

World History textbook standard review criteria

(updated 12/4/2013)

This is not a comprehensive course syllabus, but a checklist of facts that World History textbooks often censor on major topics. Use it to evaluate current texts, and to show publishers how to revise future editions.

Treat thematically the development over time of these Western political principles:

- *Aristotelian mixed government*
Balances the one (monarchy), the few (aristocracy), and the many (democracy)
- *Roman republicanism*
Holds representatives accountable to electorate
- *Gelasian "two-sword" theory*
Divides sovereignty
- *German view that custom is law*
Limits rulers' power
- *Feudal contract*
Mutualizes obligations
- *Vassals' right to revolt*
Puts conditions on obedience
- *Common law*
Defines citizens' rights
- *Protestants' rejection of a sacramental priesthood*
Reduces state control over individuals through the church by deinstitutionalizing the means of grace
- *Puritan covenant theory*
Protects privacy from state interference
- *Natural law theory*
Makes rights inalienable
- *Social contract theory*
Requires consent of the governed
- *Constitutionalism*
Defines government's powers
- *Biblical human depravity*
Justifies checks and balances, separation of powers, and federalism

[High School World History TEKS 16(A), 16(B), 18(A), 18(B), 19(A), 22(B), 22(C)]

Stress these rights of Englishmen, the document(s) that guaranteed them in British history, and their violations by Parliament that led to the American Revolution:

- No martial law in peacetime
- No standing army in peacetime without consent
- No quartering of troops in private homes without owners' consent
- No excessive bail or fines
- No cruel or unusual punishments
- No taxation without consent of property-owners
- Trial by jury of peers
- Presumption of innocence
- Due process before property seizure
- Liability for unlawful property seizure
- Freedom of travel in peacetime
- Habeas corpus
- Right to bear arms
- Free elections
- Freedom of legislative debate
- Regular legislative sessions
- Right to petition

[High School World History TEKS 8(A), 8(B), 8(C), 16(B), 18(A)]

Include these reasons for Europe's technological progress since the early Middle Ages:

- *Personal initiative*
Technological improvements in medieval agriculture originated on peasants' land, not on land peasants tilled for their lords.
- *Decentralized decision-making*
Technological growth occurred when many individuals independently conceived, funded, and performed their own experiments.

- *Private enterprise*
Except in munitions the private sector generated most technological change, which governments afterward tried to exploit.
- *Property rights*
Governments in the 1400s began offering patents, to foster innovations by protecting innovators' ownership of profits from them.
- *Competitive markets*
Technological innovation sold well in divided Europe, where each state sought economic and military advantage over rivals.
- *Profit motive*
Businessmen-entrepreneurs teamed with inventors to invest in and develop their inventions to ensure success.
- *Cultural mandate*
Christian Europe held that man, made in God's image, should master nature and raise productivity and living standards.

[High School World History TEKS 5(B), 23(A)]

Relate the West's Commercial Revolution to these economic factors:

- *Predictable law*
To calculate risks, potential investors had to know in advance how laws would apply in given situations.
- *Divided power*
Merchants prospered where a plurality of institutions shared sovereignty and no absolute political authority existed.
- *Mutual consent*
Business and political relations rested on contract, whose obligations neither party could unilaterally change.
- *Autonomous towns*
Towns were competing economic units, centers of middle class wealth, and foes of political absolutism.
- *Private property*
Commercial capitalism flourished where personal wealth was safe from arbitrary seizure.

- *Profit incentives*
Output rose when medieval price ceilings collapsed and where producers retained and reinvested their earnings.
- *Limited taxes*
Merchant capitalists resisted unpredictable or confiscatory taxes and favored taxation by consent alone.
- *Unrestrained commerce*
Political and economic entities were so small, weak, or diverse that distant sales amounted to free trade.
- *Uncontrolled markets*
Supply and demand, not traditional "just prices," set the terms of trade in the new, far-flung transactions.
- *New competition*
Facing guilds' regulations and higher production costs in towns, some merchants organized rural cottage industries.
- *Expanded credit*
To finance a venture, business obtained short-term loans by selling bills of exchange at discounts.
- *Interest payments*
To avoid anti-usury laws, purchasers justified as risk premiums their discounts of bills of exchange.
- *Combined resources*
Private joint-stock companies raised funds and spread risks for more ambitious projects.
- *More entrepreneurs*
Investors engaging in very risky but very profitable overseas trade diversified and insured their enterprises.
- *Rising bourgeoisie*
A wealthy urban mercantile middle class developed which favored representative government and constitutionalism.

[High School World History TEKS 3(C), 5(B), 14(A)]

□ Explain these benefits of the Industrial Revolution:

- *Employed displaced farmers*
Farmers displaced by the Agricultural Revolution had no tools or marketable skills. They had known long hours, low wages, child labor, and poor working conditions for hundreds of years on the farm. Factory jobs helped them survive by breaking guilds' remaining traditional monopolies on manufacturing, and paid better than any alternative employment.
- *Accumulated new capital*
People created enormous amounts of new wealth during the Industrial Revolution because they could freely earn and keep their profits. Production outran consumption as they reinvested their profits in additional production rather than consume them. Industrial capitalism generated and sustained its own momentum.
- *Increased industrial productivity*
The Industrial Revolution was so productive that it financed its continued expansion through its own reinvested profits often even without (during its first 100 years) incorporating to sell stock, except for banks and railroads. Adequate capital was always available to develop promising new power sources, technologies, or manufacturing processes.
- *Raised real wages*
Prices of manufactured goods fell greatly. Workers' purchasing power rose greatly. Living standards went up. Reinvesting profits helped workers more than using profits to pay above-market wages, which would have slowed industrialization, decreased the number of jobs, and increased demand without increasing supply, thereby raising prices.
- *Broadened economic opportunity*
The basis of economic relationships shifted from privilege to enterprise. All could incorporate and patent. Poor but creative persons enriched themselves by developing new technologies and industries. The masses for the first time es-

caped grinding poverty. Immigrants bettered their own lot or their children's.

- *Enhanced social mobility*
The basis of social relationships shifted from birth to wealth. Social class membership became dynamic rather than static, open to rapid entry and exit. Much of the lower class moved into the middle class. Through private enterprise ethnic minorities rose socially despite majority group prejudice and discrimination against them.
- *Introduced political democracy*
The basis of political relationships shifted from custom to consent. Capitalism increased the middle class's size and economic influence and catered to majority preference and popular demand. First the middle class and then the lower class won the right to vote. Majoritarianism brought mass political parties, electioneering, and appeals to the common man.

[High School World History TEKS 14(A), 24(A)]

Avoid subtle forms of political correctness which:

- *Let race and gender quotas dictate coverage.*
People or events that had more influence for a longer time, should receive more attention than those with less influence.
- *Use language to stigmatize or idealize.*
Patterns of pejoratives toward Europeans, and superlatives toward non-Europeans, are editorially suspect.
- *Note conflict between, but not within, social groups.*
Individuals of the same race, class, or gender often disagree more among themselves, than their group disagrees with others.
- *Tell of mistreatment only of non-whites by whites.*
Brutalities to Europeans by people of color are as noteworthy as inhumanities to non-whites by whites.

- *Give less than equal space to Christianity.*
As many student text lines should discuss beliefs and practices of Christianity, as of other major world religions.
- *Judge cultural consciousness by double standards.*
Preservation of Europe's literary, legal, religious, and political culture should be as worthwhile as that of others.
- *Hold different races to different ethical norms.*
If whites should have paid for Indian lands, Indians should have paid for taking each others' hunting grounds.

[Texas State Board of Education Operating Rule ¶ 2.9 (c) (4) (A), (B), and (D)]

Prevent stereotypes of whites-as-oppressors and people-of-color-as-victims from slanting discussions of Western imperialism by also noting that:

- Some sub-Saharan African peoples practiced human sacrifice (e.g., Ashanti, Dahomey). The Aztecs and some other New World Indians engaged in cannibalism as well as human sacrifice.
- In the Columbian exchange, infection was a two-way street. A very lethal strain of syphilis, probably from America, killed many Europeans in the early 1500s.
- Although slavery had long existed worldwide, only the white Christian West realized it was wrong, engaged in self-criticism over it, and took the lead in abolishing it.
- Manchu China was as culturally arrogant as the West. Chinese emperors viewed all foreign traders as barbarian bearers of tribute to whom they wished only to sell, not to buy, demanding payment in silver.
- The West demanded "extraterritoriality" because Chinese justice assumed guilt until proven innocent, used torture to extract confessions, and held whole groups responsible for acts of single members.
- British rule brought peace and a common language (English) to deeply divided India, ended or opposed suttee, infanticide, and child marriage there, improved In-

dian health, education, and transportation systems, and merely added another caste to the existing system.

- *Inter-tribal* hatreds such as between Aztecs and Tlascalians, Iroquois vs. Algonquins, or Comanche against Apache, were often deeper than *inter-racial* hatreds between whites and Indians, who often preferred to ally with whites against their more ancient Indian foes.
- Africans are now enforcing (e.g., Nigeria in Biafra, Zaire in Katanga) arbitrary boundaries drawn in disregard of ethnic loyalties by 19th-century Europeans.

[High School World History TEKS 5(B), 7(B)]

Discuss scientific weakness as well as strengths of theories of human evolution:

- Below the level at which they discovered *Australopithecines*, *Homo habilis* and *Homo erectus*, the Leakeys at the same site later found remains of a stone dwelling clearly built by man. Some *Homo habilis* and *Homo erectus* specimens have also been dated at the same or greater ages than *Australopithecus*. Thus these creatures may not be *Homo sapiens'* ancestors.
- Existence of brow ridges, for instance, or the position of the spinal column's attachment to the skull, may vary by sex or age even among individuals of a single species. Random preservation of such traits may exaggerate the actual number of alleged transitional forms.

[High School World History TEKS 25(A), 25(G)]

Explain these core beliefs of Christianity:

- Trinitarianism
- Virgin birth of Christ
- Incarnation of Christ
- Atonement of Christ
- Resurrection of Christ
- Second coming of Christ

[High School World History TEKS 19(A)]