

World History

This course encourages critical thinking, integrates history with geography, and makes social and cultural connections with historical events. Students will be introduced to the artists, musicians, literature and important people as well as to the facts of history.

The course has been written with an emphasis upon critical thinking, the development of research skills, and expression. Although facts, dates, and people of the past are a large part of history, they do not have much meaning unless you can analyze their significance. Understanding relationships between people and events helps you make sense of the way the world is today. Understanding history requires you to think effectively. Therefore, you will be asked to translate information, interpret, determine cause and effect relationships, infer and draw conclusions, recognize points of view, detect bias, analyze to distinguish facts, opinions and values, synthesize, problem-solve, form hypotheses, and evaluate.

The textbook, Glencoe's World History, rewards active reading with a dynamic structure, including sidebars and features on important people, technologies, art, literature, and key relevancies to our modern world.

The following materials are required for this course:

- The Oak Meadow World History Syllabus
- Glencoe *World History*, by Jackson J. Spielvogel, McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc., 2005

Outline of the World History Syllabus:

Lesson 1: Introduction to World History

Unit 1: The First Civilizations and Empires

Lesson 2: *The First Humans*

Lesson 3: *Western Asia and Egypt*

Lesson 4: *India and China*

Lesson 5: *Ancient Greece*

Lesson 6: *Rome and the Rise of Christianity*

Unit 2: New Patterns of Civilization

Lesson 7: *The World of Islam and Early African Civilizations*

Lesson 8: *The Asian World*

Lesson 9: *Emerging Europe and the Byzantine Empire*

Lesson 10: *Europe in the Middle Ages*

Lesson 11: *The Americas*

Unit 3: The Early Modern World

Lesson 12: *Renaissance and Reformation*

Lesson 13: *The Age of Exploration*

Lesson 14: *Crisis and Absolutism in Europe*

Lesson 15: *The Muslim Empires and The East Asian World*

Lesson 16: *Revolution and Enlightenment*

Lesson 17: *The French Revolution and Napoleon*

Lesson 18: Midterm Project

Unit 4: An Era of European Imperialism

Lesson 19: *Industrialization and Nationalism*

Lesson 20: *Mass Society and Democracy, Sections 1-2*

Lesson 21: *Mass Society and Democracy, Sections 3-4*

Lesson 22: *The Height of Imperialism*

Lesson 23: *East Asia Under Challenge*

Unit 5: The Twentieth Century Crisis

Lesson 24: *The Twentieth Century Crisis, Sections 1-2*

Lesson 25: *The Twentieth Century Crisis, Sections 3-4*

Lesson 26: *The West Between the Wars*

Lesson 27: *Nationalism Around the World*

Lesson 28: *World War II, Sections 1-2*

Lesson 29: *World War II, Sections 3-4*

Unit 6: Toward a Global Civilization

Lesson 30: *Cold War and Postwar Changes*

Lesson 31: *The Contemporary Western World*

Lesson 32: *Latin America*

Lesson 33: *Africa and the Middle East*

Lesson 34: *Asia and the Pacific*

Lesson 35: *Challenges and Hopes for the Future*

Lesson 36: Final Project

Lesson 15: Chapters 15-16

Chapter 15, “The Muslim Empires,” traces the development of the Ottoman Empire, from its gradual expansion and the achievements of Mehmet II and Süleyman the Magnificent, through to the early signs of its decline. It focuses throughout on Ottoman rule and daily life, including the division of people by religion and occupation.

This chapter also highlights Ottoman achievements in art and architecture. Elegant calligraphy (artistic handwriting) transforms the words of the Quran into a work of art on the strikingly beautiful piece of Islamic tilework shown on page 455. Because the Hadith (a collection of sayings of Muhammad) warns against any attempt to imitate God by creating pictures of living beings, inscriptions from the Quran are often used to decorate Islamic art and architecture. Islamic calligraphers seek to convey both the power and the beauty of the Islamic religion through the stylized lettering of sacred words. The piece of tilework shown on page 455 can be found today in a mosque in Turkey.



Chinese Buddha sculpture

Section 1 discusses how the Ottoman Turks used firearms to expand their lands and appointed local rulers to administer conquered regions. It characterizes the creation of a strong Ottoman Empire with religious tolerance and artistic achievements.

This section will also chronicle the life of Ottoman ruler Süleyman. The Süleymaniye Mosque, shown on page 466, was built between 1550-1557, and many historians consider it to be the most beautiful example of Ottoman architecture in Istanbul. The mosque was designed by Sinan, one of the foremost architects of the Ottoman Empire and a close friend of Süleyman. The mosque sits atop a hill in old Istanbul. It is supported by four massive columns, one from Baalbek, one from Alexandria, and two from older Byzantine palaces. Inside the mosque the *mihrab* (a prayer niche indicating the direction of Makkah) and the *mimber* (pulpit from which the Friday sermon is preached) are carved from white marble. The four minarets, one at each corner of the courtyard, are said to represent Süleyman’s position as the fourth Ottoman ruler of Istanbul. There are ten balconies on the minarets, and these are said to represent that Süleyman was the tenth sultan to reign since the founding of the Ottoman dynasty. Adjoining the mosque were theological schools, a medical school, a soup kitchen and a hospice for the poor, and a Turkish bath.

One European visitor had this to say about Süleyman: “His dignity of demeanor and his general physical appearance are worthy of the ruler of so vast an empire.” Charles V, the Holy Roman Emperor, who ruled from 1519-1556, was a contemporary of Süleyman. Charles viewed the Ottomans as a major threat to his power. Charles’s concern with the Ottoman advance (as well as war with France) kept him from stopping the spread of Martin Luther’s ideas in his realms.

The janissary corps were the elite soldiers and administrators of the sultan’s army. As noted in your textbook, they were young Christian boys chosen because of their “good appearance and good physical build.” This policy of recruiting janissaries lasted until the 17th century. After this time, new recruits came from the sons of janissaries and the forces became less disciplined. To minimize the impact on the Ottoman treasury, the janissaries took jobs in the winter (when they were usually not fighting) as artisans. By 1826, the janissary force had grown so large and so powerful that the sultan was forced to massacre all its members. The demise of the janissaries corresponded with the decline of the Ottoman Empire.

The ottoman, a stuffed footstool also called a hassock, is named after the Ottoman Empire. Tales of this great empire excited the European imagination, and by the end of the 18th century a large market had formed for items of Eastern luxury — carpets, pillows, divans, and the like. Included was a small, backless couch the French called an *ottoman*, after the empire. The name was later applied in England to the smaller footstool.

Section 2 relates how the Safavids used their faith as a unifying force to bring Turks and Persians together. It describes how the Safavid dynasty reached its height under Shah Abbas.

Once the capital of the Safavid Empire, Isfahan is today a major city in west-central Iran, known for its textiles, handicrafts, tiles, rugs, and cotton fabrics. Recovery of the city — which had declined greatly over the centuries since its peak of beauty during the reign of Shah Abbas — began in the second quarter of the 20th century.

Section 3 explains how the Moguls united India under a single government with a common culture. It discusses how the introduction of foreigners seeking trade opportunities in India hastened the decline of the Mogul Empire.

This section recounts the histories of Mogul rulers such as Akbar. There were three distinct stages to Akbar’s life: an impetuous youth; a sober, empire-expanding maturity; and a religious mysticism later in his life. The foolishness of his youth is shown in a story from the *Akbarnama*, a picture history of his life that he commissioned because he could not read. One day he was told how Indian Rajputs would charge against a double-sided spear and impale themselves. He took this “challenge” and raced towards a sword fixed against a wall. Akbar was saved from senseless death only because someone kicked the sword away.

The North Indian Nagas are a non-Hindu culture, long noted for their independence, courage in battle, and talent as dancers and musicians. Until recently they lived as slash-and-burn agriculturists in dense rainforests. They were headhunters. In Mogul paintings, the Naga were depicted as ferocious hunters

dressed in leaves, and their images were used to frighten ill-behaved children.

Chapter 16, “The East Asian World,” traces the key events in the history of East Asia during the 15th-18th centuries. It identifies the major cultural and social elements in China and Japan.

For 500 years, the Forbidden City was the imperial palace of the Ming and Qing dynasties. The Forbidden City, shown on page 483, is the largest palace complex in the world and is surrounded by a moat and protective wall. Yellow, the symbol of the royal family, is the dominant color. There are dozens of halls and courtyards where the emperor, his family, and hundreds of retainers lived surrounded by treasures, artwork, and gardens. Commoners and even high-level officials were not allowed to enter the grounds. The last emperor was forced out of the Forbidden Palace in 1924. Today it is open to the public as a museum.

Section 1 describes the Ming and Qing dynasties of China. It summarizes how China opened its doors to Europeans, but closed those doors when it observed the effects of Western ideas on Chinese society. Jesuit missionaries taught the Qing emperor mathematics and geometry, produced cannons later used to put down rebellions, and served as the emperor’s favorite court artists.

A common problem for monarchs is choosing a successor. The problem is particularly complicated for an emperor with many wives and children. Kangxi, who became emperor amidst controversy, wanted to prevent a similar problem for his heir. He chose his oldest son, Yinreng, as successor and educated him accordingly. Court officials were afraid to tell Kangxi that his son was violent and cruel. Eventually, the son had to be jailed for attempting a coup. As Kangxi lay dying, he was in the company of another son, Yongzheng, who told everyone after his father died that he was his father’s choice for emperor. There were no witnesses, and Yongzheng ruled from 1723-1753. Yinreng and two other brothers died shortly after their father died.

Section 2 describes the rapid increase in population that led to rural land shortages. Between 1500-1800, more than 75% of Chinese people lived in rural areas and were small farmers. Farmers either worked as tenants and paid rent to a landlord, or owned their land. Many Chinese believed that pursuing trade or manufacturing was inferior to farming.

The section also surveys Chinese society and its organization around the family. It relates how architecture, decorative arts, and literature flourished during this period.

Section 3 identifies the three powerful political figures who unified Japan, and the economic and cultural changes in Japan up to 1750.

Much of Japan’s cultural outlook and customs were established during this period. The *geisha* (literally, “art person”) system, for example, was traditionally a form of indentured labor. Usually, the parents gave their daughter for a sum of money to a geisha house, which taught, fed, and clothed her. After a period of years, the geisha then began earning money to repay her parents’ debt and her past keep.

Even in a society as seemingly homogeneous as Japan's, social and cultural distinctions can be powerful. As social outcasts in Tokugawa culture, the eta were forced to live in their own communities and were avoided by other groups. This was primarily due to their occupation, which was disposing of animal carcasses and tanning leather. Buddhism and Shintoism had regulations about taking a life and observed purification rituals when someone touched something dead. Today, many Japanese with eta ancestry are reluctant to reveal that information. They feel that discrimination still exists. Japanese parents may be reluctant to let their son or daughter marry someone of eta descent.

Finally, this section describes the many peasant uprisings that Japan experienced during the 16th-18th centuries, and explains why Korea could not withstand invasions by the Japanese and Manchus.

Read Chapter 15, "The Muslim Empires," and Chapter 16, "The East Asian World" (pages 454-500).

Answer the following questions:

1. Describe the changes in the Safavid dynasty during the reign of Shah Abbas.
2. Describe the treatment of women in Mogul India.
3. Describe the increase of Shiite religious elements in the Safavid dynasty after the death of Shah Abbas.
4. Describe the effects of economic changes in the Tokugawa Era on Japanese peasants.
5. Explain why the kind of commercial capitalism that was emerging in Europe did not develop in China.

Choose *one* of the following projects to complete:

- a) Write a letter from the perspective of a 15-year-old Balkan Christian boy who has been in the janissary corps for two years. Look at both the advantages (i.e. a chance to excel, better food, the excitement of court life) as well as the disadvantages (i.e. strict discipline, no contact with family, enslavement to the sultan) of being in the corps. Then, explain what you would do if placed in a similar situation. For example, what would you decide if offered an outstanding opportunity that required you to give up your family and way of life?
- b) Research and report on the historical divisions between Sunni and Shiite Muslims, and how they are relevant today. This religious division is still seen in Iran and Iraq. A shah survived as ruler of Iran until 1979, when the Ayatollah Khomeini, a Shiite Muslim imam, came to power. Today, Iran is the largest Shiite Muslim country in the world. Iraq is dominated by Sunni Muslims, although most Iraqis are Shiite. In 1980, Iraq attacked Iran and the war between the two countries lasted until 1988. There were other reasons for this war (the desire to control oil revenue primary among them), but the religious tension between these two branches of Islam was

a fundamental factor in this conflict that cost hundreds of thousands of lives. Provide contemporary examples of ongoing divisions between Sunni and Shiite Muslims.

- c) In a brief paper, compare the treatment of subject peoples by the Ottomans, Safavids, and Moguls.
- d) Research the voyages of Zheng He, and then write a front-page newspaper article about the voyages. Include an interview with Zheng He. What did he accomplish? What did he see?
- e) Develop a presentation on the samurai. Choose a particular topic to research, such as the rise of samurai, famous samurai, clothing and armor, daily life, combat techniques, or film portrayals of samurai. Your presentation may take any form you wish, including a display, video, multimedia, or drawings.
- f) Write an essay in which you evaluate the reaction of the Japanese daimyo to firearms as described on page 501. Do you believe the daimyo was merely intrigued by these weapons, or did he realize how important they would be to the future of Japan? How might Japan's history have been different if Europeans had not sold them Western military technology?