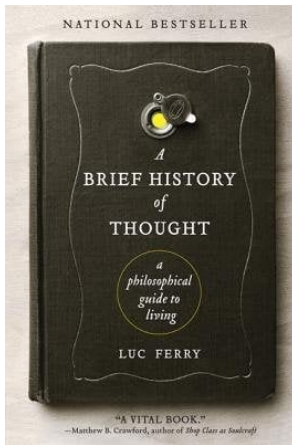


AP European History Summer Reading 2026



**Luc Ferry, *A Brief History of Thought* (New York: Harper, 2011)
ISBN: 978-0-06-207424-9**

Welcome to AP European History!

Your summer assignment is to read and annotate the first five chapters of Luc Ferry's *A Brief History of Thought* (you can skip the last chapter if you like). This text provides an accessible overview of the major philosophical ideas that shaped European civilization from the ancient world to the modern era. A familiarity with the history of these ideas will help you better contextualize many of the events we will discuss in class this year.

As you read, please annotate for the following:

- What are the key philosophical ideas of each of the first four European eras that Ferry discusses (Greek, Christian, Modern, and Postmodern)?
- How did ideas about human nature, society, and politics change over time?
- Who were the key thinkers who epitomized the thinking of each of the eras?

Ferry writes in a clear, conversational style, but you may find some of the philosophical terminology and conceptual comparisons challenging. It's ok if you don't understand everything (although you should make note of areas of confusion in your annotations). Instead, you should aim to identify the most important intellectual ideas and trends of each era. We will have an open-book writing assessment on this text in the first week of the class. Feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions/concerns.

Have a great summer. I look forward to seeing you in August!

Mr. Jackson

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