

**The Classical Historian**

**Modern World History**

**One Complete Year of History  
32-Week Guide**

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## I. What is The Classical Historian?

The Classical Historian teaches students how to strive for the truth in history and trains teachers to challenge students to become their best as historians and people. The Classical Historian encourages teachers and students to systematically learn and practice the highest academic ideals, such as honesty, virtue, patience, and logical analysis. This program shows the teacher how to teach the tools of the historian including all the analytical tools, how to lead the Socratic discussion, and how to teach analytical writing as it pertains to history.

The Classical Historian teaches students history with lessons that are age-appropriate. As Dorothy Sayers in the 1940s wrote, a student's educational life can be separated into three phases: Grammar, Logic, and Rhetoric. In the Grammar stage of history, students ages 3-11 memorize facts such as dates, events, and biographies. In the Logic stage, ages 12 to 14, students learn the tools of the historian: how to analyze history and the basics of writing and speaking. In the Rhetoric stage, 14 and older, students work on perfecting oral and written expression.

For young students, The Classical Historian teaches basic facts through history flash cards, and fun and educational games. Children ages 3-11 love to memorize and play games. They also love repetition, and are most comfortable when the educational lessons rely on games with clear rules. Older students, ages 12-18, enjoy to argue, like to analyze, and are eager to express themselves. The Classical Historian uses these natural aspects of the young student to promote the academic study of history. The aim of the study of history is discover not only what happened, but to strive to understand why it happened. Perhaps most importantly, the student builds skills that enable them to analyze, interpret, and present the most correct perspective on the past.

The Classical Historian uses a five step program to teach history. The first step is the “Grammar of History.” Steps two through five are the “Dialectic and Rhetoric of History”:

1. The Grammar of History
2. The Tools of the Historian
3. Research
4. The Socratic Discussion
5. Analytical Essays

### The Grammar of History

The grammar of history refers to basic facts of an historical event and does not require analytical thinking. Answers to the questions of “who, what, when, and where” constitute the grammar of history. It is essential for a historian to know the grammar of history, and it is a perfect level for kids in pre-k through grade 5. Students at this age (3-11) are eager to memorize, parrot, and recite. Even so, learning the grammar of history never stops at a certain age. Even an



## **II. Teaching with The Classical Historian**

Lessons from the DVD Curriculum *Teaching the Socratic Discussion in History* provide the teacher and student with important historical thinking, discussion, and writing tools. Understanding how to use these tools correctly will prepare students to be historians and will prepare teachers to competently teach and lead Socratic discussions in history and teach analytical writing in history. Each participant (teacher and student) will need to have a copy of lessons 1-17 from the *The Socratic Discussion in History* book in order to complete the Socratic Discussion curriculum. Teachers may copy this book and all Classical Historian materials for their classroom or family.

Even if your students have used this program in previous years, begin with these tools each year. Students will often forget key parts of these lessons, and it is important to repeat them before they begin analyzing history.

### **Sources**

#### ***The Western Experience***

Interspersed with the Socratic Discussion lessons are history lessons taken from our textbook, *The Western Experience*, ISBN: 0-07-242437-0, Copyright 2003. NOTE: This is an expensive book, when bought new. There are also many editions of this textbook. I have found that the newer and older editions basically fit the schedule of our program and we don't know of a problem occurring when a student uses a different edition of the textbook than the one we recommend.

#### ***Global History and Geography, Readings and Documents***

ISBN: 9781567656565 by Norman Lunger, Amsco School Publications. This is a book of primary sources. Primary sources are crucial to a historian to forming his own judgment on events and people of the past.

#### ***Encyclopedia***

If the student can, invest in an online encyclopedia, or have an encyclopedia at home. The Britannica Encyclopedia is a good source.

#### ***Take a Stand! Teacher's Key***

Located at the end of this packet, this provides the answer key to the TAS student's book.

#### ***Take a Stand! Modern World History***

### **Homework**

At the beginning of the year, the number of minutes spent on homework will be under one hour. As we progress, the number of minutes per week spent on homework will grow to 2-4 hours per week, depending on how fast or slow a writer the student is.

## **Length of Lessons**

The lessons designed in this booklet are created for the one hour class. In the classes that I teach, classes last for 1 ½ hours, because I like to have extra time where I can add other elements to each class. Because I enjoy having at least some part of my lesson plan open for spontaneity, I did not include these parts in the planning of each of the lessons that are in this guide. Some ideas for what you can do to enrich this class are included in the section below.

## **Ideas to Enrich This History Class**

### ***Games***

Some kids may remember more from the history games they will play than from our lessons we spend so much time on. And, other students may start to like history and get involved in doing more academic work because their interest is piqued by history games. I use the following three games in each of my history classes I teach.

#### **Classical Historian History Memory Game: Categories**

Following the instructions found in the game, place the tiles under their correct category. Give students two minutes to study/memorize where the tiles are. Have all students leave the room. Mix up all of the tiles. Have one student return. Time one student, as he places the tiles in the correct place. Take turns until all students have tried this. If you have a larger class, split the kids up into teams. Try to play this game at least once a month. This simple and fun game will teach your students geography or chronology.

#### **Classical Historian Go Fish Game: Go Fish**

Following instructions from the game, students play go fish, and become familiar with historical names and images. I recommend you play this game only once or twice as part of your class. After, move onto the next game, using the same Go Fish box of cards.

#### **Classical Historian Go Fish Game: Collect the Cards**

Follow the game instructions. This game teaches the students inductive thinking, and it teaches historical facts. You will be amazed how fast the students will learn to associate the hints with the images and events on the cards. At first, the reader will win most cards, but after a few games, the other participants will capture the cards. Throughout the year, your students will benefit by having these pieces of knowledge (signposts) in their memory. Students will be able to attach new learning onto their signposts.

### ***Literature***

Students are strongly encouraged to read works of fiction and biography that correlate to the history period they are studying. When we discuss these books, focus is placed on the overall meaning of the books, instead of on vocabulary. When I think of the U.S. in the 1800s, I think of Mark Twain and Herman Melville's stories. When I think of the ancient times, I think of the stories of the Old Testament. There are so many great stories about historical time periods, it is

hard to limit your choices. Choose a few books for the year, and every month or so, discuss these books.

### ***Art Assignments***

Some students enjoy creating art, and many home school families train their children in the arts. Depending upon my students, I adjust the extra activities we do in the classroom. I am not extremely interested in spending much time in creating art, however, currently I am teaching five girls who love art. Because of this, I am assigning a few more art assignments as they relate to history.

### ***Drama***

Many kids love to perform. If they do not like to perform, they are at least very excited (apprehensive!) about getting in front of others. An easy assignment to give students is to have them take a historical event, write a simple play, and to perform this in front of their classmates. This activity may be one where the kids will love to meet each other during the week to work on.

### ***History Party***

Would you like your students to have good friendship with each other, and at the same time encourage the study of history? Plan a history party. The most challenging part of this is choosing a date, or dates, for the event. Once that is done, assign students homework to prepare for the History Party. The History Party could be the event where the students act out their play they have been working on. Students could display any art work they have made. Students could play multiple history games. After hours on these fun and educational activities, the students will surely suggest that a history movie be shown. You choose the movie, so that it is educational. Food should be a part of this party. If you are the teacher, you can suggest this idea to the parents of the students. One parent may love to host parties and take care of the food. Asking for help may provide someone with a chance to help out in the class.

## **PLANNING NOTES FOR TEACHERS**

Read all Teacher Notes one week before and then again, one day before you meet with your students.

**Semester Final:** Some time before the end of 16 weeks announce to the students that they will be responsible to present to the whole class, and to their parents, two of their essays from the first semester. No note cards are to be used. Students do much better in short presentations when they are not reading from notes. One week or two weeks before the presentation, have students do a trial run and present to the class. After each student presents, ask each listening student to say one thing that the presenter did well, and one thing he could improve on. Pay attention to how much time lapsed during the presentation, to make sure the student is relaying enough information.

For the first semester, a 2-5 minute presentation is fine. Also, in the presentation, the student should not only speak about his perspective, but he can also speak about an opposing perspective, and add the reason why he does not agree with this. The goals of the presentation are 1. Practice public speaking 2. Share with the parents and students the knowledge the student has obtained 3. Advertise to the parents what your students are learning 4. Highlight and honor students publicly for their work. All should get dressed up nicely.

**Year Final:**

I strongly recommend that in the spring, the students, in addition to completing regular class assignments, choose one topic from semester 2 to be an “expert” in. The student should read a biography from this time period and should also be compelled to research from at least three primary sources not found in the textbook. The student should also know they are responsible for about a 5-10 minute final presentation (or two five minute presentations). Much like the semester final, this final looks the same, however, the student will only present one topic in depth.

**A Note on the Presentations:**

When you announce the requirements for the presentations, realize that at first, the assignment may scare your students. This is normal. Once they present at the semester final, they will see they can do it and it will boost their confidence. Also, because some students excel, or are more academically developed than others, be very gentle during the actual presentation. If the student stumbles, the teacher or the students may ask questions to help the presenter speak. And, do not focus on the number of minutes initially. Basically, whatever the student gives you, acknowledge their work.

### III. The Year in 32 Lessons

TEACHER: COMPLETE A. and B. BEFORE YOU MEET WITH STUDENTS FOR THE FIRST TIME

A. Read Chapters I, II, and Chapter III from *The Socratic Discussion in History*.  
(Teacher Only)

B. DVD 1 and Extended Introduction (Teacher Only)

1. Watch DVD 1. This is a brief introduction to a classical education in history.  
(Required)

2. Watch the Extended Introduction DVD. The extended version DVD includes the author's personal teaching stories that led him to create *The Classical Historian*. Teachers instructing in international schools have shown this to their students because of John De Gree's international experiences.  
(Optional)

C. Important: Read the next week's lesson one week BEFORE meeting with the students, so you have time to prepare.

#### LESSON ONE WITH STUDENTS

No matter how well or how poorly the students know each other, I strongly recommend an ice breaker activity. Learning is fun and social, and the ice breaker loosens everyone up. It is FANTASTIC for the students to see a sincere smile from each other and from the teacher before learning happens.

#### Two Truths and a Lie

This is an ice breaker I like to use with pre-teens and teenagers. Each person (including the teacher) writes down two truths and a lie about himself, in any order. Then, each person reads out loud the three statements, and everyone guesses which statement is the lie.

Time to complete: About 10 minutes

#### DVD 2 (Teacher and Students)

The teacher and students learn the tools of the historian with DVD 2 and by following the lessons in *The Socratic Discussion in History*. Begin on page 13, and start DVD 2 with your students. (Remember-each student will need his own page to work on.)

#### DVD 2

Introduction: DVD Time: 2:55

1. Fact or Opinion, pages 13 and 14.
  - a. DVD time: 2:55 – 15:43
  - b. Time to Complete Lesson: 20-25 minutes
2. Judgment, page 15.

- a. DVD time: 15:43-22:19
- b. Time to Complete Lesson: 20 minutes

### 3. History

- a. Read in *The Western Experience* Chapter 1. After each section, summarize the main points in one paragraph (5-8 sentences). Chapter 1 has five sections.
- b. Read *The Problem of Prehistory*, located in this guide, and answer the questions.

Try to begin the homework in class.

\*Important: Read the next week's lesson one week BEFORE meeting with the students, so you have time to prepare.

## LESSON TWO

- 1. Begin Lesson Two by reviewing the homework. Have students take turns reading out loud their sentences they wrote and review the Prehistory answers.

Time to complete: 10-15 minutes

- 2. Supporting Evidence, page 16

Using DVD 2, go to Lesson 3, Supporting Evidence. In *The Socratic Discussion in History*, go to page 16.

- a. DVD time: 22:19-30:49
- b. Time to Complete Lesson: 20 minutes

- 3. Primary or Secondary Source Analysis, page 17

Continuing with DVD 2, go to Lesson 4., Primary or Secondary Source Analysis, and open the *The Socratic Discussion in History* to page 17.

- a. DVD time: 30:49 - 36:56
- b. Time to Complete Lesson: 15 minutes

- 4. History: Assign as homework the following readings and lessons:

- a. Read Chapter 2 from *The Western Experience*. After each section, summarize the main points in one paragraph (5-8 sentences). Chapter 2 has five sections.

\*Important: Read the next week's lesson one week BEFORE meeting with the students, so you have time to prepare.

## LESSON SEVEN

### 1. Rough Draft for a One-Paragraph Lesson; Page 34, Lesson 12

Direct students to have out their rough draft they wrote as homework. Play the DVD lesson as a means to reinforce the rough draft lesson.

- a. DVD time: 1:29:24 – 1:36:32

### 2. Revising, Page 36, Lesson 13 on DVD 2

With the DVD lessons as a guide, work with your students to revise their papers. This revising lesson teaches in detail how to revise written work. You may find you will want to use this for every written assignment. Be prepared to stop the DVD and follow instructions.

- a. DVD time: 1:36:32 – 1:43:41
- b. Time to Complete the Lesson: 20 minutes

### 3. Homework: Assign students to rewrite the completed essay and turn in the following week.

Have them staple all work, in the following order:

- a. Final
- b. Rough Draft
- c. Outline
- d. Thesis Statement
- e. All Notes

\*Note: All final papers will be turned in this way. Direct students to save all their work. At the end of the year, students will have a nice packet of all their work.

f. Assign students to read chapter 6 in *The Western Experience*. After each section, summarize the main points in one paragraph (5-8 sentences). Chapter 6 has four sections.

## GRADING INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE TEACHER!

Read Chapters X. and XI. from *The Socratic Discussion in History*. These chapters will teach you how to grade papers. Note: Depending on the age of the children and their academic development, assign the length of the essays. For sixth and seventh graders, I recommend stopping at the one-paragraph assignment. Eighth grade and older, assign five-paragraph essays after about the fourth assignment.

\*Important: Read the next week's lesson one week BEFORE meeting with the students, so you have time to prepare.

## LESSON FIFTEEN

\*Let each student do a practice presentation for their Mid-Year presentation. Have each student share one thing positive about the presentation, and one thing that can be improved upon. Offer your own ideas. Hopefully, you have already set the time and place where the mid-year presentation will take place. Speak to students about the dress at the presentation. I recommend ties and slacks for boys and business attire for girls. The more practice students have in presenting information and themselves the better it is for them.

Time: This may take the rest of the lesson. It is very good for the students that they feel comfortable with the mid-year presentation before the parents come. AND, it is fine if the students will be presenting the same lessons as their classmates. For many parents, all of this information will be new, and it will good for the students to hear the information from each other.

1. Review the research the students conducted by sharing information from *Take a Stand!* pages 16-19.

Time: 20 minutes

2. Conduct the Socratic discussion from page 20.

Time: 15-20 minutes.

3. Writing assignment: Assign students to write an outline, rough draft, and final essay for *Take a Stand!* Lesson Four.

**Ideas for Family Discussion:** Have the student report to the family. Then, discuss all of the technological changes that came about from 1850-1920. Ask the kids to respond how they think this changed family life, and daily life. Discuss what the divorce rate was like in pre-industrial United States. Ask if anyone thinks industrialization changed how men and women work and view marriage and family. Talk about the recent “Information Revolution and how the computer, internet, cell phone, etc. has changed America and the world.

**\*Important: Read the next week’s lesson one week BEFORE meeting with the students, so you have time to prepare.**

## LESSON SIXTEEN

1. Have students read out loud their final essay to the class. Each student should make one positive comment and one constructive criticism of each other’s work.

Time: 15 minutes

2. Read out loud from *Take a Stand!* lesson 5: The Age of Imperialism, pages 21-26.

Time: 15 minutes

3. Research Homework: Complete the research activities from *Take a Stand!* lesson 5: The Age of Imperialism, pages 21-26, by reading the following:

a. *The Western Experience*, Chapter 25

b. *Global History and Geography, Readings and Documents*, “Gandhi Introduces Civil Disobedience to India.”

c. Internet source with primary sources as of August 2011:

[http://www.shsu.edu/~his\\_ncp/266Read.html](http://www.shsu.edu/~his_ncp/266Read.html)

4. Writing Assignment: Write an outline for a five-paragraph essay.

Ideas for Family Discussion: Have the student report to the family. Discuss the Indian practice of suttee, where the widow of her recently deceased husband throws herself on his funeral pyre. Let the students know the British ended this practice, even though it went against Indian customs. Ask the family what they think about imperialism. Is it good, ever good, sometimes good?

**\*Important: Read the next week’s lesson one week BEFORE meeting with the students, so you have time to prepare.**