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Welcome to **Advanced Placement European History**, an elective course intended for seniors who wish to complete classes in secondary school equivalent to college introductory courses in modern European history. It is our district policy to admit any interested student who is willing to accept the challenge of a rigorous academic curriculum. *Of course, students matriculated in the course are expected to complete the national AP examination in May of 2017*

## **THE COURSE**

Advanced Placement European History is a rigorous one-year course that will provide you with an understanding of the political, diplomatic, intellectual, social, economic and cultural history of Europe from the 14th-century plague to the London Bombings of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Also, the course will teach you to analyze evidence and interpretations presented in historical scholarship. As a student you will be also challenged to read and analyze primary and secondary sources such as documentary material, maps, statistical tables, works of art, and pictorial illustrations. Modeled after the AP exam, this course will offer frequent practice in writing analytical and interpretive essays such as document-based questions (DBQs) and thematic free responses. *As a student registered in this class you are also expected to complete a Summer Reading assignment.*

## **SUMMER READING**

This year we will begin our study of modern European history with an examination of the Renaissance. Therefore, your summer reading assignment will focus on this topic only. You are to work independently on this project.

In September we will be studying different aspects of the Renaissance including art, politics, society and economics. We will also study the subsequent era highlighted by the violent Wars of Religion. **Select one book from the following list and complete the writing task. The essay will be due on the second Friday after returning to school.** If you have any questions, you may email me over the summer at [brian.brennan@sparta.org](mailto:brian.brennan@sparta.org)

Enjoy, Mr. Brennan

## **TOPIC 1: Renaissance & Engineering**

*Brunelleschi's Dome: How a Renaissance Genius Reinvented Architecture* by Ross King. "Filippo Brunelleschi's design for the dome of the cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore in Florence remains one of the most towering achievements of Renaissance architecture. Completed in 1436, the dome remains a remarkable feat of design and engineering. Its span of more than 140 feet exceeds St Paul's in London and St Peter's in Rome, and even outdoes the Capitol in Washington, D.C., making it the largest dome ever constructed using bricks and mortar. The story of its creation and its brilliant but "hot-tempered" creator is told in Ross King's delightful *Brunelleschi's Dome*. Both dome and architect offer King plenty of rich material. The story of the dome goes back to 1296, when work began on the cathedral, but it was only in 1420, when Brunelleschi won a competition over his bitter rival Lorenzo Ghiberti to design the daunting cupola, that work began in earnest. King weaves an engrossing tale from the political intrigue, personal jealousies, dramatic setbacks, and sheer inventive brilliance that led to the paranoid Filippo, "who was so proud of his inventions and so fearful of plagiarism," finally seeing his dome completed only months before his death. King argues that it was Brunelleschi's improvised brilliance in solving the problem of suspending the enormous cupola in bricks and mortar (painstakingly detailed with precise illustrations) that led him to "succeed in performing an engineering feat whose structural daring was without parallel." He tells a compelling, informed story, ranging from discussions of the construction of the bricks, mortar, and marble that made up the dome, to its subsequent use as a scientific instrument by the Florentine astronomer Paolo Toscanelli."<sup>1</sup>

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According to the online History Guide, *humanism* is the term generally applied to the predominant social philosophy and intellectual and literary currents of the period from 1400 to 1650. The return to favor of the Roman classics stimulated the philosophy of secularism, the appreciation of worldly pleasures, and above all intensified the assertion of personal independence and individual expression. Zeal for the classics was a result as well as a cause of the growing secular view of Renaissance culture.<sup>2</sup> **Use the Ross King book to apply the concept of humanism while demonstrating how Filippo Brunelleschi personified the idea of a Renaissance Man.**

## **TOPIC 2: Renaissance & Art**

*Michelangelo and The Pope's Ceiling* by Ross King. "Almost 500 years after Michelangelo Buonarroti frescoed the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel in Rome, the site still attracts throngs of visitors and is considered **ONE** of the artistic masterpieces of the world. *Michelangelo and the Pope's Ceiling* unveils the story behind the art's making, a story rife with all the drama of a modern-day soap opera. The temperament of the day was dictated by the politics of the papal court, a corrupt and powerful office steeped in controversy; Pope Julius II even had a nickname, "Il Papa Terrible," to prove it. Along with his violent outbursts and warmongering, Pope Julius II took upon himself to restore the Sistine Chapel and pretty much intimidated Michelangelo into painting the ceiling even though the artist considered himself primarily a sculptor and was particularly unfamiliar with the temperamental art of fresco. Along with technical difficulties, personality conflicts, and money troubles, Michelangelo was plagued by health problems and competition in the form of the dashing and talented young painter Raphael."

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With a new Golden Age of Rome as a background, author Ross King weaves an incredible tale of two Renaissance giants: Michelangelo & Pope Julius II. Using King's novel, describe the artistic process in Renaissance painting. What was life like for a 16<sup>th</sup>-century painter? **In a well-organized essay explain some of the challenges Renaissance artists faced during this era.**

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<sup>1</sup> All book synopses are from [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.historyguide.org/intellect/humanism.html>

### **TOPIC 3: Renaissance & Social History**

*The Return of Martin Guerre* by Natalie Zemon Davis. "The Inventive Peasant Arnaud du Tilh had almost persuaded the learned judges at the Parlement of Toulouse, when on a summer's day in 1560 a man swaggered into the court on a wooden leg, denounced Arnaud, and reestablished his claim to the identity, property, and wife of Martin Guerre. The astonishing case captured the imagination of the Continent. Told and retold over the centuries, the story of Martin Guerre became a legend, still remembered in the Pyrenean village where the impostor was executed more than 400 years ago.

Now a noted historian, who served as consultant for a new French film on Martin Guerre, has searched archives and lawbooks to add new dimensions to a tale already abundant in mysteries: we are led to ponder how a common man could become an impostor in the sixteenth century, why Bertrande de Rols, an honorable peasant woman, would accept such a man as her husband, and why lawyers, poets, and men of letters like Montaigne became so fascinated with the episode. *Natalie Zemon Davis reconstructs the lives of ordinary people, in a sparkling way that reveals the hidden attachments and sensibilities of nonliterate sixteenth-century villagers.* Here we see men and women trying to fashion their identities within a world of traditional ideas about property and family and of changing ideas about religion. We learn what happens when common people get involved in the workings of the criminal courts in the ancien régime (Old Regime prior to French Revolution), and how judges struggle to decide who a man was in the days before fingerprints and photographs. We sense the secret affinity between the eloquent men of law and the honey-tongued village impostor, a rare identification across class lines."

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This book is the classic example of microhistory, a branch of the social sciences that uses a very focused tale to shed light on a larger historical era. Davis uses an incredible story to illustrate French life during the early Renaissance. **Applying events and people from the book, describe how people lived in early modern Europe. Make sure to include French social structure, religious beliefs, political hierarchy and/or the position of women in society.**

### **TOPIC 4: Renaissance & Politics**

*The Prince* by Niccolò Machiavelli. "When Lorenzo de' Medici seized control of the Florentine Republic in 1512, he summarily fired the Secretary to the Second Chancery of the Signoria and set in motion a fundamental change in the way we think about politics. The person who held the aforementioned office with the tongue-twisting title was none other than Niccolò Machiavelli, who, suddenly finding himself out of a job after 14 years of patriotic service, followed the career trajectory of many modern politicians into punditry. Unable to become an on-air political analyst for a television network, he only wrote a book. But what a book *The Prince* is. Its essential contribution to modern political thought lies in Machiavelli's assertion of the then revolutionary idea that theological and moral imperatives have no place in the political arena. "It must be understood," Machiavelli avers, "that a prince ... cannot observe all of those virtues for which men are reputed good, because it is often necessary to act against mercy, against faith, against humanity, against frankness, against religion, in order to preserve the state." With just a little imagination, readers can discern parallels between a 16th-century principality and a 20th-century presidency." **THIS BOOK CAN BE FOUND ONLINE FOR FREE.**

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Machiavelli's book was a primer for Renaissance rulers. The amoral advice from *The Prince* was a radical departure from medieval political thought. **However, is Machiavelli's advice still relevant today when so few nations are governed by monarchies? In a well-organized essay with textual support from *The Prince*, refute or support the following statement: Machiavelli's advice would not be readily accepted in 21<sup>st</sup>-century politics.**

## TOPIC 5: Renaissance & Exploration

*Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies* by Jared Diamond. “In *Guns, Germs, and Steel* Jared Diamond presents the biologist's answer to why Western Europe conquered the New World and dominated the rest of the world for half a millennium: *geography, demography, and ecological happenstance*. Diamond evenhandedly reviews human history on every continent since the Ice Age at a rate that emphasizes only the broadest movements of peoples and ideas. Yet his survey is binocular: one eye has the rather distant vision of the evolutionary biologist, while the other eye--and his heart--belongs to the people of New Guinea, where he has done field work for more than 30 years.”

**According to Diamond “history followed different courses for different peoples because of differences among peoples' environments, not because of biological differences among peoples themselves.” Was European domination due to geographic luck? Using Diamond’s reasoning, explain how Europeans were able to conquer the New World’s indigenous population.**

## TOPIC 6: Religion & Science

*Galileo's Daughter: A Historical Memoir of Science, Faith, and Love* by Dava Sobel. “Everyone knows that Galileo Galilei dropped cannonballs off the leaning tower of Pisa, developed the first reliable telescope, and was convicted by the Inquisition for holding a heretical belief--that the earth revolved around the sun. But did you know he had a daughter? *In Galileo's Daughter*, Dava Sobel (author of the bestselling *Longitude*) tells the story of the famous scientist and his illegitimate daughter, Sister Maria Celeste. Sobel bases her book on 124 surviving letters to the scientist from the nun, whom Galileo described as “a woman of exquisite mind, singular goodness, and tenderly attached to me.” Their loving correspondence revealed much about their world: the agonies of the bubonic plague, the hardships of monastic life, even Galileo's occasional forgetfulness (“The little basket, which I sent you recently with several pastries, is not mine, and therefore I wish you to return it to me”). While Galileo tangled with the Church, Maria Celeste--whose adopted name was a tribute to her father's fascination with the heavens--provided moral and emotional support with her frequent letters, approving of his work because she knew the depth of his faith. As Sobel notes, “It is difficult today ... to see the Earth at the center of the Universe. Yet that is where Galileo found it.” With her fluid prose and graceful turn of phrase, Sobel breathes life into Galileo, his daughter, and the earth-centered world in which they lived.”

This is a story of both political AND social history. Therefore you can choose to do either one of these questions:

- a. Under pressure from religious groups, the Kansas State Board of Education decided in 1999 to remove evolution and the big bang theory from the state-mandated curriculum. **Discuss the conflict between science and religion in Galileo's lifetime and explain how religious beliefs affected public policy in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.**

**OR**

- b. Galileo's correspondence with his daughter reveals the way the elite and the religious lived in Renaissance Florence. **Based on the reading describe the day-to-day routine for many including the impact of the Catholic Church, the plague, healthcare, education and/or the economy in the 17<sup>th</sup>-century Italian states.**