

History At Our House

The Ultimate History Resource for Homeschoolers



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History of Asia

Elementary Grades Syllabus

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Introduction

This syllabus presents the general objectives for an academic year of Asian History with HistoryAtOurHouse for both the Lower Elementary and Upper Elementary classes. Its purpose is to give parents 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 children's studies in the program.

Various aspects of the HistoryAtOurHouse program remain, and will likely always remain, a work in progress. Since I continually teach a range of clientele spanning age six to sixty, I am always learning new things about history, and new ways to teach it. To meet my clients' and my own needs, I find it essential as a historian to broaden and intensify my understanding of history on a continual basis. I am regularly reassessing the nature and precision of the information I present, as well as the role and significance of historical knowledge in a broader education. Consequently, I am always making pedagogical adjustments to the various programs I offer, and occasionally they are major ones.

In calendar years when I am not teaching live Asian history classes, this guide will be a fully accurate reflection of the material that is present for the already completed product. In years (such as 2012-13) where the live classes are being given, the general outline below should serve as a reliable guide for the year to come, though I may choose to depart from it in minor ways as the year progresses.

Elementary grade students will be grouped together in one class for Asian history instruction. This is why this syllabus is for both levels. Years of teaching experience have led me to maintain a close match between the two programs as there is no evident pedagogical reason not to, and it has many practical benefits. Although the lectures for both levels will be the same, class notes, quizzes and tests will be offered at two distinct levels, thus maintaining a gradation of the academic challenge for each age group.

I am very excited about the year to come, and I look forward to working with you to make this academic year a terrific success.

Best regards,



Mr. Powell

Course Outline

The History of the Islamic Middle East, c.600AD – Present (Week 1-9)

- The importance of the Middle East in world history and modern world affairs
- Survey of the ancient Middle East: From the Persian Empire to the Rise of Islam
- The Birth of Islamic Civilization
 - The life of Mohammed
 - The Islamic conquest of Arabia, North Africa, Persia, and Central Asia
 - Overview of Islamic Sectarianism: Sunni and Shi'a
 - Penetration of Islam into India and Europe and early political divisions of the Islamic World
- The Seljuk Turks
- The Crusades (1095-1291), from a Middle-Eastern perspective
- The Ottoman Empire (1299-1922)
 - Turkish conquest of the Middle East
 - Conquest of Constantinople and Penetration into Europe
 - Egypt under the Mamelukes
- The Safavid Empire of Persia (1501-1722)

QUIZ: Ancient and Medieval Middle East

- Western Ascendancy
 - From the “Reconquista” to the failed Ottoman siege of Vienna (1683)
 - Western advances until Napoleon
- Western Supremacy
 - 1798: the year everything changed
 - The “Eastern Question” for Europe / the “Western Question” for the Islamic World
 - World War I and the birth of the modern Middle-Eastern state system
 - British Power in the Middle East (c.1763-c.1956)
 - The Birth of Israel
 - American Supremacy (c.1956 – present)
 - The Middle East in the Cold War
 - Middle Eastern Oil in the Global Economy
 - Nationalism in the Modern Middle East
 - Reactionary Islamism and the “War on Terror”

TEST: The History of the Modern Middle East (1683-Present)

The History of the India, c.1500 BC – Present (Week 10-18)

- The importance of India in world history and modern world affairs
- The Indian Subcontinent and the ancient Indus “river valley civilization”
- The “Hindutva” Question
 - Roots of Cultural Nationalism
- Origins of the Caste System
- The Vedas, India's key religious texts, and Hinduism
 - The Upanishads
 - Beliefs: Karma and Reincarnation
- Buddhism
- Alexander the Great and his impact on India
- The Unification of India under the Mauryan Empire (c.322 BC – 185 BC)
 - The Connection between India, Egypt, and Rome
 - Political Disintegration and Re-unification
- The Gupta Empire and the “Golden Age of India”
- The Islamic Invasion and the Delhi Sultanate (c.1206-.c1526)
- The Mongol Threat

QUIZ: Ancient and Medieval India

- The Mughal Empire and the medieval Indian state system c.1500
- Western Ascendancy
 - Vasco da Gama (1498) and Portuguese naval dominion
 - The Dutch Empire in Empire
 - The French and British in India
 - The British East-India Company
 - The Seven Years' War (1756-63) and the fate of India
- Western Supremacy
 - The Collapse of Mughal Power and the rise of the Maratha Empire
 - The Napoleonic Threat and the Growth of British Power
 - The Failed Indian Rebellion and the British Raj (1858-1947)
 - The Anglo-Russian Rivalry for Central Asia: the “Great Game”
 - Queen Victoria: Empress of India
- Indian Independence
 - The Awakening of Indian Nationalism
 - Gandhi, the “Indian National Congress,” and the Partition of 1947
 - Pakistan and East Pakistan (Bangladesh)
 - The “Nehru” Dynasty and India's Modern Challenges

TEST: The History of the Modern India (1498-Present)

The History of the China, c.2200BC – Present (Week 19-27)

- The importance of China in world history and modern world affairs
- The “Heroic Age” of the Xia (c.2200-c.1700 BC) and Shang (c.1700-c.1045 BC) dynasties
 - The Origins of Chinese Writing
 - The Rise of Chinese Feudalism
 - The “Mandate of Heaven” (China's unique system of “divine right”)
- The Zhou Dynasty (c.1045 BC – 221 BC)
 - The cyclical pattern of Chinese history
 - The “Warring States” period and the Hundred Schools of Thought
 - Confucianism, Legalism and Daoism
- The First “Imperial Period”: The Qin and Han Dynasties (221 BC – 220 AD)
 - The origins of the “Great Wall of China”, Spread of Buddhism into China
- Anarchy of the Three Kingdoms and the Re-integration of the Second “Imperial Period”
 - The Sui and Tang dynasties
- The Anarchy of Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms (907 – 960 AD) and the Re-Integration of the Third “Imperial Period”: the Song and Liao (907 – 1279 AD)
- Mongol Rule of China (1279 – 1368)
- The Culmination of Chinese Imperialism: The Ming Dynasty (1368-1644 AD)
 - Zheng He and the Aborted Chinese Age of Discovery (1405-1433)

QUIZ: Ancient and Medieval China

- The Qin Dynasty (1644-1911 AD): China's Last Empire
- Western Ascendancy
 - Portuguese, Chinese, and Dutch traders (1540 -) and Chinese mercantile expansion
 - The Enlightened Monarchy of the Kangxi Emperor and the new Western Learning
 - China and Russia's Westward Expansion
- Western Supremacy
 - The Turning Point: The Macartney Embassy of 1793
 - The British East-India Company and the Opium Trade
 - The First Opium War (1839-42) and Western Hegemony
 - The Boxer Rebellion, the United States and the “Open Door Policy” (1899 -)
- The Chinese Response
 - Sun Yat-sen and the Failed Republic (1911-1949)
 - Communist/Maoist China (1949-) and the Separation of Taiwan (1945-)
 - Post-Maoist China
 - Deng Xiaoping and the new “Market” Economy
 - China and the United States, the temporary economic alliance

TEST: The History of the Modern China (1644-Present)

The History of the Jan, c.645AD – Present (Week 28-35)

- The importance of Japan in world history and modern world affairs
- Japanese Pre-History (-645 AD)
 - The Origins of Japanese Identity: The Yamato Clan
 - The Importation of Buddhism and Confucianism
- The “Ishi Incident” (645 AD) and the birth of historical government in Japan
 - The Taika Reforms and the Yamato Polity
 - The Japanese “Emperor” and Japanese Feudal System
 - Shintoism
- Japan's Medieval Feudal Anarchy
 - The rise of the “Shoguns”
 - Japan and China: Early Relations; The Attempted Mongol Invasions
 - Yoshimitsu and Japan's hated perceived subordination to China
 - The Samurai and “Bushido” (“The Way of the Warrior”)
- The Three Great Unifiers and the Rise of the Tokugawa Shogunate

QUIZ: Ancient and Medieval Japan

- Western Ascendancy
 - Portuguese, Chinese, and Dutch traders (1540 -) and Chinese mercantile expansion
 - “Splendid Isolation” and “Dutch Learning”
- Western Supremacy
 - Admiral Perry and the Treaty of Kanagawa (1854)
 - The Unequal Treaties with the Western Powers
 - The Meiji Restoration
 - Japan's Frenetic Westernization and Industrial Modernization (1868-1912)
 - The Rise of Reactionary Nationalism
- The Failed Japanese Empire
 - The Awakening Empire: The Sino-Japanese (1894) and Russo-Japanese (1904-05) Wars
 - Japan as a “Great Power” : The Versailles Treaty of 1919 and the Washington Conference of 1922
 - Japan in WWII
 - Invasion of Manchuria
 - The Rape of Nanking
 - The Atomic Bombing of Japan
- Post-War Japan
 - The Japanese Constitution and its Subordination to the United States during the Cold War
 - The Illusory Economic Miracle and the New Identity Crisis

TEST: The History of the Modern Japan (1644-Present)