

World Studies Honors Summer Current Events Assignment

A major goal of this course is to promote understanding of important international issues. Knowledge of current events is essential to facilitate this process. Over the summer, you are expected to familiarize yourself with important issues facing the world through reading newspaper and magazine articles and watching television news and specials. In addition, to understand each issue it is necessary to have some background information.

Subscribing to a daily news sources i.e.-- The New York Times (nytimes.com) and a weekly news magazine i.e.-- The Economist (economist.com, or their on-line free versions is recommended. Having access to these sources now will benefit you not only during the summer assignment but also throughout the school year.

Choose three of the following topics:

Your assignment is to choose **three issues** that interest you the most and acquire the necessary background knowledge to develop some expertise in them.

Do not do a natural disaster (flood, earthquake, etc.) unless it has major political or economic repercussions.

- the state of affairs between Israel and the Palestinians
- the status of affairs in Europe/Euro/Greece
- the status of democracy movements in Arab countries. Choose one Arab country among the following: Libya, Syria, Yemen, Bahrain, Egypt, Tunisia, or if developments warrant, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Jordan, Morocco, etc.
- status of Iran's nuclear program and/or Iran's relationship with the US and the IAEA
- the current situation in Afghanistan
- the current situation in Iraq
- the current situation in Sudan and Nigeria or any African Country
- the current situation in Pakistan and/or changes in its relationship with India
- the status of North Korea's nuclear program and its relations with S. Korea and US
- developments in China and/or Chinese-American relations and South China Sea
- developments in Russia and/or relations with the US
- the status of the civil conflicts in Sudan, Somalia, or other African countries
- the status of Mexico's war against drug cartels
- Iran nuclear situation
- Chaos in Yemen (role of Saudi Arabia and Iran)
- Isis (Iraq and Syria)
- Central Africa and Mali
- Human Trafficking in South East Asia
- the influence of Globalization (international trade) on the world's economy
- developments that may influence the price or available of energy around the world
- the status of U.S. relations with specific countries that we may come into conflict with
- any significant regional or global emergency development, if there is one (such as an unexpected leadership change somewhere, a major economic crisis, a new war or major terrorist attack, an emergency global health or environmental crisis)

Special Note: Make sure that your three selections are different. For example, terrorism, Israel/Palestinians, Pakistan/India, Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, plus democracy movements in specific Arab countries all pertain to the Middle East so the most you can do is two of them. Do not cover more than one Africa topic or two or more topics that are similar. **Please pay careful attention to this guideline.**

Summer Assignment Requirements:

1. **On the first day of class, you will submit an annotated bibliography that lists at least five articles from magazines, newspapers, or journals that you read for each of the three topics you chose from the lists on the other side of this page.**
 - a. The following information must be included on the works consulted in this order:
 - i. Author (last name first), title, source, page #, date.
 - ii. List your sources in alphabetical order by author's last name.
 - iii. If there is no author listed, then start with the title of the article and alphabetize it in with the author names.
 - iv. Submit 3 separate alphabetized lists, one for each of your topics.
 - v. Articles must come from printed sources that appear over the summer; the Internet can only be used to read articles posted from newspaper and magazine sources. (For example, nytimes.com is acceptable but wikipedia is not).
 - vi. Take notes on what you read.

An annotated bibliography cites each entry and provides a description of the material used and should connect to your topic. Each annotation must be a minimum of three sentences that explains how the source is important to your topic.

Example:

Duffy, Christopher. *The Army of Fredrick the Great*. New York: Hippocrene Books, 1974.

True to the nature of Fredrick's army most of the historians work is devoted to describing the "spit & polish" qualities of the Prussian military machine. Duffy covers the promotion, training, discipline, uniforms, manners, recruitment, and relationships of the officers and regular soldiers. This work is beneficial in providing a description of the details of the Prussian military.

2. **You will also make a presentation to the class on one of your three topics during the second and third weeks of school.** Therefore, it is highly recommended that you take notes or highlight what you read.

3. In addition to the three topics that you researched you will also **submit a list of recurring important WORLD (not American) news events prioritized by you in order of perceived importance within the first week of school.**
 - a. You are not expected to be an expert on these issues, but rather have a reasonable awareness of them.

Note: You must keep up with this assignment on a regular basis, taking time as often as possible to read newspapers and magazines and watch television news shows. Otherwise, you will find it impossible to develop a working knowledge of current events by the time you return to school in September. You may want to wait for one or two weeks, however, before picking the topics you will focus on so that you have time to become more informed before making a decision.

Recommendation: Get a good atlas or find one on-line and familiarize yourself with where countries are located. Knowing the geographic location of a country is essential to understanding its relationship with other countries and will help you get a better grasp of the issues that pertain to it. Furthermore, you will be doing a significant amount of map work in class, and this will give you a head start on this endeavor.

Final Note: This is a challenging assignment. For Honors level students, studying history is worthless without a working knowledge of what is going on the world today. If you do not make a reasonable effort to comply with this assignment, you will enter class in September struggling to keep up. This, of course, is not the way you want to begin the school year. You will perform better and get more value out of it if you give this assignment your best effort over the entire course of the summer.