

World History 1 Honors and On-Level Expectations

West Potomac High School's History Department takes pride in welcoming freshmen into their high school career with World History 1 Honors or On-level course work.

Course Overview

The World History & Geography I course is a chronologically-organized study of world history and geography from prehistoric times through 1500 CE. Students will study about western and non-western civilizations throughout this period of time. The course will be taught in accordance with Virginia's Standards of Learning (SOL) for World History & Geography 1 and will prepare students to succeed on an end-of-course test.

The content of the course is based on the state's Standards of Learning, Fairfax County's Program of Studies, and the following eight themes: adaptation to the environment, patterns of human population and migration, development and diffusion of technology, communication and exchange, social structure, belief systems, conflict and political legitimacy and authority.

For those students used to the honors path, they can expect rigorous work through blended learning models and student-centered teaching. Honors students are expected to be ready to jump into learning through group work, class discussions, presentation activities, and PBLs (project based learning). Tests, quizzes and projects are weighed a little heavier in honors classes. There is also a focus on the use of DBQs, sensory inquiry, and SOL based questioning.

On-level courses are not left out of the rigor and student-centered learning by any means. The goal of our on-level coursework is aimed at the development and honing of social studies skills. This means the term weighting for on-level students is weighted more heavily on formative learning activities such as homework, class discussion, and learning activities. The on-level assessments are still based on SOL standard questions but with more of a focus on understanding content.

The most noticeable difference would be the weighting put into grades between the courses. You will notice that the honors course places more emphasis on summative grades, like assessments (tests, quizzes and projects), while the on-level course gives more importance towards formative assignments, such as homework, classwork, and lessoned activities.