

Europe, Russia, and the World We Live In

Syllabus



History Through / Art

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Introduction

This syllabus presents the general objectives for an academic year of European 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 clientèle 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 *European 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 *European History* program for the coming year is: **“Europe, Russia, and the World We Live In.”** It will cover five primary units: Europe (Round 1), Russia, Ancient Greece, Ancient Rome, and Europe (Round 2)

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), and *History Through Art* classes. 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

EUROPE - ROUND 1 (Weeks 1-8 - includes 2-Week Introduction)

- Europe as a “cardinal culture” in the world we live in
- Anchor Facts of European History
- Key Progressions and Topics
 - Europe Today: Supranationalism and the Return of Nationalism
 - The Origin of the Europe of Nations
 - The French Revolution and the Rise of Modern Europe
 - The World Wars
 - The Rise of the European Union
- TEST FOR WEEKS 1-8

RUSSIA (Weeks 9-14)

- Russia as a cardinal culture in the world we live in
- Anchor Facts of Russian History
- Key Progressions and Topics
 - Russia Today: Post-communist Nationalism
 - The Origin of Russian Culture
 - Russia in Isolation from Western Europe
 - Westernization, Modernization, and the “Patriotic Wars”
 - Communism and the Cold War
- TEST FOR WEEKS 9-14

ANCIENT GREECE & (Weeks 15-20)

- Ancient Greece as the Fount of Western Culture
- Anchor Facts of Ancient Greece
- Key Progressions and Topics
 - The Construct of “Greco-Roman Civilization”
 - Archaic Greece: Monarchy, Aristocracy and Slavery
 - The Birth of Democracy
 - The Greco-Persian Wars
 - The Peloponnesian Wars
 - Alexander the Great and the Hellenistic Period
 - The Roman Conquest of Greece
- TEST FOR WEEKS 15-20

ANCIENT ROME (Weeks 21-26)

- Ancient Rome as a Contribute to “Greco-Roman Civilization”
- Anchor Facts of Roman History
- Key Progressions and Topics
 - The Roman Republic
 - The Punic Wars and the Proliferation of Slavery
 - The Conquest of Greece
 - The Decline and Fall of the Republic
 - The Age of Augustus
 - The Empire and its Emperors
 - Rome as the Incubator and Transmitter of Christianity
- TEST FOR WEEKS 21-26

EUROPE - ROUND 2 (Weeks 27-32)

- Higher Level Periodization of European History and Integration with World History
- Key Progressions and Topics
 - The Hundred Years War
 - The Reformation and Religious Wars
 - Napoleon and the Shaping of Modern Europe
 - The Rise of the German Empire
 - Democratic Socialism
 - Supranational Technocracy
- TEST FOR WEEKS 27-32

RECENT HISTORY, CURRENT EVENTS, AND FINAL INTEGRATION (Weeks 33-34)

- The patterns and structure of European history
- America and the Euro-Russian Entanglement (including current events)
- Prospects for European and Russian cultures in an interconnected world
- FINAL TEST

Special Topics

As per the weekly class schedule available at 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.

GERMANY (Weeks 1-8) - taught in conjunction with Europe Round 1

- Germany as the Most Important Nation in Europe
- Anchor Facts of German History
- Key Progressions and Topics
 - The Germanic Tribes
 - The First Reich, a.k.a. the "Holy Roman Empire”
 - The Second Reich, a.k.a. the German Empire
 - The Third Reich, a.k.a. Nazi Germany
 - Germany as the leader of Supranationalist Europe

FRANCE (Weeks 9-14) - Taught in conjunction with Russia

- France as the Second Most Important Nation in Europe
- Anchor Facts of French History
- Key Progressions and Topics
 - The Capetian Dynasty and the Normans
 - The Hundred Years War
 - The Reformation and Age of Louis XIV
 - The French Revolution and the Birth of Modern Europe
 - France as a key participant in the European Union

BRITAIN (Weeks 15-20) - taught in conjunction with Ancient Greece

- Britain: In and Out of Europe
- Anchor Facts of British History
- Key Progressions and Topics
 - Medieval England, Magna Carta and the Rise of Parliament
 - The Hundred Years War
 - The War of the Roses and English Reformation
 - The British Empire
 - Modern Britain and the Dilemma of European Supranationalism

ITALY (Weeks 21-26) - taught in conjunction with Ancient Rome

- Italy as a Major European Culture
- Anchor Facts of the History of Israel
- Key Progressions and Topics
 - Italy After Rome
 - The Papacy and the Roman Catholic Church
 - The Italian Renaissance
 - Modern Italian Nationalism

TO BE ANNOUNCED (Weeks 27-32) - taught in conjunction with Europe Round 2

- Many options exist for continuing with special topics including the study of other countries, such as Spain & Portugal, Netherlands, or perhaps certain countries in Eastern Europe — even Turkey, as an Islamic culture and peripheral member of Europe.

RECENT HISTORY, CURRENT EVENTS, AND FINAL INTEGRATION (Weeks 33-34)

- The patterns and structure of European history
- America and the Euro-Russian Entanglement (including current events)
- Prospects for European and Russian cultures in an interconnected world

Writing Seminars

Writing seminars are held on an ad-hoc basis as the year progresses. They are an important way for students to cement their understand of the histories presented. Seminars run in pairs, with the first session held to discuss and plan the writing, and, once students have submitted their assignments, the second session dedicated to editing. The assignments are carefully crafted to help students develop their thinking and writing skills. Grading and editing is done by Mr. Powell personally for each student.

History Through Art

History Through Art is a long-running component of *History At Our House*, which has expanded into an additional spectrum of art appreciation seminars, including *Amazing Artists*. No other part of history pairs more productively with visual art than the history of Europe, where most of the great representational and narrative art has been produced. *History Through Art* will run on Thursdays and/or Fridays, depending on the level of interest.