

Advanced Placement World History
J.J. PEARCE HIGH SCHOOL
2007-2008

Advanced Placement World History course is a college-level survey course that introduces students to the rich political, cultural, social, and intellectual heritage of the world. It is part of a cooperative endeavor by high schools, colleges, and the College Board that provides highly motivated students the challenge and opportunity to earn college credit during their high school years. Performance on the College Board's Advanced Placement World History exam determines a student's eligibility for up to six hours of college credit (the equivalent of a two-semester course). Course curriculum, materials, and expectations are designed to prepare students for success with this three-hour test. The purpose of this course, however, extends beyond the possibility of earning college credit by providing students the opportunity to develop skills and knowledge that will form a useful foundation for their continuing educational endeavors.

SUMMER READING ASSIGNMENT
2007-2008

1. Obtain a copy of *Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies* by Jared Diamond. (you can get it used from Borders, Amazon.com or Half Price Books)
2. Read each of the following chapters in the book and answer the accompanying questions in complete sentences. Be sure to elaborate your points. Of course, you may read the remainder of the book, but you will only be responsible for the reading of the chapters listed below.
 - A. Prologue: What is Yali's question? Restate the question in Professor Diamond's words or your own words.
 - B. Chapter 3: How does Pizarro's capture of Atahualpa explain why Europeans colonized the New World instead of Native Americans colonizing Europe?
 - C. Chapter 4: How did the availability of domestic plants and animals explain why empires, literacy, and steel weapons developed earliest in Eurasia?
 - D. Chapter 6: What factors contributed to hunter-gatherers becoming farmers?
 - E. Chapter 10: How did axis orientations of continents affect the success or non-success of human beings in various areas of the world?
 - F. Chapter 11: How does the role of germs figure in answering Yali's question?
 - G. Chapter 12: Why did writing arise in and spread to some societies and not to many others?
 - H. Chapter 13: Under what kinds of conditions does technology develop and how and why did technology development differ from one place to another?

- I. Chapter 14: How do the institutions of society change over time and how are these changes related to the “agents of conquest”, guns, germs and steel?
 - J. Epilogue: Diamond restates his original question and sums up his major points here. What do you think he is saying about the future of human history as a science?
3. After you have completed the reading and answered the questions, you are to write a 500 word (2-3 pages) “Book Review” of Guns, Germs, and Steel. Divide the review into three parts
- A. The first third is a description of what the reviewer feels was the author’s intent in writing the book. If you read a book entitled The Crusades, don’t assume that the author’s purpose was to tell you about the Crusades or to describe the Crusades. His purpose may be to persuade you that the Crusades were important because they altered commerce; or, his purpose may be to persuade you that the Crusades were militarily archaic; or, his purpose may be to persuade you that the Crusades were a crucial step on the road to Turkish expansion. One way or another, the author has an agenda. There are plenty of books on the Crusades. Why write one more? Spend a third of the paper describing what you discovered about this. I want to credit your brains; I’m not that interested in his. You may discover that he is rather witless, and persuade me of it.
 - B. The second third of your review should describe how he went about his task. What kind of evidence did he rely on? What were his sources – or does he even let you know? Does he use intelligent graphics – pictures, tables, graphs, etc.?. Do they help clarify and add to the text, or are they padding, or just confusing, or poorly introduced? Does he write well? Is he entertained by his subject, or is he just grinding out a book?
 - C. The last third of your review is critical. It is here that you evaluate his success. Did he persuade you? Did he really bore you, or anger you, or confuse you? Was it indeed a book which needed to be written, or was it a waste of your time and his? What do you advise the reader of your review to do? Read it? Check it out but be cautious? Forget about it?

This assignment is due on the first day of class next fall. We will be doing additional work with the text during the school year. Please type your answers in 12 letter size and Times New Roman font. I am attaching a copy of the course overview for you to review. AP World History is most likely your first experience with a college level course. I am very excited about being able to work with you next year. If you have any questions, feel free to e-mail me and I will get back with you as soon as possible.

Mr. Dowlatshahi