



Summer Assignment for AP European History

Welcome to Honors World History and AP European History. We do not lightly intrude on your summer, but this assignment accomplishes three very important goals. First, if students begin thinking of history as ideas enacted through human actions, then we have truly begun the study of history. Too many people see history simply as a somewhat random collection of events. The sooner we can change this perception, the better. Second, students who show commitment enough to complete the summer assignment tend to do well in the class. Third, we would like for all of our APEH students to possess a good exam prep guide. The books we have selected for the summer assignment will aid you in becoming successful in AP European History. We hope that you will enjoy this summer's assignment. Good Luck.

Assignment:

Part I: Read *A World Lit Only By Fire* by William Manchester; ISBN: 0-316-54556-2

- Take short notes on key figures and concepts. This book provides a foundation to AP European History and provides a survey of European History from approximately 410 to approximately 1550. AP European History begins in 1450, so there is a century of overlap with this book.
- Complete Part I in June and July

Part II : Read the following pages in *AP Achiever: Advanced Placement Exam Preparation Guide for European History* by Chris Freiler; ISBN: 978-0-07-325672-6

- Chapter 2: Pages 9-22 *Reading Strategies & Strategies for the Multiple-Choice Questions*
- Chapter 3: Pages 48-57 *The Rise of Europe*
- Complete Part II in August, just before the start of classes

This book might not be readily available in local bookstores. In fact, the bookstores may have to order it. It may, however, be easily purchased on Amazon.com.

The easiest way to purchase both books is to enter the ISBN number without the hyphens into the search window on Amazon.com to find the books.

Why The AP Achiever?:

This prep guide is relatively new to the AP world. However, it is one of the best we've seen. It was written by an experienced AP European History teacher who also served as both an exam reader and a member of the test development committee. In this book he not only provides a great review of the material that we cover in our text and in class, but also tips and strategies based upon his years of experience. Throughout the year, we will be referring to these strategies, especially the essay advice.

What am I supposed to get out of the summer assignment?

The expectations for reading in AP European History are very high. First, we expect you to actually complete the reading assignments. Crazy, I know! Most importantly, we expect you to understand the major concepts from the readings. Dates and dead guys may come in handy as details in an essay, but without an understanding of the big ideas, your ability to create an argument will fall flat. By meeting these two expectations your understanding of what is going on in class and your ability to participate in class discussions will be dramatically improve. *A World Lit Only By Fire* and *The AP Achiever* address both of issues. Our hope is that you will

come to class at the end of August with a better understanding of the years leading up to and around The Renaissance that will allow you to transition more easily into your first AP history class. Be prepared! We will have a brief quiz on the reading upon your return to Westview in August.

Big Ideas:

As you read *A World Lit Only By Fire* try to think of the events described as the cause or result of the major intellectual, political, or economic ideologies of the era. Concentrate on how the people and events are related to these larger concepts.

Here are a few questions you might ask about the first section of the book, *The Medieval Mind*:

- The Dark Ages; why were they so dark?
- How did Christianity spread throughout Europe?
- How did St. Augustine change politics and religion in Europe?
- How is the Paganism of the Classical Era present in Modern Europe?
- How did the political systems of Europe evolve after the fall of the Roman Empire?
- How did Europe resolve the religious crises of the Late Middle Ages?
- What exciting changes were taking place at the end of the 14th and the beginning of the 15th centuries?

As you read the rest of the book keep these four basic questions in mind:

- What causes, both long- and short-term, led to the event or development in question?
- How does this person, development, event, or work reflect the major ideas of this particular era (Middle Ages, Renaissance, Reformation, etc...)
- How is this development or area related to the other topics covered in this book?
- What was the impact, both short- and long-term, of this event or development?

