



World History

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What is World History?

The obvious answer is the history of the world, but it is much more: it is the context for where we are; it is reference from which we begin; it is lessons learned by our predecessors; it is the legacy we create. Think of world history as a play. If you simply look at the actors on the stage then you are only getting the show, you are not recognizing everything that went into making that performance; you are ignoring all the people and things that take place behind the scenes that make the play possible. To fully appreciate the history we will look behind the scenes, we will examine the culture and customs of the people; we will look at their environment to help understand the development of their culture.

Despite the ease with which we can communicate with people around the world, it seems that the world is more diverse now than ever before. The cultures of today emerged in times gone by; learning about past cultures and those that continue to exist today, we will better understand the actions of people and nations today. We will mature beyond the subjective condemnation that we are accustomed to and objectively see peoples for who they are.

The world being so large, and human history so long (growing longer day-by-day), our task is daunting. Therefore, we must limit ourselves to what we can accomplish in five months, and that which we do endeavor, must be done carefully and diligently. Our study begins around 5,000 BCE and will progress through the modern times culminating (I hope) with current events of today. In this course, I expect each of you to be responsible for your education and learning. In order to best prepare you for all the possible topics on which you will be tested, this course will be taught according to the North Carolina Essential Standards for Social Studies. You must think broadly about subjects we discuss and be able to apply what you learn to different situations because the final exam will be about the application of the broad ideas, not necessarily about the specific examples we will use in the class to explain them.

What does it mean to be an Honors Student?

Expectations of honors students are higher than those for “non-honors” students. This means that you will be asked to do things that you may not have been asked to do before. You will be asked to think critically. This means to look at information or data and interpret its meaning **WITHOUT** the teacher’s specific instruction. You will be asked to apply prior knowledge, from many disciplines, in new ways. You will be asked to have a *mature* opinion that you will be able to support with facts, information, or data. You will be asked to compare and contrast past history with modern history. You will be challenged with ideas that are new, or different or against **your** ideas and be asked to understand them (without asking you to change your personal beliefs). You will not be asked to turn in a homework assignment every day, though you will have homework every night (some written, some not). You will be asked to demonstrate your learning and understanding daily through a variety of methods (tests, quizzes, discussion, and question and answer – though these will not all be used every day).

Remember, this is **NOT** the class for the passive or lazy, you get out what you put in. This is **your** education; take an **ACTIVE** part in it. I hope that this semester will make history relevant to you instead of simply a series of people, places, and dates.

Common Core & Literacy

North Carolina is on board with the nationwide push to increase literacy in public schools. Where typically, literacy is simply thought of as “reading” and “writing,” it encompasses far more. Common Core has become North Carolina’s standard for literacy goals for all K-12 classes and schools. These standards, broken down by grade level, are found on the [Common Core](#) website. While these have just been adapted beginning this year, it is the hope that students will build through the grades from kindergarten through senior year, and beyond, to improve their ability to not only read and understand the words on the page, but to also interpret, analyze, synthesize, and apply what they read to become more meaningful, more creative, and more personal. I will attempt to use many sources of reading to improve your literacy but also attempt to give you opportunity to demonstrate that literacy by using what you have read and learned together. It is my goal to not only increase your proficiency in Common Core standards of literacy, but to improve your civic and economic literacy simultaneously. As we look toward the future, one of the most important components of your education is literacy. Regardless of how much actual core content from a course you use in your daily life, your ability to understand, comprehend, analyze, and synthesize will **ALWAYS** be necessary.

Supplies

Please obtain the following items for this course as soon as possible:

1. Loose Leaf Binder and Paper
2. A Highlighter
3. Pencil(s) and Pen(s) (blue or black ink only)
4. Pocket Dictionary

“Histories make men wise; poets, witty; the mathematics, subtle; natural philosophy, deep; moral, grave; logic and rhetoric, able to contend.”

- Francis Bacon, *Essays of Studies*

Mission, Vision, and Core Beliefs

It is important for everyone involved to accept the basic underlying principles that govern my classroom. While not specifically stated below, the most important thread is mutual respect. My goal is to create a safe and inviting environment based on mutual trust that will nurture each student's curiosity in the course and courage to explore the subjects beyond what is required in the curriculum.

Mission: To increase the achievement of all students by providing content and standards based learning that will also translate to real-world application and productive citizenship for the common good.

Vision: That all students will have a better understanding of the broader world around them than when they began their studies. The knowledge students learn in this class will make them more productive citizens and they will use this knowledge to make their environment a better place for themselves, their families, and all people they meet.

Core Beliefs:

- 1) All students who come to my class will learn.
- 2) Education is two parts: teaching and learning.
- 3) Learning takes place at ALL times – inside school, at home, at work, and everywhere in between. A person must simply be ready to see and hear the lessons.
- 4) It takes cooperation between school and home to achieve the greatest academic success.

Class Rules

My philosophy on education is simple – to learn. It is important to remember education is not a destination it is a journey. We never stop learning. Likewise, we all can learn from each other. There is more to learn than what is stated in the curriculum and between the covers of the textbook. As a result, there are some basic rules that will go a long way to making everyone comfortable in class and make this a positive learning environment, and while every teacher has slightly different procedures or expectations, all will agree that the following rules apply in all classes.

Rule #1: Read the Directions

Rule #2: Be responsible for:

2(a): YOUR Grade;

2(b): YOUR Learning;

2(c): YOUR Work;

2(d): YOUR Actions

Rule #3: Positive Attitudes ONLY

Rule #4: Treat others as you would like to be treated

Rule #5: Respect other people's property and person

Rule #6: Laugh WITH anyone but laugh AT no one

Rule #7: Come to class and hand in work ON TIME

Rule #8: Do not disturb people who are working

In addition, there are a couple of other ideas with which you should become familiar. These ideas are important for success in all your classes and beyond the classroom.

1. There is no excuse for lazy!

2. We make our own luck

("Luck favors the prepared!" – Edna Mode)

Class Policies

Hall Passes & Time on Task: I have seen through my own experience that all students show improved grades with increased "time on task"; the more time a student spends in the classroom during instruction time and the less time they spend wandering the halls or in the restroom, the higher their grade. However, as it becomes necessary from time to time for students to need to leave the classroom I will allow it, up to a maximum of 5. Beyond that, students will need to repay the time. On the other hand, any student who needs to leave the room less than 5 times will earn 1 bonus point equal to the number of times less than 5 that the student has remaining. A student who arrives to class late should NOT ask to use their hall pass later in the period. As far as I am concerned, you have already used your time out of the class for the period. *I reserve the right to deny or delay a student's use of their hall pass at any time.*

Start on Time: As you are aware, LRHS has implemented this program that has reduced the number of students wandering the halls and arriving late to class. The "Start on Time" program is essentially a zero tolerance program for tardiness. Without exception, teachers are **required** by administration to shut and lock their doors when the bell rings to begin class. Any student not in the classroom at that time is late (regardless of how close or far they are from the room, or if their materials are already inside or not). Students locked out of class are rounded up by faculty and administration and assigned lunch detention the next school day.

ALL students, regardless of where they are coming from, must be in class when the bell rings (on the stairs does not count!)

Absences: I follow the school policy for absences that is found in your student handbook.

"History is the witness that testifies to the passing of time; it illuminates reality, vitalizes memory, provides guidance, and brings tidings of antiquity."

- Marcus Tullius Cicero, *Pro Publio Sestio*, sec. 62

Bullying/Intimidation: The classroom is designed to be a safe environment. Students and teachers should not only be safe from physical harm, but also psychological harm. Anytime a student is uncomfortable participating in class due to the actions of other students it is considered a form of bullying or intimidation. My goal is to create an environment where students make smart decisions, think before they speak or act, and behave intelligently. When this happens we have a productive learning environment where we all can learn from each other.

Eating and Drinking in Class: A limited variety of foods are permitted in class. However, overtime insect related problems can sometimes arise due to students' the lack of responsibility. Food will be permitted as long as the students are responsible to clean up after themselves including crumbs, wrappers, or other such food items in the desks. I will not wait until bugs become a problem to prohibit food in class.

Electronic Devices and Nuisance Items Policy: LRHS has created a uniform policy for electronic devices or other items disruptive to class/learning environment (see page 19 of the LRHS student handbook). If I see a nuisance item (including but not limited to, iPod, mp3 player, walkman, cell phone, gaming device (such as PSP), laser pointer) I will call home and am required to take the following steps:

- 1) **First Incident:** Confiscation with parent notification and return of device at the end of the period.
- 2) **Second Incident:** 1 day ISS and the parent is required to pick up the device/item.
- 3) **Third Incident:** 2 days ISS and is required to pick up the device/item.

Grading: Assignments will be graded using a "point system." That is, each task of which you are asked will be assigned a certain amount of points. At any given time, you can determine your current grade by simply adding up the number of points you have earned and dividing that number by the total number of points that were possible. The chart below will give a sample line from a grade book:

	HW/CW	Test	Quiz	HW/CW	Quiz	Test	Sum
<i>Points Earned</i>	9	55	17	8	20	57	166
<i>Points Possible</i>	10	65	20	10	20	60	185
<i>Percentage</i>	90%	85%	85%	80%	100%	95%	90% (B)

Tests	Tests, projects, reports
Quizzes	Periodic evaluation of learning throughout the unit
Homework / Classwork	These tasks are graded for accuracy/correctness. These tasks are based on information already covered in class – review of prior information. Homework: Assignments given that are to be completed AT HOME. If there is a question if an assignment will be counted as "homework", please ask. Classwork: Assignment given in class. I will specify if it is homework or Classwork. Often times you will not finish Classwork in class, YOU ARE EXPECTED TO FINISH IT AT HOME.
Minor Assignment	These tasks are checked for completeness. It will include assignments that are due that covers information that we have not yet covered in class. Preview of new information. Only three grades are issued for this type of assessment: Complete (100%), Incomplete (50%), Not Turned In – NHI (0%).

The quarter and semester grades will be recorded as per the school's grading policy (presently this policy is determined by the State Department of Public Education). I will not round grades that are further than .5 away from the next letter grade. (i.e. 92.5 = A, 92.4 ≠ A)

- A = 93 - 100**
B = 85 - 92
C = 77 - 84
D = 70 - 76
F = less than 70

Make-up Work:

Homework/Classwork:

Absences:	An absent student may make-up missed homework and classwork at home and is expected to turn it in as soon as possible according to the Wake County make-up policy.
"Late work"	This includes any homework/classwork assignment that the student is in class to receive and is present on the day it is due but fails to submit it. These assignments can be turned in late for reduced credit.

Tests & Quizzes:

Absences:	Students are expected to make up tests and quizzes that are missed due to absence in a timely manner. This should be done after school.
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IT IS THE STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO FIND OUT THE WORK THAT WAS MISSED DURING A PARTICULAR ABSENCE. THE TEACHER WILL NOT REMIND THE STUDENT TO SUBMIT THIS ABSENT WORK (as per Wake County Schools make-up policy and can be found on pages 17-18 in the LRHS Student Handbook). The primary way to learn what work was missed during a student absence is from the online resources provided for you on the class website and homework feed (via twitter). **I expect any student who is absent from class, for whatever reason, to access the missed information and handouts online.**

"So, let us not be blind to our differences – but let us also direct our attention to our common interests and to the means by which those differences can be resolved. And if we cannot end now our differences, at least we can help make the world safe for diversity."

- John F. Kennedy

Mid-term & Final Exam: According to current information, the state has reinstated a state-wide final exam – “Measures of Student Learning” (MSL). The format, weight, grading rubric, and date of the exam are not yet known. I will furnish you with this information once it is made available. Another change is that there will not be a Mid-Term exam. The biggest thing to know here is that there will be a state administered final exam for which I do not have the details but will let you know more as I learn more.

A Word About Homework and Classwork: Many students believe that teachers assign homework just to make them do more work and cut into their social life. NOT TRUE. Teachers assign homework to give students another opportunity to think about what they learned in class. It also gives students a chance to talk with their parents about what they are learning and allows them to contribute to student learning. I find this very important, especially when it comes to current events.

Homework is very important in your preparation for the day’s discussion and activities. That is to say, the more time I have to spend giving notes on information that was already assigned in the reading, the less time we will have to do interesting classroom activities that would give deeper meaning and understanding to information. Being prepared is directly related to success. The better prepared a student is, the more they will understand the discussion, the more they will be able to participate, the better the questions that student will ask, and the deeper the understanding of the subject. All this will translate into a better understanding of the material which will be demonstrated on tests and quizzes – the bulk of your grade for this course. As a result, I strongly emphasize your preparation for class each day.

In addition to writing the homework assignments on the board in class, I will be posting the day’s homework on Twitter at the address on the front of this handout. If you are already familiar with Twitter and have an account, I suggest you follow this course on your account. If you do not have a Twitter account and do not wish to have one, you can still keep tabs on the homework by visiting the same web address. You may also keep up with the course and get copies of handouts, view related videos and other content for enrichment by visiting my World History website, also found on the front of this website (or use the QR Code from your mobile device).

I can tell, just by grading your homework if you did it while watching television or in front of some other distraction or quickly in an earlier class or Pride Period. Usually when a person does their homework while watching TV they do not read the question correctly or their answers do not make sense. So, for all intents and purposes, doing your homework in front of the TV is pointless because you will not remember what it is that you have read or written. Consider the time you spend on your homework an investment, the more you invest the more it will pay off in the long run.

Also remember, everything that you do is a reflection of you. If you turn in a sloppy, folded/creased, half completed assignment, it tells people something different than if you turned in a neat, complete assignment. So before you turn something in, look at it and say to yourself, “what does this paper / assignment say about *me*?”

Dress Code: Student attire has become a concern for administration, faculty, and staff at Leesville, as well as for the Wake County School Board. I expect that all students will adhere to the dress code instituted by the Wake County School Board as described in the student handbook on pages 22-23.

Amendments: I reserve the right to amend these policies, as the situation makes necessary. A handout explaining any changes will accompany any amendments to the above policies.

I expect that we will have a GREAT term. We will all be successful by trying to do our best, and hopefully we will all look back on this term as one of the most positively memorable.

Sincerely,
Matthew Caggia

“The subject of history is the life of peoples and of humanity. To catch and pin down in words – that is, to describe directly the life, not only of humanity, but even of a single people, appears to be impossible.”

- Leo Nikolaevich Tolstoy, *War and Peace*, epilogue pt. II, ch. 1

HOMEWORK: Complete the [Class Rules and Expectations Form](#) to demonstrate that you (both student and parent) have read and understand the course guidelines.

HOMEWORK: Please complete the [Student Information Sheet](#) to help me get a better idea of you as a person so that I can be better able to help you learn.