

AP EUROPEAN HISTORY: SUMMER ASSIGNMENT – 2026-2027

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Introduction:

You are receiving this assignment because you signed up to take the Advanced Placement European History Course during the 2026-2027 school year. This summer assignment is designed to introduce you to important skills necessary for academic success in the class. In addition, the assignment introduces you to the course content (major historical developments in Europe) that will be discussed at the beginning of the 2026 school year.

Important Due Dates and Information:

The entire assignment is due on August 14, 2026.

The assignment will be graded according to the attached rubric (see last page) and will count as part of your overall grade for the first quarter in the class.

COURSE OVERVIEW

The study of European history since 1450 introduces students to cultural, economic, political, and social developments that played a fundamental role in shaping the world in which they live. Without this knowledge, we would lack the context for understanding the development of contemporary institutions, the role of continuity and change in present-day society and politics, and the evolution of current forms of artistic expression and intellectual discourse.

In addition to providing a basic narrative of events and movements, the goals of AP European History are to develop

- (a) an understanding of some of the principal themes in modern European history,
- (b) an ability to analyze historical evidence and historical interpretation, and
- (c) an ability to express historical understanding in writing.

Selected Historical Developments in Europe in the 14th and 15th Centuries

Through Primary and Secondary Sources

Name: _____

I. MAPS-Skill: (a) Map Comprehension and Geopolitical Awareness and (b) Chronology

(a) The majority of historic developments discussed in the course took place in Europe. However, political boundaries of European empires and states constantly changed over the last 500 years of history. You will be expected to identify “main players” (and some minor ones) on various maps throughout the course, especially when discussing geopolitical situations of each time period.

Your task: Using the Internet or any other references, identify the following territories on the maps presented below. (Place appropriate letters on each map)

MAP 1: 14th – 15th Century Map of Europe:

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| A. The Holy Roman Empire | I. The Papal States |
| B. France | J. Russia (The Russian Principalities) |
| C. Kingdom of Castile | K. Sweden |
| D. Kingdom of Aragon | L. Kingdom of Naples |
| E. The Ottoman Empire | M. Poland |
| F. England | N. Lithuania |
| G. Scotland | O. Teutonic Knights/Prussia |
| H. Kingdom of Navarre | P. Portugal |

MAP 2: Italy 1450

- A. Duchy of Milan
- B. Republic of Venice
- C. Papal States
- D. Republic of Florence
- E. Kingdom of Naples

MAPS 3-6: Complete the four maps attached at the end of the packet.

(b) In a history class, you do have an advantage if you are “good with dates.” In this class, however, you are not expected to memorize them. There will never be a question on a test or a quiz that will ask you to recall a particular / exact date. Understanding of chronology, an order in which historic developments had occurred, is a lot more important. Chronological awareness will allow you to get a better grasp on the content of the course as well as contribute to your understanding of various “cause and effect” relationships.

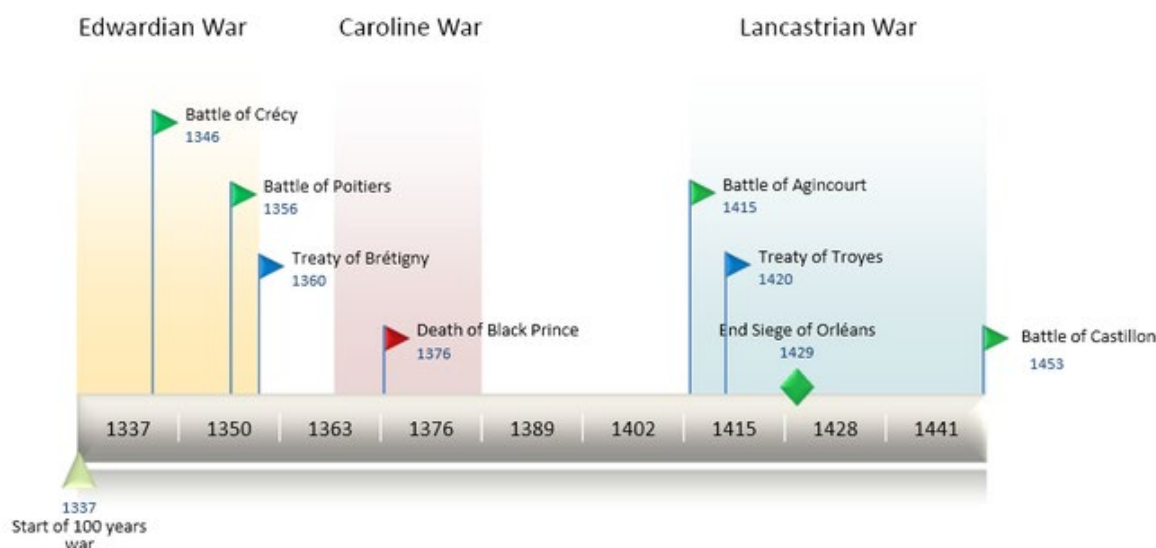
II. TIMELINES-

Your task: Carefully examine provided examples of timelines. Notice that each timeline, in its own way is based on a consistent and orderly scale (same distance between each segment on the

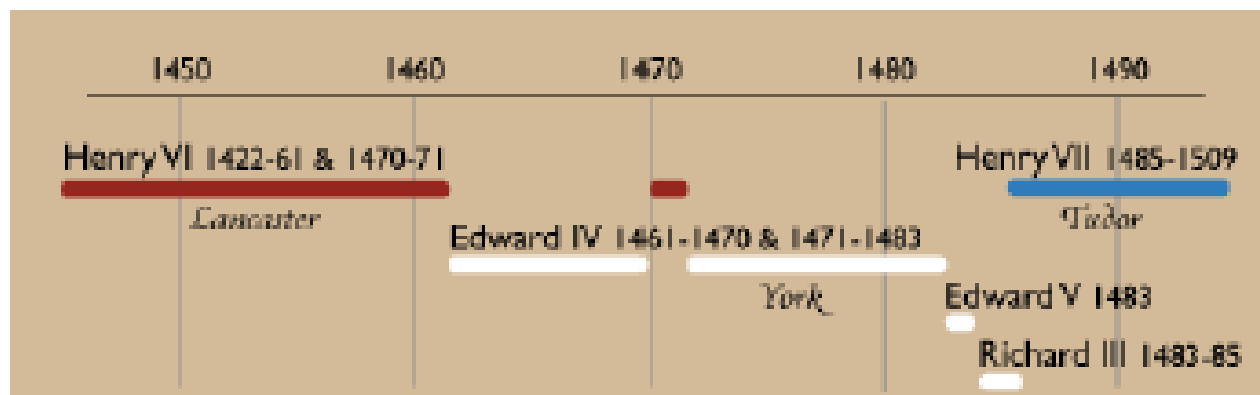
timelines). Find the exact dates (ranges of dates for some) of the events listed on the next page. Construct your own timeline and place Events A through J on your timeline in a chronological order. Make sure that your final product is clear and neat!

Example 1: Major Events of the 100 Years' War

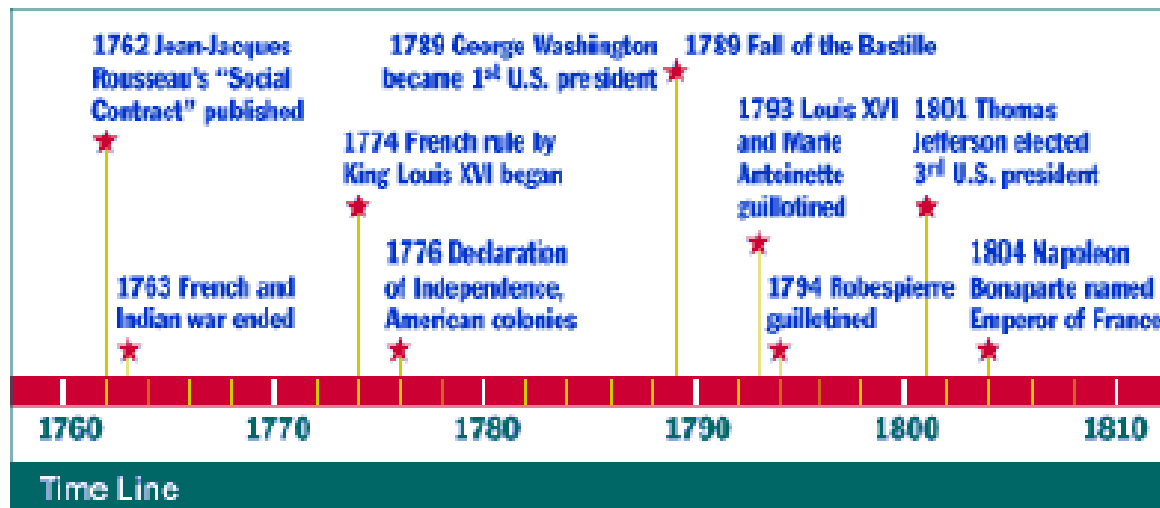
100 Years War



Example 2: The Wars of the Roses: Royal Timeline



Example 3: Selected Events in France and the United States (Late 18th – Early 19th Centuries)



Events for Your Timeline:

Using the internet, attached textbook pages, or any other credible references, find out the exact dates or range of dates for each of the events below. On the next page, construct your own timeline (don't forget to establish a consistent scale) and place these events on the timeline.

Event	Dates
Peasant Rebellion led by Wat Tyler rocks England	
B. Constantinople, capital of the Byzantine Empire, falls to the Ottoman Turks	
C. Pope Boniface VIII issues Unam Sanctam	
D. The Hundred Years' War ends	
E. The Bubonic Plague enters Europe	
F. The Great (Western) Schism divides European loyalties between two popes	
G. Cosimo de Medici becomes the "Priore of the Republic" (of Florence)	
H. The Statute of Laborers is passed by the English Parliament	
I. Peasant rebellion, known as the Jacquerie, erupts in northern France	
J. Span of time when the primary residency of the popes was in Avignon (The Papacy at Avignon)	

Prepare your timeline on the next page.

Timeline

- III. DEFINITIONS--Skill: (c) Definition/explanation of key terms - During the course of the school year, you will be expected to define /explain a list of key terms for every chapter. Most of the key terms will be mentioned and/or described in the textbook. You will have to use outside sources for others. When addressing this part of the class, you are expected to provide a complete definition for each key term (who, what, where, when) as well as briefly explain the significance of each term.

Example:

RENAISSANCE

Period of European history that is associated with the revival (rebirth) of interest in classical Greco-Roman cultures. The Renaissance first emerged and developed in the Italian city-states, such as Florence, Venice, Rome, Urbino, and Milan during the 14th and 15th centuries. Many historians believe that it represents a distinct period in European history: a break from the Middle Ages and beginning of progress for European civilization.

Your task(c) Using attached pages from the textbook (Ch.11) as well as the Internet, define the following key terms (definitions must address the terms in their historic context – 14th-15th centuries in Europe).

The Black Death

pogroms

The Statue of Laborers

The Jacquerie

The English Peasant Revolt (led by Wat Tyler) 1381

The Hundred Years War (major causes)
Joan of Arc
The Holy Roman Empire (14 th and 15 th centuries)
Condottieri
<i>Unam Sanctam</i>
The Great (Western) Schism
Vernacular Literature (examples from the 14 th century)
Christine de Pizan

- IV. SOURCE ANALYSIS--Skill: (e) Primary Source Interpretation / analysis – Mastery of primary source documents is an essential skill not only in the AP European history course, but also in any other AP social studies classes. You will deal with primary sources on a continuous basis, so there will be plenty of opportunities to learn, improve, and practice your primary source interpretation skills.

Your Task: Carefully review the explanation on primary sources provided below. After that, read and analyze each primary source provided in this handout and answer the attached questions.

What is a Primary Source? A primary source is a piece of living history. It may be defined as any artifact that provides first hand or direct information about the past. Primary sources may include first person accounts (e.g. oral histories, diaries, memoirs, correspondence), documents (e.g. correspondence, treaties, laws, speeches), images (e.g. maps, photographs, drawings, paintings), or historically gathered data.

How do you begin to interpret a primary source?

Begin analyzing a primary source, such as a spy letter, by answering the following questions:

- Who created the source and why?
- What sorts of information does the source supply?
- Under what circumstances was the source created? How would this influence the content of the source?
- For who was the source created?
- Was the source meant to be public or private?
- Did the creator wish to inform, persuade, or deceive his or her audience? What did the creator hope to accomplish by writing the source? Can you trust the source's content at face value?
- What were the opinions, motivations, or interests of the creator? How does his or her point of view compare to other writers of the period? What kind of impact would this have on the content of the source?

For analyzing images, the following questions are also a starting point:

- Why was the image created?
- What does the image reveal about its subject?
- What is the point of view of the image? Whose story is it telling?
- What is the setting of the image? What sorts of details does it include or emphasize? What sorts of details does it exclude?
- What are the underlying messages of the image and motives of the artist?
- How long after the event was the image created? How does this influence the image's content or perspective?

Because it is hard to keep all the above mentioned questions in mind, follow the acronym explained below in order to better remember the process of interpreting and analyzing primary sources:

Acronym for Analyzing Primary Sources:

A – Argument (What is the main idea(s) expressed in the source?)

H – Historical context (What developments were taking place at that time and how did it impact the perspective expressed in the source?)

I – Intended Audience (Who was the addressee of the information and how did it influence the expressed message?)

P – Purpose (What was the goal intended to be achieved by the message in the source?)

P – (author's) Point of View (How could race, gender, social status, occupation, religion, etc. of the author have impacted his/her perspective?)

Example:

Source: Excerpts from Legal Opinions, 13th-15th centuries.

England [probably fifteenth century]: Every Feme Covert [married woman] is a sort of infant...It is seldom, almost never that a married woman can have any action to use her wit only in her own name: her husband is her stern, her prime mover, without whom she cannot do much at home, and less abroad...It is a miracle that a wife should commit any suit without her husband.

Pesaro, Italy and Lucca, Italy [exact dates unknown]: No wife can make a contract without the consent of her husband.

No married woman...can seal or give away [anything] of value unless she has the agreement of her husband and nearest [male] relative.

Acronym-based breakdown: (usually done on the margins of the paper, next to the document, or, when you get really good at it, in your head!)

A HIPP	
Argument	Married women must always seek approval of their husbands on any domestic matter as well as their economic transactions.
Historical Context	13th - 15th centuries - End of the Middle Ages/Early Renaissance - the times when women were considered inferior to men intellectually as well as morally.
Intended Audience	Citizens of England and the Italian city-states that were expected to accept these judicial explanations ("legal opinions" usually accompany an order or ruling in a case, explaining the rationale for the ruling).
Purpose	To provide legal justification and explanation for the subordinate treatment of women.
Author's Point of view	The exact names of the authors are unknown. However, they were most likely judges or lawyers who, at that time, had to be male. Men who grew up in a society that considered even mature, married women "sort of infant[s]" were expressing the expected and accepted view of women at that time.

The ultimate goal of any primary source analysis is to figure out a factor or factors that shaped / influenced a perspective expressed in the source!

Examples of Factors that shape	Author's Point of View
   Christopher Columbus Martin Luther Winston Churchill	I am sure you've heard of individuals portrayed here (they were a part of last year's curriculum) Each of them was a product of his time. In turn, events of the author's time period and his social status influenced ideas in the authors' writings. For example, slavery was an acceptable institution during the time periods of Christopher Columbus and Martin Luther, but was outlawed and considered immoral when Winston Churchill grew up and led his country during World War II. Your main job is to understand what factors influenced points of view expressed in primary source documents.

Answer questions related to the provided primary sources to the best of your ability: (see next page)

Source 1: Jacob von Konigshofen, chronicler. "The Cremation of the Strasbourg Jews." 1349. Strasbourg. The Holy Roman Empire.

In the year 1349 there occurred the greatest epidemic that ever happened. Death went from one end of the earth to the other....And from what this epidemic came, all wise teachers and physicians could only say that it was God's will.... This epidemic also came to Strasbourg in the summer of the above-mentioned year, and it is estimated that about sixteen thousand people died.

In the matter of this plague the Jews throughout the world were reviled and accused in all lands of having caused it through the poison which they are said to have put into the water and the wells – that is what they were accused of –and for this reason the Jews were burnt all the way from the Mediterranean into Germany ...

On Saturday...they burnt the Jews on a wooden platform in their cemetery. There were about two thousand people of them. Those who wanted to baptize themselves were spared. [About one thousand accepted baptism.] Many small children were taken out of the fire and baptized against the will of their fathers and mothers. And everything that was owed to the Jews was canceled, and the Jews had to surrender all pledges and notes that they had taken for debts. The council, however, took the cash that the Jews possessed and divided it among the working – men proportionally. The money was indeed the thing that killed the Jews. If they had been poor and if the lords had not been in debt to them, they would not have been burnt.... Thus were the Jews burnt at Strasbourg, and in the same year in all the cities of the Rhine, whether Free Cities or Imperial Cities or cities belonging to the lords. In some towns they burnt the Jews after a trial, in others, without a trial. In some cities the Jews themselves set fire to their houses and cremated themselves.

It was decided in Starsbourg that no Jew should enter the city for 100 years, but before 20 years had passed, the council and magistrates agreed that they ought to admit the Jews again into the city for 20 years. And so the Jews came back again to Strasbourg in the year 1368 after the birth of our Lord.

QUESTIONS:

1. What is the main point expressed by the author in this passage? Provide your answer in one complete sentence.
2. Can it be said that the charges made against the Jews were economically motivated? Explain. Underline parts of the passage to support your answer.

Source 2: Pope Boniface VIII, *Unam Sanctam*. The Papal bull (statement/charter). 1302.

We are compelled, our faith urging us, to believe and to hold – and we do firmly believe and simply confess – that there is one holy catholic and apostolic church, outside of which there is neither salvation nor remission of sins....In this church there is one Lord, one faith and one baptism....Therefore, of this one and only church there is one body and one head....Christ, namely, and the vicar of Christ, St.Peter, and the successor of Peter. For the Lord himself said to Peter, feed my sheep.....

We are told by the word of the gospel that in this His fold there are two swords – a spiritual, namely, and a temporal....Both swords, the spiritual and the material, therefore, are in the power of the church; the one, indeed, to be wielded for the church, the other by the church; the one by the hand of the priest, the other by the hand of kings and knights, but at the will and sufferance of the priest. One sword, moreover, ought to be under the other, and the temporal authority to be subjected to the spiritual....

Therefore if the earthly power err it shall be judged by the spiritual power; but if the lesser spiritual power err, by the greater. But if the greatest, it can be judged by God alone, not by man, the apostle bearing witness. A spiritual man judges all things, but he himself is judged by no one. This authority, moreover, even though it is given to man and exercised through man, is not human but rather divine, being given by divine lips to Peter and founded on a rock for him and his successors through Christ himself whom he has confessed; the Lord himself saying to Peter: “Whatsoever you shall bind, etc.” Whoever, therefore, resists this power thus ordained by God, resists the ordination of God....

Indeed, we declare, announce and define, that it is altogether necessary to salvation for every human creature to be subject to the Roman pontiff.

QUESTIONS:

1. Research question: What is meant by the PAPAL SUPREMACY?
2. How does this document address the Papal Supremacy? Provide evidence from the document to support your answer.

Source 3: Petrus Paulus Vergerius: The New Education (c. 1400), Teacher and Papal nuncio (diplomat).

Dedicated to Ubertino, the son of Francesco Carrara, lord of Padua.

We call those studies liberal which are worthy of a free man; those studies by which we attain and practice virtue and wisdom; that education which calls forth, trains and develops those highest gifts of body and of mind which ennoble men, and which are rightly judged to rank next in dignity to virtue only. For to a vulgar temper gain and pleasure are the one aim of existence, to a lofty nature, moral worth and fame. It is, then, of the highest importance that even from infancy this aim, this effort, should constantly be kept alive in growing minds. For I may affirm with fullest conviction that we shall not have attained wisdom in our later years unless in our earliest we have sincerely entered on its search....

In your own case, Ubertinus, you had before you the choice of training in Arms or in Letters. Either holds a place of distinction amongst the pursuits which appeal to men of noble spirit; either leads to fame and honor in the world. It would have been natural that you, the scion of a House ennobled by its prowess in arms, should have been content to accept your father's permission to devote yourself wholly to that discipline. But to your great credit you elected to become proficient in both alike: to add to the career of arms traditional in your family, an equal success in that other great discipline of mind and character, the study of Literature.

1. What is the main idea(s) of this passage? Express in your own words.

2. What is the TONE of the passage (In other words, how would you describe the way the author is addressing Ubertinus in this passage)? Why do you think the author of this document maintains this tone?

Source 4: Portrait of Duke Federico of Urbino (with his son), painted by Pietro Berruguette in 1480-81.



1. Since the painting was commissioned by Duke himself, what image is he trying to project to the intended audience? (pay attention to details!)

2. In what way(s) does this painting reflect humanist ideas expressed in Source 3?

Source 5: Francesco Barbaro. Italian politician, diplomat, and humanist from Venice. “On Wifely Duties,” Excerpts. 1416.

This is now the remaining part to be done here, in which if wives follow me, either of their own free will or by the commands of their husbands, no one will be so unfair as to think that I have not so established the duties of the wife that youth can enjoy peace and quiet the whole life long. Therefore, there are three things that, if they are diligently observed by a wife, will make a marriage praiseworthy and admirable: love for her husband, modesty of life, and diligent and complete care in domestic matters. We shall discuss the first of these, but before this I want to say something about the faculty of obedience, which is her master and companion, because nothing more important, nothing greater can be demanded of a wife than this....

If a husband, excited to anger, should scold you more than your ears are accustomed to hear, tolerate his wrath silently. But if he has been struck silent by a fit of depression, you should address him with sweet and suitable words, encourage, console, amuse, and humor him.

I wish that wives would daily think and consider what the dignity, the status of being a wife requires, so that they will not be lacking in a dignified compartment.

We who follow a middle way should establish some rather liberal rules for our wives. They should not be shut up in their bedrooms as in a prison but should be permitted to go out, and this privilege should be taken as evidence of their virtue and propriety. Still, wives should not act with their husbands as the moon does with the sun; for when the moon is near the sun it is never visible, but when it is distant it

stands resplendent by itself. Therefore, I would have wives be seen in public with their husbands, but when their husbands are away wives should stay at home. By maintaining an honest gaze in their eyes, they can communicate most significantly as in painting, which is called silent poetry. They also should maintain dignity in the motion of their heads and the other movements of their bodies. Now that I have spoken about demeanor and behavior, I shall now speak of speech.

Isocrates warns men to speak on those matters that they know well and about which they cannot, on account of their dignity, remain silent. We commend women to concede the former as the property of men, but they should consider the latter to be appropriate to themselves as well as to men. Loquacity [chattering/babble] cannot be sufficiently reproached in women, as many very learned and wise men have stated, nor can silence be sufficiently applauded. For this reason women were prohibited by the laws of the Romans from pleading either criminal or civil law cases.

1. According to the author, what is the most important “wifely duty?”
2. Explain (in your own words) the “middle way” for wives recommended by the author in the last two paragraphs.
3. How did the time period, author’s status/position, and/or gender expectations of that time influence the author’s perspective expressed in this document?

Source 6: Laura Cereta, a humanist scholar and widow of Venetian aristocrat, “Letter to Bibulus Sempronius,” 13 January 1488. (Bibulus Sempronius is a fictitious character; Bibulus means “drunkard” in Latin)

You [Bibulus] brashly and publicly not merely wonder but indeed lament that I am said to possess as fine a mind as nature ever bestowed upon the most learned man. You seem to think so learned a woman has scarcely before been seen in the world. You are wrong for you have ceased to be a living man, but become animated stone; having rejected the studies which make men wise, you rot in torpid leisure. The explanation is clear: women have been able by nature to be exceptional, but have chosen lesser goals. For some women are concerned with parting their hair correctly, adorning themselves with lovely dresses, ... or standing at mirrors to smear their lovely faces. But those in whom a deeper integrity yearns for virtue, restrain from the start their youthful souls, reflect on higher things, harden the body with sobriety and trials, and curb their tongues, open their ears, compose their thoughts in wakeful hours, their minds in contemplation to letters bonded to righteousness. For knowledge is not given as a gift, but [is gained] with diligence. Nature has generously lavished its gifts upon all people, opening to all the doors of choice

through which reason sends envoys to the will You pretend that I alone am admirable because of the good fortune of my intellect. But I, compared to other women who have won splendid renown, am but a little mousling. You stumbled half-blind with envy on a wrongful path that leads you from your manhood, from your duty, from God.

1. What is the main idea expressed by the author of this document? Explain in one-two complete sentences in your own words.

2. What is the general TONE of the speech?

3. Contrast the attitude and outlook expressed by the author of this document to the expectations regarding women's place in the society and within marriage from Source 5. Which one of these outlooks was considered to be a norm in European societies of that time? Explain your answer in complete sentences.

- V. Read chapters 11 and 12 in the Spielvogel Textbook. Complete the reading questions that accompany each chapter. You will find a copy of the chapters in the AP EUROPEAN HISTORY GROUP on Schoology. You can also find a copy of the textbook online here:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1sur10i_aTET5RQzvcHEkGwLFykNWQ8R/view?pli=1

This is an older version of the textbook, and a few things are different, but it will work fine for your needs right now. Reading questions are attached.