennium would eventually decline as democracy would ascend.
- Positive long-term affects of industrialization include job creation, an increase in the size of cities and of the middle and upper middle social classes, and the standard of living and life expectancy rose for those in industrialized nations.
- Negative effects of industrialization were poor working conditions for labor regarding health and safety, hours, wages, and the lack of proper housing, food and water, and social services. Poor conditions led to the formation of unions and the struggles between employers and the working man to gain long-term improvements to these conditions. Reformers worked to correct conditions and abolish slavery.
- The Industrial Revolution caused a wealth gap, and therefore a power gap, between industrialized and non-industrialized nations.
- Many thinkers examined the affects of industrialization upon the masses and postulated various forms of governments and economies to deal with the current issues. These ideas varied widely in scope (capitalism, socialism and communism).
- The causes of WWI were imperialism, nationalism, militarism, and the system of European alliances.
- Russia had not yet industrialized and thus suffered many defeats as an Allied Power on the Eastern Front in WWI. By 1917 the Russians withdrew from the war due to the Bolshevik Revolution, and a treaty was signed with Germany.
- The Treaty of Versailles did not build a lasting peace in Europe after WWI. The treaty resulted in a legacy of bitterness on the part of Germany for its exclusion from the peace process and the unjust punishments it received, which gave rise to Hitler's platform within several decades.
- Czar Nicholas II of Russia was overthrown due to a legacy of autocratic government by the Romanovs including practices such as a lack of religious, political, and cultural freedom, pogroms against Jews, extreme poverty suffered by serfs and industrial workers, and mismanagement of government.
- 14 million Russians died during the Bolshevik Revolution and the civil war that followed. Violence and terror were used by the victorious Communist Party to control the masses.
- Stalin became a totalitarian dictator in the Soviet Union and used terror, indoctrination, propaganda and censorship to control the USSR.
- The people of the USSR suffered greatly as Stalin enacted the plans for his command economy in industry and collectivized agriculture.
- The Great Depression exacerbated the poor economic conditions in Europe after WWI, as some nations had already experienced severe inflation, and many nations owed funds to the United States. High tariffs raised by the U.S. negatively impacted trade around the world.
- Fascism arose in Germany and Italy in order to cope with the Great Depression and other issues. Socialist and Communist parties also attracted followers as unemployment grew.
- Aggressive actions by fascist and militarist governments in Germany, Italy and Japan caused WWII.
- Warfare was expanded as civilians, as well as armed forces, became the targets for destruction by genocide, conventional warfare, and the atomic bomb. In Europe, over 19 million soldiers died and 40 million civilians.
- In addition to losses of life, in the aftermath of WWII many suffered famine, disease, and homelessness. Much of Europe's infrastructure and building structures had been pulverized.
- Two superpowers emerged after WWII : the United States and the Soviet Union.
- A Cold War ensued between the superpowers as a Soviet bloc emerged which encompassed Eastern Europe behind the Iron Curtain.
- The Soviets dominate satellite nations as buffers for its security, while the United States offers economic aid to contain communism.
- NATO and the Warsaw Pact emerge as Cold War, peacetime, military alliances.

5.) UNIT FIVE: MODERN WESTERN CIVILIZATION (1945 – PRESENT)

- There was a division between aligned and non-aligned nations in the Cold War between the US and the USSR.
- The policy of containment of communism, or the desire to preserve it with buffer states, led to the involvement of the USSR and western nations in wars and foreign policy conflicts.
- In 1985 the new Soviet Premier, Mikhail Gorbachev announced new political, economic and social reforms to revive the stagnating Soviet economy, and in so doing unleashed calls for independence from satellite nations and ethnic peoples. By 1991 the Soviet Union had dissolved.
- Russia and many of its former satellites continue to experience social, political and economic problems today as they continue the transition from a communist state.
- Poland and Hungary rejected communism in favor of democratic rule.
- East and West Germany officially reunited by 1990.
- Czechoslovakia rejected communist rule by 1989, and divided into the nations of Slovakia and the Czech Republic.
- Yugoslavia had been a federation of 6 republics with mixed populations in the Balkan Peninsula. The peninsula now consists of many nations.
- Incidents of genocide and ethnic cleansing in the Balkans led to prosecutions by the UN, and NATO intervention in Kosovo in 1998.
- Information industries and technological advances have caused there to be a global economy in the 21st century.
- There are many multinational economic organizations around the world to encourage the free and successful flow of international trade to member nations. In developed nations the standard of living has risen.
- Globalization has also had negative effects such as the abuse of the work force in emerging nations, OPEC nations having the power to control the economies of the world by controlling the majority of the oil supply, and global industrialization causing severe and urgent environmental problems.
- The European Union has been a successful venture to establish a free trade zone in western Europe.
- The EU has established a common currency, the euro, and all agreements are agreed to by law and treaties among the member nations.

TEXTBOOK AND SUPPLEMENTAL RESOURCES

- World History, Patterns of Interaction. McDougal Littell (2005) - Textbook; and accompanying supplemental textbook materials such as In-Depth articles, document-based questions, and text sources on www.classzone.com.
- Tour of Athens Website:  <https://sites.google.com/a/ptsdwebapps.com/the-golden-age-of-athens/>
- Primary Source Catalogs: 
http://wadsworth.com/history_d/special_features/ext/westciv_simsnew/WesternCiv-ch01.html 
http://www2.latech.edu/~bimagee/201/great_books_etexts.html
- Google Sites for creating websites
- YouTube for posting commercials

- Primary Source Catalogs:  http://wadsworth.com/history_d/special_features/ext/westciv_simsnew/WesternCiv-ch01.html  http://www2.latech.edu/~bimagee/201/great_books_etexts.html
- Driven to Defiance Video:  <http://www.hulu.com/watch/44148>

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