

The accreditation period has been extended until   
31 December 2021.

Authorised and published by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority  
Level 1, 2 Lonsdale Street  
Melbourne VIC 3000

ISBN: 978-1-925264-01-2

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Introduction

The VCE Ancient History *Advice for teachers’* handbook provides curriculum and assessment advice for Units 1 to 4. It contains advice for developing a course with examples of teaching and learning activities and resources for each unit.

Assessment information is provided for school-based assessment in Units 3 and 4 and advice for teachers on how to construct assessment tasks with suggested performance descriptors and rubrics.

The course developed and delivered to students must be in accordance with the [*VCE History Study Design 2016–2021*](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/curriculum/vce/vce-study-designs/ancienthistory/Pages/index.aspx).

Administration

Advice on matters related to the administration of Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) assessment is published annually in the [*VCE and VCAL Administrative Handbook*](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/administration/vce-vcal-handbook/Pages/index.aspx)*.* Updates to matters related to the administration of VCE assessment are published in the [*VCAA Bulletin*](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/news-and-events/bulletins-and-updates/bulletin/Pages/index.aspx)*.*

VCE History study design examination specifications, past examination papers and corresponding examination reports can be accessed at: [www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/assessment/vce-assessment/past-examinations/Pages/Ancient-History.aspx](http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/assessment/vce-assessment/past-examinations/Pages/Ancient-History.aspx)

Graded Distributions for Graded Assessment can be accessed at [www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/administration/research-and-statistics/Pages/SeniorSecondaryCompletion.aspx](http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/administration/research-and-statistics/Pages/SeniorSecondaryCompletion.aspx)

Curriculum

Developing a course

A course outlines the nature and sequence of teaching and learning necessary for students to demonstrate achievement of the set of outcomes for a unit. The areas of study describe the learning context and the knowledge and skills required for the demonstration of each outcome.

Teachers must develop courses that include appropriate learning activities to enable students to develop the knowledge and skills identified in the outcomes in each unit.

All units in VCE History are constructed on the basis of 50 hours class contact time.

Example weekly course outlines are provided in [Appendix 2](#Append2). They are not intended as prescriptions.

Historical thinking

Specific historical thinking concepts that underpin the treatment of key knowledge and skills are outlined in the [Characteristics](http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Documents/vce/history/HistorySD-2016.pdf#page=10) of the study on page 10 of the VCE History Study Design. Teachers are advised to explicitly teach the skills that characterise historical thinking. These include: ask historical questions, establish historical significance, use sources as evidence, identify continuity and change, analyse cause and consequence, explore historical perspectives, examine ethical dimensions of history and construct historical arguments. These skills should shape the teaching program and assessment and should not be taught in isolation. They should inform students’ historical inquiry. A single assessment should provide the opportunity for students to demonstrate understanding and application of more than one skill.

Ask historical questions

At the core of historical inquiry is the ability to ask questions about the past. These should be drawn from the key concepts relating to the knowledge and skills that underpin the outcome statements. Teachers are advised to encourage students to examine the questions framing each area of study by asking: What type of question is it? What type of thinking is involved in this question? What is this question asking you to think about? What focus questions do you need to ask to help explain, analyse and evaluate key knowledge? What questions do you need to ask when exploring the outcome?

A good historical question could include the following components:

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| **Type of thinking** | **Type of question** | **Historical thinking concepts** | **Key knowledge** |
| Identify  Describe  Explain  Analyse  Evaluate | Who... ?  What... ?  When...?  Where... ?  How... ?  Why... ? | Significance  Evidence  Continuity and  change  Cause and  consequence  Perspectives  Ethical dimensions  Historical arguments | Use key knowledge from the study design when contextualising a question. |

Historical questions could include: What caused the expansion of New Kingdom Egypt? What were the perspectives of the coloniser and the indigenous peoples in North America? Who significantly contributed to change during the Enlightenment? What were the consequences of post-World War One reparations for Germany? How did the Bauhaus movement influence cultural change? What were the consequences of the Boston Massacre? Why did Mao Zedong introduce the Great Leap Forward? How did the anti-war movement change attitudes to international involvement in the Vietnam War? Who significantly contributed to changing attitudes towards Australian immigration policy? How did differing conceptions of identity within American settler societies affect their actions and choices during the American War of Independence?

Establish historical significance

Ascribing historical significance involves applying evaluative judgments about the past. To establish the historical significance of an event, an idea, an individual or a group, students should use questions or criteria to construct an evidence-based historical argument. When making an evaluative judgment, students could ask questions such as:

* How important was it to people who lived at that time?
* How many people were affected?
* To what extent were people’s lives changed?
* What does it reveal about the period?
* How long lasting were the consequences?
* Can the consequences still be felt today?
* What is its legacy?

Establishing historical significance often requires the application of other historical thinking skills. For example, the question: What were the most significant causes of the American Revolution? requires students to identify and analyse multiple causes, organise them into the conditional factors (social, cultural, historical, economic, environmental, political causes), use questions or criteria to judge, and draw on multiple sources of evidence to construct their historical arguments, establishing the most significant. This is an example of using multiple historical skills to engage students’ historical thinking.

Use sources as evidence

Developing historical thinking requires students to apply the historian’s method of interrogating and corroborating sources so that they can be used as evidence when constructing historical inquiry.

Primary sources are the building blocks of historical thinking and are fundamental to students’ understanding and interpretation of the past. They are created at the time of the event or shortly afterwards and may be visual, written, audio, audiovisual and artefacts. Secondary sources, such as textbooks or historical interpretations made by historians or commentators, often draw on primary sources to present an argument or interpretation of the past. Students should be encouraged to find, collect, select and evaluate the significance of sources to illuminate the historical questions they ask.

Just as they ask historical questions, students should ask questions of sources, such as: What type of source is it? Who wrote or created it? When and where and who was the intended audience? This can be followed by questions that contextualise the source in a time and place: When and where was it written? What was happening at the time of creation? What events are described in the source? Who is represented? How might the events or conditions at the time in which the document was created affect its content? Teachers are advised to teach students to read sources not only as a means of finding information, or ‘proof’ or evidence for an argument, but also to investigate the language and meaning in the context in which they were created.

Students should also read sources closely, asking questions about literal and symbolic elements, and considering questions such as: What claims does the author make? and How does the author use language, words, symbols, gestures, colours to persuade the audience? Students can then pose questions about the purpose, accuracy and reliability of sources: What is the author’s perspective or intention? What claims is the author making? Why did they create it? Can the source be corroborated by other sources? What do other sources say? Do they agree or contradict this source? Is it an accurate representation? Is it a reliable source? Why or why not? Corroborating sources is an important skill for developing historical thinking. It is advised that students use multiple sources when drawing on key knowledge or constructing arguments; for example, an assessment task could include a primary visual, primary written, and two contrasting historical interpretations.

Identify continuity and change

Developing students’ ability to make judgments and construct arguments about the past requires developing the ability to identify when change occurred or when things continued unchanged, as well as causes of change. Students’ ability to make sense of the past requires discerning patterns, such as the ability to place events in chronological order and to understand the sequence and order of events as a process of change. Students can link causation and turning points to the moments of change in direction, change in pace and depth of change.

To identify and then construct arguments about continuity and change, students should understand the key knowledge, events, ideas, individuals, movements and turning points. The use of narratives and timelines as a starting point helps support students’ understanding of the sequence of events. When exploring, for example, how the storming of the Bastille changed the political conditions in France, students could discuss questions such as: How would you describe the changes? How did X event change Y? What changed most? Least? Why did some things change while others stayed the same? Did the changes improve things or did they make things worse? What do historians X and Y identify as the most significant change? Turning points are a useful way of identifying change; for example, students should think about an event such as the October Revolution 1917 as a turning point. Students should be able to identify the type of change and whether, for example, it was social, cultural, economic, environmental, political, and/or technological.

When evaluating the impacts of change, students should think about: What was the direction of change (progress, decline, erosion of conditions)? What was the quality of change, were things better or worse? What was the rate or speed of change? What was the impact of change? Exploring questions like these allows students to understand that continuity and change are multifaceted and involve ongoing processes that have a variety of patterns and speeds.

Analyse cause and consequence

Students are required to identify chains of cause and consequence, to identify turning points and explore how and why things happened in the past. In so doing, they should be able to identify many different kinds of causes, including social, political, economic, short-term catalysts and long-term trends, and immediate and underlying causes. They should also be able to organise causes and consequences using chronology and to examine the role of individuals and movements in shaping, promoting and resisting change. It is advised that teachers avoid suggesting an event was inevitable because of a series of causes and that they encourage reflection on the unpredictability of events by asking 'What if…' questions that encourage students to develop analytical and evaluative thinking.

Narratives are a good starting point for identifying significant causes. Students should use timelines to map and organise events, people, ideas, movements and turning points to identify links between causes and consequences and to distinguish between long-term (trends) and short-term (triggers) causes of events. Listing causes or consequences and grouping them according to conditional factors can help support analytical thinking. When evaluating the most significant cause, it is helpful to ask students to rank causes or consequences and to use questions (outlined above under ‘Establish historical significance’) to justify their choice.

Getting students to identify causes or consequences that were intended and unintended can be useful discussion points. Using graphic organisers such as concept maps, causal spider webs, fishbone or ripple effect charts are useful in the organisation of thinking. Students could use a selection of primary sources, organising them in chronological order in relation to causes and annotating how each piece of evidence triggered the next event or cause. Students should also use multiple primary sources or historical interpretations as a way of identifying causation or corroborating consequences. Students’ understanding of causation allows them to construct evidence-based arguments.

Explore historical perspectives

Exploring historical perspectives requires students to consider the mindsets of historical actors and to understand how context shaped the ways they saw and acted in the world. It involves the identification and description of the viewpoints of witnesses to dramatic events who experienced the consequences or lived with their changes. It invites students to consider, for example, what it was like for someone who was a member of the Red Guard during the Cultural Revolution, or who lived in ancient Egypt, Greece or Rome, or how ordinary people’s lives were affected by the Enlightenment or Scientific Revolution, or what it was like to be a slave in the American colonies, or why boys and girls joined the Hitler Youth. It is advised that in exploring historical perspectives, teachers also explore with students the risks of imposing contemporary experiences onto historical actors and of making assumptions that they know how people in the past thought or felt.

Student’s exploration of historical perspectives is grounded in close reading of a range of historical sources and making inferences about the ideas, values and beliefs of historical actors, their thoughts and feelings or reasons for action. Using historical sources to make inferences allows students to value the role of human actions in contributing to historical causes, the consequences they have for individuals or groups within society and the changes brought to their everyday lives.

Students should be encouraged to engage with multiple and if possible contradictory perspectives. People in the past may have seen and interpreted events differently from different perspectives. Students could also explore the silent voices of the past such as Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the illiterate, or women, to provide a rich narrative and inquiry. This allows students to critically challenge or corroborate sources and to assess their reliability. Constructing arguments about the experiences of those in the past must be grounded in evidence-based arguments drawn from historical sources.

Examine ethical dimensions of history

As students develop understanding of people in the past, their actions and their intended and unintended consequences, they may begin to make ethical judgments about the beliefs, values and attitudes of historical actors. The making of implicit or explicit judgments can be problematic and teachers are advised to remind students not to impose contemporary moral standards upon the actions of those in the past, and to understand that it is too simplistic to

label actions as right or wrong or reduce historical individuals to 'goodies' or 'baddies'. Often people in the past acted according to different moral frameworks and understanding this context can allow students to make informed judgments. Students who can make informed ethical judgments of the actions of those in the past can better explain and evaluate the consequences of those events, how people responded and the changes brought to society.

It is advised that students engage in close reading of sources, narratives and historical interpretations and ask questions about the implicitly and explicitly expressed beliefs, values and attitudes of the author and about the audience and purpose of the source. Exploring the context that informed the actions of people in the past should help students understand the ethical dimensions of history.

Construct historical arguments

Developing well-supported arguments is the culmination of historical inquiry. Students’ arguments should be based on the questions asked, the establishment of historical significance, the use of sources as evidence, identification of continuity and change, the analysis of cause and consequence, the exploration of historical perspectives and the examination of ethical dimensions of history. Students should develop their own narratives and historical interpretations about the past that demonstrate understanding of key knowledge and key skills of the outcomes. Constructing an argument is a creative process grounded in and restrained by source-based evidence. It is through this creative and communicative process that students demonstrate historical understanding.

Employability skills

This study provides students with the opportunity to engage in a range of learning activities. In addition to demonstrating their understanding and mastery of the content and skills specific to the study, students may also develop employability skills through their learning activities.

The nationally agreed employability skills are: Communication; Planning and organising; Teamwork; Problem solving; Self-management; Initiative and enterprise; Technology; and Learning.

The [table](#EmploySkills) links those facets that may be understood and applied in a school or non-employment related setting, to the types of assessment commonly undertaken within the VCE study.

Resources

A list of [resources](http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Pages/vce/studies/history/histstudy.aspx) is published online on the VCAA website and is updated annually. The list includes teaching, learning and assessment resources such as texts, websites and films and documentaries.

Assessment

Assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning. At the senior secondary level it:

* identifies opportunities for further learning
* describes student achievement
* articulates and maintains standards
* provides the basis for the award of a certificate.

As part of VCE studies, assessment tasks enable:

* the demonstration of the achievement of an outcome or set of outcomes for satisfactory completion of a unit
* judgment and reporting of a level of achievement for school-based assessments at Units 3 and 4.

The following are the principles that underpin all VCE assessment practices. These are extracted from the [VCAA *Principles and procedures for the development and review of VCE Studies*](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/curriculum/vce/Pages/VCEPoliciesandGuidelines.aspx) published on the [VCAA website](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Pages/HomePage.aspx).

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| **VCE assessment will be valid** | This means that it will enable judgments to be made about demonstration of the outcomes and levels of achievement on assessment tasks fairly, in a balanced way and without adverse effects on the curriculum or for the education system. The overarching concept of validity is elaborated as follows. |
| **VCE assessment should be fair and reasonable** | Assessment should be acceptable to stakeholders including students, schools, government and the community. The system for assessing the progress and achievement of students must be accessible, effective, equitable, reasonable and transparent.  The curriculum content to be assessed must be explicitly described to teachers in each study design and related VCAA documents. Assessment instruments should not assess learning that is outside the scope of a study design.  Each assessment instrument (for example, examination, assignment, test, project, practical, oral, performance, portfolio, presentation or observational schedule) should give students clear instructions. It should be administered under conditions (degree of supervision, access to resources, notice and duration) that are substantially the same for all students undertaking that assessment.  Authentication and school moderation of assessment and the processes of external review and statistical moderation are to ensure that assessment results are fair and comparable across the student cohort for that study. |
| **VCE assessment should be equitable** | Assessment instruments should neither privilege nor disadvantage certain groups of students or exclude others on the basis of gender, culture, linguistic background, physical disability, socioeconomic status and geographical location.  Assessment instruments should be designed so that, under the same or similar conditions, they provide consistent information about student performance. This may be the case when, for example, alternatives are offered at the same time for assessment of an outcome (which could be based on a choice of context) or at a different time due to a student’s absence. |

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| **VCE assessment will be balanced** | The set of assessment instruments used in a VCE study will be designed to provide a range of opportunities for a student to demonstrate in different contexts and modes the knowledge, skills, understanding and capacities set out in the curriculum. This assessment will also provide the opportunity for students to demonstrate different levels of achievement specified by suitable criteria, descriptors, rubrics or marking schemes.  Judgment about student level of achievement should be based on the results from a variety of practical and theoretical situations and contexts relevant to a study. Students may be required to respond in written, oral, performance, product, folio, multimedia or other suitable modes as applicable to the distinctive nature of a study or group of related studies. |
| **VCE assessment will be efficient** | The minimum number of assessments for teachers and assessors to make a robust judgment about each student’s progress and learning will be set out in the study design. Each assessment instrument must balance the demands of precision with those of efficiency. Assessment should not generate workload and/or stress that unduly diminish the performance of students under fair and reasonable circumstances. |

Scope of tasks

For Units 1–4 in all VCE studies assessment tasks must be a part of the regular teaching and learning program and must not unduly add to the workload associated with that program. They must be completed mainly in class and within a limited timeframe.

Points to consider in developing an assessment task:

1. List the key knowledge and key skills.
2. Choose the assessment task where there is a range of options listed in the study design. It is possible for students in the same class to undertake different options; however, teachers must ensure that the tasks are comparable in scope and demand.
3. Identify the qualities and characteristics that you are looking for in a student response and design the criteria and a marking scheme
4. Identify the nature and sequence of teaching and learning activities to cover the key knowledge and key skills outlined in the study design and provide for different learning styles.
5. Decide the most appropriate time to set the task. This decision is the result of several considerations including:

* the estimated time it will take to cover the key knowledge and key skills for the outcome
* the possible need to provide a practice, indicative task
* the likely length of time required for students to complete the task
* when tasks are being conducted in other studies and the workload implications for students.

Units 1 and 2

The student’s level of achievement in Units 1 and 2 is a matter for school decision. Assessments of levels of achievement for these units will not be reported to the VCAA. Schools may choose to report levels of achievement using grades, descriptive statements or other indicators.

In each VCE study at Units 1 and 2, teachers determine the assessment tasks to be used for each outcome in accordance with the study design.

Teachers should select a variety of assessment tasks for their program to reflect the key knowledge and key skills being assessed and to provide for different learning styles. Tasks do not have to be lengthy to make a decision about student demonstration of achievement of an outcome.

A number of options are provided in each study design to encourage use of a broad range of assessment activities. Teachers can exercise great flexibility when devising assessment tasks at this level, within the parameters of the study design.

Note that more than one assessment task can be used to assess satisfactory completion of each outcome in the units.

There is no requirement to teach the areas of study in the order in which they appear in the units in the study design.

Units 3 and 4

The VCAA supervises the assessment for levels of achievement of all students undertaking Units 3 and 4.

There are two main forms of school-based assessment: School-assessed Coursework (SAC) and in some studies, the School-assessed Task (SAT).

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| School–assessed Coursework | A SAC is selected from the prescribed list of assessment tasks designated for that outcome in the study design. A mark allocation is prescribed for each SAC. Teachers may develop their own marking schemes and rubrics or may use the [performance descriptors](#PerformanceDesc).  The [*VCE and VCAL Administrative Handbook*](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/administration/vce-vcal-handbook/Pages/index.aspx) provides more detailed information about School-assessed Coursework. |
| School-assessed Task | A SAT is a mandated task prescribed in the study design. The SAT is assessed using prescribed assessment criteria and accompanying performance descriptors published annually on the relevant study page on the [VCAA website](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Pages/HomePage.aspx). Notification of their publication is given in the February [*VCAA Bulletin*](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/news-and-events/bulletins-and-updates/bulletin/Pages/index.aspx). Teachers will provide to the VCAA a score against each criterion that represents an assessment of the student’s level of performance. Details of authentication requirements and administrative arrangements for School-assessed Tasks are published annually in the current year’s [*VCE and VCAL Administrative Handbook*](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/administration/vce-vcal-handbook/Pages/index.aspx). |

In VCE History the student’s level of achievement will be determined by School-assessed Coursework and an end-of-year examination. The VCAA will report the student’s level of performance as a grade from A+ to E or UG (ungraded) for each of three Graded Assessment components: Unit 3 School-assessed Coursework, Unit 4 School-assessed Coursework and the end-of-year examination.

In Units 3 and 4 school-based assessment provides the VCAA with two judgments:   
S (satisfactory) or N (not satisfactory) for each outcome and for the unit; and levels of achievement determined through specified assessment tasks prescribed for each outcome.

School-assessed Coursework provides teachers with the opportunity to:

* select from the designated assessment task/s in the study design
* develop and administer their own assessment program for their students
* monitor the progress and work of their students
* provide important feedback to the student
* gather information about the teaching program.

Teachers should design an assessment task that is representative of the content (key knowledge and key skills underpinning the outcome) and allows students the opportunity to demonstrate the highest level of performance. It is important that students know what is expected of them in an assessment task. This means providing students with advice about the outcome’s key knowledge and key skills to be assessed. Students should know in advance how and when they are going to be assessed and the conditions under which they will be assessed.

Assessment tasks should be part of the teaching and learning program. For each assessment task students should be provided with the:

* type of assessment task as listed in the study design and approximate date for completion
* time allowed for the task
* allocation of marks
* nature of any materials they can utilise when completing the task
* information about the relationship between the task and learning activities, as appropriate.

Following an assessment task:

* teachers can use the performance of their students to evaluate the teaching and learning program
* a topic may need to be carefully revised prior to the end of the unit to ensure students fully understand the key knowledge and key skills required in preparation for the examination
* feedback provides students with important advice about which aspect or aspects of the key knowledge they need to learn and in which key skills they need more practice.

Authentication

Teachers should have in place strategies for ensuring that work submitted for assessment is the student’s own. Where aspects of tasks for school-based assessment are completed outside class time teachers must monitor and record each student’s progress through to completion. This requires regular sightings of the work by the teacher and the keeping of records. The teacher may consider it appropriate to ask the student to demonstrate their understanding of the task at the time of submission of the work.

If any part of the work cannot be authenticated, then the matter should be dealt with as a breach of rules. To reduce the possibility of authentication problems arising, or being difficult to resolve, the following strategies are useful:

* Ensure that tasks are kept secure prior to administration, to avoid unauthorised release to students and compromising the assessment. They should not be sent by mail or electronically without due care.
* Ensure that a significant amount of classroom time is spent on the task so that the teacher is familiar with each student’s work and can regularly monitor and discuss aspects of the work with the student.
* Ensure that students document the specific development stages of work, starting with an early part of the task such as topic choice, list of resources and/or preliminary research.
* Filing of copies of each student’s work at given stages in its development.
* Regular rotation of topics from year to year to ensure that students are unable to use student work from the previous year.
* Where there is more than one class of a particular study in the school, the VCAA expects the school to apply internal moderation/cross-marking procedures to ensure consistency of assessment between teachers. Teachers are advised to apply the same approach to authentication and record-keeping, as cross-marking sometimes reveals possible breaches of authentication. Early liaison on topics, and sharing of draft student work between teachers, enables earlier identification of possible authentication problems and the implementation of appropriate action.
* Encourage students to acknowledge tutors, if they have them, and to discuss and show the work done with tutors. Ideally, liaison between the class teacher and the tutor can provide the maximum benefit for the student and ensure that the tutor is aware of the authentication requirements. Similar advice applies if students receive regular help from a family member.

Learning activities

Units 1 and 2

Unit 1: Ancient Mesopotamia

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| **Area of Study 1: Discovering civilisation** | |
| **Outcome 1**: | **Examples of learning activities** |
| Explain the development of civilisation in Mesopotamia. | * create a glossary of the key terms and concepts that underpin an understanding of discovering civilisation, including terms like civilisation, agriculture, domestication, social stratification, specialisation, city-state, assembly and priest-kings * create an annotated map of the region, highlighting the different geographical features including the ‘boundary’ indicating where rain-fed agriculture is possible compared to where crops can only be grown by irrigation * create an annotated timeline which covers major developments during the period * compare and contrast the different theories about the invention and development of agriculture and make an assessment as to which theory is most convincing * investigate both the material remains and the translated cuneiform tablets from Ebla, Tell Mardikh in Syria as an example of a key northern Mesopotamian city; consider what may be learnt about the economy and trade by examining the tablets and reflect on how the idea of a large urban centre ‘travelled’ from southern Mesopotamia to northern Syria * undertake an inquiry into the social, economic and political features of one or more city states from Southern Mesopotamia which considers both the material record and written texts |

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| [**Detailed example**](file://VCAAFS01/Curriculum$/VCE/Implementation/2015/Detailed%20example) |
| **SOURCE ANALYSIS**  Students investigate different city-states from Southern Mesopotamia: Ur, Uruk, Kish, Lagash, Nippur, Eridu, Larsa, Umma and Shuruppak using both the material record and written sources. They discuss the differences between the material records and written sources, given that some sites have been excavated more extensively than other sites, and some sites were excavated before modern archaeological techniques were utilised, and some are only known from written texts  Working in pairs on different city-states, students prepare a report on the political structure and economy of their city-state to present to the class, using:   * the analysis of the material remains by archaeologists * the analysis of written texts by historians.   Based on the presentations, students then create a table comparing these key Southern city-states, including the rise and fall of their power base and changing alliances. |

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| **Area of Study 2: Ancient empires** | |
| **Outcome 1**: | **Examples of learning activities** |
| Explain continuity and change in Mesopotamia as new peoples and ruling elites emerged. | * create a table that compares the social, economic, political and cultural features of the following three main ruling elites: First Babylonian Dynasty under Hammurabi (southern Mesopotamia); Assyria under Shamshi-Adad at Shubat-Enlil (northern Mesopotamia); and the kingdom of Mari on the middle Euphrates * create an annotated timeline that plots the chronology of the rise and fall of the kings Hammurabi, Shamshi-Adad and Zimri-Lim * drawing on primary sources and historical interpretations, examine the causes and consequences of the fall of the First Babylonian Dynasty and the Assyrian Empire and develop a hypothesis explaining their fall * read a range of historical interpretations of continuity and change in the political, economic, social and cultural features of the succeeding empires; write a report identifying key similarities and differences in the historical interpretations * compare and contrast the Laws of Hammurabi with the laws from the tablets of the library of Ashurbanipal in Nineveh, created nearly 1000 years later * undertake an analysis of the key developments in astronomy, in the measurement of time and in medicine in ancient Mesopotamia and consider the significance of these achievements |

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| [**Detailed example**](file://VCAAFS01/Curriculum$/VCE/Implementation/2015/Detailed%20example) |
| **COMPARISON OF SOURCES**  Students compare and contrast the Laws of Hammurabi with the laws from the tablets of the library of  Ashurbanipal in Nineveh, created nearly 1000 years later.  In pairs or groups, students undertake the comparison with a focus on the following:   * historical context for each of the records * motives behind its creation * intended audience for each of the records * content of each of the records * what is revealed about the attitudes, values and beliefs of people from each society * significance of each of the records * explanation of continuity and change in the societies. |

Unit 2: Ancient Egypt

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| **Area of Study 1: Egypt: the double crown** | |
| **Outcome 1**: | **Examples of learning activities** |
| Explain the distribution of power in Old Kingdom Egypt and the First Intermediate Period, the social, political and economic reasons for the construction of pyramids, and Egyptian beliefs concerning the afterlife. | * continue developing the glossary of key terms, including those that underpin an understanding of Ancient Egypt, such as Lower Egypt, Upper Egypt, delta, dynasty, theocracy, bureaucracy and nomarchs * annotate on a map the physical environment of the Nile Valley (Upper Egypt) and Delta (Lower Egypt), the oases region and the Sinai Peninsula and major centres along the Nile such as Memphis and Thebes * hold a class debate on the topic: ‘The management of resources are important but this was not what made Egypt into a state’; support arguments with evidence drawn from a range of sources * annotate a timeline starting with the Predynastic Period and finishing with the Second Intermediate Period; provide blocks for each Kingdom, Intermediate Period and Dynasty * using the form of a pyramid, create a diagram representing the social hierarchy of the Old Kingdom; annotate the diagram with an explanation of each of the key individual roles and general classes in the Old Kingdom * analyse the stories of Uni and Harkhuf; explore the way the noble Uni and the governor Harkhuf provide insight into journeys into Nubia to secure trade and of Old Kingdom society * research the importance of the King as both political and religious ruler of Egypt using pyramid texts (specifically Cannibal Hymn) as evidence * annotate a timeline showing the construction and size of individual Pyramids during the Old Kingdom * evaluate the pyramids as a reflection of rulers’ prestige and beliefs concerning the afterlife * ‘Did the Old Kingdom Simply Wear itself out?’ write a research essay based on historical inquiry investigating the reasons and evidence for the demise of the Old Kingdom * undertake a written evaluation of what continuities from the Old Kingdom can be observed in the subsequent First Intermediate Period |

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| [**Detailed example**](file://VCAAFS01/Curriculum$/VCE/Implementation/2015/Detailed%20example) |
| **SOURCE ANALYSIS AND HISTORICAL INTERPRETATIONS: THE POWER OF THE KING**  Students analyse the Pyramid texts and in particular the ‘Cannibal Hymn’ where the King threatens to eat the entire pantheon of Egyptian Deities to acquire their power. King Unas grades the pantheon of gods as to whom he will eat (the most powerful) while others will be burnt on the flames.  (Breasted’s text is available online.)  Students develop questions, based on the text, about the motives of the king and what his threats reveal about the nature of kingship.  Students then draw on the ‘Cannibal Hymn’ and historical interpretations of it to inform an inquiry focused on the power and prestige of the King and of the Divinities. |

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| **Area of Study 2: Middle Kingdom Egypt: Power and propaganda** | |
| **Outcome 1**: | **Examples of learning activities** |
| Explain the use and representation of power in Middle Kingdom Egypt and the Second Intermediate Period. | * create a map and timeline showing the extent of reunification of the Nile Valley and Delta and the usurpation of Nubia and Canaan territories under Mentuhotep II’s reign * make an archaeological site study of Deir-el-Bahri, with particular focus on the mastaba architecture of Mentuhotep II’s funerary complex * research the religious and political reasons behind the unusual construction and location of the mortuary temple at Deir-el-Bahri’s and suggest possible theories * make an archaeological site study of the Fortress of Buhen in Nubia, with a focus on border control, economic/trade implications and control of gold coming from this subjugated region into Egyptian treasuries * analyse literary texts used as propaganda * analyse the social and political implications of the *Story of the Eloquent Peasant* * make an archaeological site study of Beni Hasan, burial ground for many of the governors of the Middle Kingdom; suggest what it reveals about the social and political power of the regional governors * make an archaeological site analysis of Avaris, Delta capital of the Hyksos foreign rulers, and first truly multicultural city in Egypt; suggest what it reveals about the social and economic pursuits and political power of the Hyksos * create a table that compares contemporarySeventeenth Dynasty (Egyptian) views of the Hyksos period with evidence from the site of Avaris * based on the table of comparison, write an essay evaluating representations of the authority of the Hyksos |

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| [**Detailed example**](file://VCAAFS01/Curriculum$/VCE/Implementation/2015/Detailed%20example) |
| **ANALYSIS OF SOURCES: REPRESENTATIONS OF POWER**  Students analyse the following sources, each of which were produced by the Twelfth Dynasty King  Amenemhet I as propaganda:   * The Prophesy of Neferti * the Pyramid of Amenemhet * The Story of Sinhue * the Instructions of Amenemhet   Students initially respond to the following questions about the *Prophesy of Neferti*:   * Who was the possible author? * What was the context in which the text was produced? * What does the text say? * How is royal power represented? * What may have motivated the creation of the text? * Who was its intended audience? * Was it a reliable account? * What other sources of evidence were produced during the Twelfth Dynasty?   Based on their research, students consider the question: ‘Why was the source created in this particular form at this specific time in the Middle Kingdom?’  Students research the possible reasons behind the building of Pyramid of Amenhemet I and the images and texts of the pyramid compounds. They then respond to the questions above using two later sources, which allude to the death of Amenemhet I:   * The Story of Sinhue * The Instructions of Amenemhet   and compare their answers to draw conclusions about whether and how the kings of the Twelfth Dynasty used literary texts as propaganda. |

Unit 2: Early China

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| **Area of Study 1: Ancient China** | |
| **Outcome 1**: | **Examples of learning activities** |
| Explain the development of civilisation in Ancient China. | * discuss the concept of ‘Early China’ or ‘Ancient China’: To what does it refer? Is it a useful reference for historical analysis? * examine a map of the physical environment of China, with particular attention to topography, climactic differences, and major waterways; identify any broad patterns of geographical distribution; annotate the map with evidence of early human settlement, including the Neolithic farming cultures of Cishan-Peiligang in present-day Henan and Hebei; Yangshao culture in Henan, Shanxi, and Shaanxi; and Liangzhu in the lower Yangzi River valley * hold a class debate on the topic: ’the Yellow River valley was the cradle of Chinese civilisation’; offer arguments for and against this proposition, with evidence drawn from the archaeological and textual record * produce a timeline showing major developments in the various Neolithic and Bronze Age cultures, as shown in the archaeological record * examine archaeological evidence of different types of early written inscriptions: pottery inscriptions; bronze inscriptions; oracle bones; add to the timeline of the Neolithic and Bronze periods looking at the differences in materials, visual styles, and content; Is there any sense of development? How does this relate to larger developments in material culture and social formation? How important was writing in state formation? * compare archaeological evidence of Neolithic and Bronze Age cultures with the textual account of early social and political developments in Sima Qian’s *Records of the Grand Historian*; What are their points of convergence and divergence? How might each type of evidence be used to construct a picture of early social and political developments? * identify the main divinities in the early religious pantheon, and ways in which humans interacted with them; analyse the use of divination, with particular reference to oracle bones and Yi jing * write an analysis of the causes of decentralisation of power during the Spring and Autumn Period (722–476 BC) and Warring States Period  (476–221 BC) under the topic: ‘The pull of regionalism was stronger than the capacity for centralisation under Zhou rule.’. * outline in oral presentation the key ideas expounded by the main ethical thinkers of the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods; produce an annotated chart tracing the intellectual relationships between those thinkers; hold a class debate: was the ethical thought of the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods the product of particular historical time or does it have a universal and enduring relevance? * produce a research essay on which aspects of pre-imperial religious and ethical thought laid the conceptual foundations for empire |

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| [**Detailed example**](file://VCAAFS01/Curriculum$/VCE/Implementation/2015/Detailed%20example) |
| **UNDERSTANDING THE POWER OF DIVINATION**  Students read a range of oracle bone texts from Shang and Zhou times (see Shaughnessy, E. (ed.) 1997,  *New Sources of Early Chinese History*, University of California Press, Berkeley, pp.30–41, 77–8, 82–3, 88–90, 97–99, 100–101, 111–3).  Based on analysis of these texts, students develop questions about the possible functions of divination and identify equivalent problems in contemporary social and political life. Students formulate suitable questions for an oracle bone divination and solutions to problems raised by their questions.  Students study the coin method for performing a divination using *Book of Changes* (*Yi jing*) (see Minford, J. (tr.) 2014, *I Ching*, Viking, New York,, pp.xxxvii–li). They perform a divination for contemporary times.  Students develop an inquiry into the role of religion in early society based on both practical reflection on the experience of performing a divination and theoretical analysis of its potential to support structures of social and political power. |

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| **Area of Study 2: The early empires** | |
| **Outcome 2**: | **Examples of learning activities** |
| Explain the rise and fall of the Qin and Han empires. | * onto a map of the physical environment of the China, done in Area of Study 1, add the political boundaries of the Qin, Western Han, Xin, and Eastern Han empires * make an archaeological site study of the tomb of Qin Shi Huangdi, drawing particular note to points of convergence or divergence between the archaeological features of the tomb and Qin Shi Huangdi’s biographical data in the transmitted textual record * discuss the different representations of Qin Shi Huangdi’s life and rule: self-representation in his stele inscriptions and tomb imagery; Sima Qian’s account in *Records of the Grand Historian*; films *The Emperor and the Assassin* (1999) and *Hero* (2002); TV drama-documentaries *First Emperor: The Man Who Made China* (2006) and *China’s First Emperor* (2008); and Jorge Luis Borges’ short story, ‘The Wall and the Books’. Are there any relationships between these representations? In what respects do they vary? What are the effects of the differences in the times and places of their creation and the media in which they were created? * develop an inquiry into modes of representation in the early empires by producing a personal account of Qin Shi Huangdi’s life; explain the reasons not only for selecting a certain content or narrative slant, but also for the medium of representation * produce a short written analysis of the circumstances under which Sima Qian composed his *Records of the Grand Historian*: what political and social questions were current at the time? Do these make themselves felt in Sima Qian’s representations of the past? Is Sima Qian’s purpose an ethical one, like the thinkers of earlier times? * with particular reference to the biographies of Xiang Yu and Liu Bang (Han Emperor Gaozu), discuss the literary techniques that Sima Qian used in his *Records of the Grand Historian*? How did he make judgments about historical events and people? What is the implication of this for using his history as a source to understand the early empires? * analyse the degree of continuity or discontinuity between the Western Han, Xin, and Eastern Han empires; To what extent did each base its legitimacy on its predecessors? Or how important was it to create an impression of difference? * situate the images of the Wu Liang Shrine in their intellectual, social, and political context; discuss their value as a source of historical evidence; To what extent might they shed light on the ideology of the central state in the late Eastern Han, as well as on local interests? * analyse the role of the individual in shaping the identity of the early imperial state; make concrete reference to the contributions made by particular people; How might we best judge these contributions – in the context of their times or through the lens of hindsight? * write a research essay on the reasons for the enduring appeal of empire as a political system: ‘Empire was the only possible political system in early China’: make reference to precise historical examples and consider a range of possible questions: What alternative systems of social and political organisation presented themselves during the early empires, in particular during the period of civil war between Qin and Han? Can ‘empire’ be considered a ‘good’ state at this time? Why did empire ultimately survive as the dominant political concept? |

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| **ANALYSIS OF SOURCES: REPRESENTATIONS OF POWER**  Each student is assigned one the following people as a character in a debate: Heaven (tian); Confucius (trad. 551–479 BC); Laozi (trad. C6th BC); Shang Yang (390–338 BC); Qin Shi Huangdi (r. 221–210 BC); Li Si (ca. 280–208 BC); Han Emperor Gaozu (r. 202–195 BC); either a Xiongnu or Modun (r. 209–174 BC); Han Emperor Wu (r. 141–87 BC); Dong Zhongshu (179–104 BC); Wang Mang (r. 9–23 AD); Han Emperor Guangwu (r. 25–57 AD); either a Yellow Turban rebel (late C2nd–early C3rd AD) or Zhang Jue (d.184).  Students prepare a brief biographical sketch of their characters. They also develop a list of their character’s contributions to the formation and survival of empire as a political concept. They should order these contributions according to their tactics for the debate: some may prefer to place their strongest contributions first; others may keep them in reserve for when the debate grows more intense, assuming that they will survive its early rounds.  The scenario for the debate is this: all characters find themselves in a vessel – a hot-air balloon, for example – that is fated to imminent destruction. Only two characters can remain in the vessel to ensure its survival; the others must be evicted. The vessel is the Chinese empire. Each character must therefore argue for the importance of their survival to the future fate of the empire. There may be more than one vessel in a class, though no character should appear twice in any one vessel.  For the first round of the debate, students introduce their historical character. They also set out the first of their contributions to the formation and survival of empire. A second round follows, in which all students present their characters’ second major contribution to the strength of empire.  Evictions start after two rounds. A fixed number of characters are evicted at each round. Evictions are judged either by those in the vessel itself, through a vote, or, if there is more than one vessel being used in a class, by any bystanders. Those who are evicted then take responsibility for interrogating survivors, for determining further evictions, and for explaining their judgments. This continues until only two survivors remain and the debate is over.  The debate leads to an inquiry into the relationship between the individual and the early imperial state. This may take several directions, but it lends itself in particular to an exploration of the ways in which an individual’s actions might be shaped by different types of representation and argument. As a corollary, it encourages consideration of how modern historians interpret such representations when forming judgments about early Chinese empires. |

Learning activities and School-assessed Coursework (SAC)

Ancient history Units 3 and 4

When developing a course, teachers select two societies to be studied from Egypt, Greece and Rome, one for Unit 3 and one for Unit 4. For the two selected societies, both areas of study must be undertaken. Students are expected to demonstrate a progression from Unit 3 to Unit 4 in historical understanding and skills, and this progression should be reflected in the learning activities.

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| **Area of Study 1: Living in an ancient society** | |
| **Outcome 1**: | **Examples of learning activities** |
| Explain and analyse the social, political and economic features of an ancient society. | * produce a time-lapse map showing the significant features of New Kingdom, Third Intermediate and Late Period Egypt, including the reunification of the Nile Valley and Delta and the expansion of the Egyptian Empire to its greatest historical extent under the Eighteenth Dynasty rulers * develop a timeline that identifies key dates for New Kingdom, Third Intermediate and Late Periods, focusing on the Eighteenth Dynasty power base, the Southern Valley capital of Thebes, the temple complexes at Luxor and Karnak and the Mortuary Temples on the West Bank of the Nile * construct an evaluative table comparing historical interpretations of the reign of the female ruler Hatshepsut and the male successor Thutmosis III * create an annotated map of the archaeological site of Karnak and explain how it represented the power of the respective New Kingdom, Third Intermediate and Late Periods * undertake a visual source analysis of foreign trade in Egypt in the Eighteenth Dynasty * undertake a document analysis of the account of the ‘victory’ at Kadesh as represented by Ramesses II on his mortuary temple, the Ramesseum * review historical interpretations of the Battle of Kadesh and create a table comparing different interpretations of ‘Who really won?’ * using a mind map or other graphic organiser, outline and evaluate the external catalysts for change in the late New Kingdom; as a class, prioritise the catalysts that were most significant in causing change during the Reign of Ramesses III * investigate the division and intrigue after the death of Ramesses III which led to the final king of the Dynasty, Ramesses XI, being sidelined by the powerful priests at Karnak and power being directed to Tanis in the Delta (North) * undertake a source analysis of depictions of non-Egyptian rulers from the Late Period; investigate the ‘Egyptianising of Foreigners’ * create a PowerPoint presentation showing how Nubian King Taharka inspired a ‘renaissance’ of Egyptian monumental building * map the significant features of the Near East that show the Middle Eastern campaigns of Necho II against Assyrians and Babylonians * construct a table and in each column identify the social, political and economic features of the reign of Amasis II * create a comparative chart analysing the extent to which traditions and features of life changed in the Late Period * undertake an analysis of Egyptian, Greek and Persian documents that provide accounts of Cambyses II’s conquest of Egypt |

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| [**Detailed example**](file://VCAAFS01/Curriculum$/VCE/Implementation/2015/Detailed%20example) |
| **VISUAL SOURCE ANALYSIS OF FOREIGN TRADE IN EGYPT UNDER THE EIGHTEENTH DYNASTY**  Suggested source: The famous depiction from the tomb (TT100) of the Eighteenth Dynasty vizier Rekhmire, depicting a procession of ‘foreigners’ bringing ‘tribute’ into Egypt. This image is available on many websites and books covering the period under investigation.  Five registers are depicted with men from Punt, Aegeans, Nubians (African), Retenu (Syrians) and Human Booty. All are represented as bringing gifts during the reign of either Thutmosis III or Amenhotep II. This visual, commissioned by Rechmire, was destined to be placed in a sealed tomb in the Valley of the Nobles. The level of detail suggests that the subject matter was significant. This visual analysis task requires students to hypothesise about who created this source and the purposes for which it was it developed (remembering that at best five per cent of the population were literate and that this mural was located in a private tomb).  Students develop their initial analysis and evaluation of the source in written or tabulated form. The following headings should be used to structure the analysis:   * Role description of the owner of the tomb * Context in which the visual source was produced * Detailed description of the source * Purpose of the source * Intended audience * Reliability * Other sources that depict Rekhmire’s tribute.   Based on the above, students undertake a more detailed analysis of this source in response to the following questions:   * Do other contemporary accounts or visual representations produced during the Eighteenth Dynasty support or challenge the depiction in his tomb painting of the arrival of Rekhmire’s tribute? * What does the attention to detail in depictions of the clothing and gifts in each register (level) indicate? * Using both the visual and your own knowledge, what could the order of the five tribute registers indicate socially, economically and politically? * Evaluate the values and limitations this visual source provides in establishing a point of view for historians attempting to understand the social, economic or political features of trade in the Eighteenth Dynasty. |

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| **Area of Study 2: People in power, societies in crisis Egypt – The Amarna period (1391–1292 BC)** | |
| **Outcome 2**: | **Examples of learning activities** |
| Evaluate the historical significance of a crisis in an ancient society and assess the role of key individuals involved in that turning point. | * develop a glossary identifying the pantheon of principal Egyptian deities during the Eighteenth Dynasty and their primary temple sites * create a PowerPoint presentation based on archaeological site studies of Karnak, explaining how and why Karnak was the centre of political power during the Eighteenth Dynasty * create a family tree for Amenhotep III and Tiye, including children and (great) grandchildren, Tutankhamun and Ankhesenamun * develop a timeline outlining the roles of the following individuals in relation to tensions in the Amarna period: the reigns of Amenhotep III, Amenhotep IV/Akhenaten, Nefertiti, Smenkhare and Tutankhamun * create a poster detailing the activities and importance of the Heb-Sed festival for the Egyptian Kings * construct a table that compares the religious beliefs and practices, and the building projects of Amenhotep III, to those of earlier kings of the Eighteenth Dynasty * in groups, draw up a detailed list of the challenges and changes that occurred under Akhenaten and outline a response to the question: ‘What was Akhenaten and his family rebelling against?’ * create a representation of the ‘social jigsaw’ depicted in the destroyed and now reconstructed Talatat wall from the Luxor Museum * drawing on textual and visual analysis of sources, write a dialogue between two people debating the role of Nefertiti in the crisis * consider the question: ‘Was Akhenaten’s reign as bad as his successors and historians make out?’; present a summary of historical Interpretations and later rulers’ assessments of Akhenaten’s reign, drawn from textual and visual evidence of the Amarna period; write an essay responding to the question, drawing on a range of interpretations |

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| [**Detailed example**](file://VCAAFS01/Curriculum$/VCE/Implementation/2015/Detailed%20example) |
| **AKHENATEN – CHALLENGE AND CHANGE**  In this activity, students identify challenges and changes during the late Eighteenth Dynasty. They respond to the question: ‘What was Akhenaten and his family rebelling against?’ and create a mind map or other graphic organiser summarising the reforms, political motivations, and attempts to consolidate Akhenaten’s position and notions of leadership that characterised his reign.  The mind map or graphic organiser may be used in class discussion when responding to the question ‘What was Akhenaten and his family rebelling against?’. Students should refer to conflicting historical interpretations, for example:   * The now discredited interpretation of some twentieth century scholars (such as Steindorff and Seele) that the ‘revolution’ was the origin of monotheism. * The differing conclusions of historians such as Thomas, Kemp, Freed and Markowitz.   (See Resource document for texts and other relevant resources.) |

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| **Area of Study 1: Living in an ancient society Greece (800–454 BC)** | |
| **Outcome 1**: | **Examples of learning activities** |
| Explain and analyse the social, political and economic features of an ancient society. | * develop a timeline that identifies key dates for Greece as a whole, and Athens and Sparta in particular, between 800 BC and 454 BC * map the significant features of ancient Greece, including the location of key cities, overseas colonies and trading partners, and key geographical features such as mountains * develop a glossary that includes key terms and important individuals * as a class, develop questions about events, people, and features of Athens and Sparta; revisit these over the course of the study to check understanding and to add answers and/or more questions, as relevant * construct a diagram that represents the connections between, and relative power of, the classes within both Sparta and Athens * create an annotated map of the Panathenaic Way, labelling the relevant architectural features and explaining what each area was used for during the festival of the Panathenaia and at other times in the year * choosing between social, political or economic features of Athens or Sparta, curate a virtual museum exhibit, using online resources such as the British Museum website * using a mind-map or other graphic organiser, outline and evaluate the short- and long-term impacts on Athens of the two Persian invasions |

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| [**Detailed example**](file://VCAAFS01/Curriculum$/VCE/Implementation/2015/Detailed%20example) |
| **TIMELINE OF GREECE, BETWEEN 800BC AND 454BC**  Students develop a timeline that identifies key dates for Greece as a whole, and Athens and Sparta in particular, between 800 BC and 454 BC.  The timeline could be constructed at the beginning of the area of study and further developed and annotated over the weeks of study. Key dates should include social and political reforms in the Athens and Sparta; the settlement of overseas colonies; wars such as the Ionian Revolt and the Persian invasions.  As the study progresses, students begin to draw connections between the events on their timeline, such as cause and effect (for example, the Ionian Revolt and the first Persian invasion), and instances of change. Students annotate their timeline to indicate relevant pieces of evidence for the different events they have listed. Finally, students consider which of the events could be judged the most significant. Students could use a ranking system like colour coding and/or include extended annotations. |

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| **Area of Study 2: People in power, societies in crisis Greece – The Peloponnesian War (460–403 BC)** | |
| **Outcome 1**: | **Examples of learning activities** |
| Evaluate the historical significance of a crisis in an ancient society and assess the role of key individuals involved in that turning point. | * develop a timeline that identifies key events and turning points of the Peloponnesian War between 460 BC and 403 BC * map the location of the Greek city states in 460 BC and denote their respective allegiances to either Sparta or Athens (including Asia Minor and Sicily); repeat this map for key stages of the war: 445 BC, 431 BC, 421 BC, 413 BC, 403 BC * develop a glossary that includes key terms, important individuals, important battles, and key treaties of the Peloponnesian War * as a class, develop questions about the wealth and resources of the respective powers (Athens and Sparta); identify what weaknesses may have existed in their military and political structures at the outbreak of the war; revisit these over the course of the study to check understanding and add answers and more questions, as relevant * construct a diagram that identifies the comparative power of Sparta and Athens; include land forces and naval strength * create a time-lapse map of the Peloponnesian War identifying: the territories lost and won by each power at different stages of the war; and the alliances that existed for each power throughout the different stages of the war * create a table comparing the social, political and economic problems faced by Sparta and Athens at various times during the Peloponnesian war * using a mind-map or other graphic organiser, outline and evaluate the short- and long-term impacts of the Peloponnesian War on Athens and Sparta and their allies * draw up a table comparing Pericles, Alcibiades and Lysander; place their names along a vertical axis and then label columns along the horizontal axis: military weaknesses/strengths; political weaknesses/strength; greatest contribution to the Peloponnesian War; greatest error/failure of the Peloponnesian War * as a class, discuss the question: ‘who would be considered the most influential figure out of Pericles, Alcibiades and Lysander and why?’ * using six to eight key primary and secondary sources pertaining to the Peloponnesian War, including print, graphic and/or film, archaeological artefacts, answer a range of questions evaluating how historians have interpreted the historical significance of the war and the key individuals who took part in it |

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| **HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PELOPONNESIAN WAR**  Students are given a range of six to eight resources (at least half of them primary) that may include print, graphic and/or film, archaeological artefacts. They use these resources to undertake the following tasks:   * Identify how ancient Greek societies, particularly Sparta and the Athenian Empire, were changed as a result of the Peloponnesian War. * Examine the literal and symbolic meaning of the sources. Analyse the ways in which the document/visual source represents leaders, groups or events during the Peloponnesian War. * Consider the influence of key leaders or groups or events in the context of change as represented in the documents.   Evaluate the contribution of the Peloponnesian War in the development of change in ancient Greek society between 460–403 BC. |

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| **Area of Study 1: Living in an ancient society Rome (c.700–146 BC)** | |
| **Outcome 1**: | **Examples of learning activities** |
| Explain and analyse the social, political and  economic features of  an ancient society. | * develop a timeline that identifies important events for Rome between 700–146 BC, including the development of Rome from village to city * map the significant features of ancient Rome in 146 BC, identifying important features; include the location of Carthage, Sicily and Greece * develop a Glossary listing principal Roman Gods * create a PowerPoint presentation outlining one Roman foundation narrative * create an annotated diagram depicting the social hierarchy in Roman society, listing traditional views of members of different social strata; for example, the views of a patrician * construct a table providing details of the lives of different social groups under the Kings in Rome; include a quotation from a historical source to support each point * based on the table, write an essay on the lives of these different groups * analyse primary sources to research the institution of slavery in the Republic; detail its origins, use and continuation, and its social and economic effects on the Roman state * create an annotated map of the site of Ostia Antica, labelling what the ancient harbour revealed about social, political and economic features of life * using a mind-map or other graphic organiser, outline and evaluate the short- and long-term impacts of the Roman conquest of Italy * as a class, develop questions about the relationship between patrons and clients and research primary sources to provide answers |

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| [**Detailed example**](file://VCAAFS01/Curriculum$/VCE/Implementation/2015/Detailed%20example) |
| **ANALYSIS OF PRIMARY SOURCES**  Students read the primary sources below and answer the following questions:   * Who created the source? Provide brief biographical details. * For what purpose was the source created? Who was the intended audience? * What views of slavery are presented? * What information does each source provide about: * How people became slaves in Roman times, and what their lives were like? * How slave owners should treat their slaves. * Summarise the differing views of slavery presented by each author. * How may the differing views be explained? * According to the sources, what effect did slavery have on Roman society?   Research other sources to answer the following:   * How did views about slavery change over time, especially in relation to the effect on Roman society of the Punic wars or the expansion of power or Greek influence?   **Source 1: Varro/Seneca comparing two views of slavery**  The slave foreman must not be allowed to use a whip to control his men, provided that he can achieve the same result with words alone. An estate owner should make his foreman more enthusiastic by giving him rewards, and taking care to allow him to have some property of his own, and a wife from among the other slaves, to bear him children. In this way a slave foreman becomes more reliable, and more closely tied to the farm ... Those of the slaves whose work is best should be consulted about what needs to be done, for they will be less likely to think they are being looked down on. Slaves will be made more eager to work by more generous treatment, more food, more clothes, longer breaks, permission to graze their own cattle on the estate and other concessions.  Source: Varro, *Rerum Rusticarum* 1, 17.1, 5–7.  **Source 2**  On one occasion a proposal was made by the Senate to distinguish slaves from free men by insisting that they wore different clothes, but it became clear how dangerous it would be if slaves could actually *see* how few free men there really were.  Source: Seneca, *De Clementia*, I.24.1  **Source 3**  I was pleased to hear those who had come from you saying that you live on friendly terms with your slaves, for this is what a sensible, well-educated person like yourself should do. People say, ‘They are slaves’ but I say that they are men like us. ‘Slaves’ they say. (Ep1–301)  No they are humble friends ...Remember this, that the man you call your slave comes from the same species, enjoys the same sky and breathes, lives and dies exactly as you do. You can imagine him to be a free man, he can imagine you a slave ... But this is my advice, in a nutshell. Treat your inferiors as you would wish to be treated by your betters. (Ep1–307)  Source: Seneca, *Epist, Mor*, 47,10,11 |

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| **Area of Study 2: People in power, societies in crisis Rome – The fall of the Republic (133–23 BC)** | |
| **Outcome 2**: | **Examples of learning activities** |
| Evaluate the historical significance of a crisis in an ancient society and assess the role of key individuals involved in that turning point. | * develop a timeline that identifies key developments that contributed to the fall of the Roman Republic between 133–23 BC * develop a glossary that includes key terms that apply to, and important events and key people who played a role in, the fall of the Republic * as a class, identify weaknesses that may have contributed to the fall of the Republic at different stages * draw up a table which compares the parts played by Julius Caesar, Cleopatra VII and Augustus in the fall of the Republic; as a class, discuss the question: ‘who would be considered the most influential figure out of the three and why?’ * analyse key primary and secondary sources relating to the fall of the Republic; evaluate how historians have interpreted the historical significance of the fall and the key individuals who took part * citing different interpretations, prepare a detailed plan for an essay evaluating the achievements and influence of Caesar * develop a report based on individual or group inquiry, which analyses the role of one of Julius Caesar, Cleopatra VII or Augustus in the demise of the Republic |

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| [**Detailed example**](file://VCAAFS01/Curriculum$/VCE/Implementation/2015/Detailed%20example) |
| **INQUIRY TASK: BIOGRAPHY**  Students develop a written report based on individual or group inquiry, which analyses the role of ONE of Julius Caesar, Cleopatra VII or Augustus in the demise of the Republic.  Students develop inquiry questions based on the key knowledge dot-points for each individual (see page 46 of the History study design). For example, questions for Cleopatra VII’s role should cover: Ptolemaic rule; family background, the relationship between Egypt and Rome; the reign of Cleopatra and her relationships with Julius Caesar and Mark Antony. Students may use the key knowledge points as sub headings in the report or may cover the material in a combined essay format.  All direct quotes should be cited and reports should include a bibliography listing both primary and secondary sources. |

School-assessed Coursework (SAC): Sample approach to developing an assessment task

Greece

Outcome 1

Explain and analyse the social, political and economic features of an ancient society.

An essay will be used as a sample approach to this SAC.

Topic 1

Sparta was a better city than Athens in which to live. To what extent do you agree? In your response you should consider the social, political and economic features of each city.

Topic 2

Athens had a better system of government than Sparta. To what extent do you agree? In your response you should consider the social, political and economic features of each city.

Topic 3

The second Persian invasion of Greece was the most significant event for Greece between 800 BC and 454 BC. To what extent do you agree? In your response you should refer to the social, economic and political features of Greece.

General advice (conditions for completing SAC)

Students may be offered three essay topics one week in advance of the assessment being undertaken in class. They will be required to answer any one of the three topics and will have 60 minutes of writing time to do so.

Students will be permitted to use one A4 page of direct quotations from historical sources, either produced during the period of study or produced later as primary sources or historical interpretations. The source of each quotation must be properly acknowledged on the A4 page that will be submitted with the essay.

Note: The above task and advice is a sample only. Teachers may choose to adapt the conditions under which the SAC will be completed according to the task they select for their students.

Egypt

Outcome 2

Evaluate the historical significance of a crisis in an ancient society and assess the role of key individuals involved in that turning point.

An analysis of primary sources will be used as a sample approach to this SAC.

Students will be required to evaluate the historical significance of tensions in the Amarna Period and assess the role of Akhenaten in that period.

Students should be given four different primary sources (two visual and two written sources), provided by the teacher or located by themselves, representing tensions in the Amarna Period and the role of Akhenaten.

With reference to the primary sources provided, draw up a table in which you complete the following:

1. Identify the origin and perspective of each source.

2. Make a dot point summary of the information contained about the roles Akhenaten played during the Amarna Period.

3. From the selected four sources, analyse Akhenaten’s leadership and response to challenges.

4. Identify significant similarities and differences between each source.

5. Use the information drawn from all four sources and further evidence to **write an extended response** in which you explore the contribution of Akhenaten in dealing with challenges to his kingship and his empire.

General advice (conditions for completing SAC)

This SAC should take two in-class periods to complete and students can bring in annotated copies of each of the four source documents and a page of A4 notes relating to the Amarna Period.

Note: The above task and advice is a sample only. Teachers may choose to adapt the conditions under which the SAC will be completed according to the task they select for their students.

Greece

Outcome 2

Evaluate the historical significance of a crisis in an ancient society and assess the role of key individuals involved in that turning point.

An analysis of historical interpretations will be used as a sample approach to this SAC.

Two possible approaches:

1. A comparison of ancient sources of the Peloponnesian War and of the late fifth century BC produced by both fifth century and later ancient writers. These writers would include:

* Thucydides (460 BC – 395 BC): History of the Peloponnesian War
* Xenophon (455 BC – 399 BC): Hellenica
* Diodurus Siculus (90 BC – 30 BC): Bibliothecha Historica: Books XII–XIV
* Plutarch (46 AD – 120 AD): Parallel Lives: Pericles, Alcibiades, Nicias

Students are given eight passages from the four historical sources (two from each). These passages will relate to a common aspect of the Peloponnesian War or to key individuals/events from the war. They draw up two columns: one for identifying similarities between the sources and the other for identifying differences. Students then reflect on the concept of historical accuracy as it pertains to the Peloponnesian War in an extended response, considering what the basis is for the different historical interpretations from the sources used.

**OR**

2. A comparison of historical interpretations of Thucydides’ *History of the Peloponnesian War*

Students are given passages from different books within Thucydides’ *History of the Peloponnesian War* (written by an Athenian general who served in the war). In an extended response or as a series of short-answer questions, students compare   
J. B. Bury’s interpretation, that ‘[the *History* is] severe in its detachment, written from a purely intellectual point of view, unencumbered with platitudes and moral judgments, cold and critical,’ with that of W. R. Connor, who describes Thucydides as ‘an artist who responds to, selects and skilfully arranges his material, and develops its symbolic and emotional potential’.

General advice (conditions for completing SAC)

This task should be completed in class over approximately 120 minutes. At the teacher’s discretion, the teacher may allocate a preliminary lesson during which students may sight the SAC and create their own study notes for use during the completion of the SAC.

Note: The above task and advice is a sample only. Teachers may choose to adapt the conditions under which the SAC will be completed according to the task they select for their students.

Rome

Outcome 2

Evaluate the historical significance of a crisis in an ancient society and assess the role of key individuals involved in that turning point.

An essay will be used as a sample approach to this SAC.

1. The Gracchi brothers ignored the very ideas on which the solidarity of the ruling class was based and pursued their goals with a single-mindedness that polarised Roman society.

OR

2. Tiberius Gracchus was nothing more than a political opportunist who completely disregarded the political and moral codes of his day, heralding the ‘beginning of the end’ for the Roman Republic.

General advice (conditions for completing SAC)

Students may be offered these essay topics one week in advance of the assessment being undertaken in class. They will be required to answer either topic and will have 60 minutes of writing time to do so.

Students will be permitted to use one A4 page of direct quotations from historical sources, either produced during the period of study or produced later as primary sources or historical interpretations. The source of each quotation must be properly acknowledged on the A4 page that will be submitted with the essay.

Note: The above task and advice is a sample only. Teachers may choose to adapt the conditions under which the SAC will be completed according to the task they select for their students.

Performance descriptors

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **ANCIENT HISTORY**  **SCHOOL-ASSESSED COURSEWORK** | | | | | |
| **Performance Descriptors** | | | | | |
| |  | | --- | |  | | | | | | |
| ***Units 3 and 4***  ***Outcome 1***  ***Explain the social, political and economic features of an ancient society.*** | **DESCRIPTOR: typical performance in each range** | | | | |
| **Very low** | **Low** | **Medium** | **High** | **Very high** |
| Some identification of the historical significance of the social, economic and political features of an ancient society. | Some evaluation of the historical significance of the social, economic and political features of an ancient society. | Sound evaluation of the historical significance of the social, economic and political features of an ancient society. | Thoughtful evaluation of the historical significance of the social, economic and political features of an ancient society. | Comprehensive evaluation of the historical significance of the social, economic and political features of an ancient society. |
| Some description of the causes and consequences of the social, economic and political features of an ancient society. | Some analysis of the causes and consequences of the social, economic and political features of an ancient society. | Sound analysis of the causes and consequences of the social, economic and political features of an ancient society. | Detailed analysis of the causes and consequences of the social, economic and political features of an ancient society. | Sophisticated analysis of the causes and consequences of the social, economic and political features of an ancient society. |
| Some identification of continuity and change relating to the social, economic and political features of an ancient society. | Limited analysis of continuity and change relating to the social, economic and political features of an ancient society. | Satisfactory analysis of continuity and change relating to the social, economic and political features of an ancient society. | Detailed analysis of continuity and change relating to the social, economic and political features of an ancient society. | Thorough analysis of continuity and change relating to the social, economic and political features of an ancient society. |
| Very little analysis of the beliefs and values of people from the period when developing an argument. | Some analysis of the beliefs and values of people from the period when developing an argument. | Sound analysis of the beliefs and values of people from the period when developing an argument. | Detailed analysis of the beliefs and values of people from the period when developing an argument. | Comprehensive analysis of the beliefs and values of people from the period when developing an argument. |
| Very little evaluation of perspectives of people from the ancient past in the social economic and political features of their society when developing an argument. | Partial evaluation of perspectives of people from the ancient past in the social economic and political features of their society when developing an argument. | Adequate evaluation of perspectives of people from the ancient past in the social economic and political features of their society when developing an argument. | Detailed evaluation of perspectives of people from the ancient past in the social economic and political features of their society when developing an argument. | Thorough evaluation of perspectives of people from the ancient past in the social economic and political features of their society when developing an argument. |
| Very little evaluation of historical interpretations of significance of features of an ancient society when developing an argument | Partial evaluation of historical interpretations of significance of features of an ancient society when developing an argument. | Satisfactory evaluation of historical interpretations of significance of features of an ancient society when developing an argument. | Detailed evaluation of historical interpretations of significance of features of an ancient society when developing an argument. | Thorough and detailed evaluation of historical interpretations of significance of features of an ancient society when developing an argument. |

KEY to marking scale based on the Outcome contributing 50 marks

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| Very Low 1–10 | Low 11–20 | Medium 21–30 | High 31–40 | Very High 41–50 |

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| **ANCIENT HISTORY**  **SCHOOL-ASSESSED COURSEWORK** | | | | | |
| **Performance Descriptors** | | | | | |
| |  | | --- | |  | | | | | | |
| ***Unit 4***  ***Outcome 2***  ***Evaluate the historical significance of a crisis in an ancient society and assess the role of key individuals involved in that turning point.*** | **DESCRIPTOR: typical performance in each range** | | | | |
| **Very low** | **Low** | **Medium** | **High** | **Very high** |
| Some identification of the historical significance of a crisis and key individuals. | Some evaluation of the historical significance of a crisis and key individuals. | Sound evaluation of the historical significance of a  crisis and key individuals. | Thoughtful evaluation of the historical significance of a crisis and key individuals. | Comprehensive evaluation of the historical significance of a crisis and key individuals. |
| Some description of the causes of a crisis and the consequences for an ancient society. | Some analysis of the causes of a crisis and the consequences for an ancient society. | Sound analysis of the causes of a crisis and the consequences for an ancient society. | Detailed analysis of the causes of a crisis and the consequences for an ancient society. | Sophisticated analysis of the causes of a crisis and the consequences for an ancient society. |
| Some identification of continuity and change relating to a crisis in an ancient society. | Limited analysis of continuity and change relating to a crisis in an ancient society. | Satisfactory analysis of continuity and change relating to a crisis in an ancient society. | Detailed analysis of continuity and change relating to a crisis in an ancient society. | Thorough analysis of continuity and change relating to a crisis in an ancient society. |
| Very little analysis of the beliefs and values of people from the period when developing an argument. | Some analysis of the beliefs and values of people from the period when developing an argument. | Sound analysis of the beliefs and values of people from the period when developing an argument. | Detailed analysis of the beliefs and values of people from the period when developing an argument. | Comprehensive analysis of the beliefs and values of people from the period when developing an argument. |
| Very little evaluation of perspectives of people from the ancient past on a crisis and on the key individuals when developing an argument. | Partial evaluation of perspectives of people from the ancient past on a crisis and on the key individuals when developing an argument. | Adequate evaluation of perspectives of people from the ancient past on a crisis and on the key individuals when developing an argument. | Detailed evaluation of perspectives of people from the ancient past on a crisis and on the key individuals when developing an argument. | Thorough evaluation of perspectives of people from the ancient past on a crisis and on the key individuals when developing an argument. |
| Very little or no evaluation of historical interpretations of the significance of a crisis and key individuals when developing an argument. | Some evaluation of historical interpretations of the significance of a crisis and key individuals when developing an argument. | Satisfactory evaluation of historical interpretations of the significance of a crisis and key individuals when developing an argument. | Detailed evaluation of historical interpretations of the significance of a crisis and key individuals when developing an argument. | Comprehensive evaluation of historical interpretations of the significance of a crisis and key individuals when developing an argument. |

KEY to marking scale based on the Outcome contributing 50 marks

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Very Low 1–10 | Low 11–20 | Medium 21–30 | High 31–40 | Very High 41–50 |

Appendix 1: Employability skills

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| **Assessment task** | **Employability skills selected facets** |
| **A historical inquiry** | **Initiative and enterprise** (generating a range of options; being creative) **Planning and organising** (planning the use of resources including time management; collecting, analysing and organising information) **Problem solving** (developing practical solutions; testing assumptions taking the context of data and circumstances into account) **Self-management** (evaluating and monitoring own performance; taking responsibility) **Communication** (listening and understanding; reading independently; writing to the needs of the audience; persuading effectively) |
| **An analysis of primary sources** | **Planning and organising** (collecting, analysing and organising information) **Problem solving** (testing assumptions taking the context of data and circumstances into account) **Communication** (reading independently; writing to the needs of the audience; persuading effectively) |
| **An analysis of historical interpretations** | **Planning and organising** (collecting, analysing and organising information) **Problem solving** (testing assumptions taking the context of data and circumstances into account) **Communication** (reading independently; writing to the needs of the audience; persuading effectively) |
| **An essay** | **Planning and organising** (collecting, analysing and organising information) **Problem solving** (testing assumptions taking the context of data and circumstances into account) **Communication** (reading independently; writing to the needs of the audience; persuading effectively) |

The employability skills are derived from the Employability Skills Framework (*Employability Skills for the Future*, 2002), developed by the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Business Council of Australia, and published   
by the (former) Commonwealth Department of Education, Science and Training.

Appendix 2: Example of a weekly course outline: Units 1 and 2

All units in VCE History are constructed on the basis of 50 hours of class contact time. Consistent with this the following weekly outline is suggested.

The example weekly course outlines below are provided as guides. They are not intended as prescriptions. Teachers should use these outlines in conjunction with the outcome statements and key knowledge and skills in the study design.

*Note: For Unit 2, teachers are able to choose between Ancient Egypt and Early China.*

Unit 1: Ancient Mesopotamia

Area of Study 1: Discovering civilisation

Weeks 1–2

Brief introduction on the nature of sources and records for Ancient history, including the difference between history sources, which use written texts, and archaeology sources, which use the material record (such as settlement distribution, buildings, graves and grave goods, pottery and bones), to reconstruct the past; introduction to the dating methods used by archaeologists and historians; summary of the physical environment of Mesopotamia; agriculture and its role in the origins of civilization; theories about the development of agriculture, such as the role of the domestication of cereals and animals; the oasis hypothesis, the nuclear zone hypothesis, the population pressure hypothesis; the transition from farming villages to the emergence of cities (3200 BC) enabled by the invention of agriculture; the shift from rainfall agriculture to irrigation agriculture; the shift from social organisation based on hunting and gathering to more complex social stratification and craft specialisation as a result of agricultural production.

Weeks 3–4

Introduction to the first cities of southern Mesopotamia and the origins of writing; the surplus production from irrigation-fed grain crops and the lack of essential natural resources as a stimulus for trade and the consequent need for a recording system and scribes; Denise Schmandt-Besserat’s theory on the evolution of simple clay tokens representing counters for various objects such as grain or sheep to cuneiform writing (2700–2500 BC); the significance of cylinder seals.

Weeks 5–6

Overview of population growth; monumental architecture in mud bricks such as temples, ziggurats, palaces and defensive walls; erection of city walls in the city of Uruk (2700 BC) as evidence of conflict and warfare; the mobilisation of labour required to build and maintain canals and dykes; continuity and change in leaders (priests, priest kings, military leaders and dynastic kingship) of the political organisation known as city-states of Southern Mesopotamia from the Early Dynastic 1 Period (2900–2700 BC) to the Early Dynastic II (2700–2500) and III (2500–2350); debates about the origins of the Sumerians, the significance of the city of Kish, fluctuations in unifications of various city-states; look at *The Epic of Gilgamesh* to gain insight into how the people of Mesopotamia understood their world and the role of leaders.

Weeks 7–8

Akkadians and the Third Dynasty of Ur; an early Empire: Semitic-speaking people north of the city-state of Nippur known as Akkad (later called Babylonia); seizure of power by Sargon of Akkad, extension of his territory beyond Mesopotamia and change of title to reflect conquests; changes and continuities brought about by Sargon’s rule (2334–2279 BC); representation of Sargon in ancient sources, including *The Epic of the King of Battle* and *The Chronicle of Kings;* the extent of the Akkadian (until about 2160) and a Sumerian revival known as the Ur III period (2119–2004 BC); the significance of the Laws of Ur Nammu.

Area of Study 2: Ancient empires

Weeks 9–10

The rise of the First Babylonian Dynasty and expansion of the Empire under Hammurabi (1792–1750 BC); exploration of archaeological site of Mari (50,000 people) located on the middle Euphrates and the reign of its king Zimri-Lim (1779–1757 BC); examination of the architectural remains of the palace, statues, and the scribal archive; relations with neighbouring kings, including Hammurabi of Babylon, as well as the ‘Harem’ texts; the Amorite king Shamshi-Adad (1831–1782) and his rule in Assyria in northern Mesopotamia for 33 years and eventual conquer of Mari; the conquests and relationships between these three kings reflected in the various texts.

Weeks 11–12

The Laws of Hammurabi inscribed on the Stele of Hammurabi to reconstruct the social, political and cultural features of Babylonian life in the time of Hammurabi; correspondence between Shamshi-Adad and his sons to reconstruct the social, political and cultural features of Assyrian life; the sack of Babylon by the Hittites from central Anatolia and the end of the First Babylonian Dynasty; the tablets discovered at Mari to understand the site’s political, social, cultural and economic context.

Weeks 13–14

How the Kassites took advantage of the power vacuum in southern Mesopotamia caused by the Hittite attack in Babylon; the rule of the Kassites from 1600–1154 BC; the weakening of Babylonian power over northern Mesopotamia by the tenth century BC; the rise of Assyria, on the northern upper Tigris River; the period 1000–612 BC and the emergence of one of the most powerful and well-organised empires of ancient Mesopotamia; the reasons for the rise of the Assyrians; the reign of Assurnasirpal II (883–859 BC) and his depiction in surviving texts of the cruelty he inflicted on vanquished inhabitants, his hunting exploits and banquets; Tiglath-pileser III (744–727 BC) and reforms introduced in order to survive the threats from a new group of people, the Urartu; the nature of reforms which increased the power of the king, including the abolition of governorships and the creation of smaller provinces the restructure of the army; the deportation of conquered inhabitants to deter rebellion.

Weeks 15–16

The continuation by the Sargonid kings of the Assyrian policy of deportations as a means of control; Sennacherib and his role in the conquest of Judah; the reasons for the demise of Assyria, such as the use of foreigners in the army and resource expropriation; developments by the peoples of Mesopotamia in astronomy, the measurement of time and medicine.

Unit 2: Ancient Egypt

Area of Study 1: Egypt: The double crown

Weeks 1–2

Overview of the unit including meaning of the ‘double crown’ representing the unification of Upper and Lower Egypt; introduction to physical environment of the Nile Valley (Upper Egypt) and Delta (Lower Egypt), the oases region, Sinai peninsula and major centres and patterns of settlement along the Nile such as Memphis and Thebes; the importance of the Nile for agriculture, transport and human settlement; regions of the Predynastic Period to Second Intermediate Period; the expansion of Upper Egypt and the unification of Egypt; meaning of terms including 'Kingdom', 'Intermediate Period' and 'Dynasty'.

Weeks 3–4

Impact of Predynastic Period; study of material culture key site Heirakonpolis; the significance of the Narmer palette as a source for understanding the unification of Egypt; analysis of symbolism and meaning of the scenes depicted and historical interpretations of the artefact.

Weeks 5–6

Old Kingdom social, political and economic organisation; explanation of each of the key individual roles, social structure and hierarchy; the absolute and theocratic nature of Egyptian kingship; analysis of location, construction and size of key individual Pyramids during the Old Kingdom.

Weeks 7–8

The nature and significance of the pyramids; the strengths and weaknesses of Pyramids and the Pyramid texts as sources of the ruler’s prestige and beliefs concerning the afterlife; social, political and economic causes and consequences of the demise of centralised power and the unified state in the Old Kingdom; continuities and change in the subsequent First Intermediate Period.

Area of Study 2: Middle Kingdom Egypt: Power and propaganda

Weeks 9–10

The reunification of the Nile Valley and Delta and re-introduction of centralisation of government; usurping of Nubia and Canaanite territories under Mentuhotep II; causes and consequences of the reunification of the two kingdoms; the importance of cross-cultural trade.

Weeks 11–12

Architecture of Mentuhotep II’s funerary complex at Deir-el-Bahri and the religious and political reasons underpinning its construction; representations of the power of king in the complex; analysis of border control, and economic and trade implications of the fortress of Buhen in Nubia.

Weeks 13–14

*The* *Prophesy of Neferti*; comparison of perspectives on authority expressed through representations of the power of King Amenemhet I in *The Prophesy of Neferti*, *The Story of Sinhue* and the *Instructions to Amenemhet*; analysis of the material record at Beni Hasan, burial ground for governors of the Middle Kingdom.

Weeks 15–16

Social, economic and political features of Avaris, Delta capital of the Hyksos foreign rulers who had taken up Egyptian beliefs and practices and formed the Fifteenth Dynasty; evaluation of the views of the Seventeenth Dynasty which held power in Upper Egypt during the same period; defeat of Hyksos by the Seventeenth Dynasty.

Unit 2: Early China

Area of Study 1: Ancient China

Weeks 1–2: Neolithic and Bronze Age cultures

Overview of the Area of Study and its major questions: how did civilisation begin in China? What was the relationship between the state and religious belief? How did different schools of thought understand people and society?; introduce ideas of cyclical and linear time in China; debates on the periodisation of ‘Early China’ and ‘Ancient China’; introduce the physical geography of China, with particular reference to topography, climactic differences, and major waterways; discuss the relevance of physical geography to patterns of human settlement; compare the formation of different political societies, especially: in the north, the Cishan-Peiligang (Neolithic), Yangshao (Neolithic), Erlitou (Bronze Age) and Erligang (Bronze Age) cultures; in the south, the Liangzhu (Neolithic) and Sanxingdui (Bronze Age) cultures; Differentiate regional variations in development, especially differences between the Yellow River valley; the Sichuan basin and middle Yangzi River valley; and the lower Yangzi River valley and southern China; analyse the relationships between archaeological evidence and transmitted accounts of social and political formation during Xia and Shang dynasties.; survey the development of writing; analysis of the religious functions of writing and its roles in the formation of early political societies.

Weeks 3–4: Western Zhou

Introduce Zhou’s conquest of Shang; evaluate the causes and processes of the expansion of Zhou sovereignty and the development of a network of royal cities; analyse the relationship between Zhou authority and regional power; consider the importance of lineage structures: what were the social and political roles of the Western Zhou aristocracy?; analyse the roles of the Dukes of Zhou and Shao, and the relationship between sovereign and minister; consider the development of a government bureaucracy; introduce religious ideas and practices: the cults of Heaven (*tian*) and the High God (*shangdi*); ancestor worship. Analysis of the uses of divination; survey the Western Zhou material culture: comparison of the different functions of jade and bronze vessels; survey the development of literature: analysis of functions of social and political functions of *Book of Songs* (*Shi jing*)and *Book of History* (*Shang shu*); consider its importance in the expansion of the state.

Weeks 5–6: Spring and Autumn period and Warring States period

Survey the collapse of centralised power under Western Zhou: what were its main causes and consequences?; introduce the structures of geographic and social administration after the fall of Western Zhou; evaluate the relative balance of power between the Eastern Zhou state and regional kingdoms; introduce territorial expansion, violence, and developments in military culture among rival regional powers; survey the means by which an official (*shi*) class rose to social prominence; analyse the roles of rhetoric and diplomacy in Eastern Zhou political culture; assess the role of ethnic relations and ethnic consciousness in defining political and social identities.

Weeks 7–8: Ethical thought and its contribution to state formation

Sketch the biographies of major ethical and political thinkers, with particular relation to the political and social context of their time: Confucius (Kongzi); Mozi; Mencius (Mengzi); Laozi; Zhuangzi; Xunzi; and Han Feizi. Examination of the role of the ‘master’ (*zi*) and the sage in the Spring and Autumn period and Warring States period; summarise each thinker’s view of human nature and, as a corollary, his analysis of the social conditions of his time and vision for society; What did each believe needed to be done to achieve his vision? Were there common problems under discussion? Did intellectual lineages or groupings suggest themselves?; appraise the ways in which each thinker presented his arguments and, in particular, the points of similarity and difference with other thinkers’ modes of argumentation: How was dialogue used in these works? How did a thinker’s presentation of an argument relate to its ethical and political content and purpose?; analyse different thinkers’ attitudes towards the roles of law and ritual in government and in society: What was the function of ritual in their ethical systems? How did it apply to individuals and to society as a whole; assess the points of convergence and divergence between the religious practices of the time and ethical thought; consider the extent to which these thinkers laid the foundations for the establishment of empire in 221 BC: What are their views on the place of a ruler in the state and on the need for autocratic government?

Area of Study 2: The early empires

Weeks 9–10: Qin

Overview of the Area of Study and its major questions: Why was there an impetus towards empire in China? Why was the Qin empire so short-lived? How did the Han empire differ from the Qin?; examine the processes of territorial and political consolidation under Qin and the establishment of imperial rule; construct a biography of Qin Shi Huangdi: To what extent was Qin’s establishment of power a result of personal charisma? How was Qin Shi Huangdi represented in such later historical sources as Sima Qian’s *Records of the Grand Historian*? How does this representation compare with his place in the popular imagination of modern times?; infer Qin ideas about the afterlife from the development and symbolism of the tomb of Qin Shi Huangdi; consider Legalism as the founding ideology of the Qin state: the influence of the political thought of Shang Yang; the role of officialdom in Qin political life. Was this ideology necessary for the establishment of empire?; compare different policies of standardisation: What were their effects? How did they contribute to political unity?

Weeks 11–12: Western Han 1

Introduce the downfall of Qin and the civil war between rival rulers, with particular reference to Xiang Yu and Liu Bang: What were the major reasons for Qin’s fall? Why was it so short-lived? What were the immediate and long-term effects of the civil war?; analyse empire as a political system: Why did the concept of empire survive the rapid collapse of the Qin state and the demonstrable failure of empire as a system of governance? Why did it succeed against the alternative political structures that suggested themselves during the period of civil war? Why did Liu Bang revert to an imperial system with the foundation of Western Han?; compare the political and social practices of Qin and Western Han: Which ideologies and practices did early Western Han rulers inherit and develop from Qin, and which did they reject? Why did they make these political choices?

Weeks 13–14: Western Han 2

Survey the political and social reforms introduced during the reign of Emperor Wu (r. 141–87 BC); analyse the need for reform; critique their immediate and long-term effects; elucidate the rise of classical scholarship and the emergence of a Confucian canon; Dong Zhongshu and intellectual debates at court: Why did these debates take place? How did classical scholars gradually achieve prominence over their intellectual rivals?; introduce the economy of the Western Han imperial state: Why were state finances the subject of such fraught debate? What was at stake for the growing Han imperial state?; outline the process of Han territorial expansionism and relations with the steppe cultures of the Xiongnu confederation; compare the different political and social structures: How were the Xiongnu represented in Han sources?; analyse the effects of interactions with the Xiongnu confederation on the development of a Han imperial identity.

Weeks 15–16: Xin and Eastern Han

Outline the process by which Wang Mang came to power and established his state of Xin: How should we appraise this state – according to traditional views, as an interregnum, or as an important political entity in its own right?; identify the major ritual and political innovations that Wang Mang introduced, both as a minister of Western Han and as the ruler of Xin: In what ways did he seek to identify himself with and set himself apart from the Western Han imperial state? What challenges did he face in establishing Xin rule, and how did he seek to overcome them?; consider Xin’s legacy: Why was Xin so short-lived? In what ways did Wang Mang’s legacy survive his personal political downfall?; survey the rise to power of Eastern Han: How did Emperor Guangwu manage to establish his political legitimacy? Was Eastern Han a continuation of Western Han or a new political entity?; appraise the causes of the decentralisation of power under Eastern Han and the ascendance of regional warlords in the second century AD: Why did regional division recur in the early empires, and what were its effects on the integrity of the imperial system?; evaluate belief systems in the late Eastern Han: immortality cults for the Queen Mother of the West and others; the Wu Liang Shrine; the Yellow Turban rebellion; the Celestial Masters; the spread of Buddhism in China; analyse the ways in which these might be discussed as ‘religious’ movements; compare with pre-imperial and Qin belief systems.

Example of a weekly course outline: Units 3 and 4

All units in VCE History are constructed on the basis of 50 hours of class contact time. Consistent with this the following weekly outline is suggested.

The example weekly course outlines below are provided as guides. They are not intended as prescriptions. Teachers should use these outlines in conjunction with the outcome statements and key knowledge and skills in the study design.

*Note: Teachers select* ***two*** *societies to be studied from Egypt, Greece and Rome, one for Unit 3 and one for Unit 4.*

Area of Study 1: Living in an ancient society

Egypt (1550–332 BC)

Weeks 1–2

What was it like to live in the Eighteenth Dynasty? An introduction to Ancient Egypt, including the features of the physical environment; the importance of religion and agriculture, and the central role of Thebes in the New Kingdom; social hierarchy of the New Kingdom; temple complexes at Luxor, Karnak and the Mortuary Temples on the West Bank of the Nile; the reign of Thutmosis III socially, economically and politically; examination of tribute and trade, including slaves from Thutmosis III’s empire; analysis of the conflict between Thutmosis III and his immediate predecessor, the female ruler Hatshepsut; civil administration, and the roles of men and women (public/private), the nobility, the scribes, the artisans, agricultural workers and the slaves.

Weeks 3–4

What was it like to live in the Nineteenth Dynasty? The social, political and economic features of the Nineteenth Dynasty; consider the stabilising reign of Seti I; focus on Ramesses II; the Battle of Kadesh and the account of the ‘victory’ as represented on Ramesseum; survey the Nineteenth Dynasty building works at Karnak and Thebes; study the Dier el Medina with a focus on the lives of artisans and their families.

Weeks 5–6

What was it like to live in the Twentieth Dynasty? The social, political and economic features of the Twentieth Dynasty; evaluation of the successes of Ramesses III in curtailing expansion of Sea Peoples; analyse the political division and intrigue that occurred after Ramesses III’s death, the sidelining of final Ramesside King Ramesses XI by priests at Karnak, and the economic and political transfer of power to Tanis.

Weeks 7–8

What was it like to live in the Third Intermediate Period? The social, political and economic features of the Third Intermediate Period and subsequent ‘Foreign control’ of Egypt; Egypt’s social, economic and political impact upon former enemy and vassal states (Nubia, Libya) in the Late Period; analyse 26th Dynasty including Middle Eastern campaigns by Necho II; social, economic and political impact of warfare during the two Persian Periods; Egyptian incorporation into Persian hegemony; Amasis II as last independent ruler of Egypt before the Persian conquest.

Area of Study 2: People in power, societies in crisis

Egypt – The Amarna Period (1391–1292 BC)

Weeks 9–10

Overview of the role of people in power during the crisis in the Amarna Period: How did this crisis change traditional beliefs and practices in Egypt? How do historians judge the significance of these events and the people who took part in them? Consider the overarching question: ‘What was Akhenaten and his family rebelling against during the Amarna Period?’ Look at key developments that caused social, economic, religious and political tensions; compare the expansion and consolidation of Eighteenth Dynasty Empire under Amenhotep III with predecessors (particularly Thutmosis III); examine Aten, Amen, Mut and Ra and their respective cult centres and priesthoods, and Amenhotep III, Tiye, their successes, legacy and relationship with the cult centres.

Weeks 11–12

Consider the final years of Amenhotep III’s reign (from first heb-sed festival); evaluate possible co-regency with Amenhotep IV/Akhenaten in order to consolidate power; analyse building projects and the principles behind them undertaken by Amenhotep III and, separately, by Akhenaten; assess change and the distortion of traditions and the reasons behind this, including political aggrandisement or as an attempt to stem the growing political, social and economic power of High priests under Akhenaten’s reign at Karnak and then at Amarna.

Weeks 13–14

Amenhotep IV/Akhenaten’s reforms, religious and political motivations, attempts to consolidate his position and notions of leadership; historical interpretations of Akhenaten’s rationale for changes to traditional beliefs and practices; the transfer of power to Amarna (Akhetaten); focus on ‘Great Hymn to the Aten’; investigate the important individuals in this period, focusing on Nefertiti, her depictions and parentage; analyse the possible co-regency with Nefertiti or Smenkhare during theTwelfth Year of Akhenaten’s reign.

Weeks 15–16

The Restoration of Stelae of Tutankhamun and later kings’ attempts to entirely erase Akhenaten from the Egyptian historical record; consider subsequent rulers’ and historians’ interpretations that Akhenaten was indolent and ‘lost’ the Egyptian Empire.

Area of Study 1: Living in an ancient society

Greece (800– 454 BC)

Weeks 1–2

An introduction to Ancient Greece, including the impact of the physical environment, such as the mountains, islands, proximity to other developed/developing civilisations, and the climate; the social features of Archaic Greece (from 800 BC), such as the roles of men and women (public/private); the political and economic reasons for, and consequences of, the development of the polis, including increasing trade between various areas; social and political features including the development of oligarchies and tyrannies, the use of slavery, and colonisation of surrounding areas and methods of agricultural production.

Weeks 3– 4

The physical location of Sparta and the early history of settlement; the social features of Sparta, especially the roles of and relationships between the classes (Spartiates, Perioikoi, and Helots) and how these developed, as well as the position of women; government structures including the dual kingship and what was expected of them, the Council of Elders (including its role in the judiciary), the Council of Ephors, and the Assembly; consider economic features including trade and taxation, and the importance of military training and service.

Weeks 5 – 6

The social features of Athens, including classes of citizenship (pentakosiomedimnoi, hippeis, zeugetai and thétes), reforms made to this system by Solon, and the implications of these classifications for participating in government, the army, and the judiciary; other social features including the position of women and slaves; look at political features of Athens, especially the changes in forms of government (the reforms of Solon, the overthrow of tyranny and the reforms of Cleisthenes), and economic features such as trade and taxation; study the Panathenaic Way (including the Agora, the Aeropagus, the Propylaia and the Acropolis) and the festival of Panathenaia; consider the ways in which religious, sporting and cultural aspects were brought together in the Panathenaia and what this suggests about social, political and economic life in Athens, including an exclusive Athenian identity; note the development of the various aspects of the Panathenaic Way over time, and the uses to which they were put.

Weeks 7– 8

Warfare and its impact on the social, political and economic features of Greece (to 454 BC); examine Persian dominance in Asia Minor and developing Greek unrest, the variety of motivations for the Ionian Revolt and mainland Greek (especially Athenian) intervention, the motivation for and consequences of the first Persian invasion, including the subjugation of Thrace and Macedon and the Battle of Marathon, and the second Persian invasion, including Battles of Thermopylae and Artemisium, the capture of Athens, and the eventual victory of the Greek infantry and navy.

Area of Study 2: People in power, societies in crisis

Greece – The Peloponnesian War (460–403 BC)

Weeks 9–10

Overview of the role of people in power during critical moments in a society’s development, identifying how crises might change ancient societies, and how historians might judge the significance of such events and the people who took part in them; key developments that contributed to the conflict between the Athenian Empire and the Peloponnesian League, including the First Peloponnesian War (460–c.445 BC); the causes of the war, including the building of the Athenian long walls and the defection of Megara from the Peloponnesian League.

Weeks 11–12

The conclusion of the First Peloponnesian War, ratified by the Thirty Years Peace, 446–445 BC, and the causes of war in 431 BC, focusing on disputes involving middle-rank powers, especially those of Corcyra and Potidea; examine the 432 BC Megarian Decree and how it led to the first phase of the Peloponnesian War (431–404 BC), the Archidamian War (431–421 BC); study the plague of 430 BC that ravaged Athens; look at the 427 BC Mytilene Debate about reprisals to be imposed by Athens against the city-state of Mytilene, and The Peace of Nicias, signed by Athens and Sparta in March 421 BC, which ended the first phase of the Peloponnesian War.

Weeks 13–14

The second phase of the Peloponnesian War, beginning with the Sicilian Expedition (415–413 BC), and how it was the crucial turning point in the war; the final phase of the war, the Decelean (or Ionian) War (413 BC); the roles of key individuals in the crisis, beginning with Pericles of Athens (c. 495–429 BC): his contribution to the ‘Golden Age’ of Athens during which great monuments, such as the Parthenon, were built and significant political reforms were introduced.

Weeks 15 –16

Investigate important individuals of the period:

Alcibiades’ (c. 450–404 BC) changing allegiances during the war, becoming a prominent proponent of the Sicilian Expedition in the mid-410s BC, and accusations of sacrilegious actions and seeking refuge in Sparta; consider his encouragement of an overthrow of democracy in Athens to see the establishment of the Four Hundred oligarchic government 411 BC; his recall to Athens and reinstatement as a general.

Lysander (c. 454–395 BC) – appointed Spartan navarch for the Aegean Sea in 407 BC; his friendship and support of Cyrus the Younger of Persia, leading to a number of naval victories against the Athenians, culminating in the destruction of the Athenian fleet at Aegospotami in 404 BC; consider the consequences for Athens (capitulation to Sparta) and for Lysander himself; establishing an oligarchy of Thirty Tyrants in Athens, which was resisted by the Athenian general Thrasybulus; how Pausanius, King of Sparta, permitted the re-establishment of democratic government in Athens in 403 BC as a result of the Battle of Piraeus between Athenian exiles and Spartan forces.

Area of Study 1: Living in an ancient society

Rome (c.700–146 BC)

Weeks 1–2

An overview of the Peninsula and the peoples of pre-Roman Italy with a particular focus on the Etruscans, including the ancient city of Cerveteri and its chamber tombs and Etruscan art revealing an opulent society heavily influenced by its Mediterranean neighbours; a survey of Rome’s early history: the origins of Rome including the foundation story of Romulus and Remus, the Etruscan Kings Lucius Tarquinius Priscus (see Livy), Servius Tullius and Tarquinius Suberbus; examine the social, political and economic features of life as revealed by the archaeological site of Rome’s ancient harbor, Ostia Antica.

Weeks 3– 4

An overview of early Roman society: the family unit including members related by blood or marriage, belonging to a larger kin group or clan called the ‘gens’; the role of the ‘paterfamilias’ as head of the household and representative to the community and the gods; the legal position of the father, mother and children in early Rome; the practice of manumission (liberating slaves); the relationship between patrons and clients; the eventual collapse of the monarchy in early Rome leading to the establishment of the Senate.

Weeks 5– 6

The growth in prosperity and diversity of Rome and the social divisions that emerged; a survey of the social hierarchy and social groups; an overview of the Early Roman Government including: the Curiate Assembly, the magistrates, the censor, the senate, the executive powers of the Consuls and the religious authority of the pontifex maximus; the ladder of offices (*cursus honorum*) as an essential feature of both the political and the social and economic landscape at this time; the tension in Roman society evident as early as fifth century BC which highlights a period of profound antagonism beginning the Struggle of the Orders; accounts of Livy highlighting the first succession of the plebs and the restoration of the Tribunes (representatives of the plebians); the establishment of The Law of the Twelve Tables reflecting the codification of existing Roman law.

Weeks 7– 8

An overview of Rome’s expansion and control throughout Italy and beyond and a brief survey of the powerful sea empire of Cathage (originally Phoenicia); consider Polybius’ accounts of the skill and prowess of the Roman Navy; the scale and length of the First Punic War culminating in Carthage losing its territory of Sicily, and Rome securing control of the entire Tyrrhenian Sea; the leadership of Hamilcar Barca and his attempt to restore the military and political might of Carthage, resulting in a larger quest to conquer southern Spain; the function of mercenary armies during this period; an overview of each of the wars highlighting Hannibal’s audacious plan to cross the Alps, battles against Scipio Africanus in 209–206 BC; the Third Punic War highlighting the final destruction of Carthage; the attempted reforms of Marcus Porcius Cato.

Area of Study 2: People in power, societies in crisis

Rome – The fall of the Republic (133–23 BC)

Weeks 9–10

An overview of the second century BC and mounting problems for the Republic; the rebellions in Sicily (uprising of 70,000 slaves) and revolts in Spain; introduction of the patricians, the Gracchi (brothers Tiberius and Gaius) and personal descriptions provided by Plutarch; consider the motives of Tiberius and Gaius and their accomplishments in the changing political and economic landscape: election of Tiberius as a Tribune in 133 BC and radical land reform proposals designed to redistribute land to poorer citizens; the continuation of the Agrarian commission despite the assassination of Tiberius, initiating a period of bloodshed and violence within the Republic; Gaius re-affirmation of his brother’s agrarian law but with further economic reforms including the question of Roman citizenship and ‘Latin rights’.

Gaius Marius heralded as a significant individual in the transformation from Republic to Empire; his career following election as Consul in 104 BC, including his highly effective reforms of the Roman army and defeat of invading Germanic tribes; prestige and influence at the end of his career and representation (for example, by Sallust) as a ‘Populares’; representations of Lucius Cornelius Sulla (for example, by Plutarch) and Sulla‘s part in the first Mithridatic War; the advent of Civil War between Romans and effects on Ostia.

Weeks 11–12

The first three years after Sulla and a new threat to the constitution; Marcus Aemilius Lepidus (declared enemy of the state); the significance of Pompey’s defeat of Lepidus and Pompey’s authority to put down Marian insurgents in Spain, eventually settling Spain; Crassus and Pompey quashed uprising and defeated Spartacus; Consulship of Crassus and Pompey.

The emergence of the ‘First Triumvirate’; introduction to Caesar, his first consulship and his quest for Gaul, Germany and Britain; study the Civil War and the weakening of relations between Caesar and Pompey.

Weeks 13 –14

Overview of the implications of civil war on three continents; Caesar’s army and the military advantages of both Caesar and Pompey; Caesar’s arrival in a politically turbulent Egypt; declaration of Cleopatra and her brother Ptolemy XIV as co-rulers of the Roman dominion.

The reconstruction of Julius Caesar; reforms to the calendar, Julian Forum, plans for public library in Ostia, increased senate membership, citizenship extended, holding paramount power of *imperium and pontifex maximus;* Mark Antony as fellow consul (Master of Horse) 44 BC; the emerging conspiracy: Cassius, Brutus, Cato – the Ides of March; consider the motivations of Caesar’s assassination in light of his practical improvements.

Weeks 15 –16

The administration of the state by Antony and Lepidus following Caesar’s assassination; the safety of Cassius and Brutus secured; the works for peace with the senate; how Octavius’ (Caesar’s Grand-nephew) arrival is met with confirmation of his inheritance (see Cicero sources); the precarious relationship between Antony and Octavius; the death of the Republic; January 42 BC Senate recognition of Julius Caesar as a God; the Second Triumvirate formed; The Battle of Actium 31 BC, the final war of the Roman Republic; the settlement of 27 BC and the settlement of 23 BC.