

Mr. Limb Course Syllabus

World Studies: The Medieval Age 500-1500 C.E.

Hosford Middle School

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“Knowledge will forever govern ignorance. And a people who mean to be their own governors must arm themselves with the power that knowledge gives.” --- James Madison.

Teaching Philosophy: Learning is both natural and vital to humanity. Teaching should emphasize cross-cultural truths and ideas that are intrinsic to all humans, and must be focused towards relevance and lifelong enrichment.

Course Introduction:

True education begins with small questions and results in big questions. But it does not end there. In fact, true education does not end at all. It is a continuing legacy that transcends the bounds of time and stretches on into the unwritten future. It is the duty of each generation to remember the stories and people from the past and forge their future with their own dreams. It is this task that draws me so passionately into the teaching profession.

To accomplish this, it is vital that students not only understand how humanity shapes, and is shaped by its story, but also how important a role they place in their own society. To that end, it is my firm belief that all history lessons but begin and end at a student’s own doorstep, in order to establish a permanent link between the timeless legacy of the past, and the immediacy of the present. When this is established, it is my firmest hope that a student will realize that there is no such thing as history, only the timeless story of US, the human race.

Students will be encouraged to utilize their own unique perspectives and cultures to enhance the overall understanding of humanity and history by sharing family or personal stories, traditions, and beliefs that will help students grasp the vast diversity of human experience, and most importantly, to assess the common aspects of humankind that unite us all.

While the text book will comprise a portion of the daily instruction and assessment, it is only one tool in a larger collection. The true story of humanity can only be told by exploring humanity itself; through art, music, culture, literature, and the timeless facts of human existence. That which makes up the important part of a person’s life today is exactly that which drove our ancestors to obscurity or greatness. Exploring these will blur the edge of time to the Modern World and the Medieval World.

Standards:

Culture

- SOC.07.01 Explain how cultures change to accommodate different ideas and beliefs.
- SOC.07.02 Understand the fundamental tenets and practices of the belief systems of the scope of this course and the relationship of beliefs, values, and culture.

Time, Continuity, and Change

- SOC.07.03 Analyze a variety of historical sources and engage in historical analysis and interpretation.

- SOC.07.04 Understand the major characteristics, developments, contributions and historical influence of feudal Europe, the empires and kingdoms of sub-Saharan Africa, Imperial China, feudal Japan, and the early civilizations of the Americas.
- SOC.07.05 Understand the characteristics and impact of the rise of Islam, the Renaissance, the Age of Exploration, and the Enlightenment.

Geographical Influence

- SOC.07.06 Evaluate the importance of different points of view, self-interest, and global distribution of natural resources.

Development of Identity, Groups, and Institutions

- SOC.07.07 Demonstrate an understanding of concepts such as role, status, and social class in describing the interactions of individuals and social groups.

Power, Authority, Governance, Civil Ideals, and Practices

- SOC.07.08 Identify and give examples of the political, economic, and social characteristics of various forms of government of this time period. Understand the various purposes and forms of government of this time period by comparing and contrasting them to the US government. Examine how characteristics of the Roman Republic and Empire are reflected in the law, government, economy, and society of the United States.

Science, Innovation, and Technology

- SOC.07.09 Explain and provide examples of how scientific and technological knowledge, such as the printing press, have influenced changes in values and beliefs.

Global Connections through Time

- SOC.07.10 Explore the causes, consequences, and possible solutions to persistent, contemporary and emerging global issues, such as health, security, resource allocation, economic development, and environmental quality.

Social Science Analysis

- SOC.07.11 Clarify key aspects of an event, issue, or problem and explain its significance; use and evaluate research information from various primary and secondary sources; identify and explain causes, consequences, and/or points of view related to the topic; and present reasonable, supported conclusions.

Materials

Things Provided by the School

_____ Your textbook, History Alive! (In class, but available for checkout in the library)

_____ Various thematic daily work & homework packets, other handouts and activities

Things Provided by You

_____ One three-ring binder with a section labeled and dedicated to Social Studies

_____ Spiral notebook with three hole punch of at least 70 pages (Journal – this will be a major source of assessable material).

_____ Your own notebook paper

_____ Your own pencils, blue/black pens

_____ Eraser

_____ Colored pencils or crayons (class has dedicated supplies, but students may want their own)

Daily Expectations and Behavior

Our class is a community, and students in that community must abide by the rules that the community has set. As leader of that community, I insist that all students treat each other with the respect they deserve. The school rules that prohibit sexist, racist, homophobic, explicit, or otherwise hateful language are echoed in adult life, and carry serious consequences. The more students are aware of this and are able to practice it in a safe and sheltered environment, the better prepared they will be for their lives outside of school when they join the adult population.

Furthermore, I expect students to:

- Arrive in class before the bell rings
- Be quiet and receptive to instructions
- Follow directions as given
- Advocate for themselves and others
- Hone their academic and social skills
- Be prepared with all required materials
- Redirect themselves when prompted
- Respect themselves
- Stand on their values while being open to the beliefs of others.

Absences and Makeup Work

Most of the daily class work will not be reproducible for an absent student. Any make up work will be in the form of writing-intensive book work, with the student getting information from the text. Furthermore, the class work and attending discussions will be tailored to diverse learning styles which will help solidify the information far more than direct instruction, so attendance will help ensure stronger content retention.

Differentiation:

All students will have the opportunity to exercise their intellectual curiosity. Instruction will consist of various strategies designed to enhance understanding, retention, and mastery of Social Studies content. ELL students will be able to utilize materials that will enhance their understanding through alternative means such as graphic organizers, image analysis, conferencing, daily check-ins, and if possible, translation services/ TAG students will be challenged with strategies that will deepen understanding and promote academic questioning. SPED Students will have access to alternative texts and modifications as per agreements in IEPs and 504s, and will also be supported through various staff and faculty.

Grading

Hosford utilizes Proficiency Grading as a means of assessment and instruction. This system seeks to hone academic skills to prepare students for academic success in high school and beyond. Therefore, grades are not meant to serve as “trophies” of accomplishment, but rather to serve as an indicator of what a student is capable of producing consistently. There are 4 levels of Proficiency:

4- Highly Proficient (HP) – The student is consistently performing above grade level expectations and learning targets, no less than $\frac{3}{4}$ of the time. **NOTE: This will be difficult to reach, even for students who are accustomed to “good grades.”**

3- Proficient (PR) – The student is consistently meeting grade level expectations and targets at least $\frac{3}{4}$ of the time. This is the target level, and should be regarded as an indicator of academic success. **NOTE: Reaching this will also be a challenge, but it will be possible for ALL students to reach.**

2 – Close to Proficient (CP) – The student is meeting grade level expectations part of the time, but still falling below target levels often enough to be of concern. Student work that falls into this category will be encouraged to revise class work and assessments in order to rise to the next level.

1 – Developing Proficient (DP) – The students does not meet grade level expectations most of the time, but still shows some progress. This will also be used to indicate that a student has not submitted adequate evidence for evaluation (in other words, they are missing work). Students who fall into this category will start planning their roadmap to success to give them a clear path towards meeting goals.

Grading Credit

The majority of graded work will come from summative assessments. However, formative assessments will be heavily used as a means for driving comprehension of the material to be assessed. Some assessments will be designed to allow students to utilize content material derived from formative assessments (aka “Open Notes”). However, any assignment that has not been turned in when it is due will not be allowed. Students will always have ample advice on when the assessment will be, what will be covered, and what can be used for it.

Revisions – Revisions are a crucial part of academic success. I do not expect that any student will be turning in a project that will not require some form of revision. Some students may require more than others.

- I am willing to accept revised assessments up until the WEEK BEFORE quarterly grades are due. This will give me time to assess them properly while I complete my professional responsibilities.
- Since revision is part of the process of learning, I will not take points from revised work that is turned in before this date.
- However, I cannot accept work that is turned in after the grading period has ended.
- * If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask. Contact info listed above. Please note that email works best.
- * A note requiring parental and student signature will go home with this syllabus, and will be due no later than **September 9, 2016.**



“Courage, College, Community”