

## *Background for our approach to teaching History in the Diocese of Marquette*

### *Introduction*

The great hope of this history curriculum is to provide the teacher and student with a coherent study of primarily western civilization, United States history and salvation history through scripture and Church history. To these ends we have provided a fixed sequence, a common unit planning structure, a richness of depth, and we have selected core resources and aids for the teacher. That both teacher and student alike might find the subsequent content enriching of their shared experience in historical truth, goodness and beauty is the overarching aim of this curriculum.

The intention of what follows is to provide an initial review of this curriculum so as to better understand the thinking that went into its development. The hope is, by providing this background, it will assist the teacher to better utilize the structure and materials found within to benefit their instruction.

### *Principles of the Curriculum*

The Diocese of Marquette curriculum foundations document describes four essential parts of our academic curriculum, ordered basic knowledge, basic skills or tools of learning, the development of the student's personal aspirations derived through worthy hopes and ideals, and the principle of correlation between subjects. It is with these essential parts in mind that we wrote the document *Principles of teaching History in the Diocese of Marquette*.

In this document we have outlined four major areas upon which this curriculum has been built: **Religious and Moral, Intellectual, Aesthetic, and Civic**. Using these four major areas and considering the principles found within them we have built two basic similar unit planning templates to be used for all units in our History curriculum. One template for first through fifth grade and one template for sixth through eighth grade.

### *The unit outline*

Each unit has several components that may be helpful for crafting a lesson. These components are ordered with a stance towards the natural chronology of planning and teaching and the principles we have set forth above as building blocks for our curriculum. Those that have information provided give the teacher some starting options around which to structure his or her lessons and unit. The provided information need not be employed all at once or in its entirety, nor are such suggestions exclusive.

Most of the fields, however, are not completed, and are instead simple promptings for the teacher to consider incorporating into his or her instruction. This year is a pilot year. The hope is

that teachers across the diocese will add their suggestions, resources, and assessments throughout this pilot year to further strengthen the foundation we have set.

Once again, these outlines are meant to promote a universal structure for teaching history by providing categories that help each teacher develop and organize his or her lessons.

## **Two key elements which run throughout this History curriculum**

### ***1. Teaching History as a Narrative***

History is a great *story*. We have done a great disservice to both subject and student by reducing history to political lenses, sociology, and mere facts. We have worked hard to revive the narrative nature of history.

### ***2. Objects that Evoke Wonder***

Every reality, insofar as it is true, is a wonder in and of itself. As the Catholic professor John Senior wrote, "Wonder is the beginning of knowledge, the reverent fear that beauty strikes within us." Wonder requires the student to be still, to be attentive, to see the grandeur of a reality while also feeling fear for what he still does not know or understand, but that nevertheless drives him to search more earnestly for the beautiful truth with reverence and humility. This wonder is the fire that has been lost in education. It is this fire that will propel a student to love learning for a long time after his early years of schooling.

Our curriculum foundations document states the above point about wonder in this way. "In each subject matter, the ideal [true, good, beautiful] corresponding to that subject matter must be assimilated no less than the corresponding skills, methods and basic knowledge."

## *Other Considerations & Suggestions*

### **Introducing History**

Avoid beginning immediately with class content. Students want to know the *what* and the *why* before beginning to learn history. Start the year with a few days talking about history. Some starting points might include questions asking: What is History? How is History handed down and inherited? What is the purpose/s of knowing History?

Require students to pick a reason for studying history, even if it's simply "because I'd get in trouble if I left the classroom or failed." This unsophisticated reason will eventually give way as the student observes the reasons why other students are studying history, the witness of their teacher who loves the subject and as he or she becomes enamored with the class itself.

In the course of introducing history, some notable highlights might include:

### **Incarnational, critical thinking, more from our principles**

- History re-presents a present/current event that a whole slew of people had once experienced. By doing so, in a sense, we "time travel."
- History is human. Only human persons understand the existence of past, present, and future and the discrete experiences that create their continuum. History is also created by human action, and according to Aristotle, all actions are taken to make

- the actor happy. Therefore, history is the story of all the ways that man has tried to be happy, aiming at some good—however low or empty.
- Know history to honor those who sacrificed for us (even our relatives in the medieval world—somewhere in that age there is your great grandfather to the 20<sup>th</sup> power), for to know is in some way to recognize, honor, and love.
  - The joy of knowing. We don't like school due to the *effort* of knowing. But to simply know something at the snap of a finger is always a joy and never refused.
  - Moral lessons.
  - History repeats (kind of); learning from others without the risks.
  - Understand human nature, how man has tried to be happy so that we can know how to be happy ourselves.
  - Smarter.
  - Better writer, listener, reader, orator. etc.
  - Get good grades, job, etc.

### **The Importance of Note-Taking & Studying Well**

Note-taking is imperative for history and certainly worth spending the time to teach at the beginning of each school year. There are several different methods, but it might be wise to adopt some sort of bullet-point, indented format for all history classes and grades. The key is to help students see an order, the relationships between larger topics and small details, cause and effect, etc. Students should rely mostly on their notes when studying, reading through them, and trying to anticipate relationships and the next part in the story. It may be helpful to require that students highlight their study guide terms in their notes as they come up. The teacher can also build certain days into the school year when students and teacher have the opportunity to review their notes together. These may be best employed early on in the school year.

Students need to be taught how to study well. It's well worth taking a few days before the first several exams to teach students how to study and to give them the opportunity to do so in class. This is especially helpful for the less-motivated or struggling students, as it gives them a structured, quiet opportunity to experience studying with assistance at hand. The teacher should also explain to students the purpose of exams and tests, placing special emphasis on the studying process and how it's a rather leisurely environment in which to review the material and come to know the story in its fullness. Students like reasons and explanations. This will help them to come to terms with the necessity and benefits of exams.

Try not to put notes on the board or in PowerPoint word for word. Instead, use PowerPoint to project maps, images, etc. that will enhance the lesson. However, try to do so after students have learned of a person or place by reading or lecture, that way they have a chance to form the story for themselves in their imaginations.

### **Teaching History as a Narrative**

History is a great *story*. We have done a great disservice to both subject and student by reducing history to political lenses, sociology, and mere facts. We need to revive the narrative nature of history. Below are several principles to ensure that a story is told.

As the chief narrator along with the textbook, the teacher should also cast the entire year as a story and may do so by treating everything as chronologically as possible. To present class material, lessons, notes, study guides, and the questions on an exam all in the same order allows for familiarity and an actual grasp of the story therein.

Tell tales and biographical background and ask students to do so as well, also directing them re-tell the stories, write biographies, etc. themselves. Students may be best held accountable by very short quizzes on reading assignments that are straightforward enough that anyone who read attentively should be able to answer without trouble. True-or-false, multiple-choice, etc. might be good methods. Reading questions beforehand are also okay, but they tend to encourage students to “fish for right answers” instead of reading for comprehension.

One way that both assists in this narrative project and keeps students thoroughly engaged in history is for the teacher to pretend to be ignorant of any future occurrence beyond the events immediately discussed. Such a feigned ignorance forces students to experience history as it played out for those who lived through it—ignorant of the future. When a student asks about something not yet covered in class, therefore, as tempting as it is to run with this curiosity, the teacher would hold their attention for a longer period of time if such an inquiry is left unanswered. And though a little silly, a good way to dismiss such questions is not to say “We’re not there yet” but to deny knowledge of that topic. For instance, if a student asks about Hitler and his murderous regime while still learning about World War I, the teacher could respond, “The only Hitler I know is a lowly but highly decorated German infantryman fighting opposite the British in the trenches of the western front.” Or if one asks, “When will we learn about World War II?”, answer with, “What’s that? The biggest war I know of is the Great War, also known as ‘the war to end all wars.’ I don’t know of any ‘World War II’. Besides, wouldn’t there need to be a first world war?” To assist in this scheme, use the terms as they were employed at the time. Therefore, don’t refer to World War I while teaching it, but instead, the Great War.

When teaching in narrative form, a great and wonder-evoking advantage is found in the ability to see which events and movements occurred nearly simultaneously in history. An effective though slightly informal way to do this is to present a faux newspaper front-page for students (or have the students themselves create them) that displays to a person in that time the various events taking place. For instance, few people would think of Cortez in Mexico and Luther's excommunication as contemporary events; but they were. So a newspaper dated 1521 might run the headline "Cortez Conquers Tenochtitlan; Pizarro Advancing Against Incans" with a side article entitled, "Pope Excommunicates German Augustinian." Another highly effective method we suggest is to build a class timeline and ask students to build their own personal timelines for the time period you are studying. These can integrate aspects including persons, key historical, scientific, literary and cultural events, the role of the church etc.

### *Teacher Resources across the History Curriculum*

Besides bearing a view towards the whole of the truth, the best teachers are those who know and love their content as an expert would. Teaching is a communication of the truth of their subject and the teacher's love thereof. Therefore, the teacher should himself seek to know as much as possible about his or her subject's content and to find it enjoyable to do so. Towards this end are these resources supplied, considered to be the best in their fields while also being enjoyable. Their intention is to enhance the teacher's knowledge and love of his or her subject, not necessarily to have a direct bearing on the content for which students will eventually be responsible, trusting that such a knowledge on the teacher's part will naturally enrich the sharing of the subject with his or her students.

This selection includes both general histories and particular histories, largely in chronological order. The resources are to be drawn from over the career of the teacher, adding to his or her understanding and providing new richness and life to the teacher's instruction throughout the years of teaching.

Since books are costly, especially to the individual, it is advised that schools begin securing for their faculty the following titles for its use over the years, a kind of faculty library from which teachers may draw.

#### **General Series**

World History (European emphasis) – Susan Wise Bauer

*The History of the Ancient World: From the Earliest Accounts to the Fall of Rome*

*The History of the Medieval World: From the Conversion of Constantine to the First Crusade*

*The History of the Renaissance World: From the Rediscovery of Aristotle to the Conquest of Constantinople*

## Subject Surveys

“Very Short Introductions” Series – Oxford University Press

## Biography

Biography Series – Paul Johnson

“Penguin Lives” Series – Penguin Random House Publishing

## Arts

“Odysseys in Artistry” Series – Creative Education

## Naval Warfare

“Fighting Ships” Series – Sam Willis

## Industrialism

*The Industrial Revolutionaries: The Making of the Modern World 1776-1914* –  
Gavin Weightman

## Web Resources

Encyclopedia Britannica – Britannica.com

Catholic Encyclopedia – NewAdvent.org/cathen

Military Maps – usma.edu/history/SitePages/Our%20Atlases.aspx

Maps – <http://mapfrappe.com/?show=1968>

(to give students a sense of the size of a place)

Poetry – PoetryFoundation.org

Art – artrenewal.org/pages/search.php

Music – ClassicFM.com/composers

World War I – FirstWorldWar.com

## Geography

*Great Maps* – Jerry Brotton

*Mapping the World: The Story of Cartography* – Beau Riffenburgh

## Europe in General

*Europe: A History* – Norman Davies

*Eyewitness to History* – John Carey (primary source)

## The Arts

*The Lives of the Artists* – Giorgio Vasari

*Michelangelo: The Artist, the Man and his Times* – William Wallace

*The Lives and Times of the Great Composers* – Michael Steen

*Mozart: A Life* – Paul Johnson

## Ancient History

*A History of the Jews* – Paul Johnson

*Twelve Greeks and Romans Who Changed the World* – Carl J. Richard

## **Greece**

*The Discovery of the Mind* – Bruno Snell  
*The Landmark Thucydides: A Comprehensive Guide to the Peloponnesian War*  
*The Landmark Herodotus: The Histories*  
*The Landmark Arrian: The Campaigns of Alexander*  
*The Landmark Xenophon's Hellenika*

## **Rome**

*Roman Civilization: Selected Readings, Volumes 1 & 2* –  
Naphtali Lewis & Meyer Reinhold  
*The Landmark Julius Caesar: The Complete Works: Gallic War, Civil War,  
Alexandrian War, African War, and Spanish War*  
*Ad Infinitum: A Biography of Latin* – Nicholas Ostler

## **Christianity & Catholicism**

*Jesus of Nazareth* – Pope Benedict XVI (3 Volume Set)  
*History of the Catholic Church: From the Apostolic Age to the Third Millennium* –  
James Hitchcock  
*How the Catholic Church Built Western Civilization* – Thomas E. Woods  
*Bearing False Witness: Debunking Centuries of Anti-Catholic History* – Rodney Stark

## **Medieval History**

*Sailing from Byzantium: How a Lost Empire Shaped the World* – Colin Wells  
*The Crusades: A History: Third Edition* – Jonathan Riley-Smith  
*The Origins of France* – Edward James  
*The Hundred Years War: The English in France 1337-1453* – Desmond Seward  
*The Habsburg Empire: A New History* – Pieter M. Judson

## **The Renaissance**

*The Renaissance* – Paul Johnson  
*The Wars of the Roses: The Fall of the Plantagenets & the Rise of the Tudors* – D. Jones

## **Spain's Peak & Decline in Power**

*Isabella: The Warrior Queen* – Kirstin Downey  
*Spain: The Centre of the World 1519-1682* – Robert Goodwin  
*Imprudent King: A New Life of Philip II* – Geoffrey Parker

## **Protestant & Catholic Reformations**

*Rebel in the Ranks* – Brad Gregory  
"Introduction" to *Cajetan Responds*  
*Characters of the Reformation* – Hillaire Belloc  
*The Children of Henry VIII* – Alison Weir  
*Heroes of the Catholic Reformation: Saints Who Renewed the Church* – Joseph Pearce

*The Life of Elizabeth I* – Alison Weir  
*Elizabeth I* – Paul Johnson

### **Wars of Religion**

*The French Religious Wars 1562–1598* – Robert Jean Knecht  
*The Thirty Years War: Europe's Tragedy* – Peter H. Wilson  
*Richelieu* – Hillaire Belloc

### **17<sup>th</sup> Century England**

*A Brief History of the English Civil Wars* – John Miller  
*Rebellion: The History of England from James I to the Glorious Revolution* –  
Peter Ackroyd  
*Cromwell* – Antonia Fraser  
*The Glorious Revolution* – John Miller

### **Louis XIV**

*The Sun King* – Nancy Mitford  
*Louis XIV* – Richard Wilkinson  
*Versailles: A Biography of a Palace* – Tony Spawforth  
*The Wars of Louis XIV, 1667-1714* – John A. Lynn

### **Scientific Revolution & the Enlightenment**

*Scientific Revolution: A Very Short Introduction* – Lawrence M. Principe  
*Copernicus: A Very Short Introduction* – Owen Gingerich  
*The New Organon* – Francis Bacon  
*Isaac Newton* – James Gleick  
Philosophers of the Enlightenment Series – Rosen Central Publishers

### **Enlightened Despotism & the Industrial Revolution**

*Iron Kingdom: The Rise and Downfall of Prussia, 1600-1947* – Christopher Clark  
*Catherine the Great* – Robert Massie  
*The Industrial Revolution in World History* – Peter N Stearns

### **French Revolution & Napoleon**

*The Oxford History of the French Revolution* – William Doyle  
*Reflections on the Revolution in France* – Edmund Burke  
*Napoleon* – Paul Johnson  
*Napoleon: A Life* – Andrew Roberts  
*Moscow 1812: Napoleon's Fatal March* – Adam Zamoyski

### **Early 19<sup>th</sup> Century**

*Romanticism: A Literary and Cultural History*  
from the "Routledge Concise Histories of Literature"  
*Vienna, 1814: How the Conquerors of Napoleon Made Love, War,  
and Peace at the Congress of Vienna* – David King

## **Late 19<sup>th</sup> Century**

*Wealth of Nations* – Adam Smith

*The Communist Manifesto* – Marx & Engels

*Economics: Work & Prosperity* – Russel Kirk

*An Essay on the Restoration of Property* – Hillaire Belloc

*The Third Way* – Leo XIII & Chesterton

*Third Ways* – Allan Carlson

*Toward a Truly Free Market: A Distributist Perspective on the Role of Government,  
Taxes, Health Care, Deficits, and More* – John C. Medaille

*Small Is Beautiful: Economics as if People Mattered* – E. F. Schumacher

## **The Great War**

*Dreadnought: Britain, Germany, and the Coming of the Great War* – Robert K. Massie

*The Guns of August* – Barbara Tuchmann

*The First World War* – John Keenan

*Fighting the Great War* – Michael Neiberg

*Nicholas & Alexandra* – Robert K. Massie

## **Totalitarianism & World War II**

*The Origins of Totalitarianism* – Hannah Arendt

*Hitler: Ascent, 1889-1939* – Volker Ullrich

*Inside the Third Reich* – Albert Speer

*The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich* – William L Shirer

*Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives* – Alan Bullock

*A Short History of World War II* – James Stokesbury

*Forgotten Heroes of World War II: Personal Accounts of Ordinary Soldiers* –  
Thomas E. Simmons

## **Late 20<sup>th</sup> Century**

*Modern Times: A History of the World from the 1920s to the 1980s* – Paul Johnson

*Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945* – Tony Judt

## **United States**

*A History of the American People* – Paul Johnson

*The Presidents Fact Book* – Roger Matuz

Not only a great set of biographies, of presidents, first ladies, and other historical figures, but also a superb history of the United States for students.

*What So Proudly We Hail: The American Soul in Story, Speech, and Song* –  
Amy A. & Leon R. Kass

*The Story of Our Nation: Its Beginnings and Its Growth* – Mary Celeste Leger

**Books to Enrich the Teacher**

*Poetic Knowledge* – James Taylor

*Leisure the Basis of Culture & The Philosophical Act* – Josef Pieper

*The Restoration of Christian Culture* – John Senior

*Ten Ways to Destroy the Imagination of Your Child* – Anthony Esolen

*The Idea of a University* – Blessed John Cardinal Henry Newman

*The Art of Teaching* – Gilbert Highet

***Student Reading***

For both in-class use and further independent reading.

“Ten True Tales” Series – Alan Zullo

“Wicked History” Series – Franklin Watts Publishing

“Historical Biographies of Famous People” Series – Alexander Kennedy

*The Presidents Fact Book* – Roger Matuz

“The Story of the World” Series – Susan Wise Bauer

“McGuffey Eclectic Readers” Series – William Holmes McGuffey

*The Making of Our Country: A History of the United States for Schools* – Smith Burnham

*Hellenic History* – George Botsford

*The American Revolution Experience* – Carlton Publishing Group

*The Civil War Experience* – Carlton Publishing Group

*The Western Front Experience* – Carlton Publishing Group

*The First World War Remembered* – Carlton Publishing Group

*The Second World War Experience* – Carlton Publishing Group

**The Unit Outline**  
**Middle School 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>**  
A Survey

*Diocese of Marquette Schools*

The outlines are intended to provide a universal structure while encouraging teachers to consider the various categories in their instruction. Where some of these categories are filled out, it should be noted that their contents are but suggestions, starting points to prime the teacher for planning lessons. The teacher need not use all of the advice and themes and certainly not all of them the first time he or she teaches. Rather, the teacher should treat the following as

features to consider in shaping a lesson, options and some starting points to use or not use as he or she sees fit given class dynamic and student capacities.

The units are broken down thematically for the teacher. But allow time and amount of content to shape the scope and duration of a unit to your own situation and what students can actually accomplish well.

Below are the various categories with brief comments explaining each.

### **Unit Description**

A very short overview of the topic.

### **Teacher Resources**

The best teachers are those who know and love their content as an expert would. Therefore, the teacher should themselves seek to know as much as possible about their content and to find it enjoyable to do so. Towards this end are these resources supplied, considered to be the best in their field while also being enjoyable. Their intention is to enhance the teacher's knowledge and love of their subject, not necessarily to have a direct bearing on the content for which students will eventually be responsible. This list is not exclusive, nor should the several resources be read in one year. Rather, they are to be drawn from over the career of the teacher, adding to his or her understanding and providing new richness and life to instruction over years of teaching.

### **Advice to Teacher**

A few points of emphasis, suggested methods or order to teaching the content, and overall thoughts on the topic are given for the teacher's consideration. Again, these are to help prime and direct the teacher's thoughts in planning lessons and are not meant to be wholly binding.

### **Naturally-Occurring Questions (1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Tiers) – "Problems"**

These questions are the obvious facts, basic information, and primary connections that students are responsible for learning. They are the most obvious and natural of questions that give students the raw material for greater contemplation. Such questions may include: When? Where? Who? What? Cause & Effect, the basics of what we don't know but need to know if we are to have any further understanding of a topic. They usually involve letting students make observations on what they have first heard and seen. To frame these "problems" on paper is more for the teacher's eyes and aid rather than for the students'.

### **Backdrop – Setting the Stage**

In teaching any history lesson, students should first have a grasp of the time, place, lifestyle, and various conditions in which the events occur—much like knowing the setting for a story or play. Having such a starting point also allows a clearer contrast of the *before* and *after* of the event that enhances students' understanding of the changes wrought.

#### **Maps, Places, & Geographical Features**

A good map that presents the physical setting and illustrates the features that have bearing on the subsequent events is a prerequisite for almost any lesson. Moreover, students particularly enjoy maps.

#### **Insights into Everyday Life**

Students should wonder at and appreciate the challenges and distinctions of ordinary life in a time period. In short, such a vision ignites the student's imagination of himself or herself living in that time period; this is an excellent method of engaging students, not to mention making them thankful for the many conveniences of modern life.

#### **Existing Circumstances & Situations**

Students need a sense of the political, cultural, and economic situations in a given time and place. With such knowledge, students will have a better understanding of the causes of the subsequent events and a clearer vision of how the consequences are distinct from the prior situations.

#### **Timeline**

The timeline situates the chronology of events. Dates and timespans should be chosen based on these criteria: key persons, major events, cause & effect, and to characterize a period by showing simultaneous events, cultural phenomenon, etc. It's also helpful to have students characterize centuries and half-centuries by political and cultural movements or major events.

### **Particulars**

This section pertains to the basic and specific material students will need to encounter and know. Further musings are based on this content. Everything need not be presented as an encyclopedia, simply running down the list of definitions. Instead, many of these facets should be introduced in the course of the narrative.

#### **Persons**

The key actors. Note the understanding of these people as actors, those given to certain actions, their actions comprising history itself: the story of actions undertaken by individual or groups of human beings. History does not exist apart from human action.

#### **Vocabulary**

Key terms or topics.

#### **Biographies to be Read**

Biography is one of the greatest mediums for retaining students' attention. We have abandoned biographies to the detriment of the

student. Good, brief biographies should be used to introduce the key actors.

### **Primary Sources**

Much of history is made in the form of writings, speeches, documents, and first-hand accounts of events. Reading and discussing primary sources is the most direct contact students will have with a historical event within the classroom.

### **Major Actions & Events**

Here we come to the particulars (vocabulary, persons, biographies, documents, speeches, writings) strung together, interwoven to form the story of people's actions as they respond to circumstances, moved by ideas, passions, reason, belief, and these mingled with a degree of ignorance, weaknesses, virtues, and the universal human quest for happiness.

### **Key Tales & Stories**

Everybody loves a well-told story. Even material that at first appears dull can be turned into a riveting story with the knowledge, passion, and charisma of the storyteller (the teacher). In the many instances that a lesson will at first seem dull to the teacher, he or she should challenge himself or herself not to discount the lesson by asking, "What about this reality is full of wonder, of awe, of mystery?" While many of the provided tales and objects of wonder noted immediately below may not be familiar to the teacher at first, a simple Google search should bear fruit for the teacher.

### **Objects that Evoke Wonder**

Every reality, insofar as it is true, is a wonder in and of itself. As the Catholic professor John Senior wrote, "Wonder is the beginning of knowledge, the reverent fear that beauty strikes within us." Wonder requires the student to be still, to be attentive, to see the grandeur of a reality while also feeling fear for what he still does not know or understand, but that nevertheless drives him to search more earnestly for the beautiful truth with reverence and humility. This wonder is the fire that has been lost in education. It is this fire that will propel a student to love learning for a long time after his early years of schooling.

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### **Catholic Saints & Church Contributions**

It is a great advantage to Catholic students to see how our faith is lived out in a historical context, for such an understanding further illuminates the heroism of the Church and the saints and even more so, the providence of God.

### **Morals, Virtues, & Catholic Principles**

The teacher should guide students towards the moral lesson, virtues, and Catholic principles that the story might include. The students should be taught to make connections and draw conclusions by themselves. Of course, if at the end of the lesson students have not arrived at these, the teacher should gently but clearly point them out.

### **Patriotism and Citizenship**

Patriotism and citizenship are important goals in our history curriculum. Be sure to preview these virtues at the beginning of the year and recognize that students may need a little direction in making consistent application of these virtues to the history they are studying throughout the year.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Tier Questions**

These questions involve more of the significance of the history just learned. They involve drawing greater understandings of reality from the lesson and adjusting their existing knowledge in light of the new.

### **Other Considerations**

#### **“Has anyone ever thought of...?”**

The teacher’s opportunity to make some observations, usually such that will evoke wonder or greater understanding.

#### **“If-stry” — a different look at History**

“What if this or that did not happen? What if another thing had?” Such an exercise evokes wonder, points out the significance of individuals’ actions, ideas, virtues, sins, and failures, and highlights the importance of the event.

#### **“What does this show us about human nature, God, society, the Church, etc.?”**

This draws out the universal understanding from the particular event.

#### **“This is connected to today by...”**

Considerations of a historical topic’s relationship to the present are a useful exercise to follow. However, it is too readily relied on only as a tool in the mundane purpose of “keeping students interested” or “making history mean something.” The entire lesson should indirectly accomplish this goal, in part by employing the overall structure here presented. Therefore, draw connections to the present, *but don’t reduce all of a lesson to this purpose.*

### **Unit’s History Expressed & Captured Through...**

History is oftentimes manifested by those both who lived through and partook of the historical events as well as by those who were effected by them soon afterwards. This is done through a variety of mediums. Such expression can either be direct or indirect, and the latter is oftentimes more telling of the history’s impact. These expressions are one way for our students to partake in the beauty of that time period or event in history. Sometimes this beauty portrays the goodness, heroism and creative in man sometimes it portrays the tragic and evil that has happened. It is hoped the teacher will choose to present these expressions of beauty to their students..

**Poetry, Novels, Theatre**  
**Music**  
**Architecture, Paintings, Sculpture**  
**Political Cartoons**  
**Newspaper Headlines**

## **End of Unit**

**Enduring Legacy Today (symbols, holidays, etc.)**

### **To be Memorized (and so carried in the Heart)**

The benefits and enjoyment of memorization should dispel the bad reputation it has garnered over the last several decades. For one, memorization strengthens the mind's abilities. That pertains to the head. As for the heart and the love of learning, memorization helps the students truly take the history into themselves, carry it within them, and share a relationship to the history and people that is closer than mere facts, a joy to recall, and that gives students a greater likelihood of retaining the knowledge. Should one memorize something from that history, it would be difficult to remain ignorant of the history itself.

**Speeches**

**Poems**

**Songs**

**Short Excerpts from Primary Sources (documents, writings)**

**Quotes**

### **Writing Assignments**

Besides reading, writing ought to be a backbone to the curriculum as regards literacy and quality thinking. The best methods are frequent paragraphs on given topics and a few essays each year.

### **At Home Questions with Parents**

To give students and parents a series of questions or conversation-starters for discussions at home is a superb way to help students incorporate their learning in their lives, share it with their parents, help parents enter into their child's learning, cultivate a sincerity in students towards their studies, and foster the love of learning, that it might become a lifelong habit.

### **Unit Assessments**

Assessments, both formative and cumulative, are important for solidifying the student's knowledge. It is at these points that students have the opportunity to review and master their content to the extent that they can reproduce it. It might be wise to structure the exam in the same chronological order in which it was taught during class, so recorded in the students' notes, and laid out on the study

guide. For any cumulative assessments, distribute a study guide one week before the exam date.

### **Map**

Students should always be required to complete some geography portion that involves drawing, labeling, and answering questions on maps. Don't underestimate students' ability to do so without a word bank. Sometimes maps can be assessed separately from exams and need not always be lengthy.

### **Timeline**

Given to students on a study guide. Put the dates in the correct order, scramble the events, and have students write the event next to the correct date. This is asking them to order events with dates as a secondary aid.

### **Write Narratives & Biographies**

Mastery is proven when original observations and conclusions are made about a known content. Proficiency is proven when the mind can simply retell a story or biography, doing so with its own filter, perspective, and creativity, and with much joy. Make it a challenge for them to write well.

### **Argument Writing**

#### **Memorization of Quotes, Poems, etc.**

Have students write these out or recite aloud.

### **Facts**

Multiple-choice is limiting. The best forms of assessments are in short-answer questions, identifications, and fill-in-the-blank. One way to structure the short answers and fill-in-the-blank is to provide a study guide with terms, persons, places, and topics and then a series of potential short answer questions based on these. On the exam students will be given a select number of the short answer questions and those not used will be turned into fill in the blank questions.

### **Further Reading**

Like the questions and topics to be sent home with parents, a list of age-appropriate texts, historical or related-fiction, for further reading would do well to give students the opportunities to take hold of their education for themselves. Many students would like to do so, but may be deterred simply because they don't know where to look.