AP European History
Enduring Understandings & Essential Questions

The Late Middle Ages – Don’t really have to know, but good to know!

Enduring Understandings
1. The roots of some modern political tenets are found in the late medieval period
2. Late medieval economic developments changed the class structure of Europe and led to a more modern demographic arrangement.
3. The breakdown of the Catholic Church, and other late medieval disasters (plague, little ice age, etc.) began to change the traditional structures of Europe.

Essential Questions
1. What relationships may be pointed out between the modern world and the Middle Ages?
2. How did the disasters that afflicted European society in the 14th century set the stage for the Renaissance?
3. What factors cause change in the political, economic, and demographic structures of a society?

The Renaissance (Ch 13)

Enduring Understandings
1. Many factors led to the changes that together comprise the spirit of the Renaissance.
2. Although similarities do exist, the Renaissance is significantly different from the late medieval period.
3. The influence of the classics and growing trade broadened the views of Renaissance citizens.
4. Political structures varied in form from region to region, in Renaissance Europe.
5. Differences existed between medieval and Renaissance art.
6. Northern Europe and Italy experienced the Renaissance in slightly different ways.

Essential Questions
1. What was the “new conception of mankind” which emerged during the Renaissance, and how does it compare to contemporary views of mankind?
2. How did humanism affect both Renaissance thinking & contemporary attitudes?
3. How & why did Renaissance art change?
4. How did the Renaissance differ from the late medieval period?
5. What was the spirit of the Renaissance & did it reflect regional differences?
6. How do beliefs about the nature of mankind affect one’s political views?
7. Are Machiavelli’s political ideas applicable in modern society?

Europe Expands & Divides—Overseas Discoveries & the Protestant Reformation

Enduring Understandings
1. The age of exploration was a natural outcome of Renaissance intellectual, economic & political changes
2. The Reformation was a social, political and economic movement, not just a religious one.
3. There were many similarities & differences between the various Protestant reformers.
4. As a result of the age of exploration, power shifted from Mediterranean merchants to the Atlantic seaboard.

Essential Questions
1. Why did the Reformation occur?
2. How did the Reformation change the world religiously, politically, economically, and socially?
3. Was the status of women and children in European society changed by the Reformation?
4. How were geographic & religious exploration related?
5. What motivated the voyages of exploration & how did they change the world?
6. How are politics & economics related?
1550-1650—A Century of Crisis for Early Modern Europe

**Enduring Understandings**

1. Religious conflicts caused a century of upheaval in Early Modern Europe
2. Political, social, and economic factors also motivated the outbreak of “religious” warfare.
3. The Thirty Years War had long-lasting impacts.
4. The development of a strong Protestant monarchy in England under Elizabeth changed the balance of power in Europe.
5. Spain experienced a decline under Philip II from which it never really recovered.
6. The disintegration and reconstruction of France had significant effects on the rest of Europe.

**Essential Questions**

1. What gives rulers legitimacy?
2. How do the personal leadership & motivations of political leaders affect their nations?
3. How do religious motivations affect politics?
4. How did the leadership of Philip II lead to the demise of Spain?
5. What qualities made leaders successful in Early Modern Europe, & are these qualities still valued in leaders, today?
The Economy & Society of Early Modern Europe

Enduring Understandings
1. Dutch cultural & commercial accomplishments were significant in the 17th century.
2. Britain experienced a century of turmoil under the Stuarts in the 17th century.
3. Many political, economic, social, and religious factors led to the English Civil War & the Glorious Revolution.
4. Dutch & English commercial conflicts ended in disaster for the Dutch.

Essential Questions
1. How did the Dutch & English come into conflict in the 17th century, & what were the results?
2. Should religion play a role in politics?
3. Should a king or ruler be “above the law?”
4. What gives a ruler sovereignty?
5. What is justice?

The Age of Absolutism

Enduring Understandings
1. Prussia emerged as an important European power during the age of absolutism due to strong political, military, and economic leadership on the part of the Hohenzollern family.
2. Absolute monarchs were responsible for many innovations in their nations, even though the basic social structures did not change.
3. Absolute monarchs used many different methods to maintain their control.
4. The relationship between the nobility and monarchs varied from nation to nation.
5. Austria, Prussia, France, and Russia, & England become the strongest powers during the age of absolutism.
6. Mercantilism became the dominant economic system of absolute monarchies.

Essential Questions
1. Was “divine right” a legitimate basis for political power?
2. Why did Europe fail to experience peace in the decades following the Treaty of Westphalia?
3. How did mercantilism affect European and New World economies?
4. Why did Austria, Prussia, France, Russia, & England emerge as the strongest powers during the age of absolutism?
5. What methods did absolute monarchs to maintain their control use?
6. Is absolute power ever justified?
The Scientific Revolution & The Enlightenment

Enduring Understandings
1. Important accomplishments of Bacon, Descartes, Harvey, Newton, Galileo, Copernicus, & Kepler forever changed mankind’s conception of the universe and the world.
2. The scientific revolution is a “revolution,” not only because of the many new discoveries, but also because of the development of the scientific method.
3. The inductive method changed traditional scientific inquiry.
4. A wide variety of Enlightenment thinkers held a wide variety of views about politics, human nature, economics, and social issues.
5. Enlightened monarchs sometimes applied the ideas of the philosophes in their realms, but they often masqueraded as being much more enlightened than they really were.

Essential Questions
1. In what ways were the Scientific Revolution and the Enlightenment a culmination of Renaissance thinking, & how were they a rejection of traditional modes of thought?
2. How did scientific findings influence Enlightenment ideas about government & society?
3. What is justice?
4. What is the ideal form of government?
5. Is capital punishment justified?
6. What motivates societal change?
7. How do we know anything with certainty?
8. Does society perfect or corrupt people?

The French Revolution & the Napoleonic Era

Enduring Understandings
1. A different social class led each phase of the revolution & each phase had different causes.
2. The French revolution resulted from a combination of traditional class conflicts, economic insecurity, and Enlightenment ideals.
3. The ideals of the revolution, introduced by Napoleon to conquered territories, lit the spark of freedom in many parts of Eastern Europe.
4. Napoleon used a variety of methods to maintain absolute control over France while also offering a degree of freedom to the French people.
5. Most European nations were threatened by Napoleon not only for political reasons, but also because he gave their populations a taste of freedom.
6. The Congress of Vienna was a reaction to the liberalism of the French Revolution & set the stage for the struggle between conservatism & liberalism during the 19th century.
**Essential Questions**

1. What were the most important causes & effects of each phase of the French Revolution?
2. To what extent was the French Revolution a product of the Enlightenment?
3. In what ways was Napoleon both “a child of the revolution” and “the last of the enlightened despots?”
4. What were the differences between liberalism & conservatism in the early 19th century?
5. Is the use of terror ever justified?

**Unit IX: The Industrial Revolution & its Consequences**

**Enduring Understandings**

1. Britain was the leader in the industrial revolution due to its political & economic stability, intellectual freedom, geographical location, & available work force.
2. The industrial revolution created important demographic, political, and social changes, including the eventual death of the cottage industries.
3. The industrial revolution accentuated the Elbe-Trieste gap.
4. The first industrial revolution is different in its causes, products, and effects than the 2nd industrial revolution.
5. The industrial revolution built upon and advanced the commercial capitalism of the early modern centuries.

**Essential Questions**

1. What were the social consequences of the new industrialism for the working classes?
2. What factors led to the industrial revolution in Britain?
3. What important demographic, political, & social changes accompanied the 1st industrial revolution Britain?
4. How did the industrial revolution accentuate the Elbe-Trieste gap & what were the consequences of this rift?
5. Do upper classes have the right to exploit lower classes for financial or political gain?
6. Is progress at the price of human suffering justified?

**Unit X: The Rise of Liberalism, Marxism, Socialism, & Revolution**

**Enduring Understandings**

1. Many different “isms” emerged in response to the industrial revolution and its human costs.
2. The clash between liberalism and conservatism culminated in the revolutions of 1848.
3. Many common objectives motivated the revolutions of 1848, and the degree to which these were achieved varied by region.
4. Marxism had many roots, such as the writings of the utopian socialists, German philosophers, and contemporary scientists, as well as personal observations, and historical studies.
5. Marxism was not adopted immediately in any nation of Europe.

**Essential Questions**

1. What solutions did liberalism, Marxism, and socialism each have to offer to meet the challenges of the early 19th century?
2. How was each of the “isms” a reaction to the 1st industrial revolution?
3. What are the roots of Marxism?
4. What common objectives motivated the revolutions of 1848 & to what degree were these goals achieved by 1848?
5. Does institutional suppression of societal groups lead to political, social, &/or economic radicalization?
6. What causes revolution?

**Unit XI: Nationalism & the Building of Nations**

**Enduring Understandings**

1. Although many leaders tried to secure the unification of Italy, Count Camillo Cavour was successful due to his political power, his growing network of alliances, & his diplomatic savvy.
2. Political, economic, and social differences between Northern & Southern Italy combined with international interference made it difficult to unify Italy.
3. Nationalism was a major factor in the unification of both Italy & Germany.
4. Separatism dating from the 16th century, and competition for control between Austria and Prussia thwarted many efforts at German unification.
5. Germany was unified due to the Machiavellian policies of Otto von Bismarck.
6. The Prussian military tradition dominated the new German government and its policies.
7. Following unification, Germany was one of the first nations to adopt widespread social welfare programs.

**Essential Questions**
1. What effects did the rise of nationalism have on 19th century Europe?
2. To what extent was realpolitik employed in the unification of Germany & Italy?
3. How did the unification of Italy & Germany affect the balance of power in Europe?
4. How do 19th century nationalism and 20th century ethnic nationalism differ?
5. To what extent does nationalism affect contemporary foreign policy?

**Unit XII: International Industrialization & Competition**

**Enduring Understandings**
1. The second industrial revolution differed greatly from the first industrial revolution in terms of living & working conditions, political control, and production.
2. The second industrial revolution reorganized capital in Europe and transformed Western European methods of investment and distribution.
3. Economic changes of the late 19th century had far-reaching social and political impacts.
**Essential Questions**

1. What important social, political, and economic effects emerged as a result of the 2nd industrial revolution?
2. How did economic changes of the late 19th century establish the conditions for the economic disaster of the 1930’s?
3. What impact did the second industrial revolution have on the demographic structure of Europe?
4. How did the second industrial revolution change opportunities for women?

**Unit XIII: Late 19th Century Challenges to the Middle Class**

**Enduring Understandings**

1. Growing political power of the working class in England led to the growth of the labor movement and the demands for greater reform.
2. Late 19th and early 20th century discoveries in the sciences once again shattered the traditional view of the world & caused citizens to question their political, social, economic, and religious beliefs.
3. Anti-Semitism was a continuing problem in Europe, tearing apart the Third French Republic.
4. The images portrayed by the Victorian media often ignored the problems of society.

**Essential Questions**

1. How did the growing self-consciousness of European labor manifest itself from 1871-1914?
2. What were the implications of 19th and 20th century developments in biology and psychology?
3. Was the Victorian media liberal or conservative?
4. How did scientific and religious writings challenge the Victorian status quo?
5. To what extent is the media an instrument of social change?

**Unit XIV: The Russian Revolution**

**Enduring Understandings**

1. The Russian Revolution was the culmination of many centuries of oppression and poverty of the peasant class.
2. A variety of social, economic, and political problems caused the Russian Revolution.
3. There were two revolutions in 1917—the first led by Kerensky and the second led by Lenin.
4. The Russian Revolution had significant and long-range effects for the entire world.
5. The Russian Revolution provided the world with its first experiment in the use of Marxism.
6. Marxism, Leninism, and Stalinism differed from one another in some significant ways.
Essential Questions
1. What were the causes of the Russian Revolution?
2. Why did the first Russian Revolution of 1917 fail to achieve its objectives?
3. Why was the second Russian Revolution of 1917 a Marxist revolution?
4. How did the Russian Revolution affect the other European powers?
5. How did Marxism, Leninism, and Stalinism differ?
6. Is Marxism a viable alternative in the contemporary world?

Unit XV: Imperialism & WWI
Enduring Understandings
1. New Imperialism had many political and economic motives.
2. New Imperialism differed in many ways from 16th century imperialism.
3. Although the immediate cause of WWI was the shooting of the Archduke, nationalism, militarism,
   imperialism, and alliance systems were important underlying causes.
4. Military technology changed considerably during WWI.
5. Although the Treaty of Versailles ended WWI, flaws in the treaty set the stage for the coming of WWII.

Essential Questions
1. What motives formed the basis of European expansion in the late 19th century?
2. How did WWI and the ensuing peace treaties change the political structure of Europe and the European
   economy?
3. What strengths and weaknesses characterized the Treaty of Versailles?
4. How did new military technology change warfare?
5. How did the carnage of WWI change the philosophical consciousness of Europeans?
6. Who is responsible for war?

Unit XVI: The World Between the Wars
Enduring Understandings
1. Although the Allies had won WWI, their economies were in shambles and most were faced with political
   instability.
2. The isolation of the US forced Europeans to solve their own political & economic problems in the 1920’s &
   1930’s.
3. The eschewing of the USSR by W. European allies led to resentment and distrust of the Western powers by
   Stalin.
4. Communism and Fascism are vastly different systems, even though they appear alike at first glance.
5. Differing motives led some Europeans to favor the appeasement of Hitler while others favored the popular
   front movement.
6. Worldwide economic problems hastened the rise of totalitarian regimes in Germany and Italy during the mid-
   war years.
7. Anti-Semitism threatened the security & lives of German Jews by the mid-1930’s, eventually culminating in
   the Holocaust.
**Essential Questions**

1. How did the apparent victory of democracy in WWI deteriorate into the totalitarian regimes of the 1930’s & what accounted for the setbacks to democracy in many parts of Europe?
2. What are the similarities and differences between fascism and communism?
3. Why did the Germans support Hitler?
4. Why was anti-Semitism accepted in the mid-war years?
5. How did the general mood of the 1930’s compare with that of the 1920’s?
6. Is it possible to “outlaw war as an instrument of international policy?”
7. How do economic problems affect politics?

**Unit XVII: World War II**

**Enduring Understandings**

1. There were two main theaters of WWII, each with differing causes.
2. The various steps in the appeasement of Hitler were actually steps toward the outbreak of war.
3. Although the US, W. Europe, and the USSR were allies during the war, there was a great deal of distrust among them.
4. Important decisions made at Yalta and Potsdam and the use of the atomic bomb had important impacts on the development of cold war tensions.

**Essential Questions**

1. What were the major causes for the outbreak of war with Germany and with Japan?
2. Why is the Munich crisis considered to be an important turning point in the impending outbreak of WWII?
3. How did decisions made at the Yalta and Potsdam Conferences affect the post-war world?
4. How did the world deal with post-war European social and economic problems, such as poverty, refugees, and general political and economic disorganization?
5. How did the use of the atomic bomb forever change the world?
6. Was the use of the atomic bomb justified?

**Unit XVIII: The Cold War—New Power Relationships in the Post-War World**

**Enduring Understandings**

1. The Cold War resulted from a variety of conflicts between the US and USSR which began even before WWII was finished.
2. The existence of nuclear weapons added a new dimension to post-war conflicts and diplomacy.
3. De-colonization and the rise of the Third World also complicated international affairs.
4. Eastern and Western Europeans were often unhappy with domination by the superpowers but were politically and economically forced to submit to their wishes.
5. The Cold War created cultural and social turbulence in Europe.
6. Cold War tensions eventually led both Eastern and Western Europeans to seek ways to separate themselves from the influence of the superpowers.

**Essential Questions**

1. What were the steps in the outbreak and development of the Cold War, & what led to confrontation and conflict between the USSR & the West?
2. To what extent were E. and W. European Nations capable of controlling their own fate? (Did this differ between E. and W. European nations?)
3. How did the rise of Communist China affect the relationships between the US, USSR, and the European nations?
4. How did de-colonization affect Europe?
5. To what extent were cold war tensions reflected in Europe socially, culturally, and artistically?
6. To what extent did the women’s movement of the 1970’s affect European women?
7. What new dimensions have nuclear arms added to international relations?

**Unit XIX: Contemporary European Civilization**

**Enduring Understandings**
1. Growing discontent with Soviet influence in E. Europe, coupled with growing economic and political problems in the Soviet Union led to a series of revolts against the USSR which culminated in not only the autonomy of E. European nations, but also the breakup of the USSR.
2. Gorbachev’s policies of glasnost and perestroika played an important role in the E. European and Soviet changes.
3. Western European nations reorganized the Common Market into the EEC, and many have adopted the Euro, in an attempt to become autonomous and competitive economically and politically.
4. Ethnic nationalism, among other causes, led to war and the breakup of Yugoslavia.
5. The collapse of the USSR has created new political, economic, cultural, and social relationships in the world.
6. NATO has had to reexamine its purpose and membership.

**Essential Questions**

1. How is the collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe and the USSR changing political, economic, cultural, and social relationships in the world?
2. What role does Western Europe play in contemporary international affairs?
3. What impact will the European Union have on international economic and political policy?
4. Does NATO serve a useful purpose in a reorganized Europe?
5. What role does ethnic nationalism play in our world, today?
6. Who has the right to define, prosecute, and punish war crimes?