Customizing Learning,
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Upper St. Clair High School Summer Assignment	
Course: IB History of the Americas	
Assignment Title:	Book Review
Due Date:	First week of school
Purpose of the assignment:	■ Review foundational material, concepts, or skills ■ Build interest ■ Provide a diagnostic measuring tool to help guide student differentiation & instruction ☐ Establish a supportive class culture & environment ■ Expose students to required material, concepts, skills, and/or texts that will be referenced throughout the academic year
Resources needed to complete assignment:	☐ Textbook assigned by school ■ Book(s) supplied by student ☐ Packet provided by teacher (please visit the Interactive Program of Studies) ☐ Other supplies: _____
Estimated time for Completion:	Students may average an estimated 10 hours to complete the assignment, but we encourage students to spend time on this assignment over several weeks.
Impact on Semester 1 Grade	Graded: ■ Yes ☐ No Teacher Note: 100pts

IB HISTORY OF THE AMERICAS

YEAR ONE

Mr. Benjamin A. Edwards

I am really excited about the IB program and our class next year, and I hope that you are as well. As you are probably aware of by now, History of the Americas is a two-year, higher-level IB course, so we'll be together for both your junior and senior year. During your junior year, we cover U.S., Latin American and Canadian history from the revolutionary times to the 20th Century. During your senior year, we study 20th Century history with a focus on the Americas' role in it. The IB curriculum is unique in that we take a comparative approach, which allows in-depth exploration of specific themes. Some of the themes we study include:

- Slavery
- Political Leadership
- Western Expansion
- Revolutions
- Immigration
- Treatment of Minorities
- The Great Depression
- World War I and World War II

The textbook for Latin American history will be Latin America: A Concise Interpretive History by E. Bradford Burns, the American history text will be The National Experience by John Blum, et al; and the Canadian text will be Canada: A North American Nation by Paul Bennett, et al.

The format of the class will be as interactive as you make it. This will be OUR class, and I hope to engage you every step of the way. We will hold Socratic seminars, debates, critique each other's work, read and discuss material and do extended projects. Of course, there will be lectures, but I hope that you will participate in those, too. Finally, we will be focusing on researching and writing for the social studies, and therefore, papers will be assigned throughout the semester. These are intended to prepare you for your exams as well as your internal assessment for history, which is a research paper and you will write three of them in the next two years.

As we will be studying the History of the Americas next year and focusing on critically analyzing history, we will begin the year with a book review of a historical work that you have read over the summer. I highly recommend you reading a book on the Mexican Revolution, the Civil War or the foundations of our government. However, other books on the topics of study listed above are possible as well. Some books that are good historical scholarship are listed on the next page. If you would like to read another book, such as a more recent work of historical scholarship, then please e-mail me the title and author for approval first. My summer e-mail is **bedwards@uscsd.k12.pa.us**. There will be a book review due in September on the book you have chosen, so you really need to read it over the summer. Also, take notes on the author's thesis, quotes to support his/her thesis and page numbers to properly cite the passages. A works cited will be necessary as well.

Suggested Reading (certainly not limited to this list)

- David Sweet, et al. *Struggle and Survival in Colonial America.*
- David McCullough. *John Adams.*
- David McCullough. *1776.*
- Gordon Wood. *The Radicalism of the American Revolution*
- Leonard Kriegel. *Essential Works of the Founding Fathers.*
- Joseph Ellis. *Founding Brothers.*
- Stephen Ambrose. *Undaunted Courage*
- Alexis de Tocqueville. *Democracy in America*
- Carl Degler. *Neither Black Nor White: Slavery and Race Relations in Brazil and the US.*
- George M. Fredrickson. *The Inner Civil War: Northern Intellectuals and the Crisis of the Union.*
- Doris Kearns Goodwin. *A Team of Rivals*
- James M. McPherson. *Tried By War: Lincoln as Commander in Chief*
- Eugene Genovese. *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made.*
- Robert Kagan. *Dangerous Nation*
- John Womack Jr. *Zapata and the Mexican Revolution.*
- Charles Cumberland. *Mexican Revolution: The Constitutional Years.*
- John S. Eisenhower. *So Far From God: US War with Mexico 1846-48*
- Carlos Fuentes. *Latin America: At War With the Past.*
- Eduardo Galeano. *The Open Veins of Latin America*
- E. Bradford Burns. *The Poverty of Progress: Latin America in the 19th Century.*
- Mary Beth Norton. *Liberty's Daughters*
- Annette Gordon Reed. *Most Blessed of the Patriarchs: Thomas Jefferson and the Empire of Imagination*
- Jasper Ridley. *Maximillien & Juarez*
- Pierre Berton. *The American Invasion of Canada: The War of 1812's First Year*
- David S. Heidler. *Henry Clay: The Essential American*
- John Meachem. *American Lion* (Andrew Jackson)
- Dee Brown. *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*
- Ron Chernow. *Alexander Hamilton*

Many of these titles can be obtained through ACCESS-PA. You can ask any librarian at the Upper St. Clair township library how to use this service if you are not familiar with it. Basically, it will transfer books from libraries across the state to Upper St. Clair within a week or two. We will use this service a lot next year, so this summer is a good time to get used to it. Also, you might want to try Half-Priced Books or used books on Amazon for some of the more recent titles.

HAVE A GREAT SUMMER! RELAX AND READ! Remember swimming pools accept history books as well.

IB Book Review Guidelines (75pts)

Written reviews should be 4-6 pages, typed, double-spaced. This is not a book report, but a book review. You are NOT to summarize the entire book in narrative form, but rather critique the author's thesis and how well he/she proved it. The value of this secondary source to students of history should be explored as well. The review should be done in a scholarly style with no first person, except Section 4. Use MLA format to cite sources, paying attention to punctuation! You should include a Works Cited for all sources used.

The book review should be divided into the following three areas (you may partition your paper with sub-titles if you wish):

I. Content (40pts)
- Again, this should NOT be narrative. Instead, state the author's thesis and the main supports that the author uses in proving his point. Does he succeed in your mind or is the author's thesis too far fetched to be provable? Does the author succeed in swaying you to his viewpoint?
- You should highlight some important examples that show either the author's success in proving his thesis or failure to do some. That is, cite from the text when possible.
- Try to organize *thematically* as opposed to chronologically throughout the book. Try to pay attention to how you structure your argument as best you can with TWO main body divisions based on two main themes.
- You should have a topic sentence that serves as your "tell me" for the body division, supporting evidence as your "show me" and impact/analysis/evaluation/synthesis of that evidence as your "so what?"
- Find something you disagree with in the book. Start a new paragraph where you explain why you disagree with it. You might want to read a short article or two you find independently to get another perspective. You can even search for people who criticized the book you read for inspiration. Try your best to CLASH with the disagreement you chose and provide evidence to support why you disagree.
- This section should be the largest part of your paper, approximately 2 1/2-3 pages.

II. Value & Limitation (20pts)
- Do a little background research on the author and tell the reader a little bit about them. Don't just focus on what they did, but also what kind of perspective they're writing from.
- Divide this section into TWO paragraphs, one for value and one for limitation of the source. Think about where you would categorize each of the following items:
    i. Think about the origin of the source, why they chose to write it when they chose to write it, and some of the content that might make this source uniquely valuable to a historian.
    ii. Every source has bias, even if it's just picking subject matter. What is this author's bias? Does the bias add to/detract from your experience with the text?
    iii. Were there any visuals in the book? Did they help illustrate the point the author was trying to make
- This section should be 1-2 pages long.

III. Personal Growth (15pts)
- This is the section that you may use first person, but you could conceivably do without it.
- Had you ever read anything like this before? How is historiography different from novels or narrative histories you've read in the past?
- What was the most important thing you learned/took away from this book?
- Is the book recommended for a general student or professional specialist?
- Would you recommend the book for another student in this course?
- Reflect a little on how your perspective on history as a discipline changed as a result of reading this book.
- Any other comments?
- This should be about ½page-1page