To parents and students,

Congratulations on your enrollment in the AP World History course. Advanced Placement history classes are designed to be more rigorous and challenging than the standard required history classes. It is important for students and parents to know that these courses will require more complex reading and writing assignments throughout the school year. We also are aware that many students might be interested in learning more about the world to create a strong foundation for the complex concepts that make up our curriculum. The following texts are optional reading for the summer before you begin the course.

These texts are recommended or required reading for multiple WHAP programs in high schools across the country, and supports AP World History in the following ways:

Divides history into the 6 time periods of the course:

Incorporates key themes of AP World that will be integrated into all units:



We commend you for taking advantage of the opportunity to create a foundation for this interesting and compelling course! We look forward to meeting you next year.

**Suggested titles are on the following pages.**

If you have questions about this, please contact our Instructional Partner, Valerie Taylor – vtaylor@eanesisd.net

Thank you,

WHS AP World History Team

***Suggested Reading Titles***

**Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies**

Societies that had had a head start in food production advanced beyond the hunter-gatherer stage, and then developed religion --as well as nasty germs and potent weapons of war --and adventured on sea and land to conquer and decimate preliterate cultures. A major advance in our understanding of human societies, Guns, Germs, and Steel chronicles the way that the modern world came to be and stunningly dismantles racially based theories of human history. Winner of the Pulitzer Prize, the Phi Beta Kappa Award in Science, the Rhone-Poulenc Prize, and the Commonwealth club of California's Gold Medal.

**An Edible History of Humanity – Tom Standage**

More than simply sustenance, food historically has been a kind of technology, changing the course of human progress by helping to build empires, promote industrialization, and decide the outcomes of wars. Tom Standage draws on archaeology, anthropology, and economics to reveal how food has helped shape and transform societies around the world, from the emergence of farming in China by 7500 b.c. to the use of sugar cane and corn to make ethanol today.

**Empires of Food: Feast, Famine, and the Rise and Fall of Civilization -- Evan D.G. Fraser**

Using the colorful diaries of a sixteenth-century merchant as a narrative guide, *Empires of Food*vividly chronicles the fate of people and societies for the past twelve thousand years through the foods they grew, hunted, traded, and ate—and gives us fascinating, and devastating, insights into what to expect in years to come. In energetic prose, agricultural expert Evan D. G. Fraser and journalist Andrew Rimas tell gripping stories that capture the flavor of places as disparate as ancient Mesopotamia and imperial Britain, taking us from the first city in the once-thriving Fertile Crescent to today’s overworked breadbaskets and rice bowls in the United States and China, showing just what food has meant to humanity.

**Seeds of Change: Six Plants That Transformed Mankind -- Henry Hobhouse**

A personal and highly original take on the history of six commercial plants, *Seeds of Change* illuminates how sugar, tea, cotton, the potato, quinine, and the cocoa plant have shaped our past. In this fascinating account, the impassioned Henry Hobhouse explains the consequences of these plants with attention-grabbing historical moments. While most records of history focus on human influence, Hobhouse emphasizes how plants too are a central and influential factor in the historical process. *Seeds of Change* is a captivating and invaluable addition to our understanding of modern culture.

**Salt: A World History -- Mark Kurlansky**

In his fifth work of nonfiction, Mark Kurlansky turns his attention to a common household item with a long and intriguing history: salt. The only rock we eat, salt has shaped civilization from the very beginning, and its story is a glittering, often surprising part of the history of humankind. A substance so valuable it served as currency, salt has influenced the establishment of trade routes and cities, provoked and financed wars, secured empires, and inspired revolutions.  Populated by colorful characters and filled with an unending series of fascinating details, ***Salt***is a supremely entertaining, multi-layered masterpiece

**The World That Trade Created: Society, Culture, and the World Economy, 1400 to the Present -- Steven Topik**

In a series of brief vignettes the authors bring to life international trade and its actors, and also demonstrate that economic activity cannot be divorced from social and cultural contexts. In the process they make clear that the seemingly modern concept of economic globalization has deep historical roots.

# Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History -- Sidney W. Mintz

In this eye-opening study, Sidney Mintz shows how Europeans and Americans transformed sugar from a rare foreign luxury to a commonplace necessity of modern life, and how it changed the history of capitalism and industry. He discusses the production and consumption of sugar, and reveals how closely interwoven are sugar's origins as a "slave" crop grown in Europe's tropical colonies with is use first as an extravagant luxury for the aristocracy, then as a staple of the diet of the new industrial proletariat. Finally, he considers how sugar has altered work patterns, eating habits, and our diet in modern times.

**A History of the World in 100 Objects -- Neil MacGregor**

The blockbuster New York Times bestseller and the companion volume to the wildly popular radio series Neil MacGregor has blazed an unusual path to international renown As director of the British Museum he organized an exhibit that aimed to tell the history of humanity through the stories of one hundred objects made used venerated or discarded by man The exhibit and its accompanying BBC radio series broke broadcasting records and MacGregors book became a bestselling sensation on both sides of the Atlantic and a huge Christmas hit with more than 100 000 copies in print in the United States alone Examining items from a chopping tool from Africas Olduvai Gorge to the credit card A History of the World in 100 Objects is an engrossing and profoundly original work of history that will captivate readers for many years to come