Welcome to Advanced Placement World History! This course will develop your historical thinking skills in covering the following themes: interaction between humans and the environment; development and interaction of cultures; state building, expansion, and conflict; creation, expansion, and interaction of economic systems; and the development and transformation of social structures. As you can see, these are themes that were also covered in geography. But geography approaches these themes through spatial analysis and models based on regionalization, whereas history primarily approaches the themes through temporal analysis (change, connections and continuity over time) and uses the structure of periodization (eras) to add clarity and meaning to these changes, connections, and continuities. In Advanced Placement World History you will be using tools and skills from both history and geography as you summer reading book makes clear in the introduction.

Learning to recognize global patterns, over both time and space, and connect those patterns with inter-regional, regional, and local developments are among the most important and challenging habits of mind developed through the study of world history. (p. XIII)

The summer reading book and this assignment are designed to help you make the transition from geography to history. The first two assignments ask you to map important events and to place them on a timeline. The third assignment asks you to engage in a bit of historical analysis. The book takes a “big history” approach and divides human history into three periods. There is one assignment for each period.

Big History Periodization and Corresponding Assignments

Beginnings: The Era of Foragers – 250,000 – 8,000 BCE pp. 1 - 22
There is a list of key events from this era on page 2. There are 11 events in this list, and you are to select 4 additional events from the chapter that you think are important to this era. You are to map the hearth of each of these 15 events and show diffusion patterns of each (if there are any) on a world map. You may draw a world map or print one out that you find on-line. I would suggest that you draw or print a map without country boundaries, as these did not exist during this period. A blank map with continents and major islands will work best. You are also to construct a time line with equal increments of time and plot each of the 15 events on it. I would suggest that you draw the time line either at the bottom of the map or on the back of it.

Acceleration: The Agrarian Era – 8,000 BCE – 1750 CE pp. 23 - 57
There is a list of key events from this era on page 26. There are 17 events in this list and you are to select 3 additional events from the chapter that you think are important to this era. You are to map the hearth of each of these 20 events and show diffusion patterns of each (if there are any) on a world map. The map you do this on should be identical to the one above, before you add the events, hearths, and diffusion patterns. You are also to construct a time line with equal
increments of time and plot each of the 20 events on it. Again, do this in the same manner as you did the above assignment.

Select three of the key features and trends of the modern era from page 59 and in a few paragraphs explain why the three you chose are the most important features and/or trends of the modern era. Use as much specific evidence as you can to support your arguments.