

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This team-taught course examines the development of societies and cultures from their beginnings in Mesopotamia up to Renaissance times in Europe. Through the examination of five major areas: geography and environment; technology and inventions; government and social structures; religions and philosophies; and art, music, and literature, students are introduced to the forces that have molded cultures. As much as possible, the literary works studied parallel the historical events to enhance student understanding of these cultures.

SYLLABUS

HISTORY

400—1000 BCE: the emergence or civilizations in Mesopotamia, Egypt and the Indus valley

1000 BCE—300 CE: the emergence of the Aegean Civilization in Europe
The major religions and empires of the Mediterranean

300—1000 CE: China and India
Early Mesoamerican civilizations
The growth of Islam
The Tang Dynasty in China
Africa south of the Sahara

1000—1600 CE: The redefining of European society and culture during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance

LITERATURE

Gilgamesh
Excerpts from the *Bible*
The Code of Hammurabi
Egyptian texts

Selections from the *Odyssey*
Oedipus Rex, Sophocles
Julius Caesar, Shakespeare

Excerpts from the works of Confucius, the *Ramayama*;
Selections from the *Koran*
African tales and myths

The Acts of King Arthur and His Knights, Steinbeck
Romeo and Juliet

ACTIVITIES AND ASSESSMENTS

Quizzes, tests, In-class writing, polished writing
Panels, debates, projects, journals, reports
Map work, simulations, and research in print and on line