

## **Nine Themes of World History (source unknown)**

### **Politics and History:**

Historians study politics to answer certain basic questions about the structure of a society. How were people governed? What was the relationship between the ruler and the ruled? What people or groups of people held political power? What rights and liberties did the people have? What actions did people take to change their forms of government?

The study of politics also includes the role of conflict. Historians examine the causes and results of wars in order to understand the impact of war on human development.

### **The Role of Ideas:**

Ideas have great power to move people to action. For example, the idea of nationalism, which is based on a belief in loyalty to one's nation, has lead to numerous wars and the deaths of millions of people.

At the same time, nationalism has also motivated people to work together to benefit lives of a nation's citizens. The spread of ideas from one society to another has also played an important role in world history.

### **Economics and History:**

A society's existence depends on meeting certain basic needs. How did the society grow its food? How did it make its goods? How did it provide the services people needed? How did individual people and governments use their limited resources? Did they spend more money on hospitals or military forces?

By answering these questions, historians examine the different economic systems that have played a roll in history.

### **The Importance of Cultural Development:**

We cannot understand a society without looking at its culture, or the common ideas, beliefs, and patterns of behavior that are passed from one generation to another.

Culture includes both high culture and popular culture.

High culture consists of the writings of a society's thinkers and the works of its artists. Many of these people were illiterate and so passed on their culture orally.

Today the term *popular culture* describes current trends and fashions such as popular TV programs, movies, and music.

### **Religion in History:**

Throughout history, people have sought to find a deeper meaning to human life. How have the world's great religions – such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam – influenced people's lives? How have those religions spread to create new patterns of culture?

### **The Role of Individuals:**

Julius Caesar, Queen Elizabeth I, Mohandas Gandhi, and Adolf Hitler remind us of the role of individuals in history. Decisive actions of powerful individuals have played a crucial role in the course of history.

So, too, have the decisions of ordinary men and women who must figure out every day how to survive, protect their families, and carry on their ways of life.

### **The Impact of Science and Technology:**

For thousands of years, people around the world have made scientific discoveries and technological innovations that have changed our world. From the creation of stone tools that made farming easier to the advanced computers that guide our airplanes, science and technology have altered how humans have related to their world.

### **The Environment and History:**

Throughout history, peoples and societies have been affected by the physical world in which they live.

In turn, human activities have had a profound impact on the world. From slash-and-burn farming to industrial pollution, people have affected the environment and even endangered the existence of entire societies.

### **Social Life:**

From a study of social life and customs, we learn about the different social classes that make up a society, the nature of family life, and how knowledge is passed on from one generation to the next. We also examine how people in history dressed, where they lived, how and what they ate, and what they did for fun.

## **Five Themes of Geography**

### **Location**

Location serves as a starting point by defining where a place is. Knowing the location of a place helps you develop an awareness of the world around you.

*Example: Florida is in the Southeastern United States; North American Continent.*

### **Place**

In Geography, place not only means where a place is located, but also describes what a place is like. Physical characteristics such as land forms, climate, and plant or animal life help geographers distinguish different kinds of places. Human characteristics, including language and way of life, also describe places.

*Example: Florida is a peninsula and has a warm tropical climate.*

### **Human/Environment Interaction**

How does the relationship between people and their surroundings influence the way people live? Geographers study how people use the environment and how their actions affect the environment.

*Example: People in Florida go fishing, hunting, to the beach, outdoor activities, or stay in air conditioning.*

### **Movement**

Movement not only refers to the import/export of goods, but it also looks at the continual movement of ideas (such as snail mail, e-mail, etc.) and people (such as immigration).

*Example: Immigrants are always moving to Florida from other countries (such as Latin America) and migration from other regions of the United States.*

### **Regions**

Geographers group places or areas into regions. Regions are united by one or more common characteristics.

*Example: Florida is in the following region: tropical climate; "The South."*