

History At Our House

The Ultimate History Resource for Homeschoolers



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European History

High School Syllabus

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Introduction

This syllabus presents the general objectives for an academic year of European history with HistoryAtOurHouse for the High School class. Its purpose is to give parents and students an overview of what will be covered during the year, and thus to facilitate the purchase or borrowing of books and other resources (both non-fiction and historical fiction) to match with your students' studies in the program.

The 2009-10 academic year is the first year that HistoryAtOurHouse will be offering a high school program, thus, inevitably, the curriculum at this level represents a work in progress. In certain regards the High School program will mirror the Junior High program for the next few years—until highly experienced students begin to move up through the HistoryAtOurHouse program. There will, however, be some significant differences at the outset.

The basic similarity between the programs is that the sequencing of the material will be essentially the same. Thus High School students in the program will study the Dark Ages, the Reformation, the French Revolution, and other major topics at approximately the same time during the school year as students in the Junior High class. The sequencing of the presentation is outlined in the included “Course Outline.” The differences, however, are numerous.

The High School program is 5 hours/wk, vs. 3 hours/wk for the Junior High class. This allows and necessitates a number of changes to the curriculum. Given the additional class time available, it is possible within each particular topic area to treat of the same material in greater depth. It is thus possible, for instance, while studying the Dark Ages, to spend additional time looking at the important activities of the Franks and the early popes. In addition, within any particular historical period, it is possible, given the additional time and the higher abilities of the students, to discuss certain topics which are more intellectually demanding. For instance, when discussing the close of the Middle Ages, it is possible at the High School level to discuss the concept of the Renaissance in greater depth, and to examine if and how it might be related to subsequent developments such as the Reformation.

The additional in-class time available at the High School level also permits us to look at more History Through Art, and to do in class readings and seminars. At the High School level, students will be introduced to “primary” and “secondary” sources pertaining to the narrative history they are studying. They will, for instance, be able to read short biographies (such as Einhard's *Life of Charlemagne*), or famous speeches (such as Martin Luther's speech before the Diet of Worms), letters, and other documents (such as the Magna Carta and the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen). These materials will be read in class either in part or in full. Some readings will be assigned as homework. A list of anticipated readings in the program is also included in this document, in the section entitled “Course Readings.” (It will not be necessary for parents to purchase any of these readings. They are all either available for free on-line, or I will make them available to students via the class web page.)

Some of the additional in-class time will be dedicated to individual study projects that the students will be tasked with. Each of the students in the live High School class will have to prepare three short lectures (15-20 minutes) over the course of the year, in addition to regular paragraph writing assignments, and periodic essays and tests.

Evidently, all the differences discussed in the foregoing are reflections of one general truth: the level of difficulty of the High School program will be higher. The material will be more abstract; there will be more of it; and there will be more work required of the students to grasp and retain it.

In addition to all the things that the High School program will include that the Junior High class does not, there are some things that the Junior High program includes but that the High School program will *not* include. First, there are no geography lessons at the High School level. Students will be expected to know their European political geography ahead of time, and if they are in need of a refresher, this will primarily be their own responsibility. (I will assist them in this area by occasional testing, including graded “pop quizzes”!) There will also not be any class notes provided to students at the High School level. Students will be expected to take notes independently in class. They will receive guidance from me on how to do so, and I will perform periodic checks on their note-taking to assist them in this area as well. Finally, students will not receive “test preparation sheets” for tests. There will be in-class review for tests, and students will be given explicit guidance on what the tests will contain and how to prepare for them, but they will have to prepare for them independently. (It will also be necessary for parents to coordinate with me in conducting the tests and submitting them to me, to insure the integrity of the testing process. This will be addressed as the school year proceeds.)

Finally, in order to prepare students for the upcoming academic year, there is required advanced reading. This is discussed in detail in the document entitled “HistoryAtOurHouse – Modern Progress Study Guide – Introduction,” which is located on the web page you used to access this document.

I am very excited about the year to come. In creating the HistoryAtOurHouse curriculum, I have striven to offer world-class history instruction for my homeschooling students. I believe the High School program will meet that standard as well, and I look forward to working with you to make this academic year a terrific success.

Best regards,



Mr. Powell

Course Outline

The Dark Ages and the Rise of Feudal Christendom (Weeks 1-7, September to late October)

- Why History?
- The Importance of European history
- Review of the history of Rome
 - Summary of the Roman Republican period (c.509 – 27 BC)
 - Summary of the history of the Roman Empire (27 BC – 476 AD)
 - The Rise of Christianity in the Roman world
- Frankish Europe
 - Italy after Rome
 - Rise of the Papacy
 - Rise of the Franks; union of Frankish and Papal power
- Early Feudalism
 - The concept of Feudalism
 - Origins of Feudalism
 - Formation of France and Germany/Holy Roman Empire
 - Feudal monarchies of early Europe
- England to
 - The Norman Conquest (1066)
 - Henry II of England
 - Magna Carta and the first Parliaments
- TEST FOR WEEKS 1-7

The Middle Ages (Weeks 7-13, late October to mid-December)

- The Crusades
 - The Byzantine Empire
 - The Rise of Islam
 - The Crusades (1096 – 1291)
- The Hundred Years' War (1337-1453)
 - The end of the Capetian Dynasty of France
 - The Plantagenet Dynasty of England and its presence in France
 - Battle of Crécy (1346)
 - Joan of Arc
 - The unification of France
 - The War of the Roses and the rise of the Tudor dynasty in England
- Spain, Portugal, and the Age of Discovery
 - The Reconquista
 - Prince Henry “the Navigator”
 - The circumnavigation of Africa: Dias and Da Gama
 - Columbus and the discovery of America
 - The Portuguese and Spanish Empires
- The Renaissance
 - Italian Renaissance in Art
 - Classicism and Humanism
- TEST FOR WEEKS 7-13

Reformation and Religious Wars (Weeks 14-18, mid-December – end of January)

- The Rise of the Hapsburgs
- The Italian Wars between France and the Hapsburgs (1494-1559)
- German Reformation
 - indulgences
 - Martin Luther
- Calvinism
 - in Switzerland
 - in France
- The English Reformation
 - Henry VIII
 - “Blood Mary”
 - Queen Elisabeth I
- Rise of the Dutch Republic
- England and Netherlands vs. Spain
- The Thirty Years' War (1618-1648)
- Puritanism and the Early Stuart Kings of England
- The English Civil War
- TEST FOR WEEKS 14-18

Emergence of Modern Europe (Weeks 19-26, February - March)

- The Anglo-Dutch Rivalry
- The Glorious Revolution
- Louis XIV of France and the “balance of power”
- The Holy Roman Empire after 1648
- Rise of Prussia
- Russia
 - Brief history of Russia
 - Peter the Great
- Europe and America until 1763
- The French Revolution
 - Background to the Revolution
 - American Revolution
 - the French monarchy since Louis XIV
 - The Estates General
 - The Revolution (1789-1799)
 - The National Assembly
 - Storming of the Bastille
 - Wars of the French Revolution
 - Robespierre and “the Terror”
 - The Directory
 - The rise of Napoleon
- TEST FOR WEEKS 19-26

Napoleon and the Nineteenth Century (Weeks 27-31, March- early May)

- Napoleon
 - First campaign in Italy
 - Expedition to Egypt
 - Crossing the Alps
 - Conquest of Europe
 - Dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire
 - The Napoleonic Code
 - The Continental System

Napoleon and the Nineteenth Century (continued)

- Napoleon (continued)
 - Invasion of Russia
 - Fall of Napoleon
- The Congress of Vienna
- The Age of Metternich (1815-1830)
- The Early Industrial Revolution (1764-1830)
- France after Napoleon
- The Revolutions of 1848
- Rise of Modern Germany (1815-1871)
- Rise of Modern Italy
- Franco-Prussian War
- World War I (1914-1919)
- TEST FOR Weeks 27-31

The Twentieth Century (Weeks 32-37, May - June)

- The Russian Revolution
 - Russia (1815-1905)
 - Rise of Communism in Russia
- Ideas for Peace: The Peace of Paris of 1919
- Formation of the Soviet Union
- Rise of Nazi Germany
- World War II
- The Cold War
- Decolonization
- Idea of a European Union
- Fall of Communism and the unification of Europe
- TEST FOR Weeks 32-36

- REVIEW OF THE YEAR (Week 37)

Course Readings

The following is a list of possible readings to be used over the course of the year. Not all the listed items will necessarily be used, nor is the list exhaustive. It is merely offered as an indication of the types of materials that students will be working with.

Dark and Middle Ages

Einhard, *Life of Charlemagne*
Ernest Henderson (ed.), *Historical Documents of the Middle Ages* (includes the Magna Carta)
Richard McKeon (ed.), *Selections from Medieval Philosophers*
St. Augustine, *City of God*
St. Bernard, *Summons to the Second Crusade*
St. Jerome, *Letter to a Friend concerning the Fall of the Roman Empire*

Renaissance and Reformation

Oliver Cromwell, *On the Dissolution of Parliament*
Galileo Galilei, *Dialogue Concerning the Two Chief World Systems*
Martin Luther, *speech before the Diet of Worms*
Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince*
Sir Thomas More, *Utopia*

French Revolution and the Nineteenth Century

The French Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen
Joseph Chamberlain, *The British Empire*
Danton, *Let France Be Free!*
Charles Hazen, *Europe Since 1815*
Karl Marx and Frederich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*
Giuseppe Mazini, *To the Young Men of Italy*
Maximilian Robespierre, *Letter to Danton*

The Twentieth Century

Neville Chamberlain, *The Munich Agreement*
Winston Churchill, *An Iron Curtain has Descended*
Albert Einstein, *Peace in the Atomic Age*
Adolph Hitler, *Germany's Claims*
Nikolai Lenin, *The Dictatorship of the Proletariat*
Maxim Litvinov, *The League of Nations*
R.R. Palmer and Joel Colton, *History of the Modern World*