AP Modern World History–Summer Assignment 2026
Ms. Rossler

How can we understand the history of the world through beverages?

The book you have been assigned to read, Tom Standage's *The History of the World Through 6 Glasses,* is one that provides an excellent and thought-provoking look at world history through the humble beverage.

As you will learn throughout this class; everything, from what we drink to the clothes we wear, from the technology we use; to the religion we practice; everything has an interrelated history.

Reading Questions: The questions provided for this book are meant to jump start your historical thinking skills. It is not enough to read about history; you must learn to "do" history. For each section, write out the answers in complete sentences in a class notes section of your notebook or on google drive.

***Note: You will have a project or essay when we return to school based on the text*

BEER
1. How is the discovery of beer linked to the growth of the first "civilizations"?
2. What does this history of beer in the ancient world tell us about the early civilizations?
3. What sources does the author use to gather his information on the use of beer?
4. What were some of the uses of beer by ancient cultures? Nourishment? Ritual? Religious?
5. How did beer "civilize" man, according to Standage?
6. What is the relationship between beer and writing, commerce, and health?

WINE
1. How did the use of wine differ from that of beer in ancient Greece and Rome?
2. How was wine used by the Greeks?
3. How and why did wine develop into a form of a status symbol in Greece?
4. How was wine consumed? What does this tell us about ancient Greek culture?
5. How did the use of wine in Roman culture differ from that of ancient Greece?
6. What is the relationship between wine and empire, medicine, and religion.

SPIRITS
1. What is the origin of distilled spirits?
2. What is the connection between spirits and colonization?
3. How was the production of spirits connected to slavery?
4. What role did spirits play on the high seas?
5. In the 18th century, how did spirits help Britain have a more superior navy than France?
6. Why were spirits an important staple in Colonial America?
7. How did rum play a role in the American Revolution?
8. What were the negative effects/uses of spirits? (Use entire chapter to answer this)

COFFEE
1. Who did Europeans get coffee from and how did it spread to Europe?
2. Why was it so important to Europe's development that many people's beverage of choice switched from alcohol to coffee?

3. Describe coffee's effect on the global balance of power (in terms of commerce).
4. How did coffee play a pivotal role in the scientific revolution? (give lots of detail)
5. How did coffee play a pivotal role in the 'financial revolution'?
6. How did coffee play a pivotal role in the French Revolution? (give lots of detail and go into the Enlightenment)

TEA

1. When did tea first become a mainstream drink in Asia? In Europe?
2. How did the consumption of tea in Europe differ from how it was consumed in China or Japan?
3. If tea arrived in Europe around the same time as when coffee did, why did it not find the immediate success that coffee had?
4. How did tea transform English society? Who were its main consumers and what were some of the new rituals that surrounded tea?
5. How was tea an integral part of the Industrial Revolution?
6. What was the connection between tea and politics?
7. How was tea connected to the opium trade and the Opium War of 1839-1842?
8. What role did the tea trade and production play in the British rule over India?

COCA-COLA

1. What was the origin of coke?
2. How was this beverage used medicinally and what were the additives?
3. What was the relationship between coke and World War II?
4. How was coke thought of by the communist during the Cold War?
5. What is meant by "globalization in a bottle"?
6. How did Coca-Cola materialize into an American value? How did this help and hurt Coca-Cola? (and, in some ways, America itself?)

Epilogue-Water

1. Describe how the scientific advancements of the 19 th century brought the history of beverages full circle.
2. Which water's quality is more tightly controlled-tap or bottled?
3. How many people have no access to safe water today?
4. How has access to water affected international relations?

Assignment and Questions adapted from http://mrrangel.weebly.com/uploads/1/4/2/2/14228848/whap-standage-6-glasses-reading-guide__1_.pdf