

AP Modern World History Summer Assignment 2025-2026

Dear Prospective AP World History Student: Google Classroom Code **6ndpun2r**. Please open google classroom and join the class using the code. All the materials are available on google classroom.

You have indicated that you wish to be in the AP World History class for next year. This is a demanding course that will require a large amount of reading, writing, guided discussion, and primary source analysis. **All students are required to take the AP test in the spring.** The course will follow the intertwined histories of World Civilizations and their many peoples from 1200 BCE to the present. World history is very broad, intricate, and demanding therefore you will be entitled to a weighted grade.

Since the course will require the coverage of a large body of information you will need to do some summer reading and research that will provide you with a valuable head start and provide you with a preview of the type of work that you will be expected to contribute. All students are required to complete the summer assignments to take the AP World History class. **Failure to have these completed on the first day of school will lead to your removal to another history section.** All materials needed for the assignment can be found once you join the google classroom platform. Please be sure to log onto your school google account before you join. The code is at the top of this page. All responses to the summer assignment should be returned through the google classroom platform. **All question responses must be in complete sentences and reflect the complexity and insights found in the reading materials. DO NOT PLAGIARIZE!**

World history requires a broader focus on the similarities and interconnectivity of people from the global community. Broad areas of understanding and analytical skills will be required to succeed and profit from the course.

Assignment #1- Easter Island and You![-LINK](#)

For the first segment of your summer project, you will need to read the article *Easter's End* from **Discover Magazine**, August 1995 by Jared Diamond, author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning **Guns, Germs, and Steel** and more recently **Collapse**. This is an article that I have used for many years and is the basis for much of the research that Diamond used to write his first and most famous book.

Read the journal article *Easter's End* and consider the following questions:

- 1.) Explain what important developments allowed the history of the Island to emerge?
- 2.) Describe the picture that emerged from the scientist who researched the island?
- 3.) Describe the factors that created crisis(s) for the early inhabitants of Easter Island and how did they cope with them?
- 4.) Evaluate how and why societal decline is hard to measure?
- 5.) What lessons can be learned from the Easter Island case and why?

Your answers should be typed and contain enough detail to convey a complete understanding of the article. (Hint-Include specific details from the text to support your answers)

Assignment #2- King Leopold's Ghost[-LINK](#)

For the second portion of your summer assignment, I would like you to read the book review of *King Leopold's Ghost-A Story of Greed, Terror, and Heroism in Colonial Africa* (link above). This incredible example of scholarship reveals the brutal history of exploitation and extraction that accompanied the emergence of the modern industrialized world. The book has been turned into a movie that is available through streaming services. This is the [trailer](#) for the

film that will give you a sense of the setting and scope. When you have finished reading the review and trailer please answer the following questions in complete sentences.

- 1.) What were the conditions in the Congo during the time of King Leopold's control?
- 2.) What were some of the impacts of the massive exploitation of the region on the people and the environment?
- 3.) How did the world "need" what came from the Congo region and how did people react to the realities that were exposed by journalists and missionaries who lived and worked in the region?
- 4.) What places in the world today face some of the same challenges because of critical resources and delicate environments that are being exploited? How have our reactions to these issues evolved and how do they stay the same?

Assignment #3-1491 Before Columbus- [LINK](#)

For the third portion of the summer assignment, I would like you to read a journal article called **1491** by Charles Mann. This groundbreaking research is also central to the book of the same name. Mann has tackled the complex topic of life in the Americas before and after European contact and some of his claims have stoked a healthy debate about historical assumptions and new insights. Please read the article carefully and answer the questions below in full sentences with examples from the text.

- 1.) Explain some of the claims made by Erikson and Balee and describe how they conflict with some of the conventional views of historians about the Americas before European contact.
- 2.) What aspects of the pilgrim story bring more nuance and complexity to the myths about early settlers?
- 3.) Describe the debate about the population of pre-Columbian America and why the estimates vary in such large ways. Why is this so controversial?
- 4.) What was the role of domesticated animals such as pigs in the interaction between Europeans and native peoples of the Americas?
- 5.) What aspects of life in the Americas before contact point to the native's sophistication with agriculture and habitat management? How will these advantages benefit the rest of the world after contact?
- 6.) Was the world before contact a "Utopia" according to the author? Did natives live without war and divisions?
- 7.) How have some of the most controversial claims of researchers about the Amazon impacted our understanding of ecology and species populations before and after the contact between the "old" and "new" worlds?