

# World History: Prehistory - 1000 CE

Welcome to World History at Oneness Family High School! In this class, we will explore some of the influential peoples, movements, and ideas that helped to make the world we live in today. While we learn about the events of the past, we will also continually develop and practice the skills of a “historian,” namely, critical analysis of information, research, writing, and of course, deep thinking. We will also look at how history has been written, who tends to write it, and why that matters to us.

The success of this course will depend entirely on your ability to prepare yourself for each class discussion. At its very worst, history class can be a teacher standing up in front of you, yammering about stuff that happened a while ago, and then telling you to write about it. Please do not let me do that. Nobody wants that, least of all me. This course centers on you, the student, the ideas you come up with and want to discuss, and the lessons we can all learn from the past. To have this kind of course, we must agree to put in that small effort before each class, to prepare ourselves for what that day has to offer, and be ready to engage with our classmates.

In short: When you come to class prepared, school is about what **you** can do. When you do **not** come to class prepared, school is about what **I** can do. If I have to do history for you, I promise that it will be boring. If we can all investigate the past together and engage with the tremendous wealth of knowledge it contains, I promise that you will find something interesting in it.

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## COURSE OVERVIEW

This course is broken up into three units, each dealing with a general time frame, and after which a “unit project” will be completed that centers around an approved historical question relating to that unit. During each unit, we will be studying peoples of the ancient world through the lens of concepts that remain relevant to humankind today, such as “Mesopotamia and Justice” during Week 5.

### Unit 1: Prehistory to ~500 BCE

- **Topics:** Hominid development, Mesopotamia, Crete, Phoenicians, Indus Valley, Egypt, Greeks, Aryans, Israelites, Kushites, Hittites, Assyrians, Shang China, Zhou China, Olmec, Zapotec, Chavin
- **Themes:** Narrative, gender, civilization, categorization, inequality, justice, history in politics, power, nation-building
- **Project:** “Guided” research project

## Unit 2: ~500 BCE to ~500 CE

- **Topics:** Persia, Greece, Rome, Qin Dynasty, Han Dynasty, India, Bantu, Aksum, Africa, North America, Maya, Aztec, Inca
- **Themes:** Empire, local self-government, social class, democracy, ethical systems, religion, love, human migration, trade, theocracy, environment
- **Project:** "Semi-guided" research project

## Unit 3: ~500 CE to ~1300 CE

- **Topics:** Islam, China, Mongolia, Japan, Korea, Byzantium, Russia, Seljuk, Western Europe, Crusades
  - **Themes:** Commerce, cultural exchange, religion and progress, technology, cultural diffusion, conflict, feudalism, social order,
  - **Project:** "Independent" research project
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## COURSE STRUCTURE

Every week will roughly follow the pattern below:

1. **"Presentation"**: Knowledge is presented to the class through readings, lecture, and visual resources.
2. **"Engagement"**: As a class, we discuss readings and information, their significance to our historical questions, and their relevance to our lives today.
3. **"Production"**: Individually, you will produce information in some form, whether that be in writing, a visual format, or a physical format. These prompts vary from week to week and explore questions from our class discussions and readings.

In preparation for each week, the appropriate folder on Google Drive will be shared with you. This folder will contain all of the documents for that specific week, along with important images from the readings, and the introduction sheet for that week which has guiding questions for each reading. Unless otherwise noted by me in class, each student will be held responsible for completing the readings and productions indicated on each day.

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## GRADING

Your grade for the year will be composed of four different parts, totalling **1000** points that can be earned. Participation in seminars and your preparedness for discussion are worth **10** points each week, for a total of **300** points. As you will notice, there are no quizzes or tests except for the final exam, which means that I am basing your knowledge of the material on your participation within

class discussions. Your productions are worth a total of **12** points each week, regardless of how many you are requested to create or write. For example, if you are answering **two** prompts during that week, each prompt would be worth **6** points. **Three** prompts would be **4** points each, and so forth. All together, productions will count for **360** points. Each project at the end of a unit is worth **80** points, for a total of **240**. At the end of the year, the final exam will be worth **100** points, or 10% of your grade.

1. Classroom Preparation, Engagement, and Involvement	<b>10</b> points <i>each week</i>	<b>(300 total)</b>
2. Productions	<b>12</b> points <i>each week</i>	<b>(360 total)</b>
3. Projects (one after each unit)	<b>80</b> points each	<b>(240 total)</b>
4. Final Exam	<b>100</b> points	+ <b>(100 total)</b>
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		<b>1000 Points</b>

Grading Scale:

- A: 90% - 100%
- B: 80% - 89%
- C: 70% - 79%
- D: 60% - 69%
- F: 0% - 59%

LATE POLICY

Unless permission has been granted because of special circumstances, productions and projects handed in late will receive the following credit:

Later than start of class through one day late: **half-credit**

Two days late: **quarter-credit**

Three or more days late: **none**

MAKE-UP POLICY

If a student is absent and the absence is excused, they may hand in their work late by as many days as they were absent (*to a maximum of five*) without penalty. After this grace period, normal late policy applies. In the case of unexcused absences, students will be held accountable for all work due during absences and any readings/assignments for the day(s) following their absence.

PLAGIARISM POLICY

Plagiarism Policy: Plagiarizing is taking and using ideas from a source without citing that source. By not citing your sources, you claim that what you have written down or made is of your own creation.

If you plagiarise without making an effort to cite the source of the information, you will receive no credit for that piece of work. If your plagiarism is unintentional and resulting from poor citation form, the production or project will be returned to you and not accepted until the errors are

corrected. Additionally, cheating of any kind, copying classmates' work, or exhibiting dishonesty in a production, project, or exam will result in receiving no credit for that work.

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## ATTENDANCE

Being present is super important! This class would not be possible without you, and its success depends on your participation.

Any assignments, productions, projects, or exams are the responsibility of the student to complete and hand in on time. If a student misses class for an excused absence, all work due during that period must be made up per the Make-up Policy detailed above. If a student leaves for ANY excused absence, it is the student's responsibility to contact me and receive all work due during that period of absence PRIOR to leaving. If the student does not adhere to this expectation, any work submitted will be subject to the Late Policy detailed above. In order for me to appropriately prepare you for any prolonged excused absence, please give me at least one full week notice to gather your materials and explain the expectations. If a student is at school but will miss class for an excused absence, it is the responsibility of the student to hand in any assignments before leaving school.

Finally, if a student misses class and they are not excused, they will not only be held responsible for readings, sources, and productions for the following day, but their work will also be subject to the Late Policy detailed above.

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## CLASSROOM CONDUCT & FINAL OVERVIEW

One of the greatest skills you can learn in life is how to respectfully disagree and then engage with another person in meaningful conversation. This also happens to be one of the most challenging skills to learn as a student, and we are all at different points on this path to becoming more precise, effective, and respectful members of the school. This course will likely challenge, and in turn teach you how to defend, closely-held personal beliefs in a logical and respectful way. In order to achieve this, I expect the following of you every time you step into the classroom:

1. Foster an atmosphere of respect within the classroom. Without the comfort of knowing that we can express our opinions openly, meaningful discussion cannot take place in the classroom. Your beliefs have value, and when expressed appropriately, they will help all of us engage with the material (and your perspective on it) more clearly.
2. Follow the guidelines from your student/family handbook as they relate to our class.
3. Be responsible for your work and take pride in what you achieve as a student of history.
4. Believe it or not, I cannot help you unless I know something is wrong. Please reach out to me if you have any questions, concerns, or just want to talk. As your teacher, I am your resource to use.