

# *World History*

Syllabus

# HISTORY At Our House



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## Introduction

This syllabus presents the general objectives for an academic year of World History with HistoryAtOurHouse. Its purpose is to give parents an overview of what will be covered during the year. This may, among other outcomes, facilitate the scheduling of other academic work, family trips, and 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.

The coming year's *World History* program is no exception. It follows a new design, as part of a new three-year program rotation, which in simple terms is: American history (Year 1), World history (Year 2), and European history—including ancient Greece and Rome (Year 3).

The exact title of the *World History* program for the coming year is: **“Asia, Africa, and the World We Live In.”** It will cover five primary units: China, Japan, India, the Islamic Middle East, and Sub-Saharan Africa.

As is the case in all “Big Picture History,” “Total History,” and History At Our House classes, the units will focus on how the past explains the present, using the method of *anchor* facts. In History At Our House, this method is systematized and explicit, helping students to see the importance of history and retain what they learn as useful knowledge.

There will also be optional writing seminars, optional readings (especially at higher levels), *History Through Art* classes offered through Outschool.com. Of special interest to families will be the series of optional **“Special Topics”** seminars to accompany the core curriculum, which are detailed at the end of this syllabus.

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**

## **CHINA (Weeks1-6)**

- China as a “cardinal culture” in the world we live in
- Anchor Facts of Chinese History
- Key Progressions and Topics
  - The Xia, Shang, and Zhou dynasties
  - Confucius
  - The Middle Kingdom culture
  - Globalization and the subordination of China by Western civilization
  - Maoism
  - Post-Maoism and the “Made in China” phenomenon
- TEST FOR WEEKS 1-6

## **JAPAN (Weeks 7-12)**

- Japan as a major culture in the world we live in
- Anchor Facts of Japanese History
- Key Progressions and Topics
  - Shintoism and the Yamato Clan
  - Emperors, Shoguns, and Samurai
  - European Pressure and the Sakoku (Isolation) Policy
  - Globalization and the subordination of Japan by Western civilization
  - Reactionary Imperialism
  - Post-Imperial Japan and its role in the world
- TEST FOR WEEKS 7-12

## **INDIA (Weeks 13-18)**

- India as a major culture in the world we live in
- Anchor Facts of Indian History
- Key Progressions and Topics
  - Hinduism and Pre-History
  - Alexander the Great
  - The Mauryan Empire and the roots of nationhood
  - Globalization and the subordination of India to Western civilization
  - The British Raj
  - Post-Colonial India, Hindu Nationalism, and India’s place in the world
- TEST FOR WEEKS 13-18

### **THE ISLAMIC MIDDLE EAST (Weeks 19-24)**

- Islamic culture as a “cardinal culture” in the world we live in
- Anchor Facts of Islamic History
- Key Progressions and Topics
  - Muhammad and the Rise of Imperial Islam
  - The Crusades
  - The Ottoman Empire and Europe
  - The subordination of Islamic Culture by Western civilization
  - Nationalism and Islamism
  - The “War on Terror” and the challenges of cosmopolitanism for Islam
- TEST FOR WEEKS 19-24

### **SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA (Weeks 25-30)**

- Sub-Saharan Africa as a major cultural block in the world we live in
- Anchor Facts of African History
- Key Progressions and Topics
  - Ancient and Medieval Tribes and Kingdoms
  - The Islamic and European Impingements
  - The European Age of Discovery and the Atlantic Slave Trade
  - European Imperialism
  - Decolonization
  - The Struggle for Democracy in Africa
- TEST FOR WEEKS 25-30

### **RECENT HISTORY, CURRENT EVENTS, AND FINAL INTEGRATION (Weeks 31-34)**

- The patterns and structure of World history
- Asia, Africa, and the World We Live In Today (including current events)
- Prospects for Asian and African cultures in an interconnected world
- TEST FOR WEEKS 31-34

## **Special Topics**

As per the weekly class schedule available at [www.historyatourhouse.com](http://www.historyatourhouse.com) the “Special Topics” series will run on Thursdays and Friday. It will be available to all students participating in the program, but is recommended for students in the Upper Elementary level and up. Here is the anticipated progression of topics that will be presented in the series. Families will have the option of subscribing to the series, or to purchase one or more of the classes separately for both live attendance, and as recordings.

### **ANCIENT EGYPT AND MESOPOTAMIA (Weeks 1-6) - taught in conjunction with China**

- Egypt and Mesopotamia as the background to Islamic Culture
- Anchor Facts of Egypt and Mesopotamia
- Key Progressions and Topics
  - The invention of writing, pyramids and ziggurats, and river valley civilization
  - The unifications of Egypt and Mesopotamia
  - Persia, Alexander the Great and the Hellenistic period
  - Roman and Muslim conquests
- QUIZ FOR WEEKS 7-12

### **KOREA (Weeks 7-12) - Taught in conjunction with Japan**

- Korea in the world we live in
- Anchor Facts of Korean History
- Key Progressions and Topics
  - Korean Shamanism and Nationalism
  - Korea and China
  - Korea and Japan
  - Korea Divided and the challenge of nuclear North Korea
- QUIZ FOR WEEKS 1-6

### **IRAN (Weeks 13-18) - taught in conjunction with India**

- Iran as an important country in the world we live in
- Anchor Facts of Iranian History
- Key Progressions and Topics
  - The Persian Empire
  - The Muslim Conquest of Persia
  - European imperialism and the Transformation of Persia into Iran
  - Theocratic Iran and its role in modern Islamic Culture
- QUIZ FOR WEEKS 19-24

### **ISRAEL (Weeks 19-24) - taught in conjunction with the Islamic Middle East**

- Israel as an important country in the world we live in
- Anchor Facts of the History of Israel
- Key Progressions and Topics
  - Judaism and the Kingdom of Israel
  - Roman and Muslim occupations of Israel
  - The Diaspora and the rise of Zionism
  - The modern State of Israel and the challenge of Israeli-Palestinian conflict
- QUIZ FOR WEEKS 13-18

### **SOUTH AFRICA (Weeks 25-30) - taught in conjunction with Sub-Saharan Africa**

- South Africa as a key culture in Africa
- Anchor Facts of South African History
- Key Progressions and Topics
  - Pre-European South Africa
  - Dutch and English Colonialism
  - The Apartheid Era
  - Democracy and the Struggle for Modernity
- QUIZ FOR WEEKS 25-30

### **RECENT HISTORY, CURRENT EVENTS, AND FINAL INTEGRATION (Weeks 31-34)**

- The patterns and structure of World history
- Asia, Africa, and the World We Live In Today (including current events)
- Prospects for Asian and African cultures in an interconnected world
- QUIZ FOR WEEKS 31-34