

AP European History Summer Assignment 2026

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Hello! Welcome to AP European History with Mrs. Rabin! How lucky are you? I look forward to welcoming you into my classroom when the 2026-2027 school year kicks off. My assignment for this summer has been picked with intention. First, I want you to explore the college board's [AP European History Course and Exam Description \(CED\)](#). If this link does not work for you, google "college board AP European History course and exam description." It will pop up. The CED informs you about the framework for the course, the topics covered, and the historical skills you will be tested on. You will handwrite your answers to the questions 1-5 on notebook paper. The final piece (the short essay) will have you apply Machiavellian political thought to a European leader of the past century. Please have this handwritten assignment with you on Day #1 of our class. It is due then.

3 TIPS FOR SUCCESS FOR AP EURO SUMMER WORK:

- 1) Please make sure your name and class period are clearly labeled on each sheet of notebook paper. Please use your best handwriting, which is not my forte either but try!
- 2) Don't work with friends. This is for you by you. Clearly, you all will have similar responses for 1-5, but I want you to go through the CED on your own.
- 3) For the short essay: leave AI/ Chat GPT alone. They do not serve you at all. All universities and colleges are checking student work with advanced technology to detect AI. USC has a zero-tolerance policy, resulting in an immediate "failure" of the course, as well as possible expulsion. I will hold you to the same accountability. You are too smart to choose so poorly.

QUESTIONS (1-5) USING THE AP EURO COURSE AND EXAM DESCRIPTION (CED):

- 1) Skip to pg. 21: The course framework has 2 essential components. Read over these and summarize each one in your own words.
- 2) On pg. 24, they provide 6 skills that comprise "Historical Thinking." Please read over these and digest them for a minute. Then, paraphrase all 6 skills, individually, into your own words.
- 3) On pg. 25, they break "Reasoning Processes" down into the three ways that historians (you) will be asked to think about European history over time. Read over these 3 processes. Summarize comparison, causation, and continuity and change in your own words.
- 4) On pg. 28, they break down the 9 Units of AP Euro. For this question, please write down what Units 1-9 are and their time periods.
- 5) As you will be creating a chart, use a fresh sheet of notebook paper for #5. See the chart below as the example to follow. Using pg. 32, pgs. 42-43, and pgs. 46-63, Unit 1 on the Renaissance, copy the chart that I have here (11 rows/3 columns). I've included some starter information—the rest is on you to find and fill out accordingly.

Unit 1 Topics	Reasoning Processes	Key Concepts Summarized
1.1 Contextualizing Renaissance and Discovery	Causation	????

1.2?	?	?
1.3?	?	?
1.4?	?	?
1.5?	?	?
1.6?	?	?
1.7?	?	?
1.8?	?	?
1.9?	?	?
1.10?	?	?
1.11 Causation in Renaissance and Age of Discovery	?	????

6) **Short Essay Response: Handwritten 1.5-2 pages/ don't skip lines:**

Niccolò Machiavelli's *The Prince* (1532) is one of the most influential and controversial works of political thought to emerge from the Renaissance. In it, Machiavelli makes bold claims about how political power is gained, maintained, and used. Using the excerpts at the bottom of the page, apply his ideas to a European leader from the past century (Miklos Horthy to Winston Churchill to Putin—the possibilities are endless). Your argument should connect Machiavellian thought to specific historical evidence.

Step #1: Read over the quotes below and think about what Machiavelli was saying? If you need more background on *The Prince*, [watch this short Discovery Education](#) video, which can be found on your class link.

Step #2: What historical faces does Machiavelli have you conjuring in your head? What key bills or pieces of legislation were their hallmark? How did this person rise to power and maintain it? How did this person leave their stamp on history? In other words, what evidence can you gather that frames this person as “Machiavellian”? ***This part will require you to research!

Step #3: Create a clear thesis statement that ties Machiavelli political thought, as seen in these two quotes, to your European leader backed with clear evidence from history.

“The lion cannot protect himself from traps, and the fox cannot defend himself from wolves. One must therefore be a fox to recognize traps, and a lion to frighten wolves.”

— Niccolò Machiavelli, [The Prince](#)

“And here comes in the question whether it is better to be loved rather than feared or feared rather than loved. It might perhaps be answered that we should wish to be both; but since love and fear can hardly exist together, if we must choose between them, it is far safer to be feared than loved. It is much safer to be feared than loved because ...love is preserved by the link of obligation which, owing to the baseness of men, is broken at every opportunity for their advantage; but fear preserves you by a dread of punishment which never fails.”

— Niccolò Machiavelli, [The Prince](#)