

Politics in World History

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Introduction

Politics in 9th grade World History? Is this really possible or even feasible? Yes. If you think about it, World History is a series of connected events; each of those events began with a political action. However, this is not what people consider when they think about World History. Instead, people think about World History as a bunch of dusty tomes, and memorizing the names of influential figures and dates that their teachers stressed in class. Few people are willing to look at the cause and effect relationship with historical events. Fewer still delve deeper to see that behind every movement or event is a common element - politics. G.R. Elton states it best in his book Political History: "In making sense of the past, the historian not only tries to discover what happened - and all that those two brief words involve - but also how the things that happened were linked one with another: their meaningful relationship."¹ Weaving the common thread of politics in World History allows students to not only understand how historical events are interconnected, but also demonstrates the interconnection between World History and today. By teaching thematically through the concept of politics in World History, I am able to help students see the interconnections between not only past events, but between the past and present. I have discovered that teaching thematically retains the students focus because they begin to look for the link from one topic to the next.

In order to better facilitate this understanding, and make thematic teaching user friendly, I have divided World History into fourteen units. Each unit is further divided into topics. Topics that are covered in these units include: Ancient Civilizations; Classical Civilizations; the Middle Ages; Renaissance; Reformation; Global trade & relations between nations; Motivations for exploration & expansion; Scientific Revolution; Enlightenment; Nationalism; Natural Rights; French Revolution; Revolutions in Haiti,

Mexico, China; World War One; World War Two; Colonial Africa and Asia; Nationalistic movements; Vietnam War; Korean War; Cold War; and the War on terror.

Recently, North Carolina has adopted the Common Core Standards curriculum. As such, there must be a great deal of vertical alignment in order for the subjects to flow into each other. By vertical alignment I am referring to the concept of all Social Studies subjects in all grades flowing into each other. For example, middle schools cover ancient civilizations through the middle ages. This flow is then picked up in high school where they look at the Renaissance through the modern era. By adopting the idea of thematic teaching, vertical alignment is easily achieved.

Using politics as that central theme not only aids in vertical alignment, but it does so without losing focus. Students are not asked to jump from topic to topic. Teaching thematically by weaving a common thread throughout all lessons will lead to an increase in students' retention, and academic progress in World History. The perception of World History will change as students' interest and academic performance increases. World History will not be looked on as a superficial class, but as one that has merit and value in today's society. The breadth of topics covered in World History has the potential to be perceived as a dense and overwhelming subject.

In order to avoid my subject as being seen as fluff or too dense, I have adopted the concept of thematic teaching as a way to increase interest and lessen the perception of an overload of facts and figures. The North Carolina new Essential Standards that coincide with a national common core help facilitate the concept of thematic teaching. "The essential standards for World History have been written conceptually and identify the most critical knowledge and skills that students need to learn in this course. ...The use of RBT as well as conceptually written standards are a combination that will help to ensure students successfully achieve the mission of the North Carolina State Board of Education: "...every public school student will graduate from high school, globally competitive for work and postsecondary education and prepared for life in the 21st century."ⁱⁱ

Rationale

Traditionally, World History has been a lecture course that students must 'slog through' in order to obtain their diploma. This perception has been perpetuated by the increased academic stress of math and science and the decreased emphasis on World History and Social Studies in general. This devaluation of World History has led many people to view

the subject as ‘fluff’ and not truly critical to a well-rounded academic education.

“...whatever else history may be, it must be at heart a story, a story of the changing fortunes of men, and political history therefore comes first because, above all other forms of historical study, it wants to, even needs to, tell a story.”ⁱⁱⁱ Weaving a common thread throughout the teaching allows students the opportunity to understand how World History relates to their lives and their future. As G.R. Elton states, “In making sense of the past, the historian not only tries to discover what happened - and all that those two brief words involve - but also how the things that happened were linked one with another: their meaningful relationship.”^{iv}

I intend for this to be a semester-long unit for Honors level World History. The topics and supplementary materials in this curriculum unit can easily be modified to fit the needs of regular and lower level students. My ultimate goal is to create a curriculum unit that will enable the teacher to connect all key events and people in World History to the common themes of politics and political movements. By doing this I aim to show students how society truly hasn't changed that much - that politics still play a large role in what does and does not happen in a country. G.R. Elton persuasively argues that “The study of history began as political history - the affairs of the great.”^v My premise for this unit is that up until 1215 politics were controlled by the government. Meaning, the people were controlled by the government. In 1215, the nobility in England rose up against King John and forced him to sign the Magna Carta thereby ensuring rights to the people.

Another large stride towards political awareness of the people is in the Enlightenment with the movement against absolute monarchs. Voltaire was a champion of not only individual rights, but the concept that governments can be corrupt and should be controlled by the people. Baron de Montesquieu wrote on how the government itself should be divided. In the Glorious Revolution two political groups vie for control of England. The revolutions in America, Russia, France, Haiti, China, and Mexico have their basis in political thought. World Wars One and Two are caused, drawn out, and ultimately ended by politics. International events of the Twentieth and Twenty-first centuries, such as the Velvet Revolution in Czechoslovakia and Solidarnost in Poland are direct results of political parties and politics.

The common thread of politics will enable students to understand how historical world events connect to each other and to the world around them today. One critical aspect of the Common Core Standards is that students will be able to connect the present world with their classroom studies. I can think of no better way than to weave a common thread

through World History is crucial because "As soon as the student comes to grips with the reality of the past, he becomes aware of the two inescapable facts: the amount of evidential material which he needs to master, and the unsolved problems and questions which meet him at every turn."^{vi}

Objectives/Background

World History is a semester-long class of eighteen weeks. The eighteen weeks are broken into nine week long quarters that are further divided by topics. Quarter One concentrates on the pre-1500 world, with snapshot studies on topics such as ancient civilizations of Mesopotamia and Egypt, classical civilizations of Greece and Rome to the influence of the Middle Ages. Quarter Two concentrates on the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries. From beginning to end, World History covers 5,000 years in eighteen weeks. One of the key elements of World History is for, students to receive a foundation of key civilizations, movements, and accomplishments that will aid them in their study of Civics and Economics, the Social Studies course they will take in their tenth grade year. As a result of this it is imperative to create not only a common thread to tie World History together, but to also show how World History then relates to Civics and Economics and United States History. That common thread is politics. By the end of the semester each students will be able to explain not only how historical events are connected, but also how politics has played a crucial role in those connections.

This curriculum unit is intended to be utilized for the entire semester. The common thread of politics and political parties will be utilized as warm-ups, outside reading sources, group discussions, or small projects. For ease of use and reference I have divided World History into thirteen units. Each unit has a 'hook' or central topic that can be used as an 'attention-grabber' at the beginning of the unit; a central focus within the unit; an outside reading or research project to supplement the unit; an in-class discussion mid-unit; or, used as an end of unit 'wrap-up'. Higher level students will be able to do the majority of this on their own. Regular level and lower level students may not be able to handle all of the primary sources attached with each unit. Use your discretion as a teacher to determine what your student can and cannot handle.

No matter what you decide to do, I strongly recommend referring back to the main ideas of the unit and some of the primary sources throughout the semester to aid students in identifying the common thread of politics. The culminating activity of this curriculum unit is for the students to create their own timeline of the world. This timeline will accomplish the three end goals of this curriculum unit. First, students will be able to

demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of how events are connected together. Second, the events noted in the timeline will be grouped by a political theme that is created by the students. Third, each event will be explained through key details and pictures. Each group is required to describe five to seven key events, two or three details for each event, and a picture to represent the political theme of their unit. To create the timeline students will be put into fourteen groups, each group representing one of the units covered throughout the semester. Each group will be responsible for giving a detailed description of their assigned unit. Fourteen groups will allow a class of 36 students to have two or three people in each group. I recommend giving a review of all units the day prior to the timeline activity. Once each group has completed their timeline connect all of the timelines together into one long banner. This banner can then be hung up in the hall way, or if you are adventurous, hung up in a central area of the school for all of the student body to examine.

Units One through Four are covered relatively quickly and should be considered more as snapshots and reviews rather than in-depth lessons; each unit should be covered in approximately three to five days. The reasons for this are three-fold. First, pre-1500 society should have been covered in middle school. Second, as a result these units serve as a review to their previous studies. Third, these four units serve as the foundation on which the rest of the semester's topics are based. I use these first units to set up the idea of common threads and help students understand the differences between primary, secondary, and tertiary sources. I also help students understand the differences between fact and opinion. These skills will be of vital use to them throughout the semester. Ideally, in a semester-long class, Units One through Four should take no more than five or six weeks.

Within each unit I have included the hook for students. The purpose of the hook is for students to have a primary or secondary source to examine to help them understand the political thread running through the unit. I use the majority of these sources with my Honors level students; though, I have adapted these sources to accommodate regular and lower level students. For example, I expect my Honors students to be able to read an excerpt from *The Prince* on their own, where with a regular level class; I will go over an excerpt of the source with them.

Unit One

Unit One examines ancient river valley civilizations such as those in Mesopotamia, Egypt, India, and China. The hook of this unit is the Code of Hammurabi. The Code of

Hammurabi, as the first recognized written law code, is a perfect example of the government exerting its control over the citizenry. I use an excerpt of his code in Unit One to help students see how the government exerted their influence over their subjects.

The main idea of this three-day unit is to review the ancient river valley civilizations found in the Middle East, Egypt, India, and China. Mesopotamia, Babylon, Assyria, and Phoenicia should be the topics reviewed in the Middle East. Egypt should focus on the three kingdoms with most focus on the New Kingdom. The overview of India focuses on the Mauryan and Gupta dynasties. China's overview looks at the Shang, Zhou, and Qin dynasties.^{vii} Students are introduced to their first primary source in this unit. I have my classes read selected sections of the Code of Hammurabi and lead discussions on how this code was a political strategy to control the people. I have put my students in the place of some of these early leaders to see if they would have done anything different. Quite often, to my students' surprise, they react much the same as the early emperors.

Unit Two

Unit Two is a focus on the classical civilizations of Greece and Rome. The hooks in this unit are the Twelve Tables, the Pax Romana, and Justinian's Code. The Twelve Tables was Rome's written law code and an example of how the government's vision of politics differed from many of their subjects. In Unit Two I draw a comparison between the Code of Hammurabi and the Twelve Tables to aid students in seeing the changing structure of political thought. After all, it is with Rome and Greece that we see the formation of democracies and republics.^{viii} Ancient Greece's polis has been idealized with the New England town meeting. Justinian's Code was the Byzantine Empire's attempt to simplify Rome's Twelve Tables and addressed the needs of multiple groups within society. Unlike the political climate in Greece and Rome, Byzantium shows the beginning of the closure of community access to political influence.

From this three-day unit students understand how societies developed into vast empires. A comparison of governments in Athens and Sparta is significant to understanding classical Greece. This comparison is the perfect opportunity to review four types of government and how they are politically motivated. Students will create a foldable to compare monarchies, oligarchies, tyrannies, and democracies. Make sure to note to the students how these four types of governments interacted with the general population. When I am discussing classical Rome I make sure the students understand the significance of the Twelve Tables. The Twelve Tables gave people a voice in the government. To begin the connection of politics I connect Hammurabi's Code with the

Twelve Tables by having the students create a T-Chart so they can list the key points of these two codes of law and their influences on society. I also have students create a four-door foldable to help them not only understand the four types of government in classical civilizations, but their lasting influence.

Unit Three

Unit Three focuses on the three eras of the Middle Ages: Early, High, and Late. The hooks of this unit are the Magna Carta, Illuminated Manuscripts, and maps and paintings of the atrocities of the Late Middle Ages. I divide this unit into three topics that are then covered over a span of four days. The topics are *the Church and Society, People, and War and Woe*. Within the topic of the Church and society discuss with students the Magna Carta. After the fall of the Western Roman Empire common man is shut out completely from the political machinations of society. All of that changes in 1215. The Magna Carta proved to be a watershed event in political history. It is through the Magna Carta that we see subjects rising up and asserting their will over the government.^{ix}

Students need to understand that this is the first time that people rise up against the government and create a document that limits the power of the leader. Contrast the Magna Carta with Hammurabi's Code. Draw comparisons between the Magna Carta and the current government of the United States. I have my regular level students create a Venn diagram to help them see similarities and differences between the two documents. My Honors students take this a step further by comparing current political thought with those of the Magna Carta and Code of Hammurabi. I like to finish this unit by leading a whole group discussion on how politics has influenced the government of the past and present.

Unit Four

Unit Four explores the Renaissance and the Reformation. The hooks of this unit are not just written words. As primary sources for the Renaissance I have students examine paintings from the Italian Renaissance such as The School of Athens by Raphael, and Northern Renaissance, such as Jan van Eyck's Arnolfini Portrait. Within the Renaissance be sure to explain how the Inquisition was a political backlash of the Church against the secular views made popular by Renaissance thinkers and painters.^x I draw a comparison between the Inquisition and Hammurabi's Code. I ask the students to identify and explain how both the Inquisition and Code of Hammurabi suppressed and controlled citizens through political machinations. Another distinction to stress for students to understand is the Italian Renaissance was primarily influenced by Greek

philosophers whereas the Northern Renaissance was influenced by money, meaning politics played a larger role in the Northern Renaissance. As an additional primary source for the Reformation students read excerpts from the 95 theses. Martin Luther's list of grievances gave the masses another opportunity to exert their influence over the government. The 95 theses changed political though in that the political powerhouse of the time, the Catholic Church, lost a great deal of influence and prestige over the population. I use the 95 theses in conjunction with the rise of independent kingdoms in what will become Germany and Poland. At this point in the semester I have the students look back at what they have studied and follow the political thread from ruler with total control to people now voicing their opinions.

At this point in the unit, I lead a class discussion in how this changed politics. I ask the students if they can think of any other instances of civil disobedience that had a massive impact on society and draw comparisons between them and what Martin Luther did. Honors level students can hold a debate on whether the 95 theses had an overall positive or negative influence on political thought of the 1500s.

Unit Five

Unit Five is an examination of global exploration and trade. The hook of this unit is Niccolo Machiavelli's *The Prince*. The Prince became the handbook for politicians on how to obtain and keep power.^{xi} It is through Niccolo Machiavelli's text that we see to what extents people will go to in order to exert their influence not just over the government, but society as a whole. I do not recommend this source for regular level students as this work is quite dense and can be very difficult for students to understand.

Honor's students may be able to read excerpts of this on their own, but regular level students are going to need help understanding what the point of the book is. Through this source students are shown the connection between gaining power and keeping it on a global scale. Students are introduced to the notion that politics are not just localized phenomena, but an international machine. Up until now, students have concentrated on internal politics. Now, they are confronted with the concepts of piracy, intrigue, and international diplomacy. I make sure the students understand that this is the first time in history that countries are not only competing over the same territory, but that they now have to extend their political reach into colonies. This is accomplished by looking at a world map and plotting the routes of the various explorers and identifying colonies and places of contention. An activity the students like is to compare pirates of the 1500s with

those of today, and to draw comparisons between how pirates were dealt with then and now.

Unit Six

Unit Six examines monarchies and revolutions. The hooks of this unit are the English Bill of Rights, the Federalist Papers, the Declaration of Independence, and the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen. Monarchies include absolute monarchs of England, Russia, Prussia, and France. This unit also includes reactions to those monarchs such as the Enlightenment and the Glorious Revolution. Revolutions in the unit include the Scientific Revolution, Enlightenment, American Revolution and the French Revolution. As a primary source I have my Honors students read an excerpt from The Federalist Papers. The language in the Federalist Papers is stilted, but it is the closest we have to an American political philosophy. My regular level students will compare the works of John Locke, Voltaire, and Jean Jacques Rousseau to gain a deeper understanding of the backlash against absolute monarchs and how that movement helped form the basis of the American government.^{xii} I have all of my students look back at the Magna Carta to see its influence on the politics of the 17th and 18th centuries.

Unit Seven

Unit Seven looks at revolutions around the world, including the Industrial revolution. International revolutions studied include those in Haiti, France, and England. Continuing the thread of revolutions, this unit also explores the unification of Italy and Germany, the quest for empires, and nationalism.^{xiii} Hooks of this unit include Charles Dickens *Oliver Twist*, and Rudyard Kipling's poem, *The White Man's Burden*. Within the unit the political discussions focus on international politics. I help the students draw comparisons between the politics of global expansion with those of imperialism and nationalism. Students create a concept map to show how politics weaves through both topics.

Unit Eight

Unit Eight discusses World War One and the Russian Revolution. The hooks in this unit are modern art pieces of Otto Dix. Otto Dix was a German war veteran who produced art that explained the war on a very personal level.^{xiv} His art not only shows what the war on the Front Line was like, but also how the war affected the Home Front. The art of Otto Dix , in my experience, quite often leads to lively discussions on the politics of war. Every time I look at the art of Otto Dix I see something new. A word of caution on Otto

Dix: some of his pieces are very graphic. I recommend that you examine the art before you show it to your students.

I also use Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen points. The Fourteen Points was an attempt to prevent another world war, but inadvertently is a cause of the Second World War.^{xv} Through the Fourteen Points and the Treaty of Versailles I have my students do a foreshadowing activity where they predict what will happen in Europe and why. I also have my students look back again at how far mankind has come politically. I assign my students to create a list of all actions that have led to the what is being studied in class.

Unit Nine

Unit Nine examines international events between the two world wars. The hooks of this unit are Mein Kampf and the art of Fernand Leger^{xvi}. I use these sources to help explain the rise of the World War Two dictators. These sources also help the students understand why people like Adolf Hitler, Joseph Stalin, and Benito Mussolini were able to not only rise to a position of power, but keep control over their respective countries.

The concept of blaming one group for political woes is not new. After discussing Hitler's book I lead my class into a whole-group discussion of other global instances from where one group has been blamed for economic and political woe. Quite often, the first example students come up with is the holocaust of the Middle Ages. I will also use *The Good Earth*. This book is a supplementary reading assignment for my Honors students. Pearl S. Buck takes the reader on a journey through 1920's China. I use this book in correlation with my unit "Between the Wars" to help students understand the political atmosphere that existed before World War Two and why China and Japan acted as they did in World War Two.

Unit Ten

Unit Ten looks at World War Two and the Holocaust. The hook of this unit is the book "The Boy in the Striped Pajamas". All levels of World History read excerpts from the book and use it as a discussion starter on how political thought can lead to nationalism, militarism, and imperialism. By approaching World War Two from a political construct, students gain an understanding that there was more than one reason why World War Two took place. My students look back, again, at what has been studied to see other instances where one group was made the scape-goat for another. In veritably, my students come up

with the Holocaust in the Middle Ages and World War Two saw the emergence of world superpowers that are still influencing the world today.^{xvii} I have students draw comparisons between the dictators of World War Two and those that exist today. Honors level students do a project in which they predict if one of the current dictators will lead the world into another war, and if so , how it can be avoided.

Unit Twelve

Unit Twelve examines the Cold War and the Nuclear Age. This unit looks at the world after World War Two. Political machinations led to Korean War and Vietnam Conflict.^{xviii} The hooks of this unit are NATO, the Warsaw Pact, and the creation of the European Union. Through this unit I try to help the students understand that we are still dealing with the decisions that were made as little as fifty years ago. NATO and the Warsaw Pact are used to show students how the world was truly divided for most of the twentieth century. The European Union is brought in to show how countries have unified together towards a common goal.

Unit Thirteen

Unit Thirteen looks at Africa, Asia, and the Middle East 1945 - present. Students will study topics such as Apartheid, the Khmer Rouge, and the conflicts in the Middle East.^{xix} The purpose of this unit is for students to gain a deeper understanding of events in the recent past are having a major impact on politics of the region. For example, the Arab Spring in Egypt. The hooks of this unit are the Declaration of Human Rights, the Universal Declaration of the Rights of the Child, the Kyoto Treaty, and OPEC. Honors level students will examine parts of the Kyoto Treaty and OPEC to decipher international politics and its impact on us today. Regular level students will examine parts of the Declaration of Human Rights and the Universal Declaration of the Rights of the Child to determine a grade for the actions of countries. For example, the students are asked what grade they would assign to a country that uses its political might to suppress the will of the people.

Unit Fourteen

Unit Fourteen explores issues with Latin America and the World Today. Included in this unit are the topics of 9-11 and global terrorism. The hooks of this unit are CAFTA and the U.S. Patriot Act. CAFTA (Central American Free Trade Agreement) is very similar to NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement). "Beyond the economic benefits to U.S. businesses, CAFTA paves the way for greater economic and political stability in the

region by nurturing the rule of law; open, transparent governance; protection of private property rights and investments; market-based competition; and regional economic integration."^{xx} The U.S. Patriot Act was enacted in reaction to the terrorist attack on 9-11. Through this unit students see how politics is still impacting their life today.

At the end of Unit Fourteen students will participate in the culminating activity of the semester. They will create a timeline that spans 5,000 years. Students are divided into fourteen groups, one for each unit. Each group will then create a timeline. The timeline will include a minimum of 7 dates (10 for Honors). Students will describe the event for each date. Each group will create a political theme as a title for their timeline. In addition to the events and the title, each group will create a picture that helps summarize the unit. Each timeline is then connected together. This timeline is then hung up in the room, or if you are adventurous someplace where the entire student body can look at it. I have drawn out a sample timeline in the resources section of this unit.

Strategies

Warm-Up/Ticket-Out

Warm-Up/Ticket-Out is used to focus students' attentions at the beginning of class on what is to be covered in class, and again at the end of class as a summation exercise. Each week I have students create a new Warm-Up sheet. Students put Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday on the front, and Thursday and Friday on the back. I require my students to turn in their Warm-Up sheet every day so that I can check their understanding of what was discussed in class. To ensure that students take these seriously I have made this into a weekly grade, 20 points for each day. All students are required to write their responses in complete and concise sentences.

Foldables

Foldables are a great way to compact a great deal of information into a small amount of time. Depending on how much information you are compacting, foldables can be completed individually, in small groups, or as a whole class. One foldable I use is found in Unit Two – a four door foldable. To make this foldable, fold your paper so this look like to big double doors. Cut each door in half to form Dutch or divided doors. Students will write the concept on the outside of the door. Inside each door they will have a picture or symbol, and description, and a connection to today. I have found that

students have an easier time doing this particular foldable on stiff construction paper. For my regular level students I will supply them with the pictures needed for their foldable. They will then need to refer to their notes to help them decide where the pictures or symbols go.

Concept Maps

Concept maps are used to demonstrate connections between larger topics. One of my favorite ways to create a concept map is through a collage of pieces of paper. For example, one concept I have assigned on the Middle Ages was students wrote sixty facts – each fact on its own piece of paper. Those pieces of paper then had to be assembled together to form a larger picture that helped describe one aspect of the Middle Ages. One student assembled her pieces of paper to form a rat, another assembled a sword.

Another type of concept map is also known as a mind map or web chart. . In this type of concept map students write the topic or main idea in the center of their paper. Surrounding the main topic are four or five sub-topics. Here, students break the main topic down into its main parts. Surrounding each sub-topic students will write down two or three details. The ultimate purpose of this type of concept map is for students to see how topics can be broken down into their smaller parts. In other words, students are able to go from the whole to the parts. This is an excellent teaching strategy for those students who are particularly analytical.

Classroom Activities

Think-pair-share

In Think-Pair-Share students are in small cooperative groups. The students are grouped heterogeneously to secure the widest possible input of collected information. Think-Pair-Share works best in groupings of two or three students. It is recommended that the teacher assign the groups to ensure that students are divided up in such a way as to ensure the greatest chance of academic language being spoken, and not gossip. Heterogeneous grouping is best; however, if the class has a high percentage of limited English proficient (LEP) students, then homogenous grouping is recommended in order to take full advantage of peer mentoring. In this strategy students are given a topic to contemplate. They will then pair up in their groups and share their thoughts and answers.

Socratic seminar

Socratic Seminar is a whole-class discussion of a specific topic. In this strategy, the teacher introduces a topic, gives the students a visual reference, and guides them through a discussion of self-discovery within the topic. "The Socratic method of teaching is based on Socrates' theory that it is more important to enable students to think for themselves than to merely fill their heads with "right" answers. Therefore, he regularly engaged his pupils in dialogues by responding to their questions with questions, instead of answers. This process encourages divergent thinking rather than convergent."^{xxi} This method of class discussion is uncomfortable to some students, so the teacher will need to spend time, prior to the lesson, coaching students through the Socratic process. An example of Socratic Seminar is giving the students a reading a day in advance of a class discussion on the same topic.

Debate/Discussion

A debate or discussion is an excellent way to ensure that every person in the class participates in the topic being presented in that each student is required to speak up and contribute to the topic at hand. A debate or student-focused discussion is an excellent strategy to use when summarizing and finishing a topic. "Participation adds interest—It's hard to maintain students' focus and attention when all they hear is the professor talking. It helps to hear another voice as well as an answer or another point of view."^{xxii} Debates and discussions give students the chance to enhance their own learning experience. I encourage debates and student-led discussions with my Honors level students. Many students need to be coached first on how to participate in a discussion, but once they understand it, the teacher can step back and watch students take charge of their own learning.

Whole group discussions.

I find that whole-group discussion work best with classes that are not comfortable with individuals eliciting answers. "Discussion focuses on interactions. Participants are allowed to express their knowledge, understandings, and opinions on a topic. It is a student-centered strategy in which teachers assume the role of facilitator, and students become interactive participants. Student participation promotes active learning and greater student accountability because students must share their knowledge."^{xxiii} While

debates and student-led discussions work best with Honors students, whole-group discussions work best with regular level students.

Learning Centers

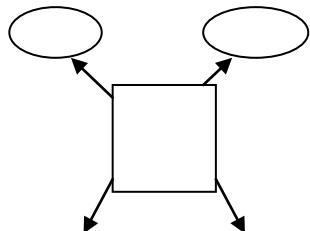
Learning Centers are known by many names. You may have called them stations or rotations. Whatever you call them they are a great way to review material you have covered. Horace Mann states it best, “They are best used after the class has been exposed to the main lesson and showed some knowledge of its ingredients. Typically, the centers provide more layers to the learning and a deeper understanding of the material.”^{xxiv} Learning Centers are a great way to reach every student because you can cater the different centers to different learning modalities. I have found that rotation between stations really only works best with Honors level students and those who are truly vested in the learning process. For those students that are not high achievers, they can have the option of coming to you to pick up information for the next topic they explore. In class I call this “self-paced work”.

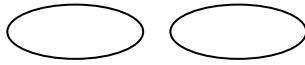
Resources

Warm-Up/Ticket-Out Sheet

	Warm-Up	Ticket-Out
Monday	Students write their answers to a question posed by the teacher.	Students have the opportunity to reflect and ask questions here.
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		

Concept Maps





Culminating Project: World History Timeline

[Political Theme] *Created by the students			
Event and date	Event and date	Event and date	Event and date
2 – 3 details	2 – 3 details	2 – 3 details	2 – 3 details

Resources for teachers

Political Parties. A Sociological Study of the Oligarchical Tendencies of Modern Democracy. Robert Michels has written a classic text on the influence of politics on the actions of societies. This book is exceptional for the teacher that would like to understand the influence of politics in history.

Prophet of Decline. John Farrenkopf has translated and commented on the classic work of Oswald Spengler. Oswald Spengler was a German scholar who spent a great deal of energy in the early twentieth century studying political influences on World History. This book is a great asset for the teacher that would like an in-depth understanding of political thought and philosophy of Europe in the first third of the twentieth century.

Toynbee's Philosophy of World History and politics. This book by Kenneth Thompson gives the reader an understanding of the correlation between political thought and foreign policy in World History.

www.ncpublicschools.org. This useful website lists the Essential Standards for World History and provides ideas discussions and projects in class.

www.sagepub.co.uk/secondary. This website works in conjunction with Ian Phillip's book "Teaching History", which is a useful book for those who are relatively new to teaching.

Works Cited

- admin@studyguide.org. "Approaches to teaching high school literature." StudyGuide.org. A Resource for Students, Parents, and Teachers. www.studyguide.org (accessed October 1, 2012). This is a great tool to have for classroom lessons. I recommend this source for students, and teachers.
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This source is a companion to Susie Hodge's other book, and should also be in every history teacher's classroom. Susie Hodge does a fabulous job of giving the teacher sample lessons to increase rigor in the classroom.

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<http://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/teaching-and-learning/10-benefits-of-getting-students-to-participate-in-classroom-discussions/> (accessed September 28, 2012). This is another great source to have in a teacher's toolbox. I highly recommend this website for all teachers.

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- ⁱ Political History. p. 112
- ⁱⁱ www.ncpublicschools.org
- ⁱⁱⁱ Political History. p. 5
- ^{iv} Political History. p. 112
- ^v Political History. p. 67
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- ^{vii} my.hrw.com. Chapters 2 and 3 (accessed August 2012)
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- ^{xii} my.hrw.com. Chapters 18, 19, and 20. (accessed August 2012)
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