

A GUIDE TO GRADING IN WORLD HISTORY II

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INTRODUCTION

Your grades measure what you know and can do.

Failure is expected and it is okay. Learning is not instantaneous. (How many tries did it take you to ride a bike or drive a car with a stick shift?) Learning is about trying and failing, and then trying again, and again, until you achieve success. This is how learning works outside the classroom, and it is no different inside the classroom. This grading policy reflects this idea by giving you multiple chances to demonstrate mastery and by minimizing the weight of practice.

Intelligence is not fixed, anybody can increase their intelligence. Research on the brain has shown that if you embrace challenges, put effort into your learning, keep going despite setbacks, and learn from criticism, you can increase your achievement. I truly believe this and I have tried to formulate a grading system that allows you to work hard and make mistakes without your grades suffering.

When you master a topic or skill is not important, that you learn it is what is important. Thus, if you are having a rough day, or do not really understand something and you do poorly on an assessment, you can show me later that you do understand the material.

Our job, as teachers, is to make our grading system reflect all of this in the best way possible. No grading system is perfect, but this grading system is based on what I believe in and teaching best practice. If you have feedback, please let me know.

GRADING CRITERIA

On most assignments and assessments you will be graded against one or more standards. It should be clear to you from the outset what standard is being assessed on any work you do. In order for your grades to be as accurate as possible, you will be assessed multiple times on each standard. If you do not provide a large enough body of evidence for an accurate grade (in other words, if you are not completing assigned tasks), your grade will be Incomplete until you supply the evidence.

RETAKES AND REVISIONS

Learning happens through practice. Therefore, you are encouraged, and may sometimes be required to, retake or revise assignments. It is not a sign of failure. Mastery in, or outside of, school is a result of repeated practice. Retakes and revisions allow for you to continue practicing. Your grade will most heavily reflect where you end up, not the journey you took to get there.

GRADING STANDARDS

See the course syllabus for a detailed description of each of these standards.

- Writing (W): 20%
- Reading (R): 15%
- Speaking (S): 10%
- Research (X): 10%

- Analysis (A): 15%
- Use of Evidence (E): 25%

Yes, it only adds up to 95%, keep reading. Each assignment will fall into at least one of the five grading categories. Some may be in two or more, depending on what knowledge and skills are being assessed. When you get your unit learning goal sheet, you will know how each goal connects to the grading categories. Also, you will know in advance what categories will be assessed on each assignment.

Work habits (WH) and life skills such as: engagement in class, respect, timeliness, and preparedness are important and will be 5% of your grade.

A FEW LAST WORDS

A teacher does not *give* grades, a teacher gives feedback on your learning. Grades are communication about the learning you are doing. *Learning* is the emphasis, not the grade. What you are learning matters more than the number grade.

If you disagree with a particular grade, I encourage you to debate that specific grade with me. However, don't expect the grade to change unless you have proof that I got it wrong. Proof is evidence that you have the skills or knowledge (for example, showing me a properly formatted works cited or labeling a map correctly). Whining, no matter how persistent, does not equal proof.