WORLD HISTORY PROJECT
COURSE GUIDE

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Welcome to the World History Project!

World History Project (WHP) is a global history course aimed at tenth-grade students that provides a cohesive approach to learning and understanding the history of the world. It is distinctive from courses often seen in today's classrooms. Instead of a typical march through time, WHP uses a set of overarching inquiry problems and frames, situated at a variety of scales, to organize and facilitate teaching and learning. World History Project provides a comprehensive course by grounding its student-facing curriculum, assessments, teacher-facing assets, professional development, and its open educational resources (OER) platform in four principles of action:

1. Merge core content and disciplinary inquiry practices.
2. Manage students' challenges through thinking tools and spiraling activities.
3. Manage teachers' challenges through educative curriculum and interactive professional development.
4. Use research to improve the course for teachers and students.
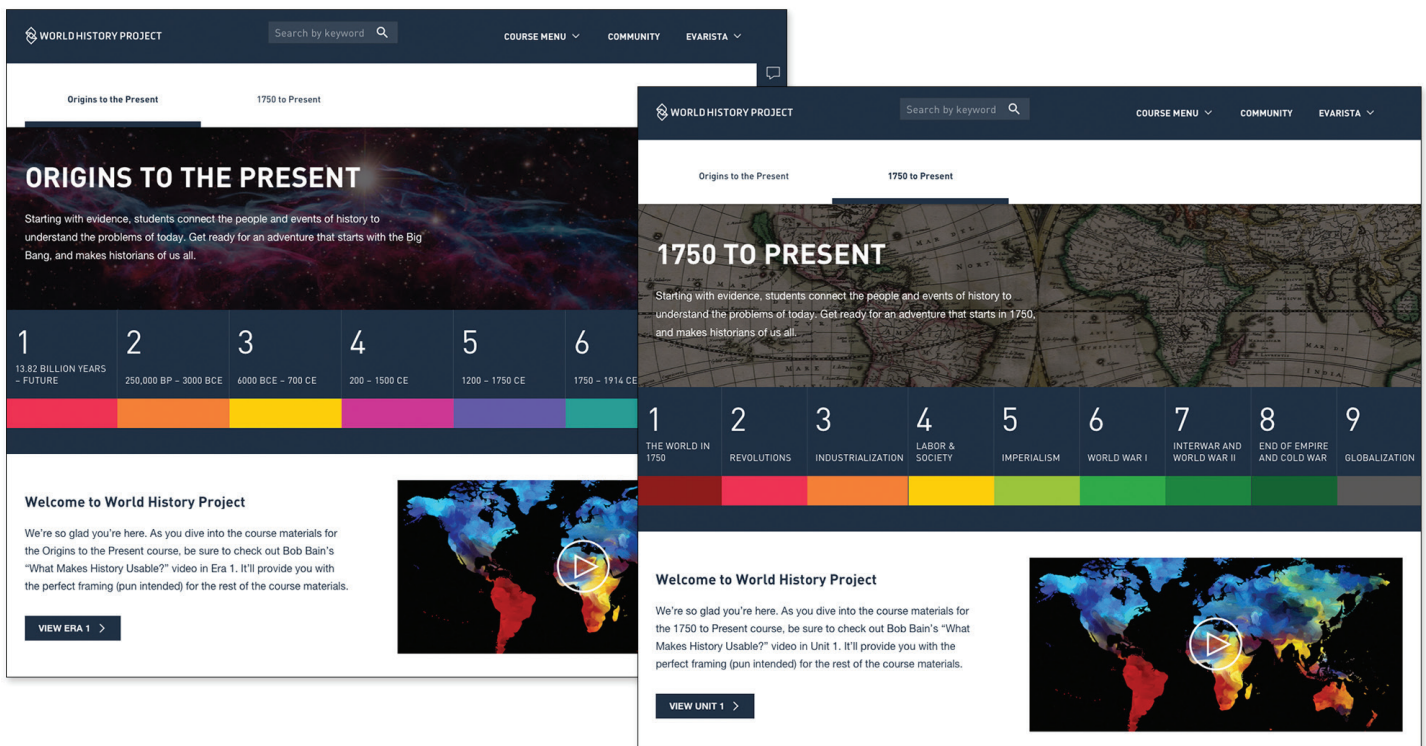
WHP Origins course (left) and WHP 1750 course (right)

Course Overviews

WHP consists of a large body of assets that are designed to cover multiple iterations of world history standards across the United States. In the current versions of the course, we're optimizing for New York, California, Washington, North Carolina, Michigan, and Arizona. We hope that by addressing the needs of these states with their differing standards, we're covering the bulk of most states' requirements. You'll see the manifestation of this in our two course overviews:

- **WHP Origins Course Overview**: Big Bang to present
- **WHP 1750 Course Overview**: 1750 to present

We expect that teachers might need to add or modify assets to meet specific state standards—in fact we encourage teachers to do so—and to meet the needs and interests of their students, as well. For more information, refer to the "Origins Course Overview" and the "1750 Course Overview."

World History Project Framework

In developing and piloting its course in world history, the WHP team has combined research in teaching and learning, knowledge of disciplinary literacy, contemporary scholarship in global and world history, and years of experience creating, improving, and managing the Big History Project (BHP). WHP provides a unique, comprehensive, coherent, and flexible curriculum that includes a rich set of resources for students and a coherent set of lessons, assessments, and professional development resources and activities for teachers.

Specifically, WHP provides teachers and students with a problem-based and disciplinary approach to studying the past through an overarching and spiraling set of historical inquiry problems situated at different historical scales. These unit-level "big questions" organize¬ and link all the lessons and connect units to a unifying global framework, thus challenging the "one civilization after another" approach that defines most courses in world history. Experienced teachers, educators, and historians have created articles, lessons, and activities with the WHP framework in mind, ensuring clarity and cohesiveness throughout the course. Using a wide range of primary and secondary sources in a variety of formats, WHP focuses on different interpretations of historical and contemporary events to help students move beyond simple analysis of primary sources and learn to analyze and evaluate claims people make about the past that shape understanding of the present and the future. Each unit includes text-based Investigations (argumentative essays), through which students use the history they are learning to make and evaluate claims. In short, WHP aims to "grow" students' thinking, writing, and reading practices as well as deepen their understanding of historical change and concepts. As a result, WHP aligns quite effectively with state and national standards, including those found in College and Career Readiness Standards, the C3 Framework, pre-IB, and AP programs.

WHP situates itself in opposition to what typically defines courses in world history. Such courses often ignore student thinking, instead emphasizing facts at the expense of concepts and world historical thinking. In addition, those curricula use either the nation-state or civilization as their dominant unit of analysis, lack any coherent story or framework, and ignore differing interpretations.

WHP provides a comprehensive course in global history by grounding its student-facing curriculum, assessments, teacher-facing assets, professional development, and its OER platform in four principles of action:

1. **Merge core content and disciplinary inquiry practices.**
    WHP merges historical content – the "stuff" of history – with disciplinary inquiry and literacy practices. Our goal is to increase both students' understanding of historical content and their capacity to use history's sophisticated thinking, reasoning, reading, and writing practices.

2. **Manage students' challenges through thinking tools and spiraling activities.**
    WHP attends to and meets the challenges students face in understanding historical content and using historical reasoning and thinking practices through a mix of thinking tools and activities that increase in sophistication over the duration of the course.

3. **Manage teachers' challenges through educative curriculum and interactive professional development.**
    WHP attends to and meets the challenges teachers face in developing students' understanding and use of historical reasoning and thinking practices through its educative curriculum and a wide range of interactive professional development activities.

4. **Use research to improve the course for teachers and students.**
   WHP's development team gathers and uses existing research and conducts its own studies on teachers' and students' experiences to design and improve student-facing curriculum, assessments, teacher-facing assets, professional development, and its OER platform.

Course Problem and Objectives

Course Problem: How have we and our human communities converged and integrated to be so similar yet remain fragmented and so different?

Our students live and experience the world in multiple communities. They live in a *global community* connected by networks and webs that have increasingly enabled the exchange of ideas, goods, and peoples across the world. Every part of the world is connected to and interacts with each other to varying degrees. Such linking of cultures, commodities, ideas, and peoples is unprecedented. The webs or networks of these connections grow thicker and more extensive every year. Increasingly, more people have access to global communication networks. As we grow more connected, more of the human population shares collective understandings that have led to remarkable similarities in systems of production, governance, social relations, ideas, technology, use of energy, and relationship to nature. In short, students live in a world where a high degree of global integration has occurred, and histories are intertwined.

However, students across the globe also live in *local and differentiated communities* defined by such things as nationality, ethnicity, and socioeconomic class. Amid the similarities discussed above, people also have a local and personal sense of difference. Thus, they live in a world of accelerating integration and proliferating differentiation.

This course addresses this *paradoxical global condition* in the belief that our students "need a conceptual hold on the experience of a world that is defined by its globality."[1] We do so by asking, how have the communities and peoples of the world converged and diverged over time? In short, why have we come to be so similar and yet so different?

Throughout the course, we look within and across time periods to see both how humans have grown more integrated, interconnected, and similar, and how we've remained fragmented, autonomous, and different from each other.

WHP Course Objectives

1. Understand that history is a narrative, or a combination of narratives, shaped by the sources and perspectives you use to tell that story.
2. Apply the evidence from sources using multiple perspectives and scales to evaluate (support, extend, or challenge) different narratives.
3. Use primary and secondary sources from multiple perspectives of gender, race, and socioeconomic status, or hierarchies to gain a deeper understanding of human history.
4. Analyze the narrative of history using the course's three frames: communities, networks, and production and distribution.
5. Use historical thinking skills and reasoning practices such as scale, comparison, causation, continuity and change over time, sourcing, claim testing, and contextualization, to understand and evaluate the historical narrative.

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1 Charles Bright and Michael Geyer, "Benchmarks of Globalization: The Global Condition, 1850–2010," in *A Companion to World History*, ed. Douglas Northrop (Cambridge: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd, 2012), 286.

◈ WORLD HISTORY PROJECT

The Frames of WHP

In WHP, we ask you and your students to examine world history through different lenses, or frames. These frames are intended to help structure students' experiences with course content. This approach highlights the idea that historical accounts are based on particular perspectives. More important, these frames provide students with big-picture, historical "stories," thus providing a cohesive backdrop against which students can construct their historical understanding.

For each of the frames, we ask how they have changed over our long history. We think about each frame in the following ways:

1. **Communities**: One of the things that is distinctive about humans is that we live in communities. Communities provide us with support, assistance, and growth. Examples of communities include families, neighborhoods, states, religions, and even online forums. Throughout history, human communities have generally grown, and frequently changed.

2. **Networks**: In addition to living in communities, humans share ideas, material goods, and other things (including people). Sometimes we share across vast distances. This sharing happens through systems called *networks*. In general, humans have built larger and larger networks over time, leading up to the global exchange of ideas through the internet. But within this bigger pattern, very small networks remain important today.

3. **Production and distribution**: Production is how we make and use things. Distribution refers to how we share, sell, trade, and otherwise move those things within our communities and across networks. Humans have become increasingly sophisticated in the ways we produce and distribute goods and tools. But this increasing sophistication has created new problems. Exploring these changes and problems helps orient us to the present and prepares us for the future.
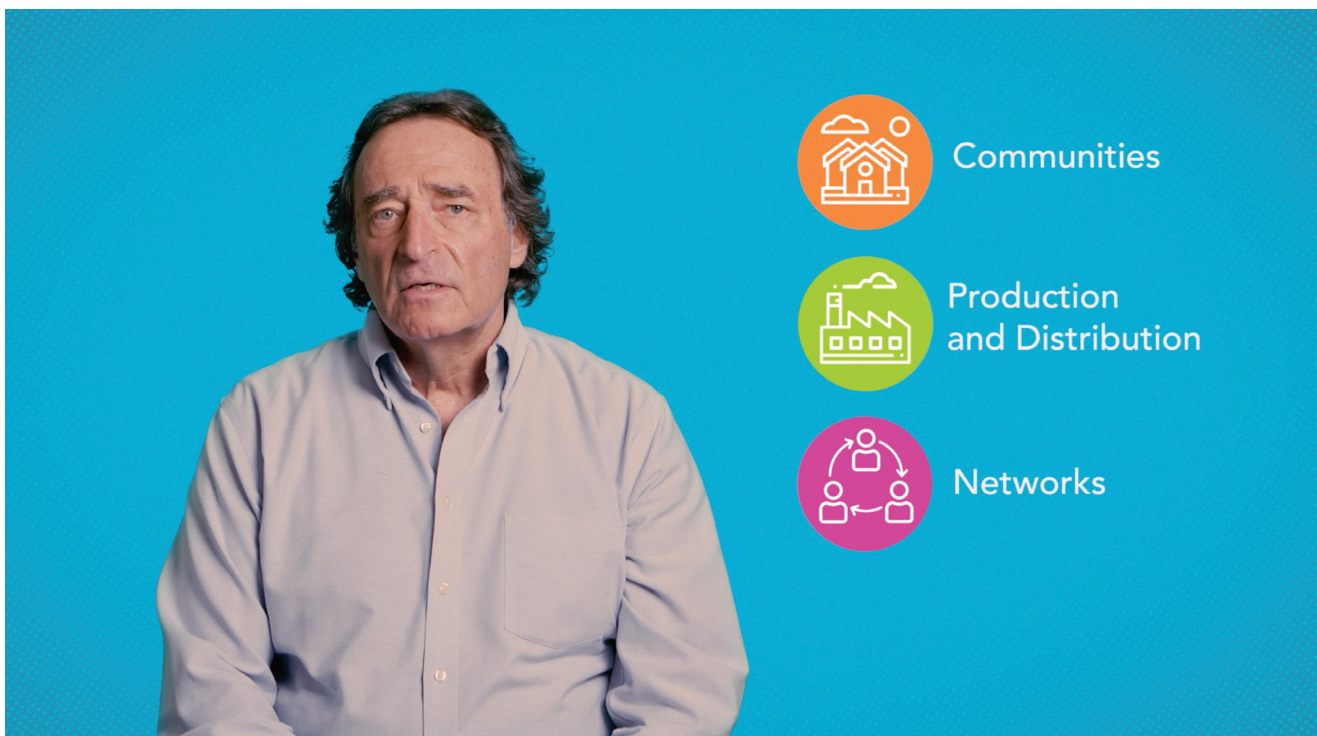
Professor Bob Bain, describing WHP frames

Each frame[2] consists of a historical problem (a "big question") and a historical narrative[3] that help provide students with the relevant background knowledge to support historical inquiry and meaning making. Each is a chronologically structured set of large-scale generalizations, capturing vast expanses of time and space. Each frame reduces a lot of information about large-scale historical processes to a single big picture of what happened for students to evaluate, use, and modify as they study historical processes at different and smaller scales of time and space.

Background

We use the frames to help students build and maintain historical coherence.[4] Through the chronological narrative that accompanies each frame, we introduce students to a big, global, overgeneralized *starter* picture of historical events and processes. Pitched at very large scales of time and space, these provide a brief story arc to help students contextualize, organize, connect, and evaluate the historical data, names, facts, and events they encounter at smaller scales throughout the course.

While the frames are helpful for the zoomed-out view of history and gaining an overarching understanding of what happened over a long period of time, their limitations become clear when zooming in, or examining the past from smaller scales. But these limitations also carry benefits. Through studying historical processes and events at smaller scales, students are able to use what they are learning to test the usefulness and the limits of the frames. Much like the way we test and modify theories, students will be able to determine if the information they are learning supports, extends, or challenges the frame. As it extends or challenges the frame, students will begin to modify the narrative so that it's more usable in relation to what they are learning. Thus, by scale switching, "tacking between big processes and small events to see the whole picture," students construct their own detailed and nuanced version of each narrative frame to help them make sense of the past to situate the present and think about the future.[5]

For teachers and students familiar with the Big History Project (BHP), the WHP approach aligns to and extends how a frame and its accompanying narrative can be used in a course. In BHP, we use David Christian's "thresholds of increasing complexity" narrative as the frame to structure the course. These thresholds, which are chronologically ordered, create a story arc that traverses 14 billion years across the entire Universe. BHP introduces the students to its narrative early in the course (via David Christian's TED Talk), and then throughout the course offers a range of tools and activities to help students understand and apply the narrative at smaller scales of time and space. Thus, BHP students move *from* the large-scale narrative *to* the details and specifics found at slightly smaller—though still very large—scales of time and space. In BHP, what students learn generally supports the frame. WHP complicates this process by having students move *back to* a frame after studying events or processes at smaller scales to evaluate the usefulness of that frame, and asks them to modify the associated narrative as they go, continually refining and redefining the particular frame. Additionally, WHP does not punctuate the narrative with turning points or thresholds. Rather, we focus on the more gradual transformations[6] that occur throughout history, using those to create our story arc.

2 A **frame** is a filter through which we can interpret major events and trends of the past. Any single episode or process might be understandable through multiple frames. By looking across time and around the world through a single frame, we are able to create meaningful accounts of the global past.

3 A **narrative** is an interpretation of the global past, a large-scale general pattern that captures changes in many events and trends over time in a single frame. While narratives describe long patterns of change over time, historians and history students can modify or contest the narratives by looking closely at the evidence in specific historical cases.

4 Constructing a usable and coherent understanding of the past has long been a problem in history courses. Students report the study of history is often "one darn thing after another," while research has shown that students' knowledge of the past is often a fragmented jumble of facts and events with few connections. For a discussion of such research, see Robert B. Bain, "Challenges of Teaching and Learning World History," in *A Companion to World History,* ed. Douglas Northrop (Cambridge: John Wiley & Sons, 2012), 111–127.

5 Jo Guldi and David Armitage, *The History Manifesto* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 13.

6 *Transformation* is a term we use to loosely describe changes in a narrative that are sustained, significant, and widespread. It is not necessarily a turning point or a threshold, but rather describes a shift visible over a significant length of time and across many regions.

Frame Analysis: Scale Switching to Support, Extend, or Challenge Frames

Students analyze the frames by "scale switching," moving between the global frames and the processes or events at smaller scales of time and space to determine the degree to which historical events *support*, *extend*, or *challenge* a frame. They consider how some human experiences reflect the transformations articulated in a frame, but they also look for experiences that diverge from the frame narratives they are given. In this way, students evaluate the stories we give them, identifying areas where the narrative is in need of modification. Thus, we seek to add nuance to the story to make it richer and more applicable to a wider swath of history.

So, why select these three frames (communities, networks, and production and distribution), when there are probably an infinite number of frames through which we can view history and construct the story of the past?

These particular frames allow students to understand the increasing connectedness of the human experience over time, while still identifying the complexity and differences that enrich our understanding of the past. In this way, they help us get to the core of the shared human experience while still recognizing the uniqueness of each individual's existence. Moreover, rather than pulling out and separating culture, gender, politics, technology, economics, and social organization into their own interpretive boxes, these frames help students recognize how they are wrapped together at different levels – in small communities, in states, and through larger networks.

Through each frame, students identify and evaluate the degree to which people and cultures have grown increasingly connected over our long history, examining the integration and interconnection of human experiences and increasingly common approaches to living. At the same time, by zooming in, students will identify distinctions and differences among the human community and human experiences, distinctions that extend or challenge the narrative story arc, making it more complex, plausible, and useful.

Frames: Instructional Progression

Like all the progressions in the course, we offer a carefully structured sequence of spiraling activities to help teachers and students use the frames.

It might be helpful to think of the frame narratives as road maps, guides that we present to students at the beginning of the course to get them started on their narrative journey. Like a road map, the narrative highlights historical transformations and provides information about turns and landmarks. The frames should help students see where they've been, where they are, and where they are going.

And just as our understanding of a map deepens and grows more nuanced as we travel and see details that our map could not convey—such as sights and sounds—students' understanding of each frame will deepen and grow more nuanced as a result of what they're learning. And like travelers who can offer far more detail of a map after they've used it to explore a landscape, our students will have a far richer understanding of the frames at the end of the course. Hence the narrative roadmap they start with will be quite different from the finished frame narrative.

For each frame we will provide the following:
1. **Narrative**: An introductory video that presents each frame and its associated narrative (that is, the story arc of the frame).
2. **Unit frame overview**: A short video at the start of each unit that connects the content and topic of the unit to one or two of the course frames.

For each progression, we provide a set of questions that can be used to help analyze the frame's narrative and that can also be used to help students analyze history through that frame. When students encounter new historical information throughout the course, they will have the tools to help them decide whether what they're learning

supports, extends, or challenges the frame. Based on their decisions, students will have opportunities to strengthen and revise the original narrative, making it more usable and applicable to their work as historians.

We teachers ask ourselves a set of questions to facilitate this process:

- **Support**: How do I use the frame to help my students see ways it generally fits events or processes of the past?
- **Extend**: How do I use the frame to help my students understand the ways the frame is over-generalized and thus creates an incomplete picture of the past?
- **Challenge**: How do I help my students revise and criticize the frame to develop a more usable picture of the past?

Conducting Historical Inquiry

WHP students engage in a systematic and coherent process of inquiry to learn the course's historical content. That is, historical inquiry is *how* students learn historical content. In each unit, WHP students:

- Frame problems for investigation.[7]
- Make conjectures that guide inquiry.
- Select, read, and analyze a wide range of primary and secondary sources.
- Assess sources' claims using a variety of historical thinking practices.
- Use evidence and relevant disciplinary concepts to reason toward and communicate written, spoken, or visual conclusions in the form of narratives, explanations, or arguments.[8]
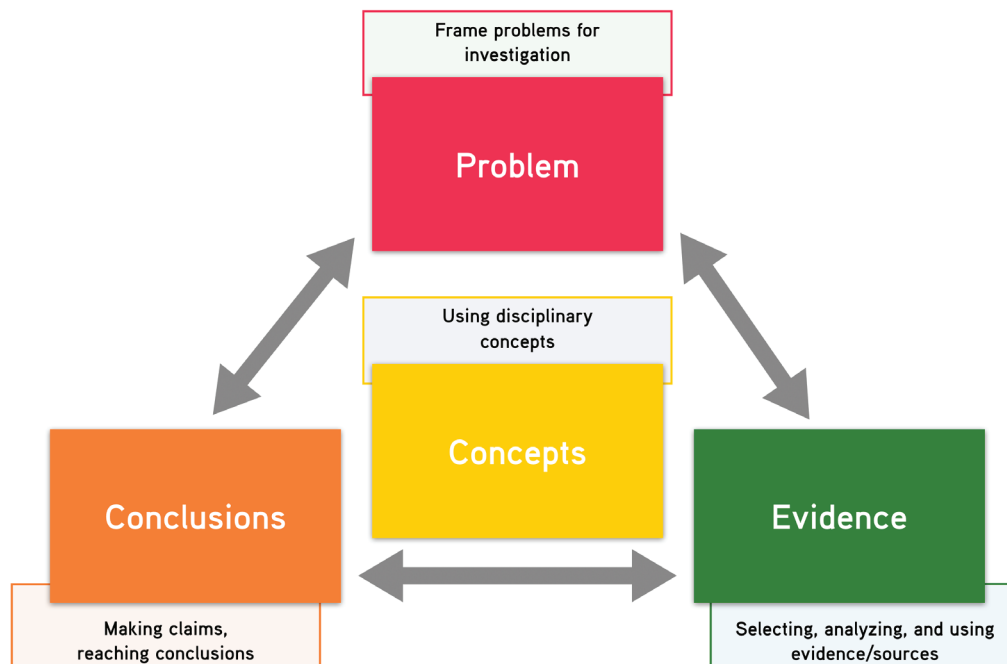
Practices of WHP students

7 Typically, the problems and driving questions students will work on involve determining causes or consequences of historical events or processes, contextualizing events, assessing continuity and change, making comparisons, and/or testing claims.

8 WHP's inquiry model aligns perfectly with the C3 Frameworks' Inquiry Arc with its four dimensions: 1. Developing questions and planning inquiries. 2. Evaluating sources and using evidence. 3. Communicating conclusions and taking informed action. 4. Applying disciplinary concepts and tools.

The picture above is a visual map of historical inquiry. We use this picture to understand the practice of historical inquiry and to help students locate their work, say in reading a primary source or watching a video, in the larger process of investigating a historical problem. This concept map, then, is the inquiry tool, though as we explain below, there are tools to help students use evidence, make and test claims, and make their conclusions public through writing or speaking. Thus, as WHP students develop their inquiry skills, the course asks them to improve their reading, writing, speaking, and thinking skills, as well.

Conducting historical inquiry is WHP's core and central practice. It consists of:

1. Constructing historical problems to investigate.
2. Selecting and analyzing historical evidence.
3. Employing historical, social scientific, and scientific concepts.
4. Reasoning toward and making public conclusions.

In studying the past and conducting historical inquiry, WHP students also read, source, contextualize, and corroborate historical evidence; evaluate historical interpretations; engage in causal and consequential reasoning; compare historical developments across and within time; assess continuity and change; contextualize historical events; and test and make claims. We recognize that *all* the historical thinking practices are critical and interconnected. That is, in conducting inquiry, historians read texts or produce accounts to answer causation questions, or continuity and change questions, or to contextualize phenomena, processes, or events. However, we have created and used these categories to help structure practice progressions. And because they are all critical to the work of conducting historical inquiry, we break them apart so that students are able to engage in all the practices of historians. By the end of the course, students will put them back together in a way that shows how their historical analytical skills have grown and developed into a more expert approach to conducting historical inquiry.

Managing Students' Challenges Through Spiraling Practice Progressions and Thinking Tools

WHP works with a wide range of students and recognizes the challenges learners face trying to understand historical content and using sophisticated historical reasoning and literacy practices. Using a form of cognitive apprenticeship (Collins, et al., 1987) and research on domain-specific learning (Alexander, 1998), WHP has designed a series of spiraling activities around specific historical thinking practices intended to deepen students' ability to engage independently in more sophisticated historical inquiry, analysis, and reasoning. These activities build upon each other over the course and are intended to provide all students a sequence of activities to support their progress.[9]

The WHP curriculum intentionally spirals the level of complexity at which students encounter these practices. Developing students' capacity to use these reasoning and literacy practices provides a clearer pathway to more advanced work, such as in AP or IB courses, and post-secondary education. These also align well with career-readiness programs.

We have eight thinking practices around which we have theorized a sequence of activities, or *practice progressions*, each with a "thinking tool," or scaffold, for students to use when learning a particular skill. Those practices and tools are:

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9 Note: Teachers should be cautious about skipping activities in a spiraling series as doing so might leave students with an incomplete set of skills or cause confusion when students encounter less scaffolded activities. WHP advises teachers to complete each activity in the series with your students. Even if you don't do them in the exact order suggested in the outline, ensure appropriate scaffolding is provided to support skill development.

Thinking Practice	Tool/Scaffold
Reading	Three Close Reads
Writing	WHP Writing Rubric
Claim Testing	Claim Testing Poster
Causation	Causation Tool
Comparison	Comparison Tool
Contextualization	Contextualization Tool
Continuity and Change Over Time (CCOT)	CCOT Tool
Sourcing	HAPPY Template

Our thinking tools help students "do" the work of history. These tools, which make visible complex disciplinary thinking, are for students to use in order to engage in that complex thinking. Thinking tools might involve specific routines, language, and graphic organizers. The tools help students conduct investigations, read texts, construct arguments, test claims, and determine causation, among other things. In many cases, students will outgrow the tool and show evidence that they no longer need a formal routine or organizer to, say, make a causal argument or test a claim. However, some students will continue to find value in using the formal routine since it will continue to help them engage in complex thinking.

Teachers are the best arbiters of when and if students can do disciplinary thinking without explicitly using one of the thinking tools. That is, some students will successfully collapse the steps in a routine, employ disciplinary language, or create a concept map without referencing the tool. Teachers might not require such students to use a tool. However, for other students, often in the same class, teachers will determine there is great value in encouraging or requiring them to use a tool in doing the work of historical thinking. WHP provides our best guess about each typical learning progression, but affords teachers (who know their students best) the flexibility to modify and adjust our suggested sequence or tool use.
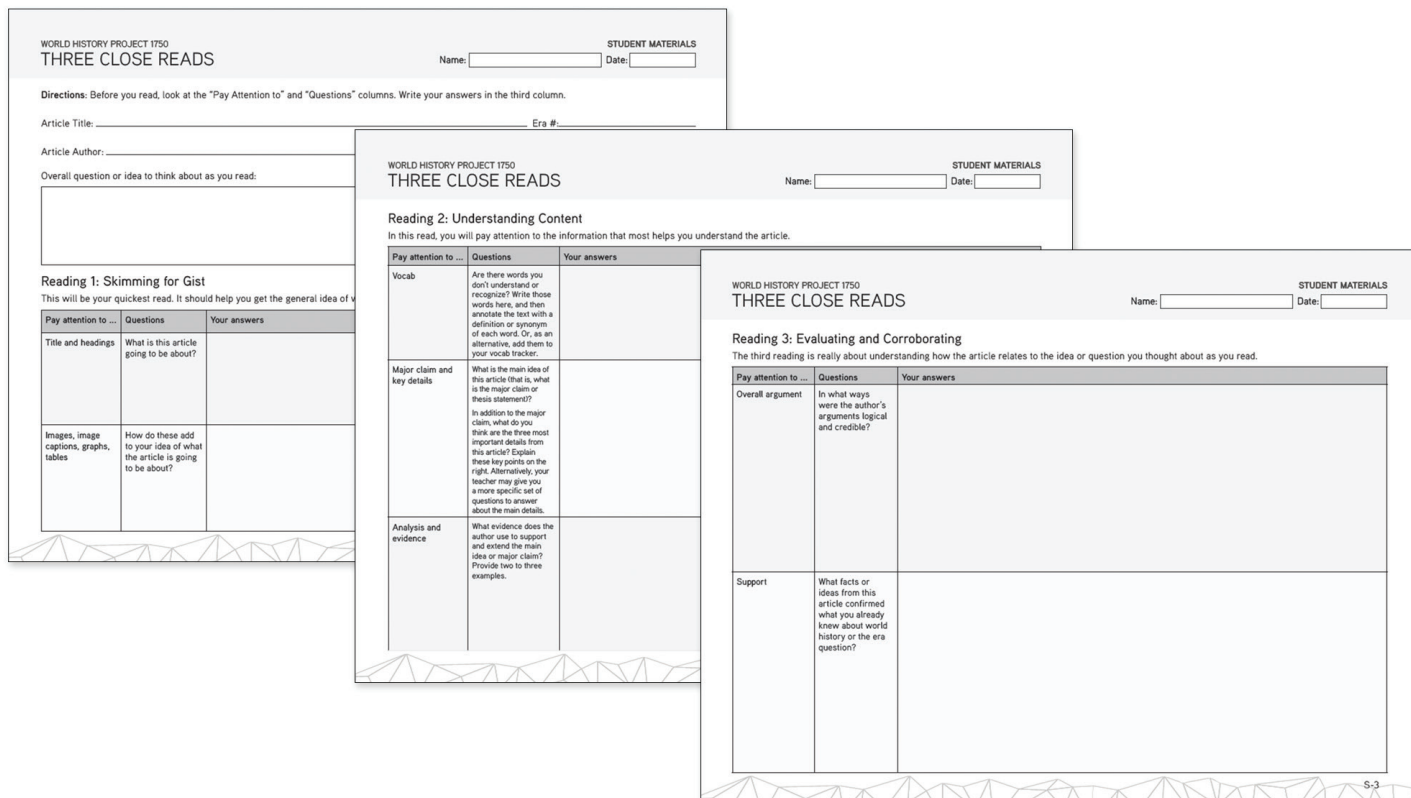
A final note about the disciplinary tools: Some of the tools, such as those for reading, writing, and causation, have a long research and development history. We have drawn on that research and that history to construct well-tested and supported tools to assist students in reading, writing, and determining causation. In other areas, the research is still being conducted. In those areas, WHP is working with teachers and our research team to design and test tools to support students in scale switching, making comparisons, using narrative frames, and determining continuity and change over time.

Reading Text and Video

WHP seeks to improve students' ability to analyze, evaluate, and use a range of primary and secondary sources and video, including arguments about the past in a variety of formats or genres. Specifically, WHP activities regularly asks students to read sources deeply; to evaluate the roles that evidence, context, and underlying assumptions play in constructing an interpretation; and to evaluating the consequences or significance of one interpretation over another.

For students to develop the skills related to historical reading, the course provides extensive supports for what we call the Three Close Reads process. Students are introduced to close reading strategies in the first Overview Reading of the course, and then continue to use the process throughout. Although reading everything in the course three times might seem like overkill, it's a very helpful tool for getting all the information from the articles. Students will get faster and faster with each reading, and somewhere in the middle of the course they will notice

that the three reads take the same amount of time that one used to take. Students will eventually internalize this process; however, they should continue to use the Three Close Reads Worksheet as a tool to help them with more complicated readings.

Three Close Reads worksheet

In addition to text-based readings, we also assume that students will "read" video in the course in the same manner they use Three Close Reads to assess text-based readings. The videos used in the course are often dense and provide detailed information. Usually, watching a video once and moving on does not provide the kind of engagement needed for students to comprehend, recall, and apply the details contained in videos. We recommend that you approach video like you do reading. First, have students watch the video so that they can get the overall gist (a first watch of a video is often a great homework assignment). Then, have students watch a video more closely, using the questions provided in the accompanying lesson plan to help them focus on the key ideas. For the final viewing, ask students to apply what they learned in the videos to see if they support, extend, or challenge what they already knew about the topic at hand. You can also have students read video transcripts to cut down on the overall time it takes to use each video as part of instruction. Note, videos are not intended to replace instruction in any way; rather, they are a resource that should be used in an interactional way.

Key Ideas for videos

Teachers should keep an ear out for when students start to grumble about the three reads. It might mean that they're ready for a less scaffolded experience. Teachers should use their knowledge of how their students' reading skills are developing to decide when students need less guidance and structure. It's unlikely this will happen in the first unit, or even the first couple of units, but eventually this process will become a habit. Until it does, it's important to use the worksheet, and early in the course, we recommend modeling the Three Close Reads process with your students.

Typically, students should use the Three Close Reads Worksheet to help them analyze an article. In addition to the worksheet, you will always be given more specific questions (with sample answers that appear only in the teaching material), that can be used to orient your students to particular concepts and rhetorical devices for the second and third reads. The questions provided as part of the activity should be used for class discussions and for checking students' understanding of the reading. The content covered in the reading-specific questions is important for your students to learn, so make sure these questions, which are in addition to those on the Three Close Reads Worksheet, are addressed with your students in some way.

Our teachers have noted that sourcing is a difficult skill for students to master; therefore, we call it out as a separate historical thinking practice. While it's tightly bound to reading, we tease it out in the WHP practices so students can spend additional time deliberately practicing their sourcing skills.

Writing

The WHP course is writing intensive. Students are asked to respond in writing to a variety of prompts, including those related to contextualization, causation, historical comparison, CCOT, and a variety of document-based questions (DBQs). Because history teachers are not necessarily trained as writing teachers yet must help students develop their writing skills, we have created a series of seven activities that focus specifically on developing these

core writing skills, so that students are prepared to construct their own historical narratives in response to these varied historical prompts.

Claim Testing
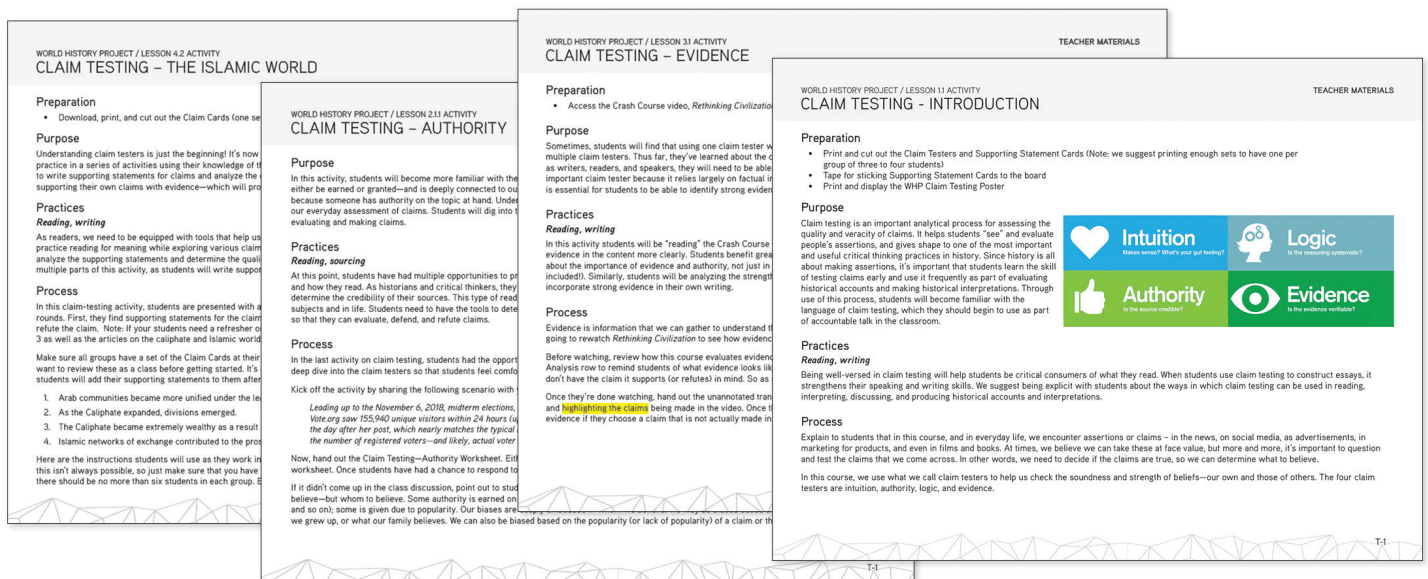
Claim testing is an important analytical process for assessing the quality and veracity of claims. It helps students "see" and evaluate people's assertions and gives shape to a useful critical thinking practice in the study of history. Since history is all about making assertions, it's important that students learn the skill of testing claims early and use it frequently as part of evaluating historical accounts and making historical interpretations. Through use of this process, students will become familiar with the language of claim testing, which they should begin to use as part of accountable talk in the classroom.

The WHP course equips students with the language and practice needed to analyze claims made in many forms, including primary and secondary sources, data charts, videos, infographics, and even in-class discussions. It's very important for students to see teachers modeling claim testing by making it a regular part of class work. Teachers might stop a video to ask about the support John Green offers for one his claims; or they might ask students to highlight an article's major and minor claims; or have them use claim testers to shape a discussion of a current issue in the news or in school.

In class discussions, you might encourage students to respond to each other with questions such as:

- Is the creator of this source credible? Why?
- What's the evidence for that claim?
- Can you explain the logic for your statement?
- This makes logical [or intuitive] sense to me but I don't have much evidence. Can someone suggest some evidence to support this?

Some teachers even create a poster of such phrases to scaffold the regular use of the claim testers in class. Of course, claim testing should also become evident in students' writing as they use these same strategies to show how they arrived at or are supporting their conclusions.

Claim Testing activities

Causation

Causal reasoning can help students develop evidence-based explanations or arguments in response to causal questions that consider human actions, events, and larger structures or processes.

Students are introduced to causation at the beginning of the course through the fictitious story of Alphonse the Camel. Reasoning about cause and consequence is core to the work of a historian, and therefore this practice is introduced early and repeated often. As students' progress in the course, they will use their causal reasoning skills in most activities they encounter. It should not take long for the steps they follow to analyze cause and consequence to become implicit, and they may not need the support of the Causation Tool. However, when it comes to writing about causation, this may take more time, so make sure to provide the appropriate support to your students until they have mastered writing about cause and consequence.

Causation poster

Comparison

Comparison is a key process that historians use to help them better understand the past. WHP seeks to improve student's ability to "do" historical comparison. WHP asks students to: Describe similarities and differences between different historical developments or processes; explain relevant similarities and differences between specific historical developments and processes; explain the relative historical significance of similarities and differences between different historical developments or processes.

While comparing and contrasting is something that students have likely engaged in prior to this course, in these activities they are introduced to a systematic way of conducting historical comparison. Ultimately, the goal is for students to be able to describe and explain the relevant similarities and differences between specific historical developments and processes, as well as explain the relative historical significance of similarities and differences between the topics of study. Don't skip these activities because this seems like an easy skill to master. Although students may be able to conduct historical comparisons quickly, writing comparison essays can be more of a challenge. Students are introduced to different structures for writing comparison essays so that they can write a well-crafted essay that carefully addresses historical comparison.

Comparison poster

Contextualization

A key component of historical inquiry is the ability to contextualize. Contextualization is a historical thinking skill that involves situating phenomena and actions by people in the context of time, space, and sociocultural setting. Context, in many ways, is complex and subtle, and involves other events, climate of opinion, and the local and more distant political, economic, social, and other cultural processes that surround the issue at hand. Contextualization is more than deciding when to begin an event. It requires students to think about the various layers of information that help us understand an event. Essentially, historical contextualization requires students to avoid "present-ism" – the tendency to interpret past events through the lens of modern values and concepts.

Some research has shown that there are four pedagogical design principles that should be in place for students to both understand and write about historical context (Huijgen, van de Grift, van Boxten, and Holthuis, 2018).[10] These include:

1. Making sure that students are aware of presentism.
2. Assisting students in the reconstruction of historical context.
3. Supporting students in using historical context to explain historical phenomena.
4. Focusing on historical empathy by putting human agents into the historical narrative.

It is these four pedagogical design principles upon which the contextualization activity spiral was constructed.

10 Tim Huijgen, Wim van de Grift, Carla van Boxtel & Paul Holthuis (2018). "Promoting Historical Contextualization: The Development and Testing of a Pedagogy," *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 50:3, 410-434, DOI: 10.1080/00220272.2018.1435724.

Contextualization poster

Continuity and Change Over Time (CCOT)

WHP seeks to improve students' capacity to evaluate historical continuity and change. Specifically, WHP lessons ask students to describe patterns of continuity and change over time; to periodize and explain patterns of continuity and change over time; to explain the relative historical significance of specific historical developments in relation to a larger pattern of continuity and change; to compare the past and the present to determine what has changed and what has remained stable; evaluate the degree to which change was global, interregional, regional, or local; assess different pace of change (slow, rapid); and determine the direction or impact of change (degree to which change or continuity was progressive or regressive). Learning how to evaluate continuity and change over time helps students make sense of historical processes and the evolution of those processes.
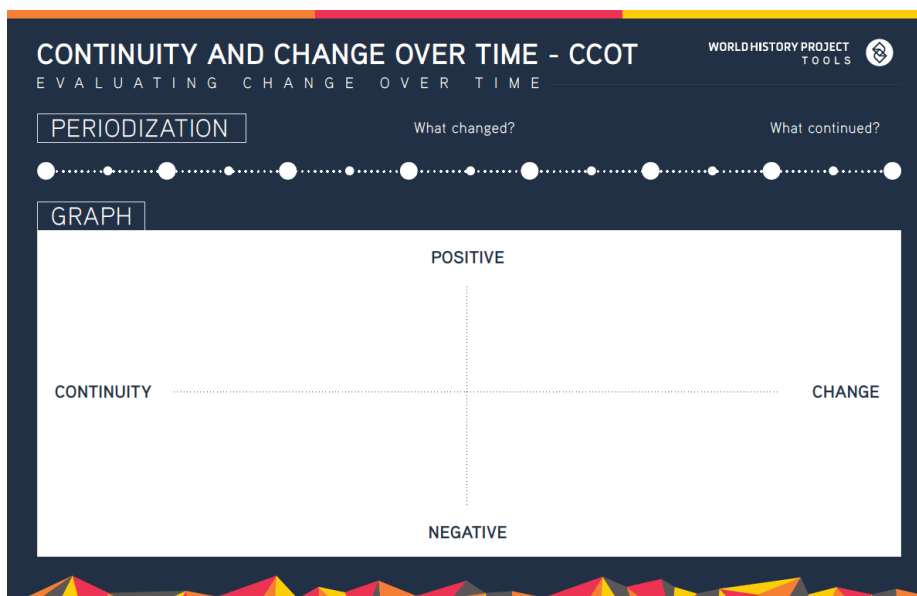
CCOT poster

Sourcing

Sourcing—the act of understanding who wrote a document, where they wrote it, and why they wrote it, for the purposes of analysis or interpretation—is integral to the work of a historian. Without properly understanding an author's purpose and perspective, it's difficult to properly interpret a document. Therefore, students will learn how to discover how an author has framed an event, and how that then impacts their interpretation of it. The act of sourcing a historical event involves two of the essential practices that students have already been introduced to in this course: reading and claim testing. In order to adequately make sense of a historical account, students need to understand the author who is interpreting and then producing an account of that event.

Sourcing activities

Additional Course Content and Guides

The World History Project course includes a wide range of materials. All course content comes with teaching notes, is available online, and can be downloaded for offline use. These resources include the following:

- **Videos**: A series of talks by historian Bob Bain, world history teachers, and noted scholars from around the world presenting challenging topics to students, including visualizations of more complex ideas.
- **Texts**: A series of articles and essays by eminent scholars. All texts in the course will be leveled, and each article will have three or four Lexile level versions to accommodate students of all reading levels.
- **Activities**: Lessons include standard activity types (vocabulary activities, for example), progression activities, as well as customized activities to maximize student engagement and learning.
- **Primary source collections**: Primary source collections have been curated and included throughout the course to include a wide variety of historical content. These include image collections.
- **Graphic biographies**: Graphic biographies of everyday people from throughout human history are included in each unit of the course.

Vocab Guide

In the WHP course, vocabulary is more than just a list of words students memorize. These words represent concepts critical to the unit, to the lesson, and to the individual readings and videos. To help students understand and retain words, students need to see them in a variety of contexts and need to engage in repeated, deliberate practice.

Vocabulary can be difficult to address because each student is unique in terms of the words they know and understand. There are both disciplinary words specific to the content, and everyday words that may be unfamiliar to some students. Given these varying needs, we address vocabulary in three ways in the course. We encourage you to use these or add you own vocabulary practices—whatever works best for your students.

Word Walls

In the first lesson in each unit we have a word wall activity. We make a variety of suggestions about how to create and work with word walls, and hope that classrooms build these throughout each unit. Word walls are generally meant to be used for the vocab we feel all students must learn to successfully engage with the content.

Vocab Tracker

The vocab tracker is meant to be used daily, throughout the course. This is really just a place for students to keep their own personal vocabulary list. We refer to the vocab trackers in our Three Close Reads process, so we hope that students will fill it out when reading articles and watching videos. This is how we address differentiating vocabulary needs – students can keep a list of the words that are unfamiliar to them. This may include content-related words, but also more general vocabulary. You can find the tracker in every unit as well as in the Teacher Console.

Fun Activity

We have included a vocab activity that is typically more creative and active than the others. These activities typically use unit level words, but you can adjust as you see fit for your students. These activities appear late in the first five units of the course. For the remaining units, you can pick your favorites and use them over and over again, or you can choose to do each activity twice. The activities include live concept mapping, word wheel, word relay, word sneak, and the What's My Word? activity.
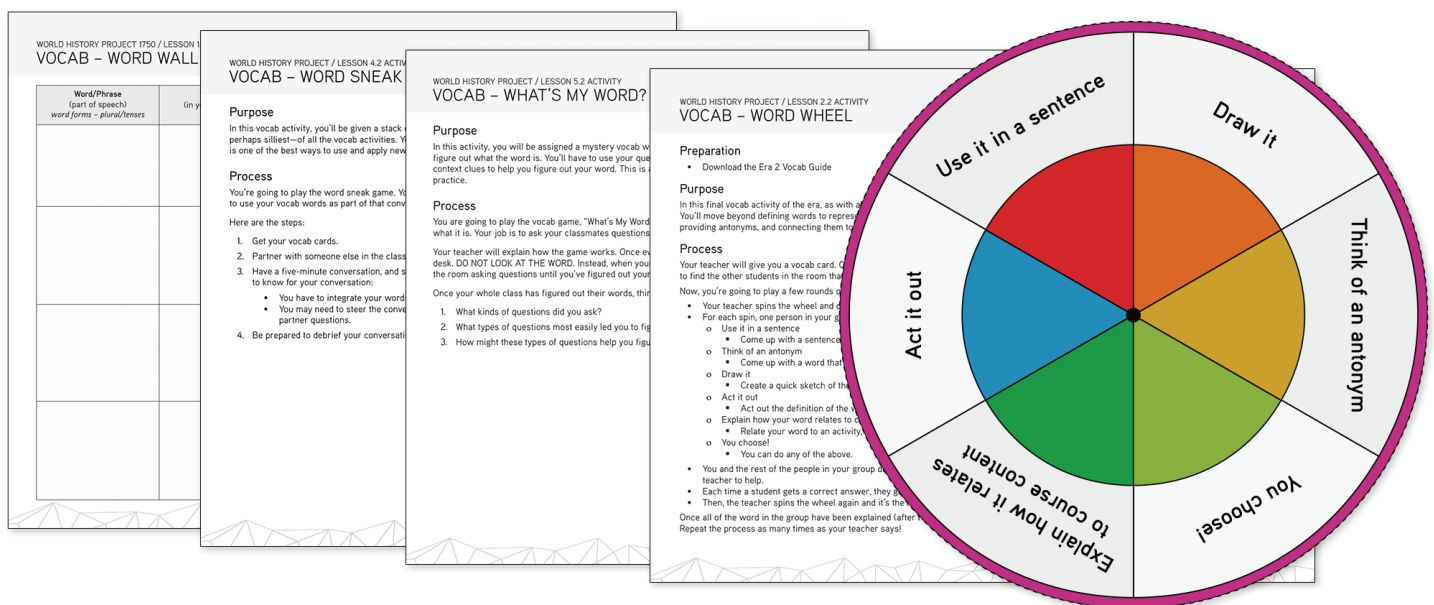
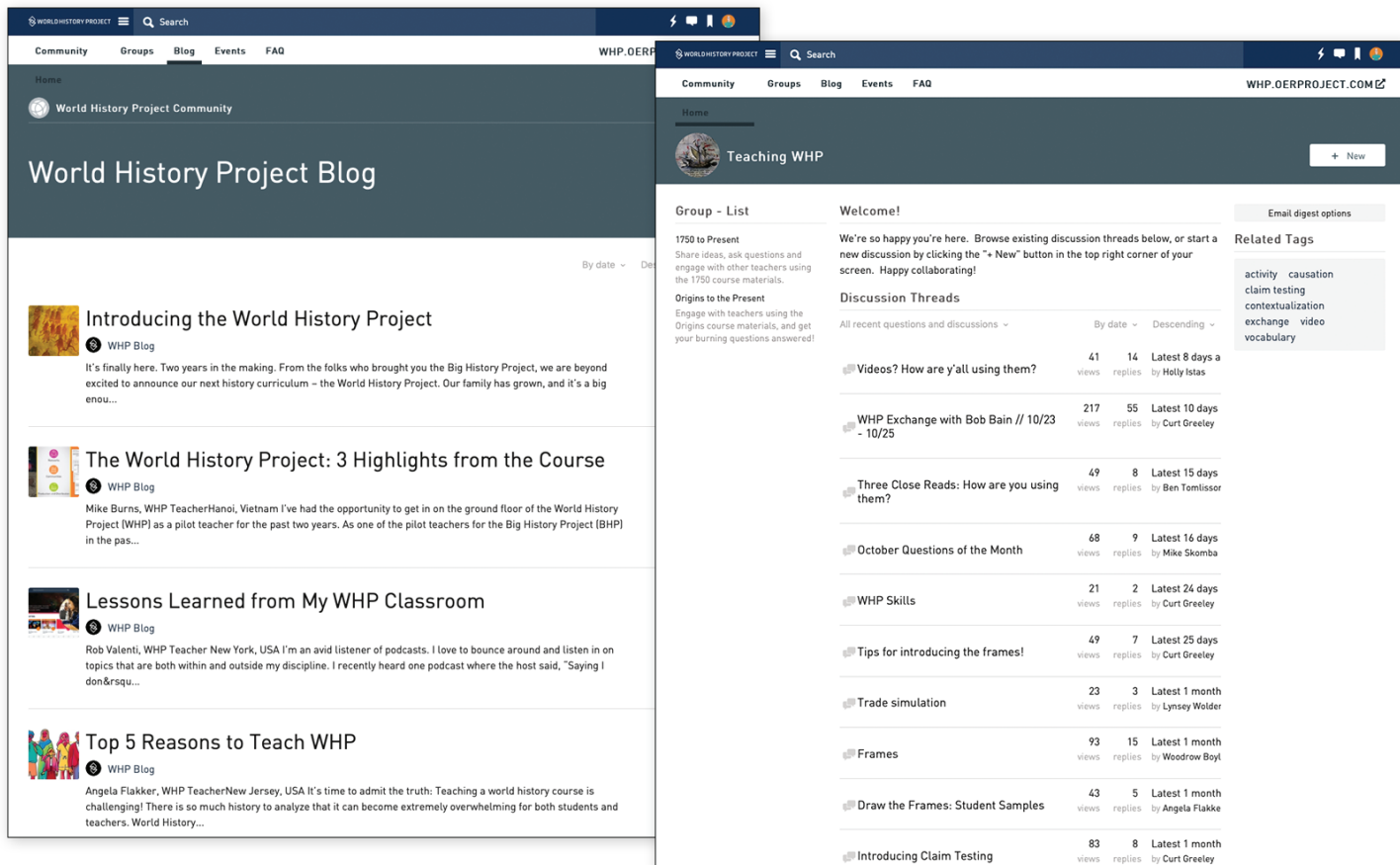*A selection of fun activities*

WORLD HISTORY PROJECT

Community

WHP is more than a just a course with a set of curriculum materials. Rather, it is a community of teachers, who come together to support one another and offer feedback that informs the design and ongoing redesign of this course. WHP is driven by a deeply engaged group of educators. We draw much of the instructional content from the best practices of World History teachers. By contributing feedback and suggesting new ideas, current teachers play an important role in the continual improvement of the World History course.

Teachers often report how they feel that this virtual community provides them just in time supports, resources, and new ideas as they delve into and continue teaching WHP. There are discussions about the curriculum, how teachers approach different topics and skills with their students, and how they differentiate and tailor the course to their particular settings and student needs.

Community conversations are saved and searchable, so even if someone isn't available to answer a question in the moment, there is often an answer waiting in the searchable discussions. We also invite historians and other experts in education to participate in the community, either through informal discussion or by hosting week long forums on specific topics related to teaching world history.

The community extends beyond the virtual platform, as we also host World History Project PLCs online and in-person. These forums allow you to share your ideas and help shape the course. We welcome you to this vibrant professional teaching community! Click "Community" (next to the Course Menu) from anywhere on the WHP site to join.

WHP Blog (left) and Community discussions (right)