

Europe (4 weeks)

I. Geography

A. Where is it located?

Locate Europe on the map and define its borders – oceans, seas, and Ural Mts.

B. What is it like?

1. Bodies of water – Mediterranean, Black Sea, Aegean Sea, etc. Influence on climate, resources, and culture. Most of Europe is a peninsula.
2. Mountains – Alps, Apennines – create obstacles and boundaries

II. Ancient Greece

A. Locate Greece on a map. Discuss the influence of geography on Greek development. Mountainous terrain forced Greek city-states to develop independently. Also, location on the sea encouraged trade with others, as well as colonization of other places.

B. Athens

1. Their government was the first form of democracy. They developed a direct democracy in which citizens (men over 20 born in Athens) elected their leaders and voted on laws.
2. Their culture emphasized beauty, arts, and education. Great teachers included Socrates, Aristotle, and Plato. Pythagoras made great advances in mathematics.

C. Sparta

1. Their government was an oligarchy, or rule by a few.
2. Their culture emphasized military might. Boys were taken from their families at age 7 for military training, and girls were trained for family chores and physical strength.

D. Olympics – began in ancient Greece. All city-states participated, and peace was called during times of war, so that all could participate in the Olympics. Winning brought great pride to the city-state.

E. Alexander the Great – son of Phillip II of Macedonia, He spread Greek culture as he set out to conquer the world (**cultural diffusion**). His empire stretched as far as India, northern Africa, and southern Europe. Alexander was known for allowing the culture of those he conquered to continue while Greek ideas and philosophy were introduced.

1. Cultural borrowing – the spread of cultural ideas by adopting patterns of speech, actions, and artifacts which are from another cultural group.

III. Rome

- A. Locate Rome on a map.
- B. Rome was founded around 750 B.C. Early Rome contained two main social classes: the **patricians** (wealthy landowners) and the **plebeians** (small farmers, craftsmen, and merchants). The Romans overthrew their king and made Rome a republic (a government in which leaders are elected). Power was shared between the **Senate**, made up of patricians, and two **consuls** elected by the Senate. The plebeians elected two **tribunes** to represent their views, and they had **veto** power, or the power to refuse to allow a law to be passed.
- C. **Julius Caesar** became dictator and overthrew the republic, angering the Senators, who killed him. After his death, civil war ensued. **Augustus Caesar** gained control of Rome, turning it into the Roman Empire.
- D. Augustus brought a long period of peace, known as the **Pax Romana** to Europe and the Mediterranean world.
- E. Romans allowed many religions to exist throughout the empire, and among these were Judaism and Christianity. They faced persecution from Rome because they refused to accept the emperor as divine.
- F. Despite this, Christianity continued to spread. **Emperor Constantine** allowed Christians to worship, and he even became a Christian. By the end of the 4th century, Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire.
- G. **Dark Ages**: After the fall of the Roman Empire, there was lawlessness throughout Europe.

IV. Feudalism

The Middle Ages, or medieval period, in Western Europe was characterized by the manor system and strong feudal ties. Kings granted land to their nobles in exchange for loyalty and service, especially in times of war. The nobles, in turn, granted land to peasants and serfs in exchange for their loyalty. Most people lived on manors, which consisted of the lord's house, peasant huts on the surrounding land, and fields for planting. Each manor was generally self-sufficient. The Catholic Church became the most important institution in Western Europe during this time.

V. Renaissance

A revival of the interest in education and arts began in Italy in the 1400s, triggering the beginning of the **Renaissance (rebirth)** in Europe. Literature and science, as well as art, began to flourish. Important artist/thinkers of the time included Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci, and Galileo. Johann Gutenberg invented the printing press, allowing books to be printed, distributed and read throughout Europe.

VI. Industrial Revolution

The **Industrial Revolution** brought about a fundamental change in society by introducing mass production. Two inventions – the spinning jenny and the steam engine – launched Great Britain into the industrial era. People began moving from the countryside into cities in search of jobs, as machines began to take over much of the work that had previously been done by hand. Ready supplies of coal and steel in England prompted an explosion of mechanized work there. The new way of doing work quickly spread throughout the western world.

VII. European Union

The European Union was created to strengthen the economic systems of participating countries by reducing or eliminating taxes between trading countries. Many of the nations have merged their currencies into the Euro Dollar. The central idea behind the European Union was to compete economically with the United States, China and Japan. And to claim Europe's share in the Global Economy.

Important dates in the EU:

Jan. 1st 2002- 12 countries comprise the EU and coins are distributed.

March 31st, 2003- Foreign aid and security policies are established. The EU takes on peace keeping operations. These units replace NATO units.

Jan. 1st 2007- There are now 27 countries that are part of the EU. They signed The Treaty of Lisbon which was designed to make the EU more Democratic and efficient. It also allows for the countries to address Global challenges together.

