

Gregg Pugliese, Social Studies
John Chiappetta, English
Patrice Faggella, Science
Paul Rasmussen, Mathematics



Fairfield Public Schools
Secondary Curriculum Office
Fairfield, Connecticut 06825
(203) 255-7256 FAX (203) 255-8212

June, 2015

Dear Future AP Modern European History Student,

As we prepare for another school year we are so excited to present you with a course that will be both fascinating and engaging. Advanced Placement Modern European History is a course that will provide you with a strong foundation of knowledge in not only history, but politics, religion, philosophy, art and economics to help prepare you for your collegiate experience. As the course covers the detailed history of an entire continent over the course of six centuries, it is essential that we begin our preparation of the content over the summer. Our first unit examines the Renaissance and the concept of “Rebirth.” To truly understand what made the Renaissance so distinct and unique, you must have a strong background in the history of the Middle Ages. William Manchester’s **A World Lit Only by Fire: The Medieval World and the Renaissance-Portrait of an Age** is considered one of the most seminal works of scholarship in Middle Ages and Early Renaissance history. This book will serve as your foundational text for the course.

Task: Read **A World Lit only by Fire: The Medieval World and the Renaissance – Portrait of an Age** in its entirety.

As you read the text please take typed, specific and organized notes on the following topics:

1. The Crises of the Middle Ages
2. The importance of the Church in the period of early Modern European History
3. The pivotal characters of this time period
4. Your response to Manchester’s thesis that the medieval worldview was “shackled in ignorance, disciplined by fear, and sheathed in superstition.”

These notes will be assessed for clarity, accessibility, comprehensiveness, and discernment in the identification of key principles.

On the first day of school, you will use your notes to write an essay based on the above points. You will have one hour to complete the essay, as we are interested in seeing your synthetic/analytical abilities and your capacity for writing succinctly and persuasively within a timed writing experience. You will be submitting your typed notes to turnitin.com, as well as handing them in with your essay. Your teacher will give you the turnitin.com login and password on the first day of school when class periods are determined. Many copies of the text are available in the school library and on Overdrive.com.

SUGGESTED READING: We encourage you to add the following books to your summer reading list in order to enhance your understanding of the content/add to future class discussions.

FWHS: *World War Z* by Max Brooks

FLHS: *Inferno* by Dan Brown & *All the Light We Cannot See* by Anthony Doerr

We look forward to seeing you in class next year. Have a great summer!

Sincerely,
Fairfield AP Modern European History Teachers