

World History & Geography

Mr. Houston

(Room T-6)

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Hello and welcome to Mr. Houston's history class. I have lots of fun activities and projects for us to do as we discover the people and places of the historical past.

Medieval and Early Modern Times

Students in grade seven study the social, cultural, and technological changes that occurred in Europe, Africa, and Asia in the years A.D. 500–1789. After reviewing the ancient world and the ways in which archaeologists and historians uncover the past, students study the history and geography of great civilizations that were developing concurrently throughout the world during medieval and early modern times. They examine the growing economic interaction among civilizations as well as the exchange of ideas, beliefs, technologies, and commodities. They learn about the resulting growth of Enlightenment philosophy and the new examination of the concepts of reason and authority, the natural rights of human beings and the divine right of kings, experimentalism in science, and the dogma of belief. Finally, students assess the political forces let loose by the Enlightenment, particularly the rise of democratic ideas, and they learn about the continuing influence of these ideas in the world today.

Here are some things you need to know about how I conduct this history class:

TECHNOLOGY

We will be using a great deal of technology throughout the school year. *What is technology?* Technology can be the use of computers and computer programs such as Microsoft PowerPoint or Word; it may include the creation of an historical Web site or wiki; filming and editing a video; recording podcasts, and writing blogs. Some of you may have a great deal of technological knowledge, while others may have none at all—that's OK. No matter which category you fall into, you will have the opportunity to receive the same grades by using less difficult technology or by learning to use the technology in this class. You will not be graded on your use of the technology itself, rather you will be graded on the use of technology to present your understanding of historical topics. I will be demonstrating each technology to you before you have to use it.

What if I don't have a computer, the Internet, or other technologies at home? Having technologies at home is certainly an advantage, but you can still complete your work in class, before or after school, during lunch, at a library, or at a friend's house that has the technology you need. As long as you are staying focused and working during class/lab time, you should be able to complete much of your work during school. *However, there will be some assignments for which you will be required to access the Internet outside of class time.* Important: When we are in the computer lab you must remain quiet. Failure to follow this rule will result in the loss of your computer lab privileges. You will then be required to complete your assignments elsewhere and on your own time.

HISTORY NOTEBOOK

Each student will use a 3-ring notebook to organize classroom materials. It can be one used exclusively for this class or it can be a part of a multi-class notebook *as long as it contains a history section that is clearly defined*. You will be required to keep all handouts, maps, homework, class work, etc. neatly organized in one place. This will help you keep organized and assist you in your study skills. Keeping your history notebook organized will be a part of your overall grade.

CORNELL NOTES

Every student will use the Cornell style of note-taking (we will discuss the Cornell Notes in detail during the first week of class). You must be very familiar with this style. It will be used for lecture and textbook notes, and for some homework. Cornell Notes will greatly improve your study skills and will help keep you focused on what information is important for tests, quizzes, and projects. All students will be given a sample format of the Cornell Notes for you to use as a guide.

GRADING POLICY

Tests & Quizzes	25%
Projects	20%
Homework/Class work/Notebook	40%
Participation/Effort/Cooperation	15%

All grades will be scored by using the following scale:

GRADE & GPA TABLE													
Average	0%	60%	63%	67%	70%	73%	77%	80%	83%	87%	90%	93%	97%
Letter Grade	F	D-	D	D+	C-	C	C+	B-	B	B+	A-	A	A+
GPA	0.00	0.67	1.00	1.33	1.67	2.00	2.33	2.67	3.00	3.33	3.67	4.00	4.00

I do **not** grade on a curve and I **rarely** offer extra credit, so keep up with your assignments and communicate with me any difficulties you may be having.

Please visit your class Website. Here you will find your weekly assignments and other important class information. Please feel free to contact me via my e-mail houstonj@svusd.org if you need my assistance.

Sincerely,

Mr. Houston