

World History: The Modern Era

Teacher's Guide

Grade Level: 6–12

Curriculum Focus: World History

Duration: 14 segments

Program Description

This library of videos contains segments covering the Renaissance through the 19th century around the world.

- Achievements of Leonardo da Vinci (5 min.)
 - Galileo's Telescope (4 min.)
 - Machiavelli and The Prince (5 min.)
 - China's Forbidden City (4 min.)
 - Slaves Revolt (6 min.)
 - Peter the Great (4 min.)
 - America Declares Independence (6 min.)
 - Emperor Napoleon (6 min.)
 - After the French Revolution (7 min.)
 - Building New York City (6 min.)
 - Flight From Famine (5 min.)
 - European Imperialism in Africa (4 min.)
 - Australia's Early Settlers (4 min.)
 - Early Industrial America (6 min.)
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Lesson Plan

Student Objectives

- Review important books and other writings from this period, and discuss their influence.
- Select and defend one book as the most influential of the modern era.
- Describe one influential book from the 20th century.

Materials

- *World History: The Modern Era* video
- Print and online resources about books and other writings of the modern era
- Computers with Internet access

Procedures

1. After watching the video, ask students to define the modern era based on the periods, events, and people highlighted in the video. (*The modern era as depicted in the video covers history from the Renaissance to the Industrial revolution.*) Ask students to give a general description of these two periods, the Renaissance and the Industrial revolution. (See Vocabulary.) What were some other significant events of the modern era? (*Examples include the Opium Wars, transatlantic slave trade, the rise of Russia, the American Revolution, the French Revolution, immigration to America, the Irish Potato Famine, European imperialism in Africa, and British colonization in Australia.*)
2. Next, identify some of the influential books and other writings from this time period that were described in the video. Make a list on the board. Then ask students to add other titles they're familiar with. You may want to help develop the list by adding a few of your own. For example, your list might include the following:
 - *The Prince* (1513), by Niccolò Machiavelli
 - *The Revolutions of the Heavenly Orbs* (1543), by Nicolaus Copernicus
 - *Common Sense* (1776), by Thomas Paine
 - *The Communist Manifesto* (1848), by Karl Marx
 - *Civil Disobedience* (1849), by Henry David Thoreau
 - *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852), by Harriet Beecher Stowe
 - *Origin of Species* (1859), by Charles Darwin
 - *Les Misérables* (1862), by Victor Hugo
 - *Heart of Darkness* (1902), by Joseph Conrad
 - *The Jungle* (1906), by Upton Sinclair
3. For each book discuss the author, time period, and basic subject of each one. Then talk about the influence the book had on society or government. If students are unfamiliar with some of the titles, assign each title to a pair of students and have them research the book and come back and share what they learned with the class.
4. Have students work individually to choose the one book they feel was the most influential of the modern era. Ask them to write a short essay defending their choice.
5. Bring students together and ask volunteers to read their paragraphs. Discuss their choices. Which books did the class most often choose? What were some of the common themes found in

these books? (For example, many of these works describe an injustice or oppression. Some deal with the use of power, such as who should hold it and how it should be used.)

6. End the class by asking students to identify influential works of the 20th century. For example, their list might include the following titles:
 - *Twenty Years at Hull House* (1912), by Jane Addams
 - *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1913), by Sigmund Freud
 - *The Meaning of Relativity* (1920), by Albert Einstein
 - *Mein Kampf* (1925–26), by Adolf Hitler
 - *Brave New World* (1931), by Aldous Huxley
 - *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939), by John Steinbeck
 - *Animal Farm* (1945) or *1984* (1949), by George Orwell
 - *Silent Spring* (1962), by Rachel Carson
 - *The Feminine Mystique* (1963), by Betty Friedan
 - *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* (1965), by Malcolm X
7. As a homework assignment, ask students to choose one book and explain its influence on the 20th century.

Assessment

Use the following three-point rubric to evaluate students' work during this lesson.

- 3 points: Students were active in class discussions; identified several influential works of the modern era; wrote an engaging, convincing essay defending one book as the most influential of the era.
- 2 points: Students participated in class discussions; identified some influential works of the modern era; wrote a complete, satisfactory essay defending one book as the most influential of the era.
- 1 point: Students did not participate in class discussions; did not identify any influential works of the modern era; wrote an incomplete or weak essay defending one book as the most influential of the era.

Vocabulary

colony

Definition: A country or an area that is ruled by another country

Context: In the 1500s Europeans saw enslaved Africans as a source of inexpensive labor for their colonies.



czar

Definition: A king, or ruler, in Russia before 1917

Context: Peter the Great became the czar and transformed Russia into a powerful modern state.

emperor

Definition: A ruler who has total control over a group of nations or territories

Context: In the Forbidden City emperors were safe, isolated from the world.

Enlightenment

Definition: An intellectual movement of the 18th century that emphasized reason, science, human rights, and the natural world

Context: Thomas Paine was influenced by the ideas of the Enlightenment.

famine

Definition: An acute shortage of food leading to widespread hunger and starvation

Context: Almost one million people died during the Irish Potato Famine.

immigrant

Definition: Somebody who comes to a country to live there

Context: The flow of immigrants arriving in the 19th century helped create a diverse society in old New York.

imperialism

Definition: The domination of one country's political, economic, or cultural life by another

Context: Imperialism brought wealth and power to the Europeans, but those living in the colonies were often oppressed.

industrial revolution

Definition: A period of economic and social change in Europe and the United States beginning in the late 18th century, involving the widespread introduction of factories and a migration into cities

Context: The Industrial revolution, which began in the late 1700s, had a dramatic effect on economic and social life around the globe.

opium

Definition: An extract from the seeds of the opium poppy, containing narcotic substances; the drug made from the opium extract

Context: In 1836 the Chinese government banned the importation of opium.

oppression

Definition: The domination over a person or people in a cruel or unjust way

Context: Some of the worst oppression occurred in the Congo.



Renaissance

Definition: A period of time in Europe (A.D. 1500–1800), after the medieval era, based on a rebirth of intellectual activity, a new way of thinking, and a new emphasis on learning about art, literature, and modern science

Context: The Renaissance began in Italy with the rediscovery of the writings and art of ancient Greece and Rome.

treatise

Definition: A book or other written work that examines a subject carefully and completely

Context: Niccolò Machiavelli wrote a treatise on effective leadership that made him famous to some and infamous to others.

tyrant

Definition: A ruler who uses absolute power in an oppressive and unjust way

Context: Some saw *The Prince* as a guide to becoming a tyrant.

Thematic Units

Help your students evaluate and analyze what they view in the videos with the Essential Questions for each Thematic Unit.

Power

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- During the modern era (the Renaissance to the 1900s), who (people or countries) had power? How did they exercise this power?
- During this period, who was oppressed by dictators or regimes? How did people respond to their oppression or lack of power?
- What has given people or groups of people more power than others? How has that changed over time?

SEGMENTS

Machiavelli and *The Prince*

- *Pre-viewing question*
What was Italy's political situation during the Renaissance? Who was considered powerful?
- *Post-viewing question*
What is Niccolò Machiavelli's most well-known treatise? What did he consider attributes of a great leader?



China's Forbidden City

- *Pre-viewing question*
When did the Opium Wars take place? Who fought them and for what cause?
- *Post-viewing question*
How did cultural differences contribute to the failure of Britain's diplomatic mission to China in 1793? What helped open trade between these two countries?

Slaves Revolt

- *Pre-viewing question*
From where were many slaves purchased? When did the practice of transatlantic slave transportation become illegal in the U.S.?
- *Post-viewing question*
Why did Europeans initially bring African slaves to the Americas? Describe key events that helped abolish slave trading in the U.S.

Peter the Great

- *Pre-viewing question*
Who was Peter the Great? What city in Russia is named after him? Where is it located?
- *Post-viewing question*
For what is Peter the Great most famous in Russia? Why did he want to westernize his country?

America Declares Independence

- *Pre-viewing question*
Who are the leaders of the American Revolution? What were their goals?
- *Post-viewing question*
What effect did Thomas Paine's Common Sense and the Declaration of Independence have on the American colonies? Are the ideals of those documents still held to today?

Emperor Napoleon

- *Pre-viewing question*
What were Napoleon Bonaparte's ambitions? Who were his allies, and who were his enemies?
- *Post-viewing question*
Describe the mission and outcome of Napoleon's march on Moscow. How did scientists and historians reconstruct the details of this invasion?

After the French Revolution

- *Pre-viewing question*
When did the French Revolution occur? How did its outcome affect French society?
- *Post-viewing question*



Describe life for the French people before their Revolution. What were the causes of the revolutionaries?

Flight From Famine

- *Pre-viewing question*
What is a famine? What crop was struck by disease in Ireland in 1845?
- *Post-viewing question*
What blame can be attributed to British landowners and government officials for the deaths that resulted from the Great Hunger?

European Imperialism in Africa

- *Pre-viewing question*
What is imperialism? Why did Europeans believe that imperialism was beneficial?
- *Post-viewing question*
Give examples of European imperialism. Why were Europeans successful in dominating African countries in the late 1800s?

Australia's Early Settlers

- *Pre-viewing question*
Where is Australia? How is it governed? What is its history of colonization?
- *Post-viewing question*
When and why did Britain establish a penal colony in Australia? How did convicts contribute to the development of the country's modern infrastructure?

Early Industrial America

- *Pre-viewing question*
Which industries flourished in the United States as a result of the industrial revolution? What jobs became available to immigrants?
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- *Post-viewing question*
What was Upton Sinclair's purpose in writing *The Jungle*? What changes in America can be attributed directly or indirectly to this novel?

Art and Culture

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- Name Renaissance artists or inventors and identify their works. What made them and their works well known?
- Who are well-known authors of the modern era? Name their works. How did their works influence their contemporary society?
- Who were great political leaders of the modern era who sought to modernize their countries? How did they accomplish their goals?



SEGMENTS

Galileo's Telescope

- *Pre-viewing question*
Who was Galileo? When and where did he live?
- *Post-viewing question*
What did Galileo study? Why were his ideas considered radical?

Achievements of Leonardo da Vinci

- *Pre-viewing question*
Where and when did Leonardo da Vinci live? What are his best-known accomplishments?
- *Post-viewing question*
What were da Vinci's areas of expertise? Why is it ironic that his artwork has gained the most notoriety?

Machiavelli and *The Prince*

- *Pre-viewing question*
What were the predominant attitudes about humanity and the arts during the Renaissance? Who were some of the great thinkers of this period?
- *Post-viewing question*
Why did Machiavelli write *The Prince*? Why was it considered important at the time?

Peter the Great

- *Pre-viewing question*
Who was Peter the Great? What city in Russia is named after him? Where is it located?
- *Post-viewing question*
What changes did Peter the Great make in Russia? How did these changes improve the lives of Russians?

After the French Revolution

- *Pre-viewing question*
When did the French Revolution occur? How did its outcome affect French society?
- *Post-viewing question*
Who is the author of *Les Misérables*? What themes does the novel explore? How do they reflect the problems of 19th-century France?

Building New York City

- *Pre-viewing question*
Where did New York's immigrants come from in the 1800s? What were their living conditions?
- *Post-viewing question*
How did gangs affect the social and political composition of New York City in the 19th century?



Science and Technology

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- What were some technological advances that occurred during the modern era? Who was responsible for them?
- Describe the importance of urban planning during the modern era. What effect did early planning have on the development of large cities such as New York City?
- Who were scientists and inventors who were considered ahead of their time? How did their thinking influence others?

SEGMENTS

Achievements of Leonardo da Vinci

- *Pre-viewing question*
Where and when did Leonardo da Vinci live? What are his best-known accomplishments?
- *Post-viewing question*
What areas of science did Leonard da Vinci study? What scientific inventions did he design before their time?

Galileo's Telescope

- *Pre-viewing question*
When and why were telescopes first used?
- *Post-viewing question*
What was the Renaissance view of science and religion? How did Galileo advance the study of astronomy?

Building New York City

- *Pre-viewing question*
Describe housing for residents of 19th-century New York City.
- *Post-viewing question*
When were fire departments and police forces established in New York City? What challenges did they face to bring order to the city?

Early Industrial America

- *Pre-viewing question*
Which industries flourished in the United States as a result of the industrial revolution? What jobs became available to immigrants?
- *Post-viewing question*
What was Upton Sinclair's purpose in writing *The Jungle*? What changes in America can be attributed directly or indirectly to this novel?



Academic Standards

Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL)

McREL's Content Knowledge: A Compendium of Standards and Benchmarks for K-12 Education addresses 14 content areas. To view the standards and benchmarks, visit link:

<http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/browse.asp>

This lesson plan addresses the following national standards:

- Geography – Human Systems: Understands the patterns of human settlement and their causes; Environment and Society: Understands how geography is used to interpret the past
- History – Historical Understanding: Understands and knows how to analyze chronological relationships and patterns, Understands the historical perspective
- Language Arts – Viewing: Uses viewing skills and strategies to understand and interpret visual media

The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS)

NCSS has developed national guidelines for teaching social studies. To become a member of NCSS, or to view the standards online, go to <http://www.socialstudies.org>

This lesson plan addresses the following thematic standards:

- Culture
- Time, Continuity, and Change
- Power, Authority, and Governance
- Production, Distribution, and Consumption
- Science, Technology, and Society
- Global Connections
- Civic Ideals and Practices

Support Materials

Related Lesson Plans

You can find hundreds of lesson plans online at <http://www.discoveryschool.com>. The following lesson plans work well with the video segments in this library collection.

- **Napoleon** (grades 6 - 8)
<http://school.discovery.com/lessonplans/programs/napoleon/>
- **Galileo's Dialogue** (grades 9 - 12)
<http://school.discovery.com/lessonplans/programs/greatbooks-galileosdialogue/>



- **Historical Heroes** (grades 9 - 12)
<http://school.discovery.com/lessonplans/programs/historicalheroes/>
- **Peter the Great** (grades 9 - 12)
<http://school.discovery.com/lessonplans/programs/peter/>
- **The Forbidden City** (grades 9 - 12)
<http://school.discovery.com/lessonplans/programs/forbiddencity/>
- **Africa: Names and Nations** (grades 9 - 12)
<http://school.discovery.com/lessonplans/programs/namesandnations/>

Other Resources

Develop custom worksheets, educational puzzles, online quizzes, and more with the free teaching tools offered on the Discoveryschool.com Web site. Create and print support materials, or save them to a Custom Classroom account for future use. To learn more, visit

- <http://school.discovery.com/teachingtools/teachingtools.html>
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