

Advanced Placement European History Summer Assignment for 2026-2027 School Year



Welcome to AP European History!

If you are reading this, then you have enrolled in AP European History for the 2026-2027 school year. This is a demanding, but hopefully rewarding, course which will require that you do some preparation *before* you arrive on the first day of school.

The enclosed packet contains 3 assignments, which I estimate should take you around 6 hours total. If they seem to be taking longer, then you may be overdoing it or you may not be working in a quiet (phone-free, radio-free, etc.) environment.

To do this work you will need to join the **AP Euro Summer Assignment Schoology** group. It will give you access to the texts you need to complete the assignments. **If you were not on my roster as of May 22, you may need to contact me to add you to the group.** You can find my email address below.

Because we will be discussing these topics at the very beginning of the school year, I suggest you resist doing them until August so the information will be fresh. All work will be collected on the first day of school.

There are four general purposes for this preparatory work:

- 1) To get your juices flowing about European History, particularly our first topic- “The End of Feudalism & the Renaissance”. The AP course technically begins with the Renaissance, but we will need the background of the Late Middle Ages to better understand why the Renaissance is such an important turning point.
- 2) To accelerate our movement through this topic. As you will come to learn, this course is simply too big for one school year. We will battle this reality all year by various means. If there is one topic that most of you have already had limited exposure to in Global Studies, the Renaissance is it. Therefore, we will move quickly through this material.
- 3) To orient you to the workload and variety of assignments you will have this year. Reading is your primary “homework” all year long. What you do with this information is to analyze and respond to it. I hope these assignments will give you a taste of these processes.
- 4) To help you start thinking like a historian. How do we know what we know about the past? What evidence do we use to understand history, and how reliable is that evidence?

If you have any questions, you can contact me through email at hvoight@gsgis.k12.va.us.

Learning Objectives

As with all units of study, learning objectives will help focus your thinking and confirm your understanding. As you work through these assignments, think about the answers to the following questions:

- A) What factors set the stage for the Renaissance? Why did it happen in Italy first?
- B) What was new and what was “reborn” in the Renaissance?
- C) How was the Renaissance a secular social movement? How was it a religious social movement?
- D) How are the Italian Renaissance and the Northern Renaissance similar? How are they different?
- E) How does the Renaissance effect social values, politics, religious climate, art, literature and science during this time period?
- F) Is the Renaissance a singular revolution diverging from the Middle Ages or is it part of a continuing evolution of European society?

All assignments are due on the first day of school. We will have our first two (open-note) chapter quizzes on Day 1. Participation and class contributions will be expected immediately.

I am sure that many of you will be thinking about European History all summer long and wondering what else you might do to prepare yourself for this class. I would suggest (but not require) skimming the following:

- McKay’s section on “AP Historical Thinking Skills: A Primer” (pp. HTS-1 – HTS-20)



Assignments - Summer 2026

❖ Assignments #1 & 2: Chapter Readings & Study Guide

- Read Chapter 11 “The Later Middle Ages” (pp.322-353) and Chapter 12 “European Society in the Age of the Renaissance” (pp. 386-387) in the McKay text.
 - You are reading these pages as an introduction to our first unit “The End of Feudalism and Renaissance Europe”. As with all reading this year, keep in mind the learning objectives as you read; these are some of the essential things you must know. Also, you have been given a list of key terms, events, & people for this unit. This list is not exhaustive but should be a good start. Look for the terms as you read and get to know them (*not all of them will be present in this chapter*).
- Complete the Chapter 11 and Chapter 12 Guided Readings
 - You will have an open-note **quiz** on the first day of school on these chapters.
 - **You must HAND WRITE your answers.**
 - You only have to answer each question in as much detail as you think you need to get the “gist” of the question. This may be a single word, or it may be a couple sentences. While you need to answer the question completely, the amount you write is complete up to you.
 - You need to define the vocabulary in the chapter. Some of the vocabulary is also answered in the questions. You can either (a) define all vocabulary separately at the beginning or end of the guided reading or (b) define the word as you answer the questions **and HIGHLIGHT** the word in the response.
 - Try to complete the chapter and Guided Reading in no more than 1.5 to 2 hours (for each chapter)! Efficiency is key here.

❖ Assignment #3: Comic Strip

- After doing the introductory reading, you will need to synthesize the information. As you read through the parts of the McKay chapter assigned, note 6 of the disasters / upheavals / crises of the late Middle Ages that had the deepest impact on Europe in the long and short term.
- Divide a sheet of **white 8.5x11” paper** into 6 frames. You will sketch the 6 disasters / upheavals / crises and leave room for captions explaining *the short and long term significance of each*. **All information and drawings should be on the same side of the paper**. However, if you feel that you need extra room, you can use “lift-the-flap” technique to put the analysis under the sketch.
- Here’s the twist for the artistically disinclined: represent the people by using inanimate objects (pieces of toast, push pins, bananas, etc.). Example: Cupcakes wearing turbans and brandishing swords scaling the walls of Constantinople. I am looking for effort and creativity, not artistic talent. **You must use color.**



The Upheaval in Western Christendom, 1300-1560

Key Terms, Events & People

- | | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| 1. Indulgences | 8. Humanism | 15. Christian Humanists |
| 2. Renaissance | 9. Vernacular | 16. Johann Muller |
| 3. Italian City-States | 10. Dante | 17. Nicholas Copernicus |
| 4. The Medici Family | 11. Petrarch | 18. Mysticism |
| 5. Lorenzo the Magnificent | 12. Baldassare Castiglione | 19. Lay Religion |
| 6. Individualism | 13. Courtier | 20. Sisters & Brothers of the Common Life |
| 7. Secularism | 14. Machiavelli | 21. Erasmus |

Chapter 11: The Later Middle Ages

Guided Reading Questions

Define all terms bolded in the chapter:

- Great Famine
- Black Death
- flagellants
- Hundred Years' War
- representative assemblies
- Babylonian Captivity
- Great Schism
- conciliarists
- confraternities
- Jacquerie
- English Peasants' Revolt
- Statue of Kilkenny

Please note – you can either 1) create a separate list of terms with their definitions or 2) incorporate the definition into your answers to the following questions. If you choose to do option 2, please highlight or otherwise designate where the definition is located (asterisk, bold, etc.)

Prelude to Disaster (pgs. 324-325)

1. What caused the Great Famine, and what were its demographic, social, economic, and political effects?

The Black Death (pgs. 325-332)

2. How did the Black Death become such an epidemic in Europe?
3. Discuss the impact of the plague on the following aspects of European society:
 - Economy
 - Religion
 - Demographics (population)
 - Art
 - Intellectual Pursuits

The Hundred Years' War (pgs. 332-338)

4. List and explain the distant causes of the Hundred Years' War.
5. List and explain the immediate causes of the Hundred Years' War (political, propaganda, economic)
6. Explain the early English successes in the war.
7. Who was Joan of Arc? How did she influence the war?
8. What was the aftermath of the war in the following areas: economy, society, politics

Challenges to the Church (pgs. 338-343)

9. What was the Babylonian Captivity, and how is it related to the Great Schism?
10. Who were the following men, what were their chief complaints, and what reforms did they call for?
 - William Occam
 - Marsiglio of Padua
 - John Wyclif
 - Jan Hus
11. How did the Great Schism change views of the Catholic Church?
12. What was the role of Lay Piety and Mysticism during this time period?

Social Unrest in a Changing Society (pgs. 343-353)

13. Describe the Peasant Revolts in the following regions. Why did they happen? What were the results?
 - Flanders
 - France
 - England
14. How did the production of goods change in the 14th century? How did this change the role of the following groups?
 - Guilds
 - Capitalists
 - Men
 - Women
15. How did these changes lead to urban conflict?
16. Describe and explain the changes in marital patterns as a result of turmoil.
17. Describe and explain the following social issues and what changed during this time period.
 - Fur Collar Crime
 - Ethnic Tensions
 - Literacy and Vernacular

Chapter 12: European Society in the Age of the Renaissance

Guided Reading Questions

Define all terms bolded in the chapter:

- Renaissance
- patronage
- communes
- popolo
- signori
- courts
- humanism
- virtù
- Christian humanists
- debate about women
- New Christians

Renaissance Wealth & Power (pgs. 358-361)

1. Although Venice became immensely wealthy due to its ability to engage in year round overseas trade, which Italian city-state became the “hub” of international trade in Italy?
2. Which family used its banking to gain control over that city for over three centuries?
3. How does wealth change the way people look at the way they live their lives? How is this different from the Middle Ages?
4. What was the result of many nobles marrying the daughters of wealthy merchants?
5. Who created the Representative Governments and what help did they get in obtaining control?
6. What often was the result of the “help” they received?
7. Which five city-states dominated the Italian peninsula in the 15th century?
8. How was a “balance of power” kept along the Italian peninsula?
9. Who was Savonarola, and what were his “bonfires of the vanities”?
10. What ultimately lead Italy to suffer centuries of subjection by outsiders?

Intellectual Change (pgs. 362-372)

11. What the studia humanitates that Petrarch proposed be the new kind of education?
12. What is the implicit philosophy of the humanist?
13. Which Greek philosopher did both Ficino and Pico look to and what were they hoping to see come about?
14. What kind of life did humanist believe people should aim for?
15. According to Castiglione, what are the attributes of a courtly man and of a court lady if they wish to rise in the social hierarchy?
16. What does Machiavelli believe is the main function of a ruler (government) and how should he be judged?
17. Who was Cesare Borgia?
18. How is the island community described in More’s Utopia?
19. What are the two themes that run through Erasmus’s works?
20. Why is Gutenberg’s creation so revolutionary?

Renaissance Art (pgs. 372-378)

21. What is a patronage?
22. How much involvement did patrons have in the artist’s work?
23. What does art reveal about the changing patterns of consumption?
24. What two places do we see the biggest expenditure of wealth in the sixteenth century?
25. What becomes a distinctly new genre of art and what does it show?
26. Which two artists embodied the idea of “artist as genius”?
27. What role did women play in the arts of the Renaissance?

More questions on the back...

Name: _____ Date: _____ Per: _____

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Social Hierarchies (pgs. 378-383)

28. How was the word race used during the Renaissance?
29. How was social status attained during the Renaissance?
30. What was the “debate about women”?
31. What do the misogynist critics have to say about women?
32. How was Renaissance society hierarchically arranged, and which was regarded as the most natural?

The Nation-State (pgs. 383-387)

33. Describe the condition of France before Charles VII’s reign?
34. What is Charles VII the first to create in all of Europe?
35. What was the significance of the Concordat of Bologna?
36. What was the War of the Roses and its results?
37. What tactics did Edward IV, Richard III, and Henry VII use to establish order? Who would have approved?
38. How was Henry VII different in establishing his royal court and what was the Court of Star Chamber?
39. Does Spain move to create a nation-state during the Middle Ages like France and England?
40. Whose marriage does the attempt to create a Spanish national state revolve around?
41. Why were the Jews hated in Spain?
42. By the sixteenth century what was the foundation of the Spanish nation state?