



World Geography, Fall 2024

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Course Description: This one semester graduation requirement is designed to introduce students to the geography of the world, physical and cultural, as well as current issues in the world. Students will focus on improving literacy skills within social studies as well as understanding the relationship between humans and the world around them. There will be a heavy emphasis on improving evidence based arguments. This is aligned with both the [California History-Social Science Framework](#) and the [Common Core State Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies](#).

Course Goals:

- Students will understand common geographical terms, concepts and reasoning.
- Learn more about places in the world and the relationships between people and their environments.
- Improve literacy (reading & writing), and skills like critical thinking & discussion.
- Students will become proficient in collaboration and teamwork.
- Develop mindfulness to improve overall health (lower anxiety, encourage thoughtful reactions, deal with stress, improve focus, better sleep, etc.).

Materials:

All students should bring the **tools of a scholar** daily; pencil, pen, and highlighter. Students can access their textbook *digitally* through the TCI application on the Class Link page though we will mostly rely on expository texts provided by the teacher. Students will be provided a journal for daily warm ups and any note-taking required in class as well as a folder within the classroom to keep these items. Students are expected to bring their *charged chromebook to class each day*. All students must join the google classroom for their assigned period. Assignments will be a combination of paper and digital.

Grading:

The teacher will use the district grading scale (A = 90-100% B = 80-89% C = 70-79% D = 60-69% F = 50-59%). Assessments are both informal and formal through the semester and may include projects, quizzes, tests and a variety of written assignments. Students receive daily points for completing classwork (such as warm ups, pair-share, etc.) whether or not the teacher requires students to turn in an assignment. This means that attendance and engagement, completing what is asked when it is asked will impact student grades dramatically.

Attendance:

Please try to attend class each day, but also know that we are all human and you may have to miss class due to issues beyond your control. Let the teacher know as soon as possible if you know of an upcoming absence or email/text teacher to check in during absence (if you are able and comfortable doing so).

**Restroom:**

Students are expected to wait for an appropriate opportunity to let the teacher know they need to use the restroom. Upon receiving permission from the teacher, a pass will be provided and the student will place their phone in one of the phone pockets while they are away from the classroom.

Expectations for Success in this Class:

1. **STRIVE to do your daily best, setting goals and accomplishing them through hard work, commitment and a positive attitude.** This translates into: attend class regularly, have a willingness to do class activities, be involved in class, raise your hand to ask or answer questions, complete assignments in class and at home. Feel PROUD of your work!
2. **EMPATHIZE with others and practice perspective taking, listen respectfully and interact in a courteous and helpful manner.** Practice the following daily: be patient when you can't hear another student speak, listen silently and attentively when someone else is talking, reading or asking a questions help someone by explaining the assignment, lecture, directions or homework, address others by their proper names and pronouns, be sensitive to another culture, ethnicity, gender, age, etc.
3. **RESPECT our shared space by keeping it clean, neat and safe.** Practice the following daily: Don't waste paper or other products. Return borrowed computers and charges to your teacher at the end of class. Throw gum and other trash in the garbage, if you make a mess - clean it up. We all deserve a clean learning environment.
4. **PHONES** - Technology is both a blessing and a curse. This year our high school will be strictly enforcing a "no cell phone during class" policy unless specifically instructed to do so by the teacher. A first violation of this policy will result in students being asked to turn off devices, additional violations of this policy may result in device confiscation. **Please support your student by not contacting them during class time. If there is an emergency, contact the school and we will inform your student.**

The regions we will cover, in order:

Unit 1 - North America

Unit 2 - South America

Unit 3 - Africa

Unit 4 - The Middle East

Unit 5 - Asia



Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s) and Students,

Literacy is a central focus in my classroom, and as we begin a new school year I would like to share some thoughts about reading with you. At John F. Kennedy High School, our teachers and administration strive to give our students a world-class education. In order to reach this goal, we encourage our students to develop strong reading habits in their busy lives.

In order to lead rich literate lives, students must have the fundamental skill of reading and in this class, students will be supported in becoming avid readers. The only way to get better at reading is to read→ this holds true for excellent readers as well as reluctant readers. With this in mind, my goal is for your child to read two million words this school year. For the average student, two million words a year translates to forty minutes of reading every day. I will do my best to motivate your student to read academically as well as for fun. Much of the reading will be assigned, but your student will have opportunities to select books to be read independently each Thursday.

To help your child reach the two-million-word goal, I have worked hard to develop my own classroom library. This library is available to any student who wants to choose a book to be read recreationally. Research shows that availability of books is a major motivating factor in getting teens to read. Students who are surrounded by books at school and at home read more. Students who read more, read better. I have found that having my own classroom library has dramatically increased the amount of reading my students do.

As a parent myself, I want you to know I am sensitive to having appropriate reading material in my classroom library. That said, what is considered "appropriate" may vary from one parent to another. Some parents do not mind their child reading Stephen King; other parents object to the horror genre. Please be aware that the selections in my classroom library, just like any public library, range from elementary-level to university-level reading material. As a parent, I ask you to remain aware throughout the year of the books your student has chosen to read and assist in gauging appropriateness.

Rest assured the books in my classroom library are never assigned. They are checked out on a voluntary basis only. Some students use my library a lot; others find books elsewhere. Any student who borrows books from my library is asked to have a parent or guardian sign below indicating that this classroom library letter has been read and understood.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please feel free to contact me at Elisabeth-Johnson@scusd.edu. Let's get reading!

Sincerely,
Elisabeth Johnson
Social Studies teacher, John F Kennedy High School

_____ I have read this letter and course syllabus with my JFK student and understand the course requirements and expectations.

Parent signature_____ Date_____

Parent of _____ Period _____