**Recommended Study Process for Nightly**

**Reading Assignments – AP World History**

Thank you for considering how to do the best you can in AP World History. I apologize if this is kind of a lengthy response, but students carry a lot of responsibility for their performance in class, and I think it is helpful to lay out a detailed path that students can follow in order for them to achieve success. From my teaching experience, it is easy for me to say that students can usually do more to facilitate their learning. My recommendations to do so begin with spending the required amount of time prepping for the chapter, reading the chapter and taking notes, and then reviewing the chapter prior to quizzes. From the very beginning of the class, I have said to the kids that reading for this class is a multiple step process, and they should expect to spend 1-2 hours on the material every day of the week (7 days a week). Students and parents should remember that the course website is updated every day and gives a great overview of essential lesson questions and activities; such a site is the teacher’s devotion to transparency.

1-The first thing they must do is go to the textbook website (Google: Traditions and Encounters 3rd edition – this link is also on the Course Website[[1]](#footnote-0) under “Resources & AP Skills”), print out the outline, and read it thoroughly. I equate this to looking at a map before you head out for a road trip, where you have an idea of the general route your trip is going to take, and can anticipate upcoming turns. In the same way, if you read the outline, you are aware of the major issues and people that are going to play starring roles in the chapter, so when you come across them in the text, you understand how they fit into the big picture.

2-\*\*\* (This step can be interchanged with Pages 3-5 of this document at the discretion of the student) Once you have read the outline, you then embark on reading the chapter. Student usually have 2-3 days to read the chapter, so I usually recommend they break the chapter up into digestible sections, and only read about 10 pages in one sitting. (It is impossible to read an entire chapter in one setting, and while a student may feel as if they are spending a lot of time studying, when trying to read 30 pages at once, they are unable to focus and work efficiently) While they are reading, students should be taking extensive, thorough notes on the important themes as well as vocabulary in the text, in order to help them process the material and produce valuable review material come quiz time. As you have probably seen from looking through the textbook, each chapter is chock-full of information, and the note taking process helps them boil it down to essential knowledge that is related to the six major themes of study.

3-After completing the reading, students should then take the *online multiple choice quiz* that is on the textbook website[[2]](#footnote-1). It is a 20 question quiz that is generated from the same test bank I use to make my quizzes. If a question on the online quiz is missed, the student should then go back to the text and read the paragraphs where the answer can be found, because s/a1he may have not been reading closely enough, because s/he was tired or distracted. I will occasionally give student "Pop-Quizzes" in order to make sure they are keeping up with their homework reading assignments. These quizzes are often the exact quiz that is available to them on the website.

4-The Student should then go to the *study questions* on the same website. These questions follow along with the text, but are broader and more analytical in scope than the multiple-choice questions. He should be able to discuss the answers to these questions as if it were a well-developed paragraph utilizing key vocabulary (we call them Concrete Details in class). This is part of the chapter review process.

That is what is expected of a student in their chapter-to-chapter preparation at home, so that they can come to class adequately prepared to contribute to class discussions and pose questions they were not able to clear up in their homework. Class participation is also a key part of realizing success in the class. Our class discussions/lectures are designed to hash out the important details and make the big connections amongst regions that the class is focused on. Students need to be able to utilize and manipulate the text material in the context of class discussion in order to internalize their learning, or address issues of misunderstanding. Within these class discussions, students should be supplementing their chapter notes with the connections we make. Additionally, I specifically mention almost every quiz question in our discussions, so if students are paying attention, they will be acquainted with possible test material.

I usually try to have the class discussions be based around students raising their hands to voluntarily make contributions, because I do not like to play "gotcha". However, when I do call on students involuntarily, I try to give them softball questions in order to draw them into the discussion and break the ice. Students who are preparing adequately at home are engaged and confident participants in the discussions.

For the majority of the chapters in the textbook, we will spend two days in class conducting an extensive discussion of the content material and making essential connections. At the end of that, we take a quiz that is 15-20 questions, focused on the specific details from the chapter. The chapter-based quizzes are the largest portion of the grades that students receive in this class. Quizzes serve as reading checks which hold the students accountable to textbook reading, so that the other activities can focus in on specific aspects of the content and analysis. The quizzes must be focused on content specifics so that students read closely, and will be equipped with the Concrete Details necessary to analyze big ideas. In my syllabus, I explain that I do not enter my grades into weighted categories, because past experience has shown that unweighted categories allow classwork and homework to more adequately balance out poor quiz performance. However, an approximate percentage of grade category breakdown is provided to illuminate how important quiz and test grades are.

After students take a quiz and it is graded, I recommend that students come back and look at the quizzes to find out which ones they missed, and analyze the mistakes they made in an effort to improve their reading and note taking for the next chapter. I do not hand back the actual test questions during class (for test security, and time reasons) but students can come and examine the quizzes before school, during homeroom, some lunches, or after school. If the sit down with their scantron, their notes, and the textbook, they can figure out why they missed the questions, and also learn how to access the textbook more efficiently for future chapters. If they missed a test item that was in their notes, then they did not review their notes closely enough. If the missed item was not in their notes, then they look in the textbook, and figure out why they did not recognize the item as important enough to record in their notes. Through this process they begin to recognize the types of information that will be found on future quizzes.”

Hopefully this information will help you guide and monitor your child’s performance in AP World History. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. Email is the most reliable way to reach me.

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**Mr. Cameron’s Guide to EFFICIENT NOTE-TAKING**

It is odd for a teacher to say that the textbook ordered for this class does not link up well with the vision or structure of the AP Exam, but that is exactly the situation at hand. Not only does our textbook break up eras of human development differently than the AP College Board, our textbook does not make explicit sense of the 5 major themes of the course: Social, Environmental, Cultural, Statehood, and Economic concerns. Perhaps this is a good thing: maybe the absence of direct reference to the themes and chronological periods will force students to re-envision this complexity themselves!

It is the goal of this worksheet to show students how to make sense of our textbook in light of the 5 SECSE themes of the course. In a nutshell, this page is a guide to taking notes more efficiently so students FOCUS on:

* Tend to key vocabulary – vocabulary = detail
* Map/visualize these details along a chronological timeline AND within a geographic region,

- Relate the detail back to as many SECSE themes as possible.

1 … 2 … 3… BREEZE through note-taking. There’s no need to go, ¶ by ¶ … let’s work EFFICIENTLY!

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Follow along with this **example**:

Let’s say we’re outlining **Chapter 3**. Looking at the *detailed* table of contents, we will see there are 3 sections to this chapter – **Sec. 1**: Early Agricultural Society in Africa, **Sec. 2**: The Formation of Complex Societies and Sophisticated Cultural Tradition, and **Sec. 3**: Bantu Migrations and Early Agricultural Societies of Sub-Saharan Africa.

Turn to the beginning of **Chapter 3**, Section 1. We can see Section 1 is split even further into **4 sub-sections**: **1.1)** Climatic Change and the Development of Agriculture in Africa; **1.2)** Egypt and Nubia - "Gifts of the Nile"; **1.3)** The Unification of Egypt, and; **1.4**: Turmoil and Empire.

Now that we have a **Road Map** of our Chapter AND Sections, we can begin taking notes. For our examples here, let’s work through all of Chapter 3, Section 1. The first section in particular ties into *all* of the key components of this unit: agrarianism, technological development, and the transformation of the environment to the benefit of accelerated human growth.

**LET’S TAKE SOME NOTES!**

**W**hen you begin an entirely new chapter, simply read over the introduction, get your bearings, and go straight to the first section. No writing … yet.

Now Read the Intro of the first sub-section. The only info you need from this intro is where else in the world this geographic region *connected* with. For Ch. 3, Sec.1, (Early Agriculture in Africa), that is the eastern Mediterranean and southwest Asia. Boom. Done. Write that *connection* *to other societies/cultures/empires* in your notebook however you see fit. *E.g: “Early African agricultural societies regularly connected with eastern Mediterranean and southwest Asia.”* To really save time, you can even develop a short-hand script: *“early Afr. Agrarn. SOCs connected w/ E Mediterran and SW Asia”*

Continuing this example, now that we’ve connected this region with its contemporaries, we’ll take a few details about our first sub-section: Climactic Change and the Development of Agriculture in Africa.

***\*\*\*Here’s the TRICK to taking notes on a sub-section by sub-section basis: you must flip the title of the subsection into a question. For example: “Climactic Change and the Development of Agriculture in Early Africa” becomes “what caused the climate to change, and how did it affect the development of agriculture in early Africa?”*** This skill takes a bit of practice.

For now, let’s continue our example. We have this question we need to answer: “*what caused the climate to change, and how did it affect the development of agriculture in early Africa?”* How do we answer it quickly and efficiently!?

*THE* *ITALICIZED NOTES IN THE MARGINS ARE YOUR BEST FRIENDs!!* With our example in this chapter🡪section🡪sub-section, there are 3 side-notes: 1) Early Sudanic Culture; 2) Climactic Change; and The Nile River Valley. ASK YOURSELF: *which of these side-notes will most likely lead me to answering my flipped question??* Yes… It’s clearly “Climactic Change.” ***Read*** *ONLY the intro paragraph of the subsection and the corresponding paragraph(s) to the side-note*, *and then* ***write*** *down one or two* ***VOCABulary words*** *from those paragraphs that will help* ***provide detail****.* In this example, the introduction paragraph informs the reader that, “the ice age ended in 10,000 BCE,” and the Climactic Change paragraph has the words “arid,” “uninhabitable,” and “desiccation,” correlating with the year circa 5,000 BCE.

**Example notebook entry: re: Ch.3 Sec. 1.1:**  As temperatures rose due to the end of the ice age in 10,000 BCE, most of northern Africa became too arid to sustain human life. This forced people to migrate towards water sources, principally along the Nile River Valley.

… and in short-hand script: \*\*End of Ice Age c. 10,000 BCE 🡪 earth warms up 🡪 Afr c. 5000 BCE 🡪 too arid 🡪 need water🡪 migrate (SECSE) to Nile River.

Notice how even the short-hand note (\*\*) answers our flipped question!! In so taking lean and hearty notes for this entire multi-paragraph sub-section, we asked a poignant question about a key concept, and answered it in just quick code of notes! How efficient!

Good note-takers FOCUS ON:

* Tending to key vocabulary – vocabulary = detail
* Placing these details along a chronological timeline AND within a geographic region,

- Relating the detail back to as many SECSE themes as possible.

\*Here’s **ANOTHER EXAMPLE**, this time from Ch. 3, Sec. 1.2: “Egypt and Nubia: Gift of the Nile”

**Step 1:** (reading, thinking, and writing)

**FLIP the sec. Title into a Question**

EX: 🡪 *“In what way(s) was the Nile a ‘gift’ to Egypt and Nubia”?*

**Step 2:** (Reading and Writing)

**Glean INTRO ¶ and for *relevant* VOCAB, Dates, and Empires**

EX: 🡪 *“Floodplains”* = function of SECSE environment – relevant b/c Nile is a RIVER

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*“Agriculture”* = first word of paragraph & relevant b/c more h2o = more agricult

(This example’s introduction has no mention of empires [statehood] or dates)

**Step 3:** (Reading, Thinking, and Writing)

**ASK YOSELF:** which **Side-Note** will most likely lead me **to** answering my **Flipped Question**?

EX: 🡪 We have two options in this example: “Early Agriculture in the Nile Valley” OR “Political Organization” … choice is obvious. Now read the corresponding paragraph(s) to the side-note and write down relevant vocab, dates and empires.

**Step 4:** (Thinking and Writing)

**Write a short response to the flipped Q, using VOCAB and ideas from notes and Sec Titles**

EX: 🡪 *“The ‘gift’ was water for desiccated north Africans to take advantage of to develop their agricultural settlements. Floodplains in the Nile River Valley provided a consistent flow of water for early Egyptian and Nubian societies, who took advantage of this environmental ‘gift’*” (Don’t forget: in the chapter intro paragraph we also learned that the Nile was a ‘gift’ in that it *connected* early Africa with other societies. **Connect** as many ideas relevant to the Flipped Q as possible.)

EX: 🡪 … in shorthand to save time … *“Nile h2o was ‘gift’ b/c: 1) floodplains* *were constant source o h2o, and 2) more water allowed for consistent agricultural development. / Nile = ‘gift’ also b/c it connected region with other Mediterr societies.*

**END RESULT:** You just condensed 11 paragraphs into two important questions and answered them with just a few very brief notes of your own design and logic! In no time at all! Awesome!

**\*\*Process in a Nutshell\*\***

Example for Ch 3, Secs. 1.3 & 1.4: The Unification of Egypt & Turmoil and Empire

**Flip the Titles into Qs:** *“How was Egypt unified?” “What turmoil did the Egyptian empire endure?”*

**Glean intro ¶:** (hint: see Topic Sentence)*“constant ∆ power 3,500 thru 3,100”*

**Read most relevant Side-Note:** Note the new, relevant terms/vocab. See underlined terms, below.

**Shorthand response to Flipped Q:** *“After c. 3,100, Menes and later Pharaohs unified Egypt by establishing central power of Memphis.”* And just glancing at the remaining three side-notes in the subsection, we can see a pattern and write: *“3 periods after Menes: 1) Archaic and Old Period = (years)*;(…now we’re naturally flowing into the next sub-section: “how did the Egyptian empire operate through ‘turmoil’?) *2 ) Middle Kingdom = (years) and invasions of Hyksos; 3) New Kingdom = (years) very advanced society w/ Pharaohs – greatly expanded kingdom – Egyptian Imperialism* went too far… */ 1,100 BCE – Kush takes over / Mid-6th century - Egypt falls.*

Boom! We just condensed the 16 paragraphs of Sections 1.3 & 1.4 into a few efficient lines of notes!

1. <sdagovernment.edublogs.org> [↑](#footnote-ref-0)
2. <http://glencoe.mheducation.com/sites/2222555555/student_view0/chapter1/index.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)