

AP World History: Modern  
Summer Assignment 2024-2025  
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## **Welcome to AP World!**

I'm so pleased that you decided to take this course! I hope you're glad as well, but I'm willing to bet that at least once over the next year, you're going to think to yourself, "Why did I sign up for this again?" It's a lot of work!

So why are you studying world history? Maybe you've heard that those who ignore history are doomed to repeat it. Perhaps, but even if that's true, our species has done a fairly miserable job of heeding that advice so far. This is what I think:

Reason to Study History #1: History is our best source of information about ourselves. If we want to know who we are, we need to know what we have done.

Reason to Study History #2: History is literally the Matrix. It's around you all the time, but you can't see it unless you choose to.

But those are just my reasons, and if you commit to what this class has to teach you, no doubt you'll find reasons of your own. Important work=big rewards!

## **Why do we have a summer assignment?**

For two reasons, really. One is that our class starts in 1200 CE, after a great deal of history (most of it, actually) has already happened. All of the major belief systems around the world were in place by the 7th century CE, and they continue to influence human behavior (big time) after 1200. In order for us to understand what's going on, we're going to need to know about world religions/cultural traditions: Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Daoism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Part of your summer work will accomplish that task.

The other reason is that our course has 9 units and not enough time. The summer assignment will cover the first unit, and it will serve as a review for you before the College Board exam. ***I will not cover this material in class at all, but you will take a traditional multiple choice test based on this material on the second or third day of school. You will be responsible for learning this material on your own, since we will not be going over it in class.***

The summer assignment covers Unit 1: The Global Tapestry, 1200-1450. Basically, the College Board takes you on a whirlwind tour of the major civilizations that existed around the world during that approximate period of time. Your project, a "Guide to Earth for the Recently Arrived," will provide a short introduction to earthing culture and recent developments for an alien who has arrived on Earth in approximately 1450 CE (in other words, YOU.)

**Guide to Earth for the Recently Arrived (50 points): DUE Monday, August 12th, 11:59 pm.**

- For the summer assignment, you will write a guidebook for aliens who have arrived on Earth in the year 1450 CE. Let's assume they're friendly ambassadors who want to know more about our planet (and who read English.)
- The goal of your guidebook is to orient these aliens to their new environment by providing them with a brief overview of Earthling cultures, as well as a guide to the most recent developments on the planet. In order to write your guidebook, you will need to read sections of our Strayer textbook, as well as a few outside readings that make up for what our textbook lacks.
- Topics you **MUST** cover in your Guidebook:
  - Earthling Culture (Strayer, pp. 21-38)
    - What are the origins, beliefs and practices of each of the following spiritual/cultural traditions?
      - South Asian Cultural Traditions: Hinduism, Buddhism (150-200 words)
      - Chinese Spiritual Traditions: Confucianism, Daoism (150-200 words)
      - Middle Eastern Cultural Traditions: Judaism, Christianity & Islam (200-250 words)
  - Song dynasty China (Strayer, pp. 52-63) (200-250 words)
    - How did the **Song dynasty** maintain and justify its rule over China?
    - What were the causes and effects of the **Chinese economic revolution**? (include **Champa rice**)
    - To what extent did China influence its neighbors?
  - Dar al-Islam, 1200-1450 (Strayer, pp. 63-69, 129-133) (200-250 words)
    - Describe the **Abbasid Caliphate** and explain the effects of its decline. How did Turkic groups change the political landscape in Dar al-Islam? (include, **Seljuk Turks, Delhi Sultanate, Ottoman Empire**)
    - How did Muslims states encourage intellectual innovations and cultural transfers/diffusion? (include **House of Wisdom, al-Andalus, & Nasir al-Din Tusi**)
  - South & Southeast Asia, 1200-1450 (pp. 66-67 and this article on the [Khmer Empire](#)) (150-200 words)
    - How did Hinduism/Buddhism contribute to the development of states in South/Southeast Asia? (include **Vijayanagar**, and the **Khmer Empire**) [We will do more of this in Unit 2, so it's ok if this section is a little short]

- Americas (Strayer, pp. 86-92) (200-250 words)
  - How did the **Maya**, **Aztec** and **Inca** create and maintain states in Mesoamerica and the Andes? How were these states both similar and different from each other?
- Africa ([National Geographic article on Great Zimbabwe](#), [New World Encyclopedia article on Ethiopia](#) [only need to read the first section]) (200-250 words)
  - How did **Great Zimbabwe** and **Ethiopia** build and maintain their states?
- Europe (Strayer, pp. 69-81) (200-250 words)
  - Contrast the trajectories of the **Byzantine Empire** and Western Europe in 1200.
  - Describe the political developments in Western Europe between about 1000 and 1450. How did European states become more centralized over time? (Include **feudalism**, **Roman Catholic Church**) What were the effects of this change?
  - Describe the European economy during the High Middle Ages, or between 1000-1450. (include **serfdom**, **manorialism** [p.73, Strayer just mentions “manors,” but manorialism is the whole system of estates that dominated Western Europe at the time])
- What should the handbook look like?
  - You should type your handbook in Google Docs, with clearly identified headings (although you can come up with your own headings that are more creative than mine.)
  - You can include digital images to “illustrate” your handbook, as long as you cite them in tiny text underneath the image.
  - Use Times New Roman 12 font, and **double space**.
  - Feel free to be creative, as long as you meet all of the requirements mentioned above.
- Where do I submit the assignment?
  - Please submit the assignment on Google Classroom AND Turnitin.com no later than **Monday, August 12th at 11:59 pm**. Please make sure that all work is your own. This means that you haven’t referenced another student’s work, or used any part of it in crafting your own work. It also means that you shouldn’t be using the language of the original source; direct quotes are unnecessary, so just use your own words to convey the information. Turnitin.com will evaluate your work for any excessive similarities between your work, other students’ work, and the internet. Please do not use ChatGPT.
  - If your assignment is late, your overall grade will be reduced by 5 points for each day it is late. If your assignment is more than a week late, we will have a conference at the beginning of the year to determine whether the course is a good fit for you this year.
- **Multiple Choice Test: There will be a 50-question multiple choice test on the assigned reading on the 2nd or 3rd day of school (Exact date TBD).**