

IB History of the Americas
2026-2027
Year 1 Summer Reading Assignment
Ms. Sambol

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(Please email me over the summer with any questions or concerns)

The following assignment is a course requirement and is due by the first day of class, **Monday, August 3, 2026**. After that date, no credit will be given unless a student enrolls late in the course. In this case, please contact me immediately to make a plan for submission.

IB History of the Americas is a rigorous, fast-paced two-year class. You must use the summer months to acquaint yourself with the [course content, skills, and concepts](#) and prepare for the kind of inquiry-based learning that is central to the class. The book chosen for the summer assignment – [15 Foods in U.S. History by Anne Zeide](#) - provides students an opportunity to explore history in a slightly different way, considering the different foods that shed light on the history of the country.

Year 1 of the IB History course corresponds to Paper 3 of the IB History curriculum. We will cover much of U.S. History during the first year, but we will also devote attention to the Americas as a regional study. At the conclusion of Year 2 you will take external assessments for three content areas – Paper 1, Paper 2, and Paper 3. While Paper 1 and Paper 2 are more global in their orientation (and will be covered in Year 2), Paper 3 is a regional study focused on the Americas. All work students produce for IB History is written, including short answers and essays. Multiple Choice based questions will not appear on the IB exam and will only be used sparingly and for non-summative assessments in the class.

In addition to being an introduction to core content for the course, the Summer Assignment is designed for students to engage with the core concepts and command terms that are used to structure Paper 3 essays.

<u>Core Concepts</u>	<u>Command Terms</u>
• Cause and Consequence – Why have things happened in the past? • Continuity and change – What has changed and what has stayed the same? • Perspectives – Who has a view of past events and how do we reconcile different views • Significance – Which stories should be told?	• Discuss – Break down in order to bring out the essential elements or structure. • Analyze - Offer a considered and balanced review that includes a range of arguments, factors or hypotheses. Opinions or conclusions should be presented clearly and supported by appropriate evidence. • Examine – Consider an argument or concept in a way that uncovers the assumptions and interrelationships of the issue. • Explain – Give a detailed account including reasons or causes • To what extent – Consider the merits or otherwise of an argument or concept. Opinions and conclusions should be presented clearly and supported with appropriate evidence and sound argument.

Summer Assignment Requirements

The Summer Assignment should be hand-written, clearly labeled as shown below, and 100% authentic, original student work.

1. **Author:** Provide the name of the author and title of the book along with a one-paragraph biography of the author. Address how the author's background could be important in evaluating the source. (10 points)
2. **Thesis:** In one sentence, explain the major point of the book. What does the author argue about foodways and U.S. history? (10 points)
3. **Summary:** In bulleted points, take approximately 1 ½ to 2 pages of notes on the major points of the book. (30 Points/2 points per food) - Include each of the foods and a brief explanation of how they impact and relate to U.S. History.
4. **Essay:** In 5 paragraphs you will analyze the book. (50 Points) - You will respond to one of the questions below, which are aligned with the core concepts and command terms for IB History
 - **Option 1: Evaluate the author's claim that using foodways is an effective way to examine U.S. History.**
 - **Option 2: "The examination of foodways is best used to understand change over the course of U.S. History (not continuity)." To what extent do you agree with this statement?**
 - **Option 3: Evaluate the impact of different foods in U.S. History.**

Please ensure that your essay includes the following:

- **Historical Context and Thesis** (10 points): An introductory paragraph with **historical context** and an **arguable, defensible thesis**
- **Organization and Evidence / Analysis** (30 points): Each body paragraph (x3) should include a **topic sentence** and **evidence from the text** – Be sure to connect the evidence to the topic sentence and thesis ****Note:** It is not recommended that you analyze all of the foods covered in the book; 6-7 foods should be considered the appropriate number to examine (approximately 2 per body paragraph)
- **Different Perspectives and Judgement** (10 points): Include **different perspectives** on the author's claims as well as your **own judgement** in which you indicate which claim is the most valid – This should be integrated into each body paragraph ****Note:** *You do not need to complete additional research beyond the book to satisfy this requirement. Instead, you should 1) speculate how someone might disagree with the author or evidence that possibly complicates her claim(s) and 2) how you have reconciled different perspectives (For example, if you make a claim that the author's focus on one of the foods is potentially limited or distorting, do you find that there is a way to reconcile or synthesize the different perspectives?)*
- **Conclusion** (0 points): **A conclusion that provides close to the essay** ****No points, but must be included for credit**

The summer assignment portion outlined above will be a **Minor Grade**. This will be your first grade in IB History of the Americas. The assignment is due on the first day of class in August. There will also be a quiz on the book the first Friday of the school year, which will count as a **Formative/Practice Grade**.