

# History

Grade Span 9/10

In the 9/10 grade span, all subjects of the social science program are taught in parallel. This enables coordinated presentation of teaching content within the framework of each thematic area, avoiding redundancies and taking advantage of synergies including possibilities for on-site historical work at locations such as archives, memorials and museums. This holistic approach promotes cross-disciplinary thinking and critical reflection on social science topics.

The development of Germany and Europe in the context of an increasingly globalized world as well as daily life in and the characteristics of democracies and dictatorships are the main focus of twentieth century studies in this grade span. Determinative international challenges and opportunities following the end of the East West conflict and the outlook for the twenty-first century are examined through a historical perspective.

Continuing their work from middle school, students first examine the period from the age of imperialism until the end of the First World War from a global-historical perspective. European power politics, colonial policy and expansionism marked the *Age of Imperialism*. The terms of peace following World War I and their consequences for Europe, Germany and the world are explored. Students analyze the causes of the First World War and draw lessons applicable to current crises and conflicts.

The characterization of war and its interpretation as a *primal catastrophe* is discussed in light of historical and cultural considerations. The possibilities for periodization of history are illustrated using epochal designations such as the *long nineteenth century* and the *short twentieth century*. The significance of historical upheavals and caesuras (1917, 1945, 1990) and the construction of meaning surrounding these events is examined.

The subject area *The Weimar Republic - Opportunities and Constraints on the First German Democracy* concerns struggles for democracy and between tradition and modernity in post-1919 Germany. Historical processes of upheaval and lines of continuity observable in the emergence of the domestic and foreign policy reality as well as cultural and social history questions are investigated and problematized. Reasons for the failure of the

Republic, such as the consequences of the global economic crisis and increasing popular support for the opponents of parliamentary democracy, are analyzed and evaluated.

The subject area *Nazi Germany 1933-1945* concerns the mechanisms by which a state becomes a dictatorship, and the ways in which a dictatorship expands and consolidates power. Mass loyalty and terror are examined as means by which power was secured in National Socialist Germany. The disenfranchisement, persecution and annihilation of minority groups, legitimized by racist ideology and laws, as well as atrocities committed during the Second World War, are examined. Students come to recognize the characteristics of National Socialist totalitarianism. Examination of daily life and the organization of the National Socialist dictatorship raises questions concerning the guilt and responsibility borne by subsequent generations.

Key concepts that help explain and organize historical facts support the recollection of facts and facilitate the creation of transferable and connectable knowledge. This methodology is deployed in the study of power structures and peace agreements of the nineteenth and twentieth century in the subject areas *Comparing Forms of Government* and *Conflicts and Conflict Resolution*. In the subject area *East West Conflict and the German Question*, the discussion centers on the interwoven histories of the divided postwar Germany against the background of the Cold War and conflicting ideological systems in Europe and the world. In this area, key moments in the history of Germany's division as well as significant events, developments, structures and life in the political and economic systems of East and West are examined in relation to democracy and dictatorship.

Students explore the causes and events of the Peaceful Revolution, as well as the meaning of German reunification within the context of the end of the East West conflict. Students examine perspectives on the unification process and consider it in light of its status as the immediate prehistory of contemporary political and social conditions, questions and problems. Following on from this, the subject area *The World Since 1990 - Challenges and Opportunities* provides an outlook on current and future challenges and possible solutions in the globalized world of the twenty-first century.

The subject area *Reflections on History* involves an examination of forms of individual and collective memory. An assessment of social controversies regarding historical-cultural interpretation elucidates for the student the present-boundedness of historical interpretation. The student reflects on and internalizes these considerations by participating in the public discourse, preparing the student for further advanced studies in the field of history.

### *Subject Matter Competencies*

The target competencies involve the ability to ask historical questions, use historical terms appropriately and place historical events in context.

- develop, narrow down and structure questions independently as means of inquiry-based learning and creating personal narratives
- recognize and understand questions raised by historical accounts and apply them in formulating one's own questions
- reflect on history as a construct and apply principles of historical insight
- use historical terminology correctly, and extend and reflect on such terminology
- distinguish between contemporary and present-day language used in historical texts
- independently organize historical events and developments spatially and chronologically; recognize and present historical sequences and juxtapositions
- independently apply, extend and reflect on selected concepts to explain historical facts and structure historical knowledge
- distinguish between sources and historical accounts
- identify and describe a variety of sources and accounts on the basis of their characteristics

### *Methodological Competencies*

Students develop methodological competencies permitting sophisticated interpretation of historical accounts.

- develop hypotheses and develop methods to verify the hypotheses
- investigate in a goal-oriented and independent manner information relevant to a selected historical topic in light of the characteristics of various media
- purposefully select, describe, analyze and interpret sources when examining a historical question
- independently compare the viewpoints of a diversity of sources regarding a historical issue and analyze and assess perspectives, intentions and possible contradictions
- independently analyze and compare historical accounts with reference to their symbolic patterns and intended meaning, and examine indicia of validity
- depict the results of historical learning in increasingly complex contexts and present them appropriately for the target audience and using suitable media

### *Social and Emotional Competencies*

Social and emotional competencies in the field of history relate to the student's ability to gain historical orientation.

- consciously perceive and reflect on the historical development of present conditions and the omni-presence of history
- examine and reflect on the significance of selected historical facts for the present day and one's own life
- explain and assess human behavior in the past within its historical context and independently arrive at well-grounded conclusions
- examine, extend and where necessary revise existing concepts of the past
- compare one's own moral conceptions and views with those of other cultures and eras; perceive and reflect on any differences
- independently form and substantiate conclusions and viewpoints as to historical topics
- discuss diverse viewpoints and evaluate, extend and where necessary revise personal orientations and beliefs

## Orientation in Time and Space

The following topics are discussed in all learning areas: issues of periodization in historical accounts and the meaning of epochs in history

### **The Age of Imperialism and the Post-World War I Era**

- motives and sociocultural consequences of colonialism
- changes in German foreign policy
- imperial politics and the road to World War I
- the epoch-making year 1917
- World War I as "the seminal catastrophe of this century"
- The Paris Peace Conference/Treaty of Versailles and the reshaping of Europe

### **The Weimar Republic - Opportunities and Constraints on the First German Democracy**

- the conditions giving rise to the Republic
- the Republic between self-assertion and decline (political, economic, cultural and social)
- mentalities - *a republic without republicans*
- ideology and the rise of Nazism

### **Nazi Germany 1933-1945**

- the establishment and expansion of the Nazi dictatorship
- the character of Nazi Germany (economy, society and culture as instruments of the Nazi regime)

- implementation of racial policy in Nazi Germany
- life under the dictatorship (active participation, conformity and resistance)
- Nazi foreign policy in the run-up to World War II
- World War II

### **Comparing Forms of Government**

- the legitimacy of power and power structures on the basis of European examples from the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth centuries (constitutional and parliamentary monarchy, dictatorship and democracy)

### **Conflicts and Conflict Resolution**

- historical context, motives, aims and consequences of European peace treaties (Congress of Vienna, Paris Peace Conference/Treaty of Versailles, Potsdam Conference/The Two Plus Four Agreement)

### **East West Conflict and the *German Question***

- tensions and confrontations in the context of a bipolar world
- FRG and GDR: one nation - two states (formation, political ambitions and social reality, everyday experiences, response to criticism and opposition)
- the two German states between confrontation and rapprochement
- the process of reunification
- experiencing dictatorship - field trip or other direct encounter with witness(es) to history

### **The World Since 1990 - Challenges and Opportunities**

- Europe after the East West conflict (collapse of the Eastern bloc, new nationalisms, conflicts and wars, process of European integration)
- changes in the global balance of power

### **Reflections on History**

- ways of commemorating the victims of National Socialism
- cultures of remembrance in Europe (days and places of remembrance and symbols) or history as controversy - public discourses on interpretations of a selected example

## Elective Subject Areas

- encounters with history in the media (e.g. comic books, movies, documentary accounts, young adult novels, computer games)
- reflecting remembrance in various countries (e.g. World War I)
- the Germans and their neighbors: common past - divergent histories
- migration during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries
- perceptions of women and men in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries
- youth culture in East and West Germany
- political extremism and terrorism in history