

 CollegeBoard

**AP**<sup>®</sup>

**INCLUDES**

- ✓ Course framework
- ✓ Instructional section
- ✓ Sample exam questions

# AP<sup>®</sup> World History: Modern

---

**COURSE AND EXAM DESCRIPTION**

Effective  
**Fall 2020**

**AP**<sup>®</sup>

 CollegeBoard

# AP<sup>®</sup> World History: Modern

---

## COURSE AND EXAM DESCRIPTION

Effective  
**Fall 2020**

**AP COURSE AND EXAM DESCRIPTIONS ARE UPDATED PERIODICALLY**

Please visit AP Central ([apcentral.collegeboard.org](https://apcentral.collegeboard.org)) to determine whether a more recent course and exam description is available.

# Course Framework Components

---

## Overview

This course framework provides a description of what students should know and be able to do to qualify for college credit or placement.

### The course framework includes two essential components:

#### 1 HISTORICAL THINKING SKILLS AND REASONING PROCESSES

The historical thinking skills and reasoning processes are central to the study and practice of world history. Students should practice and develop these skills and processes on a regular basis over the span of the course.

#### 2 COURSE CONTENT

The course content is organized into commonly taught units of study that provide a suggested sequence for the course. These units comprise the content and conceptual understandings that colleges and universities typically expect students to master to qualify for college credit and/or placement. This content is grounded in themes, which are cross-cutting concepts that build conceptual understanding and spiral throughout the course.

# 1

## AP WORLD HISTORY

# Historical Thinking Skills and Reasoning Processes

---

This section presents the historical thinking skills and reasoning processes that students should develop during the AP history courses that form the basis of the tasks on the AP history exams.

### Historical Thinking Skills

The AP historical thinking skills describe what students should be able to do while exploring course concepts. The table that follows presents these skills, which students should develop during the AP World History course.

The unit guides later in this publication embed and spiral these skills throughout the course, providing teachers with one way to integrate the skills into the course content with sufficient repetition to prepare students to transfer those skills when taking the AP Exam.

More detailed information about teaching the historical thinking skills can be found in the Instructional Approaches section of this publication.



# AP Historical Thinking Skills

Skill 1	Skill 2	Skill 3	Skill 4	Skill 5	Skill 6
<p><b>Developments and Processes 1</b> Identify and explain historical developments and processes.</p>	<p><b>Sourcing and Situation 2</b> Analyze sourcing and situation of primary and secondary sources.</p>	<p><b>Claims and Evidence in Sources 3</b> Analyze arguments in primary and secondary sources.</p>	<p><b>Contextualization 4</b> Analyze the context of historical events, developments, or processes.</p>	<p><b>Making Connections 5</b> Using historical reasoning processes (comparison, causation, continuity and change), analyze patterns and connections between and among historical developments and processes.</p>	<p><b>Argumentation 6</b> Develop an argument.</p>
<b>SKILLS</b>					
<p><b>1.A</b> Identify a historical concept, development, or process.</p> <p><b>1.B</b> Explain a historical concept, development, or process.</p>	<p><b>2.A</b> Identify a source's point of view, purpose, historical situation, and/or audience.</p> <p><b>2.B</b> Explain the point of view, purpose, historical situation, and/or audience of a source.</p> <p><b>2.C</b> Explain the significance of a source's point of view, purpose, historical situation, and/or audience, including how these might limit the use(s) of a source.</p>	<p><b>3.A</b> Identify and describe a claim and/or argument in a text-based or non-text-based source.</p> <p><b>3.B</b> Identify the evidence used in a source to support an argument.</p> <p><b>3.C</b> Compare the arguments or main ideas of two sources.</p> <p><b>3.D</b> Explain how claims or evidence support, modify, or refute a source's argument.</p>	<p><b>4.A</b> Identify and describe a historical context for a specific historical development or process.</p> <p><b>4.B</b> Explain how a specific historical development or process is situated within a broader historical context.</p>	<p><b>5.A</b> Identify patterns among or connections between historical developments and processes.</p> <p><b>5.B</b> Explain how a historical development or process relates to another historical development or process.</p>	<p><b>6.A</b> Make a historically defensible claim.</p> <p><b>6.B</b> Support an argument using specific and relevant evidence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe specific examples of historically relevant evidence.</li> <li>Explain how specific examples of historically relevant evidence support an argument.</li> </ul> <p><b>6.C</b> Use historical reasoning to explain relationships among pieces of historical evidence.</p> <p><b>6.D</b> Corroborate, qualify, or modify an argument using diverse and alternative evidence in order to develop a complex argument. This argument might:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explain nuance of an issue by analyzing multiple variables.</li> <li>Explain relevant and insightful connections within and across periods.</li> <li>Explain the relative historical significance of a source's credibility and limitations.</li> <li>Explain how or why a historical claim or argument is or is not effective.</li> </ul>



# Reasoning Processes

Reasoning processes describe the cognitive operations that students will be required to apply when engaging with the historical thinking skills on the AP Exam. The reasoning processes ultimately represent the way practitioners think in the discipline. Specific aspects of the cognitive process are defined under each reasoning process.

Reasoning Process 1	Reasoning Process 2	Reasoning Process 3
<i>Comparison</i>	<i>Causation</i>	<i>Continuity and Change</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>1.i: Describe similarities and/or differences between different historical developments or processes.</li><li>1.ii: Explain relevant similarities and/or differences between specific historical developments and processes.</li><li>1.iii: Explain the relative historical significance of similarities and/or differences between different historical developments or processes.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>2.i: Describe causes and/or effects of a specific historical development or process.</li><li>2.ii: Explain the relationship between causes and effects of a specific historical development or process.</li><li>2.iii: Explain the difference between primary and secondary causes and between short- and long-term effects.</li><li>2.iv: Explain how a relevant context influenced a specific historical development or process.</li><li>2.v: Explain the relative historical significance of different causes and/or effects.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>3.i: Describe patterns of continuity and/or change over time.</li><li>3.ii: Explain patterns of continuity and/or change over time.</li><li>3.iii: Explain the relative historical significance of specific historical developments in relation to a larger pattern of continuity and/or change.</li></ul>

## 2

## AP WORLD HISTORY

# Course Content

---

Influenced by the Understanding by Design® (Wiggins and McTighe) model, this course framework provides a description of the course requirements necessary for student success.

The course content is organized into commonly taught units. The units have been arranged in a logical sequence frequently found in many college courses and textbooks.

The nine units in AP World History, and their approximate weighting on the AP Exam, are listed on the following page.

Pacing recommendations at the unit level and on the Course at a Glance provide suggestions for how to teach the required course content and administer the Personal Progress Checks. The suggested class periods are based on a schedule in which the class meets five days a week for 45 minutes each day. While these recommendations have been made to aid planning, teachers should of course adjust the pacing based on the needs of their students, alternate schedules (e.g., block scheduling), or their school's academic calendar.

### TOPICS

Each unit is broken down into teachable segments called topics. The topic pages (starting on page 38) contain all required content for each topic. Although most topics can be taught in one or two class periods, teachers are again encouraged to pace the course to suit the needs of their students and school.

<b>Units</b>	<b>Chronological Period*</b>	<b>Exam Weighting</b>
<b>Unit 1:</b> The Global Tapestry	c. 1200 to c. 1450	<b>8–10%</b>
<b>Unit 2:</b> Networks of Exchange		<b>8–10%</b>
<b>Unit 3:</b> Land-Based Empires	c. 1450 to c. 1750	<b>12–15%</b>
<b>Unit 4:</b> Transoceanic Interconnections		<b>12–15%</b>
<b>Unit 5:</b> Revolutions	c. 1750 to c. 1900	<b>12–15%</b>
<b>Unit 6:</b> Consequences of Industrialization		<b>12–15%</b>
<b>Unit 7:</b> Global Conflict	c. 1900 to the present	<b>8–10%</b>
<b>Unit 8:</b> Cold War and Decolonization		<b>8–10%</b>
<b>Unit 9:</b> Globalization		<b>8–10%</b>

\*Events, processes, and developments are not constrained by the given dates and may begin before, or continue after, the approximate dates assigned to each unit.



## Themes

The themes serve as the connective tissue of the course and enable students to create meaningful connections across units. They are often broader ideas that become threads that run throughout the course. Revisiting them and applying them in a variety of contexts helps students to develop deeper conceptual understanding. Below are the themes of the course and a brief description of each.

### **THEME 1: HUMANS AND THE ENVIRONMENT (ENV)**

The environment shapes human societies, and as populations grow and change, these populations in turn shape their environments.

### **THEME 2: CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS AND INTERACTIONS (CDI)**

The development of ideas, beliefs, and religions illustrates how groups in society view themselves, and the interactions of societies and their beliefs often have political, social, and cultural implications.

### **THEME 3: GOVERNANCE (GOV)**

A variety of internal and external factors contribute to state formation, expansion, and decline. Governments maintain order through a variety of administrative institutions, policies, and procedures, and governments obtain, retain, and exercise power in different ways and for different purposes.

### **THEME 4: ECONOMIC SYSTEMS (ECN)**

As societies develop, they affect and are affected by the ways that they produce, exchange, and consume goods and services.

### **THEME 5: SOCIAL INTERACTIONS AND ORGANIZATION (SIO)**


The process by which societies group their members and the norms that govern the interactions between these groups and between individuals influence political, economic, and cultural institutions and organization.

### **THEME 6: TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION (TEC)**

Human adaptation and innovation have resulted in increased efficiency, comfort, and security, and technological advances have shaped human development and interactions with both intended and unintended consequences.

# Spiraling the Themes

The following table shows how the themes spiral across units.

	Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4	Unit 5	Unit 6	Unit 7	Unit 8	Unit 9
<b>Big Ideas</b>									
									
<b>Humans and the Environment</b> <b>ENV</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Cultural Developments and Interactions</b> <b>CDI</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Governance</b> <b>GOV</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Economic Systems</b> <b>ECN</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Social Interactions and Organization</b> <b>SIO</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Technology and Innovation</b> <b>TEC</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	<i>The Global Tapestry</i>	<i>Networks of Exchange</i>	<i>Land-Based Empires</i>	<i>Transoceanic Interconnections</i>	<i>Revolutions</i>	<i>Consequences of Industrialization</i>	<i>Global Conflict</i>	<i>Cold War and Decolonization</i>	<i>Globalization</i>

# Course at a Glance

## Plan

The Course at a Glance provides a useful visual organization of the AP World History curricular components, including:

- Sequence of units, along with approximate weighting and suggested pacing. Please note, pacing is based on 45-minute class periods, meeting five days each week for a full academic year.
- Progression of topics within each unit.
- Spiraling of the themes and historical thinking skills across units.

## Teach

### HISTORICAL THINKING SKILLS

*Historical thinking skills spiral across units.*

- |   |                             |
|---|-----------------------------|
| <b>1</b> Developments and Processes     | <b>4</b> Contextualization  |
| <b>2</b> Sourcing and Situation         | <b>5</b> Making Connections |
| <b>3</b> Claims and Evidence in Sources | <b>6</b> Argumentation      |

### THEMES

*Themes spiral across units.*

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>ENV</b> Humans and the Environment             | <b>ECN</b> Economic Systems                     |
| <b>CDI</b> Cultural Developments and Interactions | <b>SIO</b> Social Interactions and Organization |
| <b>GOV</b> Governance                             | <b>TEC</b> Technology and Innovation            |

## Assess

Assign the Personal Progress Checks—either as homework or in class—for each unit. Each Personal Progress Check contains formative multiple-choice and free-response questions. The feedback from the Personal Progress Checks shows students the areas where they need to focus.

**UNIT**  
**1**

**The Global Tapestry**  
*c. 1200 to c. 1450*

**~10–13** Class Periods    **8–10%** AP Exam Weighting

---

<b>GOV</b>	<b>1.1</b> <b>Developments in East Asia from c. 1200 to c. 1450</b>
<b>CDI</b>	
<b>ECN</b>	
<b>4</b>	
<b>CDI</b>	<b>1.2</b> <b>Developments in Dar al-Islam from c. 1200 to c. 1450</b>
<b>GOV</b>	
<b>TEC</b>	
<b>1</b>	
<b>CDI</b>	<b>1.3</b> <b>Developments in South and Southeast Asia from c. 1200 to c. 1450</b>
<b>GOV</b>	
<b>3</b>	
<b>GOV</b>	<b>1.4</b> <b>State Building in the Americas</b>
<b>3</b>	
<b>GOV</b>	<b>1.5</b> <b>State Building in Africa</b>
<b>1</b>	
<b>CDI</b>	<b>1.6</b> <b>Developments in Europe from c. 1200 to c. 1450</b>
<b>GOV</b>	
<b>SIO</b>	
<b>1</b>	
<b>6</b>	<b>1.7</b> <b>Comparison in the Period from c. 1200 to c. 1450</b>

**UNIT**  
**2**

**Networks of Exchange**  
*c. 1200 to c. 1450*

**~10–13** Class Periods    **8–10%** AP Exam Weighting

---

<b>ECN</b>	<b>2.1</b> <b>The Silk Roads</b>
<b>4</b>	
<b>GOV</b>	<b>2.2</b> <b>The Mongol Empire and the Making of the Modern World</b>
<b>ECN</b>	
<b>CDI</b>	
<b>5</b>	
<b>ECN</b>	<b>2.3</b> <b>Exchange in the Indian Ocean</b>
<b>CDI</b>	
<b>ENV</b>	
<b>5</b>	
<b>TEC</b>	<b>2.4</b> <b>Trans-Saharan Trade Routes</b>
<b>GOV</b>	
<b>1</b>	
<b>CDI</b>	<b>2.5</b> <b>Cultural Consequences of Connectivity</b>
<b>2</b>	
<b>ENV</b>	<b>2.6</b> <b>Environmental Consequences of Connectivity</b>
<b>5</b>	
<b>6</b>	<b>2.7</b> <b>Comparison of Economic Exchange</b>

### Personal Progress Check 1

- Multiple-choice: ~15 questions**  
**Short-answer: 2 questions**
- Primary source (partial)
  - Primary source (partial)
- Free-response: 1 question**
- Long essay (partial)

### Personal Progress Check 2

- Multiple-choice: ~15 questions**  
**Short-answer: 2 questions**
- Primary source
  - Primary source
- Free-response: 1 question**
- Long essay (partial)

**NOTE:** Partial versions of the free-response questions are provided to prepare students for more complex, full questions that they will encounter on the AP Exam.

**UNIT 3**

**Land-Based Empires**  
c. 1450 to c. 1750

**~8–11** Class Periods **12–15%** AP Exam Weighting

- GOV** 3.1 Empires Expand  
**1**

---

- GOV** 3.2 Empires: Administration  
**4**

---

- CDI** 3.3 Empires: Belief Systems  
**2**

---

- 6** 3.4 Comparison in Land-Based Empires

**Personal Progress Check 3**

- Multiple-choice: ~10 questions**  
**Short-answer: 2 questions**
- Primary source
  - Primary source
- Free-response: 1 question**
- Long essay (partial)

**UNIT 4**

**Transoceanic Interconnections**  
c. 1450 to c. 1750

**~22–25** Class Periods **12–15%** AP Exam Weighting

- TEC** 4.1 Technological Innovations from 1450 to 1750  
**4**

---

- GOV** 4.2 Exploration: Causes and Events from 1450 to 1750  
**ECN**  
**5**

---

- ENV** 4.3 Columbian Exchange  
**3**

---

- GOV** 4.4 Maritime Empires Established  
**ECN**  
**SIO**  
**2**

---

- ECN** 4.5 Maritime Empires Maintained and Developed  
**GOV**  
**SIO**  
**CDI**  
**3**

---

- GOV** 4.6 Internal and External Challenges to State Power from 1450 to 1750  
**4**

---

- SIO** 4.7 Changing Social Hierarchies from 1450 to 1750  
**3**

---

- 6** 4.8 Continuity and Change from 1450 to 1750

**Personal Progress Check 4**

- Multiple-choice: ~15 questions**  
**Short-answer: 2 questions**
- Primary source
  - Secondary source
- Free-response: 1 question**
- Long essay (partial)

**UNIT 5**

**Revolutions**  
c. 1750 to c. 1900

**~20–23** Class Periods **12–15%** AP Exam Weighting

- CDI** 5.1 The Enlightenment  
**SIO**  
**3**

---

- GOV** 5.2 Nationalism and Revolutions in the Period from 1750 to 1900  
**3**

---

- ENV** 5.3 Industrial Revolution Begins  
**1**

---

- TEC** 5.4 Industrialization Spreads in the Period from 1750 to 1900  
**5**

---

- TEC** 5.5 Technology of the Industrial Age  
**1**

---

- GOV** 5.6 Industrialization: Government's Role from 1750 to 1900  
**5**

---

- ECN** 5.7 Economic Developments and Innovations in the Industrial Age  
**5**

---

- SIO** 5.8 Reactions to the Industrial Economy from 1750 to 1900  
**2**

---

- SIO** 5.9 Society and the Industrial Age  
**4**

---

- 6** 5.10 Continuity and Change in the Industrial Age

**Personal Progress Check 5**

- Multiple-choice: ~25 questions**  
**Short-answer: 2 questions**
- Secondary source
  - No source
- Free-response: 2 questions**
- Long essay (partial)
  - Document-based (partial)

# UNIT 6

## Consequences of Industrialization

c. 1750 to c. 1900

~12–15

Class Periods

12–15%

AP Exam Weighting

CDI 4	6.1 Rationales for Imperialism from 1750 to 1900
GOV 4	6.2 State Expansion from 1750 to 1900
GOV 2	6.3 Indigenous Responses to State Expansion from 1750 to 1900
ENV 2	6.4 Global Economic Development from 1750 to 1900
ECN 4	6.5 Economic Imperialism from 1750 to 1900
ENV ECN 5	6.6 Causes of Migration in an Interconnected World
SIO 5	6.7 Effects of Migration
6	6.8 Causation in the Imperial Age

### Personal Progress Check 6

Multiple-choice: ~20 questions

Short-answer: 2 questions

- No source
- Primary source

Free-response: 1 question

- Document-based (partial)

# UNIT 7

## Global Conflict

c. 1900 to the present

~9–12

Class Periods

8–10%

AP Exam Weighting

GOV 4	7.1 Shifting Power After 1900
GOV 1	7.2 Causes of World War I
TEC 3	7.3 Conducting World War I
ECN 2	7.4 The Economy in the Interwar Period
GOV 2	7.5 Unresolved Tensions After World War I
GOV 2	7.6 Causes of World War II
GOV 3	7.7 Conducting World War II
SIO 5	7.8 Mass Atrocities After 1900
6	7.9 Causation in Global Conflict

### Personal Progress Check 7

Multiple-choice: ~25 questions

Short-answer: 2 questions

- Secondary source
- No source

Free-response: 1 question

- Document-based

# UNIT 8

## Cold War and Decolonization

c. 1900 to the present

~14–17

Class Periods

8–10%

AP Exam Weighting

GOV 4	8.1 Setting the Stage for the Cold War and Decolonization
CDI 2	8.2 The Cold War
GOV 5	8.3 Effects of the Cold War
ECN SIO 2	8.4 Spread of Communism After 1900
GOV 5	8.5 Decolonization After 1900
GOV ECN 3	8.6 Newly Independent States
CDI 2	8.7 Global Resistance to Established Order After 1900
GOV 1	8.8 End of the Cold War
6	8.9 Causation in the Age of the Cold War and Decolonization

### Personal Progress Check 8

Multiple-choice: ~25 questions

Short-answer: 2 questions

- No source
- Primary source

Free-response: 1 question

- Document-based

**UNIT**  
**9**

**Globalization**  
*c. 1900 to the present*

**~8–11** Class Periods

**8–10%** AP Exam Weighting

<b>TEC</b> 5	<b>9.1</b> Advances in Technology and Exchange After 1900
<b>ENV</b> 5	<b>9.2</b> Technological Advances and Limitations After 1900: Disease
<b>ENV</b> 4	<b>9.3</b> Technological Advances: Debates About the Environment After 1900
<b>ECN</b> 2	<b>9.4</b> Economics in the Global Age
<b>SIO</b> 4	<b>9.5</b> Calls for Reform and Responses After 1900
<b>CDI</b> 4	<b>9.6</b> Globalized Culture After 1900
<b>CDI</b> 2	<b>9.7</b> Resistance to Globalization After 1900
<b>GOV</b> 3	<b>9.8</b> Institutions Developing in a Globalized World
<b>6</b>	<b>9.9</b> Continuity and Change in a Globalized World

**Personal Progress Check 9**

**Multiple-choice: ~25 questions**

**Short-answer: 2 questions**

- Secondary source
- No source

**Free-response: 1 question**

- Long essay