

**IB History Year 1 Standard and Higher Level
Mr. Harrington**

Summer and Fall 2017 Assignments

The IB Contemporary History course provides the student with the opportunity to engage in in-depth analysis of major events and themes from the history of the twentieth century and evaluate the interpretation of those events by leading historians. The course is not a broad survey such as one would find in an AP history class. Because of this, the student is expected to engage in extensive and thoughtful reading about the subject not only by completing assigned class readings, but also through independent study outside of the classroom. The following summer and fall assignments have been designed in order to adequately prepare the student for the coming year. I have also added a list of suggested relevant outside print and film resources that the student may wish to read and view before or during the coming school year, perhaps as a jumping-off point for an internal assessment or extended essay.

- I. **SUMMER READING** (due the second week of class): Comparative Memories of the First World War
 - a. You will acquire and read Erich Maria Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front* over the course of this summer, and you will need to have the book completed by the beginning of this coming school year. This book is relevant to Paper 2 of the IB History SL/HL exam, in particular with regard to Topic 11, which covers twentieth century wars. You will complete the assigned discussion questions posted on the course website, to be submitted during the second week of class. They will be due on August 23, 2017.
 - b. Class discussion on this book will be conducted during the second week of class, and will be led by a student who will be selected by the instructor. You will be expected, as in every class discussion, to have the relevant text with you and be prepared to discuss the book and its contents thoroughly.
 - c. During the first nine weeks in your IB English course, Dr. Cory will assign Ernest Hemingway, *A Farewell to Arms*. On October 6, you will submit a short essay comparing these two fictional representations of the memory of the First World War. The essay prompt will be posted by the second week of school. (For students whose parents withhold permission to read *All Quiet on the Western Front*, the comparative essay will be written on the poetry of Wilfred Owen instead of Remarque's novel.)
 - d. Note: due to some of the language and a brief and not explicitly described love scene in *All Quiet on the Western Front*, students must attach a signed parental permission slip to the reading questions, signifying parental consent to the student reading this book. If parents withhold permission, the student will read Barbara Tuchman's classic history of the opening of the First World War, *The Guns of*

August. The reading questions for this book are also appended to this document. The parent permission letter may be found in Appendix D.

- e. For **extra credit**, you may acquire and read up to two books from the suggested reading list in Part III before the beginning of the school year. You are encouraged to take notes while reading, and if the book is a personal copy, to underline and/or write notes in the margins.
- f. For each extra credit book, you will need to prepare a typewritten précis of the book. Detailed descriptions of the précis assignment are appended to this document. The précis will be due during the first week of class, on August 18.

II. INTERNAL ASSESSMENT

- a. You will need to start pondering what eras, themes, and events in history you find most interesting, and considering topics to research for the internal assessment next year.
- b. The “historical investigation” (internal assessment or, more commonly, IA) is worth 25% of the total IB History SL score and 20% of the HL score. An excellent IA is an essential requirement for earning a good overall IB history grade.
- c. Any historical topic that does not fall within the past ten years is valid for the IA. Excellent IAs have been written in my class not only on traditional topics such as diplomacy, policy and strategy, and the role of women in wartime, but also on education and decolonization, the space race and the Florida economy, novelists in the Harlem Renaissance, film and historical memory, the impact of Operation Linebacker II on North Vietnamese morale, the historical memory of the Los Angeles riots as reflected in hip hop music, the role of education in Japanese-American internment camps and on American Indian reservations, and the intersection of art and politics in the Weimar Republic. The best topics are often the most original, and involve primary research either at the state archives, local archives and libraries, or interviews with family members or others in the community with direct experience of historical events.
- d. Students in the SL course will submit two drafts of an IA for an official grade. The students in the HL class will write one draft this year. The SL section will have freedom of choice, subject to my approval, in topics as long as they do not fall within the past ten years, and are of historical significance. The students in the HL section must choose a topic from the case studies in the IB History syllabus for World History Topic 10: Authoritarian States. If the draft earns a grade higher than an IB grade of 6 (on a 1-7 scale), the student may keep that topic during the senior year. Otherwise, the student **must** choose a new topic for the official IA in the senior year.

- e. The instructor will introduce the students to the IA during the second week of class. The IA topic and draft research question will be due September 1, 2017. Draft sections of the IA will be due during the fall semester for SL students and during the third and fourth nine weeks for the HL students.
- III. The student is encouraged, in addition to the assigned course readings, to cast a wide net in consulting outside books, historical journal articles and essays, and documentary films. Below is a list of suggested reading and viewing that is relevant to material that will be taught in the coming year. This list is not exhaustive by any means, and students are urged to browse library shelves and read good book review sections in periodicals such as *The Economist*, *The New York Times*, and *The Wall Street Journal* in order to see what is new in the field.

Books

- Applebaum, Anne. *Iron Curtain: The Crushing of Eastern Europe, 1944-1956*.
- Ash, Timothy Garton. *The File: A Personal History*
- _____. *The Polish Revolution: Solidarity, 1980–82*.
- Beevor, Antony. *The Battle for Spain: The Spanish Civil War*.
- _____. *Stalingrad: The Fateful Siege*.
- Chang, Iris. *The Rape of Nanking*.
- Conquest, Robert. *The Great Terror: Stalin's Purges of the 1930s*.
- Fussell, Paul. *The Great War and Modern Memory*.
- _____. "Thank God for the Atom Bomb." (Essay)
- _____. *Wartime: Understanding and Behavior in the Second World War*.
- Gaddis, John Lewis. *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History*.
- Gellately, Robert. *Lenin, Stalin, and Hitler: The Age of Social Catastrophe*.
- _____. *Stalin's Curse: Battling for Communism in War and Cold War*.
- Hastings, Max. *The Battle for the Falklands*.
- Keegan, John. *The First World War*.
- Keylor, William R., ed. *The Legacy of the Great War: Peacemaking, 1919*.
- MacMillan, Margaret. *Paris, 1919: Six Months that Changed the World*.
- _____. *The War That Ended Peace: The Road to 1914*.
- Overy, Richard. *Why the Allies Won*.
- Roberts, Andrew. *The Storm of War: A New History of the Second World War*.
- Shute, Nevil. *On the Beach*.
- Snyder, Timothy. *Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin*.
- Solzhenitsyn, Aleksandr I. *The Gulag Archipelago*.
- _____. *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*.
- Tuchman, Barbara. *The Guns of August*. (This will not count for extra credit if the student is using this book to replace *All Quiet on the Western Front*.)

Documentaries

The First World War (2003)

World at War (1974)

The War—A Ken Burns Film (2007)

Appendix A: Summer Reading Questions for *All Quiet on the Western Front*

IB History Year 1
Mr. Harrington

Summer 2017

***All Quiet on the Western Front* Reading Questions**

Please answer the following questions to aid in your comprehension of the summer reading books. Be as thorough yet concise in your answers as possible, write in complete sentences, and cite the source of your information with the page number from the books in parentheses as the end of each answer. Answers must be handwritten. These are questions that demand a close and thoughtful reading of the summer reading texts, and should not be undertaken at the last minute.

1. Contrast Paul Baumer and Kaczkinsky. Why do they have such a close relationship, considering their differences?
2. What role does Himmelstoss serve in the story? How has the war affected him?
3. What happened in the shell crater with the French soldier? What do we learn about Paul, and Remarque's, view of the war from this episode?
4. What is the purpose of Paul's visit home? How has the war changed Paul?
5. Why does the book end the way it does? What is Remarque trying to say about war?
6. What is Remarque's view of the First World War? How did his experience as a veteran shape the novel?

Appendix B: Summer Reading Questions for *The Guns of August*

IB History Year 1
Mr. Harrington

Summer 2017

Guns of August Reading Questions

Please answer the following questions to aid in your reading of the Tuchman book. Be as thorough yet concise in your answers as possible, write in complete sentences, and cite the source of your information with the page number from the Tuchman book in parentheses at the end of each answer. Answers must be handwritten. These are questions that demand a close and thoughtful reading of *Guns of August*, and should not be undertaken at the last minute.

1. How does Tuchman characterize the European monarchs Nicholas II? George V? Kaiser Wilhelm II? What significance do their interrelationships with each other hold?
2. Who was Alfred von Schlieffen? Why was he significant?
3. Was a two front war inevitable for Germany? What opportunities were available to avert the onset of the First World War? Why were they not taken?
4. Assess King Albert of the Belgians as a political and military leader. How well did he do in facing the prospect of German invasion?
5. Assess the state of the Ottoman Empire and its position in European affairs at the beginning of the First World War.
6. Why was Russian participation on the Eastern Front essential to the Allies?
7. What was the purpose of the German use of terror, or *Schrecklichkeit*, in Belgium?
8. Why does Barbara Tuchman say that the battles of August 1914 laid a “trap from which there was, and has been, no exit?” Is she implying that the First World War is still with us? If so, how might this be true.

Appendix C: Writing a Précis (also available on the course website):

IB History Year 1
Mr. Harrington

Summer 2017

Book Précis Assignment

A précis is a method of summarizing and critically evaluating a book, academic article, or an essay. It will help you hone your writing skills in presenting a complete thought in a concise format, since the précis should consist of no more than two pages of typewritten material, while still providing a comprehensive overview of a text and its place in historiography. It will also aid you in identifying and describing the elements of OPCVL on your IA and Paper 1 exam.

Format

The précis should be typed in 12 point, Times New Roman font, double spaced, and with one inch margins on all sides. The students name, class, period, and date should be indicated in the upper right hand corner. The précis should be headed by a bibliographic entry, and continue in the following order, with the sections indicated by a left-justified, bolded heading.

Bibliographic Entry

This serves as the title of the précis. The bibliographic entry should be in correct Chicago/Turabian format, and must indicate the author's name, title of the work, place of publication, publisher, and date of publication.

Author Background

Who is the author of the work? Are they still living? Where were they educated? Are they a professional historian? Who was their mentor, if relevant? What field or genre of history are they most known for?

Author's Purpose

Why did the author write the work? What problem was the author addressing? What is the key historical question the author is seeking to answer?

Author's Thesis/Theses

What is/are the main argument(s) of the work?

Genre of History

Is this primarily political, cultural, social, economic, military, or intellectual history? Sometimes genre can be difficult to pin down, or the work may be a blend of genres. Sometimes a clue can

be found in the major themes of the work, what sources the author uses, and how the author uses and interprets sources.

Ideological Orientation

Sometimes this can be hard to tell. How does the author interpret history? Is there a national, religious, or class-based bias? Does the author ascribe agency to leaders, or ordinary people? Be creative—a professor once told us that a current American historian is actually a “nineteenth century British classical liberal, whether he admits it or not.”

Significant Findings

What, as best as you can tell, is the author contributing to the field? What is new and surprising in the work? Focus on what the author has learned from primary sources.

Strengths

What are the strengths of the book? Where has the author effectively argued and supported a thesis? What positive contributions have been made to the historiography? Every work has some strengths.

Weaknesses

You need to be specific but also fair. Every work has some weaknesses.

Appendix D: Parental Permission Letter for *All Quiet on the Western Front*

May 2, 2017

Dear Parent or Guardian:

I am enthusiastic at the prospect of having your son or daughter for a second year in the IB History of the Americas 1 or IB Contemporary History 1 course. We have had a fruitful and productive year, and I look forward to seeing further achievements among the class next year.

I am currently assigning reading for the summer. As in the past, I prefer to choose books that contain engaging ideas and themes that will introduce the subject matter we will be studying in the coming year. In order to prepare the students for the study of the First World War and grappling with its place in modern memory, I am assigning German veteran Erich Maria Remarque's classic novel *All Quiet on the Western Front*. This coming fall, the students will be reading Ernest Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms* in their IB English literature class, and together the students will hopefully gain perspective on the cultural and social impact of that cataclysmic conflict.

As Remarque was drawing upon his experience in the German Army in the trenches of the First World War, the novel contains themes of wartime violence, some profanity, and an obliquely described love scene between the narrator and a young Frenchwoman. One purpose of this letter is to inform you that the book therefore contains some content that you may not wish for your son or daughter to read. If this is the case, your student is free to choose to read the alternate summer reading text, Barbara Tuchman's classic history of the outbreak of the First World War, *The Guns of August*. There is no advantage or disadvantage related to grade or content connected to choosing one book or the other.

A permission slip is appended below, which will be required with the summer assignment if the student chooses to read *All Quiet on the Western Front*. The permission slip is due at the end rather than the beginning of the summer to allow you time to preview the book if you so choose. I believe that our students will have their minds pleasantly exercised by this summer's readings as we prepare ourselves for the final year of the IB program. I wish all of you a safe and restorative summer break.

Very respectfully,

Matthew C. Harrington

I grant _____ my permission to read *All Quiet on the Western Front*. It is understood that an alternate reading assignment, *The Guns of August*, has been provided if permission is not granted. Refusal of permission will not affect the student's grade.

_____ Parent / Guardian Name (Printed)

_____ Parent / Guardian Signature