

*"Man is born free,
and everywhere he is
in chains."*

*"Liberte', Egalite',
Fraternite!"*

*"I have nothing to
offer but blood, toil,
tears, and sweat."*

*"Do they think that men who
have been able to enjoy the
blessings of liberty will calmly
see it snatched away?"*

*"The people are
the ultimate
guardians of their
own liberty."*

*"Into the valley of
Death rode the
six hundred"*

*"The war to end
all wars."*

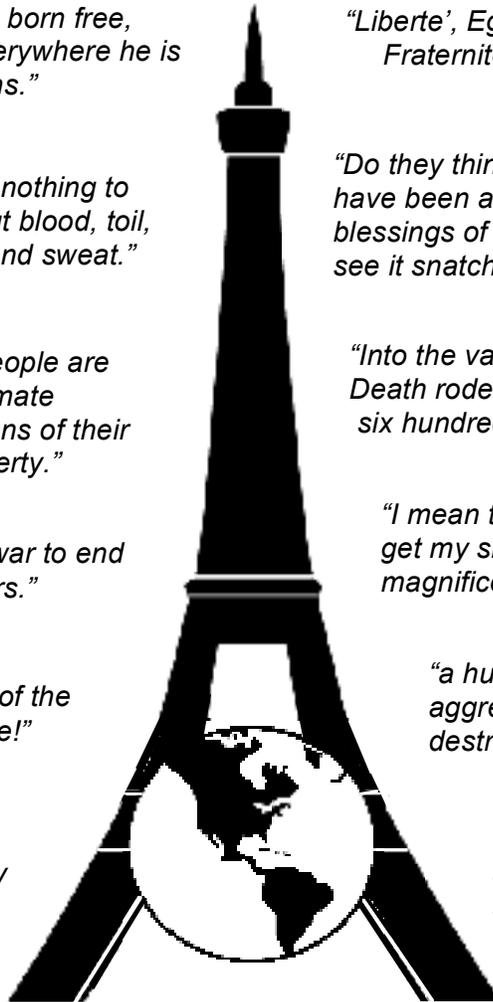
*"I mean to miss no chance to
get my share of this
magnificent African cake."*

*"Workers of the
world unite!"*

*"a human instinct for
aggression and self-
destruction."*

*"Thank God I
have done my
duty."*

*"I fear we have
awakened a
sleeping giant."*



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WHG2

World History & Geography 2

Essentials of world history from 1500 to the present

➡ History

What is history?

History is the story of human experience.

Why study history?

- History shows us how the world works and how humans behave.
- History helps us make judgments about current and future events.
- History affects our lives every day.
- History is a fascinating story of human treachery and achievement.

➡ Geography

What is geography?

Geography is the study of interaction between humans and the environment.

Why study geography?

- Geography is a major factor affecting human development.
- Humans are a major factor affecting our natural environment.
- Geography affects our lives every day.
- Geography helps us better understand the peoples of the world.

CONTENTS:

Unit 7 - 1500s & 1600s: The Early Modern World	Page 25
Unit 8 - 1700s: Enlightenment and Revolution	Page 29
Unit 9 - 1800s: Industrialism and Imperialism	Page 33
Unit 10 - 1900 - 1950: World at War	Page 37
Unit 11 - 1950 - present: Cold War and the Space Age	Page 41
Unit 12 - Current issues: A Changing World Order	Page 45

Unit 7 - The 1500s and 1600s: The Early Modern World

LOCATIONS: Russia, England, Germany, Portugal, Netherlands, Latin America, West Indies, China

93. The Modern World

The great European voyages of discovery ushered in a new age of history, the modern age that continues to the present day. This was the first truly global age when ships from Europe sailed the world's oceans bringing together the Old World and the New. The consequences were enormous: populations in the Americas were destroyed and replaced by newcomers from distant lands, international trade swelled, and people the world over started growing new plants and eating new foods.

Why did these ships come from Western Europe and not from some other advanced civilization? The Muslim world was dealing with internal concerns following the disruptions of the Mongol conquests. China was also looking inward after halting the ocean voyages of Zheng He. Kings in Western Europe, on the other hand, encouraged exploration to find new trading opportunities to increase their wealth and to help them compete against rival kings. When the Muslim Ottomans took control in the Middle East and disturbed overland trade routes, both Spain and Portugal sent explorers to look for new ocean routes to the spice-growing lands of Asia. While Spain stumbled across America instead, Portugal succeeded in opening a southern trade route to Asia by sailing around Africa into the Indian Ocean.

With their long reach into the oceans, European nations went from being a quarrelsome collection of medieval states to the world's most dynamic civilization, still quarrelsome but armed with advanced ships and weapons. From this point forward, Western civilization and world history were bound together.

94. Conquest of the Americas

When Christopher Columbus and his three small ships arrived in the **West Indies** on an October day in 1492, they set in motion a chain of events that would profoundly change life in the Americas and elsewhere in the world. The great Aztec and Inca civilizations would soon perish, conquered by Spanish **conquistadors**, adventurers seeking gold and glory. The Native Americans had no weapons to match Spanish swords and cavalry. Between 80 and 95 percent of the Americans would die and be replaced by immigrants from Europe seeking new opportunities and by immigrants from Africa who arrived in chains. Gold and silver taken from the Americas would make Spanish and Portuguese kings rich and powerful.

95. the Columbian Exchange

Because Eurasia and America developed in isolation from one another for thousands of years, they had different plants and animals. After Columbus connected the two landmasses, an exchange of products began: it was called the Columbian Exchange. At this time, Native American cultures included excellent farmers who raised corn, potatoes, tomatoes, chocolate, peanuts, coffee, and tobacco. Corn and potatoes from the New World had a big impact on Chinese and European diets, leading to large population increases in both places.

The most important food America acquired from Europe was wheat, used for making bread, pasta, and the like. Soon oats, barley, grapes, rice, and sugarcane were being grown in America. Domesticated animals from Europe changed America in a big way. The plains Indians of North America, for example, built a lifestyle around horses, the Navajos around sheep, and cows came to outnumber people.

The **import** from Europe with the greatest impact, however, was disease. Most diseases come from human contact with animals, and Europeans had long lived closely with their horses, pigs, cows, and sheep animals that did not exist in America. Over centuries, Europeans developed some immunity to diseases like smallpox and measles. Native Americans had no such immunity. When these diseases arrived in America, **indigenous** (native) populations were largely wiped out, emptying much of the land for Europeans.

96. capitalism (or the free market)

The voyages of discovery shifted the focus of European trade from the Mediterranean Sea to the Atlantic coast. Venice declined as a major trade center, while port cities prospered in Portugal and Spain followed by England, France, and the Netherlands (the Dutch). To increase their income from taxes on foreign trade, European monarchs encouraged the formation of joint-stock companies. Stock (or shares) was sold to several investors who shared the expense and risk of expensive ocean trading voyages. If a ship went down, no single investor lost everything, but if a voyage was successful, all stockholders shared in the profits. Most voyages succeeded, and many investors made good money. The modern stock market operates in a similar way today.

Best known of these companies were the British East India Company that traded mostly with India, and the Dutch East India Company that operated in Southeast and East Asia. Both acted as extensions of their governments and even had their own armies. Joint stock companies promoted the rise of an economic system called **capitalism** (or the free market). Capital is wealth such as ships, factories, or money. Under capitalism, people are free to own capital and make their own decisions about how to use it. Since joint stock companies were chartered by governments, they were a form of state-sponsored capitalism.

97. African slave trade

A capitalist economic system can benefit society by producing the best possible products at the lowest possible prices due to competition among producers. But with companies focused on making the best possible profits, capitalism can sometimes harm people. The African slave trade was one example.

After the discovery of America, European countries began sending people to the New World to establish colonies to produce goods for trade. With native populations dying off, Europe looked for another source of cheap labor. Although slavery no longer existed in Europe, Europeans began importing slaves from Africa to work on plantations and mines in the New World. Before this time, most African slaves had been enemies captured in battle. But, as the slave trade grew, Africans began kidnapping other Africans in large numbers and selling them to European slave traders.

Due to ocean currents and prevailing “trade winds,” European sailors learned they could make the fastest crossing to America by first sailing south to Africa. On the last leg of this **Triangular Trade Route**, the Gulf Stream ocean current sped ships from America back to Europe. Leaving West Africa for America on the “Middle Passage” of this three-part journey, ship cargo holds were crammed full of Africa’s chief **export**, human beings. Conditions on the slave ships were appalling. Many slaves died of disease from eating rotten food and breathing foul air. Some desperate slaves took their own lives. When these African people were sold at slave markets in the New World, the profits were used to purchase plantation products such as sugar, coffee, tobacco, and cotton, which were shipped back to Europe and sold there. It was a splendid system of trade for everyone except the Africans whose lives were ruined.

98. New Spain

The Atlantic powers of Europe came to dominate trade on the world’s oceans. Portugal’s trading empire included Brazil in South America and trading stations in Africa and Asia. The huge Spanish trading empire stretched from Europe to Asia to the Americas. Spain’s holdings in America were called New Spain; they extended from what is now the southern U.S. to the tip of South America. (Today, lands south of the U.S. are called **Latin America**.) New Spain’s biggest business enterprise was silver mining, which produced enough silver to make Spain the most powerful nation in Europe if not in the world.

Unlike English settlers in North America who maintained a distance from the “Indians,” the Spanish wanted to bring the indigenous people of New Spain into the Catholic faith. Many Spaniards intermarried with Native Americans and later with African-Americans creating a distinctive new civilization in Latin America. In this mixed society, Spaniards born in Europe were at the top of the social pyramid followed by Spaniards born in America (creoles). These people controlled society in New Spain. Next in rank were people of mixed Spanish and Native American heritage (mestizos) and mixed Spanish and black heritage (mulattos). At the bottom of society were Native Americans and African-Americans of unmixed ancestry.

99. Qing Dynasty (CHING)

During the early modern period, China’s Ming dynasty tried to isolate itself from Western cultural influences; only two Chinese ports were open to European ships. Still, Chinese products were so popular in Europe that much of the Spanish silver mined in the New World ended up in China where it paid for Chinese silks, tea, and fine porcelain. The Ming dynasty began requiring Chinese to pay their taxes in silver. When harsh weather reduced harvests, peasants didn’t have enough food or enough silver. It is said starving peasants ate goose droppings and tree bark. Disease and death swept through China.

The Ming government was weak following years of internal conflicts, and it was unable to contend with large peasant uprisings. As soldiers from a peasant army climbed the walls of the Forbidden City, the last Ming emperor hung himself in 1644. Like others before it, the Ming Dynasty grew, flowered, declined, and was replaced. The new rulers would be **Manchu** nomads from northeast of the Great Wall, a region known as Manchuria. They entered China, defeated the peasant army, and established the Qing dynasty that endured for two-and-a-half centuries until the early 1900s. The Qing dynasty would be China’s last.

100. The Tokugawa Shogunate

During the late middle ages, Japan suffered through a long period of internal wars. Japan was divided into many kingdoms; warlords lived in fortresses, and they employed mounted samurai warriors. It looked a lot like the feudal system of the middle ages in Europe. Endless warfare and pillaging made life miserable for Japanese peasants. Then in the mid-1500s, something happened to change all this: Portuguese traders showed up in Japan selling firearms. With the help of guns, a series of three warlords succeeded in conquering and unifying Japan. The last of these warlords, Tokugawa, became Japan’s shogun, or military ruler, in 1603. The shogunate adopted a Japanese version of Confucianism, and it improved education in Japan.

Concerned about the intentions and the influence of Europeans, the Tokugawa Shogunate adopted a policy of near total **isolation** from the West. Japan expelled Christian missionaries, burned Western books, and allowed only the Chinese and Dutch to trade with Japan at just one port. The southern port city of Nagasaki became Japan’s only window on the outside world.

101. Peter the Great

Russia emerged as a great power during the early modern period. In 1480, under the leadership of Ivan III, duke of Moscow, Russia finally threw off the Mongol domination that had long crippled Russia's development. Ivan tripled the size of Russian territory and rebuilt Moscow's fortress, the Kremlin, which is still home to Russia's rulers. Ivan declared himself the first Russian **tsar**, or Caesar. He is now known as **Ivan the Great**. Russia continued to grow in size as later tsars encouraged peasants to move into new territories. With the help of firearms, Russian settlers spread across the steppes of central Asia finally putting an end to the military superiority of mounted nomadic warriors. Russian territory eventually reached the Pacific Ocean, creating an empire that included many ethnic groups and the largest country in the world.

In 1682, Russia got a new and energetic tsar who stood nearly seven feet tall. He was Peter I, known as Peter the Great. Peter took eighteen months off to travel as a commoner in Europe where he worked as a carpenter and learned more about the West. Peter tried to bring Russia into the modern world by adopting elements of Western culture and technology. He imported printing presses along with European clothing and architecture, and he adopted the Western calendar. Peter also reorganized his military and civil service along European lines. In a war with Sweden, Peter acquired land on the Baltic Sea giving Russia an ocean outlet to the west and direct access to Europe by ship. There he built a European-style capital at St. Petersburg. Peter died at the age of 53 after jumping into icy water to save drowning sailors.

102. Gutenberg

Big things were happening in Europe during the early modern period: the Renaissance was spreading from Italy to northern Europe, major scientific discoveries were being made, Christianity was breaking apart, and a German jeweler improved on Chinese printing techniques to change how the world communicated.

As a goldsmith, Johann Gutenberg was skilled at working with small pieces of metal. He combined this skill with an olive press design to produce a new printing press that used **metal movable type**. After his press printed multiple copies of one page, the pieces of type were reused to print more pages. Before this, it took a person anywhere from six months to two years to copy one book by hand. Gutenberg's press made printing much faster, so books became less expensive and more widely available. People now had a reason to learn how to read and write. As a result, the printing press greatly expanded literacy, and it spread news of scientific discoveries and Renaissance ideas to wider audiences.

103. Protestant Reformation

Without Gutenberg's press, we might not remember the name **Martin Luther**. But through the power of the press, Luther's ideas spread until they tore apart the Catholic Church. The influence of the church had already started to decline during the late middle ages following the horror of the Black Death and conflicts over who was the rightful pope. Then, along came the Renaissance to revive the classical Greek idea of **humanism**, a concern with human life on Earth that further reduced the influence of the church.

But the biggest blow to the Roman Catholic Church came in 1517 when Luther, a Catholic monk and college professor, nailed his "95 Theses" (or arguments) to the door of a Catholic church in Germany. Luther was upset about the sale of "indulgences," which allowed Catholics to pay money to be forgiven of sins. The money was being used to build the huge, new, Renaissance-style St. Peter's Basilica in Rome.

Luther also believed that every person could have a direct relationship with God, so there was little need for Catholic priests or Catholic rituals. The printing press made such a direct relationship easier by supplying Bibles in local languages, not just in Latin. People could now read the Bible for themselves. Luther's attempt to *reform* the Catholic church is called the Reformation. His *protest* led to the establishment of Protestant churches, a new branch of Christianity. The Protestant Reformation not only fractured the church, it opened minds to new ways of thinking. If it was now possible to question the sacred teachings of mother church, it might also be possible to question other long-held beliefs about science, politics, and society.

104. Counter-reformation

At about this time, the Catholic Church was adopting reforms of its own. A new Catholic religious order, the Jesuits, promoted education and sent missionaries to Asia and America. Schools were opened to educate women in Renaissance learning, and the sale of indulgences was stopped. This Counter-reformation, or Catholic Reformation, had another important task: fighting the ideas of Protestantism.

The Counter-Reformation identified books to be burned, and it stepped up the work of the **Inquisition**, a system of church courts that placed heretics and sinners on trial. Torture and imprisonment were used to extract confessions from Protestants and disobedient Catholics. The Inquisition was especially strong in Spain where Christian forces had only recently succeeded in pushing the Muslim Moors back to North Africa. For centuries under Muslim rule, Spain had been a multi-cultural society where Muslims, Jews, and Christians lived side-by-side. After Christians retook Spain in 1492 (called the "Reconquista"), Jews and Muslims were expelled from Spain.

105. Elizabeth I

England became a Protestant country in 1534 when King Henry VIII broke from the Catholic Church so he could divorce his first wife and marry Anne Boleyn. He was hoping for a male heir, but instead they had a daughter. His daughter grew up to become one of history's most brilliant rulers, Queen Elizabeth I. Elizabeth was intelligent and confident. By tolerating religious differences, she maintained peace in her kingdom. She ruled for nearly a half century during the Renaissance in England, the "Elizabethan Period," when **William Shakespeare** wrote his plays, and the English language underwent rapid development. Greek and Latin words entered the English vocabulary, and Shakespeare alone invented hundreds of new words.

It was during Elizabeth's reign that England defeated the "invincible" **Spanish Armada** of 130 warships sent by Spain to attack and invade England. Although Spain was the world's largest empire, England and France were also building navies to compete on the oceans. Spain's Catholic king wanted to conquer the meddlesome English and return England to the Catholic faith. As the Armada waited off the French coast for its invasion army to arrive, the British sent burning fire ships against the Spanish vessels forcing them to scatter. With their battle formation broken, the Spanish ships were unable to fend off the smaller, faster, and more maneuverable British warships with their longer-range cannons. The defeat of the Armada in 1588 was a huge blow to Spain's pride and confidence, and it made England ruler of the waves.

106. the Wars of Religion

Conflicts between Protestants and Catholics in Europe escalated until the two sides went to war in the 1500s and fought for more than a hundred years. With both sides convinced God was on their side, the fighting was especially bloody. Religion wasn't the only issue involved; some rulers used the religious wars as an opportunity to seek advantage against rival powers. The last of the religious wars was the **Thirty Years' War**, which involved nearly every country in Europe. By the time it was over, one-third of Germany was dead, and Europe lay devastated. The killing of Christians by Christians had resulted in the worst disaster since the Black Death, but this disaster was man-made.

At the end of the war, the **Treaty of Westphalia** (1648) decreed that the ruler of each kingdom could choose the religion for his own land. Southern Europe (France, Italy, Spain) chose to remain with the Roman Catholic Church, while northern Europe (such as Germany, England, and Scandinavia) generally chose to be Protestant, a pattern that remains with us today. As another consequence of the Thirty Years' War, France replaced Spain as the strongest country in Europe.

107. divine right monarchs

European kings grew extremely powerful during the early modern period for several reasons: kingdoms had grown wealthy from trade to Asia and the Americas; international trade required big merchant fleets and strong navies; and after a century of religious warfare, Europeans looked to strong monarchs to maintain stability. Monarchs claimed to rule with a "divine right" that came directly from God. The grandest of the divine right monarchs was **Louis XIV** (LOO-ee the 14th) who called himself the "Sun King." He ruled France for 72-years when France was at the height of its power (1643-1715).

Twelve miles outside of Paris, Louis built a palace fit for a god-king. His huge palace at **Versailles** (vur-SIGH) was surrounded by endless gardens and 1,500 fountains. Versailles was built in an artistic style called **Baroque** (buh-ROKE), which replaced the classical-style art of the Renaissance. Baroque art was complex and dazzling; it was filled with ornamentation and gold. It was art meant to impress all who saw it with the power and wealth of the king or the church. Other rulers tried to copy the splendor of Versailles, but none ever equaled it. Louis shrewdly used his court at Versailles to control the French nobility. As many as 5,000 French nobles living at Versailles had little to do except seek the king's favor and compete for honors like holding the candle while the Sun King prepared for bed.

108. Scientific Revolution

The Renaissance, the Reformation, the discovery of new lands all these events opened European minds to new ways of thinking, and this included the pursuit of science. **Galileo** of Italy used a telescope to observe the heavens and prove the Earth was not the center of the universe. (The Catholic Church disagreed and locked him up.) Isaac **Newton** of England discovered the principle of gravity while sitting under an apple tree; he concluded that all objects in the universe obey the same laws of motion.

A Dutch shopkeeper and amateur scientist, Anton von **Leeuwenhoek** (LAY-vun-hook), built an early microscope and was struck with "wonder at a thousand living creatures in one drop of water." This new world of tiny organisms challenged the accepted theory of spontaneous generation, a theory that proposed small creatures such as insects spring to life from rocks or air. Leeuwenhoek suspected eggs.

These and other discoveries amounted to a leap in scientific understanding in the 1600s that came to be called the Scientific Revolution. Printed books spread this new scientific knowledge along with the revolutionary idea that the workings of the universe could be explained by natural causes.

Unit 8 - The 1700s: Age of Enlightenment and Revolution

LOCATIONS: Moscow, Egypt, Belgium, Great Britain, Austria, Brazil, Haiti, Mexico, Crimean Peninsula, India, Ottoman Empire

109. the Enlightenment

The big lesson of the Scientific Revolution was that “natural laws” governed the operation of the universe not God, superstition, witchcraft, or mysterious forces like spontaneous generation. Furthermore, these natural laws could be discovered by using reason. Writers and thinkers began to take these lessons from science, the physical world, and apply them to society, the world of people.

During this new “**Age of Reason**,” philosophers like **John Locke** in England and **Voltaire** in France claimed the power to rule came from the people, not from a divine right. They asked if nations should be ruled by monarchs who came to power through an accident of birth. They wrote of “self-evident truths” that required more democratic forms of government and “natural laws” that made all people equal. French philosopher **Jean Jacques Rousseau** wrote, “Man is born free, and everywhere he is in chains.” Rousseau said the ruler had a **social contract** with the people. If a ruler didn’t do what was best for the people, he violated the contract, and the people had a right to overthrow him.

Old ideas like serfdom and absolute monarchy were considered leftovers from the outdated **Ancien Regime** (old regime, old system). Many educated people rejected traditional religion, becoming **Deists** who believed in God and morality but did not accept church authority, church rituals, or beliefs that disagreed with science. These ideas about reason, freedom, and equality are called the Enlightenment.

110. Adam Smith

Enlightenment thinking wasn’t limited to politics; it extended to other areas of society such as economics and women’s rights. In 1776, Scottish philosopher Adam Smith published an influential book called *The Wealth of Nations*; it is considered the first full explanation of the capitalist economic system. Smith said rulers should stop trying to control their nations’ economies. Economies would work best, he said, if they were left alone to control themselves through the “invisible hand” of competition in a free market. Smith’s belief came to be known as **laissez faire** (LES-ay-fair), French for “leave it alone.”

English writer **Mary Wollstonecraft** believed Enlightenment ideas about equality should apply to women as well as men. Her book, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, proposed that educational systems be reformed to give girls the same education as boys. Her controversial ideas had little immediate effect, but they became a foundation for the women’s movement that would arise in the next century.

111. American Revolution

Enlightenment ideas found fertile ground in the British colonies of America where influential leaders such as Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, and George Washington were Enlightenment thinkers and Deists. Americans felt Britain had violated the social contract by passing unfair laws, so Americans were justified in throwing off British rule. The American Revolution in 1776 made a big impression on many people in Europe who saw it as a turning point in history; Americans had enforced the social contract, ended rule by the king, and established the first national democracy since ancient times.

The **Declaration of Independence**, written largely by Jefferson, began with a restatement of the Enlightenment ideas of philosopher John Locke: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.” By demonstrating that Enlightenment ideas could be used to govern a nation, the young democracy in America became the model for a better world.

112. The Third Estate

Although France was a birthplace of Enlightenment thinking, France was still living under the Ancien Regime. Society was made up of three classes called estates. The First Estate was the clergy (church officials), and the Second Estate was the nobility. The clergy and nobles made up only two percent of the population, but they owned one-third of the land, and they paid few taxes. Everyone else belonged to the Third Estate, the commoner class in France. They paid the taxes that financed France’s government.

The commoners of the large Third Estate included rural peasants, the urban poor, artisans, and the middle class. The middle class, or **bourgeoisie** (burzh-wah-zee), was made up of successful and educated people like large landowners, merchants, doctors, lawyers, scholars, and government officials. They had wealth and economic power and paid taxes, but they had little say in government. In America, it was the middle class who led the revolution against England; in France the middle class was growing restless too.

In 1789, King Louis XVI (the Sun King’s great, great, great grandson) called representatives from France’s three estates to the palace at Versailles for a meeting of the Estates General, an old institution from medieval times that had met only once in the past three centuries. The king needed cash.

113. French Revolution

France was deeply in debt from supporting the American Revolution against the British, France's old enemy. King Louis XVI convened the Estates General to discuss raising taxes. Representatives from the Third Estate, mostly bourgeoisie, knew they would be out-voted by the other two estates and be stuck paying the new taxes. Frustrated, the Third Estate declared *it* was the nation's new parliament, the "National Assembly." When locked out of their meeting room, the Assembly met on a tennis court and swore an oath not to go home until France had a modern constitution. The king called out the army.

In 1789, France was ripe for revolution. Not only were the bourgeoisie angry about having little say in government, the peasants and urban poor were hungry after two years of bad harvests. As the king's troops marched toward Versailles, the enraged people of Paris stormed and captured the **Bastille**, a prison that represented the Ancien Regime. (Bastille Day, July 14, is France's independence day.)

The French Revolution was underway. The Paris mob executed the mayor and paraded his head through the streets on a pole. Throughout the countryside, peasants attacked the nobility and burned feudal documents. The National Assembly abolished **feudalism** in France, and in the streets the common people shouted, "Liberte', Egalite', Fraternite'!" (Liberty, Equality, Brotherhood). Hungry women armed themselves and marched to Versailles; they forced the king to return to Paris where they placed him under house arrest.

114. Reign of Terror

Many of France's nobles fled to other countries where they encouraged foreign kings to stop the French Revolution before it could spread. France was soon at war with Prussia and Austria, later joined by Britain, Spain, and the Netherlands. France drafted all able-bodied men into the military and raised an army of nearly one million men. With foreign armies invading French territory, economic problems in Paris, and fears about enemies within France, a group of **radicals** took control of the revolution.

The radicals took extreme measures against their enemies, real or imagined. After the king and queen were caught attempting to flee from France, they were marched to the **guillotine** and beheaded. Members of the nobility and the clergy were beheaded. The radicals even beheaded other revolutionaries. Some 50,000 people died during France's bloody "Reign of Terror," about half at the guillotine.

115. Napoleon

After the French army managed to eliminate the immediate threat of foreign invasion, new leaders took control in France and ended the Reign of Terror. Still, the government was unable to end foreign wars or improve the economy, and the army was frequently called in to maintain order. In 1799, a brilliant young general named Napoleon Bonaparte seized control of France.

Napoleon was a popular leader. After military victories in Italy, he proclaimed himself emperor and began his conquest of Europe. Napoleon's army was unique: French soldiers believed in their cause of spreading the Revolution, and the army chose its officers based on ability, not on noble birth. Leading a capable, dedicated, and battle-hardened army, Napoleon easily defeated all forces sent against him.

In the lands he conquered Napoleon eliminated feudalism and serfdom, improved education, and promoted the arts and sciences. He established a uniform legal system, the **Napoleonic Code**, that guaranteed freedom of religion and granted equal rights to all men. The Code, however, reduced gains made by women during the revolution. Women would have to wait another century for their equality.

116. Neoclassical art and Classical music

In Europe, divine right, absolute monarchy, and the Ancien Regime were swept away by the Enlightenment, revolution, and Napoleon. A simpler artistic style was needed to replace the rich and fancy Baroque style of the god-kings. Again the Western world turned to classical Greece and Rome for artistic inspiration; the new style was termed "Neoclassical," meaning "new classical."

Emperor Napoleon considered himself the new Caesar of the new Rome. He had himself crowned in the style of Roman emperors. He built classical-style monuments such as the Arc de Triomphe in Paris, and he spread Neoclassicism to the countries he conquered. Meanwhile, the young republic in the United States chose Neoclassical architecture for its new capital in Washington D.C. Other changes were also happening in the art world: successful members of the middle class now bought art, not just kings and churches. And artists were learning their skills at "academies," not through the support of rich patrons.

While the art and architecture of the period are called Neoclassical, the music is simply called Classical because ancient classical music had not survived to claim that name. Classical music originated with opera, which was meant to imitate ancient Greek theater. Classical music replaced the Baroque musical style popular at the court of France's Louis XIV and other kings. This was Europe's greatest age of music; it was centered in Vienna, Austria where music was the focus of upper class social life. During a remarkable 50-year period (1775-1825), Classical music giants Haydn, (HIGH-dun) Beethoven, and Mozart worked side-by-side in the same city. "Papa" Haydn gave encouragement to Mozart and lessons to Beethoven. Musicians flocked to Vienna where they found training, jobs, money, honor, and fame.

117. **Horatio Nelson**

England was the only major European power not conquered by Napoleon, due largely to the British naval victory at Trafalgar. In 1805, a combined French and Spanish fleet of 33 warships was intercepted by a British fleet of 27 ships under the command of Admiral Horatio Nelson, a most uncommon sailor. Wounded in a naval battle ten years earlier, Nelson lost the use of his right eye. In a sea battle three years after that, he lost his right arm. The following year, Nelson defeated a French fleet at “The Battle of the Nile,” forcing Napoleon to withdraw from Egypt. Three years after that, he was in a battle against a Dutch fleet when the British commander gave the signal to withdraw. Nelson put the telescope to his blind eye and said he could see no such signal. Nelson went on to destroy the Dutch fleet.

The **Battle of Trafalgar** would be Nelson’s greatest victory and his last. Before the battle, he told his sailors “England expects that every man will do his duty.” Nelson’s ships engaged the larger enemy fleet at Cape Trafalgar off the southwest coast of Spain. When the smoke cleared, 20 French and Spanish ships had been destroyed or captured without the loss of a single British vessel. Nelson, however, was shot by a French sniper and died aboard his flagship *H.M.S. Victory*. Before he died, Nelson was certain of victory, and he declared, “Thank God I have done my duty.” Trafalgar wrecked Napoleon’s plans to invade England, and Britain continued to rule the waves for another hundred years. Today a statue of Admiral Nelson stands atop a tall column in London’s main square, Trafalgar Square.

118. **Haiti**

One of France’s richest colonies was Haiti in the West Indies. Its wealth was based on a brutal slave economy. Slaves in the Americas often resisted their masters by running away or fighting back. In Haiti, slaves succeeded in taking over a country. When the turmoil of the French Revolution spilled over to Haiti, slaves used the opportunity to revolt. Under the leadership of **Toussaint L’Overture**, slaves took control in Haiti, defeated an invasion force sent by Britain, and freed all slaves on the island.

When L’Overture heard that France planned to return and reinstate slavery, he wrote, “Do they think that men who have been able to enjoy the blessing of liberty will calmly see it snatched away?” In 1802, Napoleon sent a large army to Haiti to restore French control and slavery. L’Overture was captured and died in a French prison. Soon, however, the French were defeated by a combination of yellow fever and Haitian rebel fighters. Haiti became the second nation in the Americas, after the U.S., to gain independence. Haiti’s slave revolt worried slave owners, but it was a symbol of hope to blacks.

119. **Napoleon’s invasion of Russia**

Napoleon’s downfall began with his biggest military mistake, an attempt to invade and conquer the vast empire of Russia. The Russians had no hope of defeating Napoleon’s huge and powerful **Grand Army** of more than 600,000 soldiers, the largest army ever assembled in Europe. So, the Russians burned everything in Napoleon’s path to deny his army food and shelter. After a bloody but indecisive battle at Borodino, Napoleon captured the Russian capital of **Moscow**, but it was nearly empty. Knowing that his army could not survive the coming winter in Russia, Napoleon had to retreat. As the Grand Army made its way back to France, temperatures dropped to 30 degrees below zero during the bitter cold Russian winter of 1812. Between the cold, starvation, Russian attacks, and desertion, only 30,000 of Napoleon’s original soldiers returned to France. It was one of the worst disasters in military history.

Disgraced by the ruin of his Grand Army, then defeated in battles by an alliance of European nations, Napoleon was captured and forced into exile on the small island of Elba off the coast of Italy. It wasn’t long, however, before Napoleon escaped and returned to France where he raised another army. Napoleon met his final defeat at the hands of a British-led allied army near the town of **Waterloo**, Belgium in 1815. Again Napoleon was exiled, this time to St. Helena, a remote British island in the South Atlantic, where he died in 1821, probably of stomach cancer or arsenic poisoning.

120. **Simon Bolivar**

Inspired by revolutions in America and France, people of Latin America wanted independence too. A creole named Simon Bolivar led the way. Bolivar was born in 1783 to a wealthy family in Venezuela. After studying Enlightenment ideas at home and in Europe, Bolivar returned to Venezuela and raised an army to fight for independence from Spain. With Spain preoccupied by the Napoleonic Wars, Bolivar achieved victory in his native Venezuela, and then went on to defeat the Spanish in what is now Columbia, Ecuador, and Bolivia. His final victory in Peru ended Spanish rule in South America. Bolivar failed, however, in his dream of bringing South America together in a union. Although he died a discouraged man, Bolivar is remembered as “The Liberator,” and the country of Bolivia is named in his honor.

At the same time Bolivar was fighting for South American independence in the early 1800s, Mexico and countries in Central America were also fighting for their independence from Spain. Meanwhile, Brazil declared its independence from Portugal. In a period of just twenty years, the three-hundred-year European domination of Latin America came to an end.

121. **British Parliament**

In contrast to revolutions in the United States, France, and Latin America that lasted only a few years, revolution against the monarchy in England was a long, slow process that took centuries. It began in 1215 when the “Great Council” of English nobles forced King John to sign the **Magna Carta**, a document that established the principle that the king was not above the law. The Magna Carta was an early step toward the kind of constitutional government later established in the United States, France, and other democracies.

Over time, the Great Council evolved into a law-making body called Parliament. When an English king interfered with religious practices in the mid-1600s, Parliament raised an army that defeated and executed the king. In the late 1600s, Parliament removed another king from power and replaced him with a king and queen who agreed to follow a “Bill of Rights” strongly influenced by the Enlightenment views of John Locke. Although the British monarch continued to serve as head of state, Parliament has been the true power in Great Britain since the 1700s. England was not yet a democracy, however, because the nobility controlled Parliament, and few people had the right to vote.

122. **Catherine the Great**

Several weak emperors ruled Russia after the death of Peter the Great. One was Peter III who married a lively German princess named Catherine who was anything but weak. In fact, it’s commonly believed she approved Peter’s murder in 1762. Although Catherine’s son was next in line for the throne, she pushed him aside and ruled Russia as empress. In some respects, Catherine continued the Westernization program begun by Peter the Great. She imported farming and manufacturing techniques from the West along with European art. Enlightenment philosophers were her friends.

But trouble was brewing in the empire. Hardship caused by war with the Ottomans joined with plague to make life especially hard for Russian peasants. They rose up in the greatest revolt yet seen in Russia. After putting down the rebellion, Catherine abandoned her Enlightenment philosophies and ruled with an iron fist. She took rights away from the serfs and increased the power of their noble landlords. By the time she had finished, serfs were little more than slaves, and hardly a free peasant remained in Russia.

But Catherine created one of the world’s finest art museums at the Hermitage in St. Petersburg, and she expanded the Russian Empire west into Poland. After her armies defeated the weakening Ottoman Empire, Russia took control of the **Crimean peninsula** on the Black Sea, which gave Russia direct access to the Mediterranean and a warm water port that could stay open year round. Under Catherine’s forceful rule, Russia grew strong and was capable of challenging other great powers. For these reasons she earned the title “Catherine the Great.”

123. **Mughal Empire**

Back in the 1300s, when Mongol control over India weakened, India broke into many states. Two centuries later, Muslim invaders armed with firearms conquered northern India and established the Mughal Empire, the last of India’s golden ages. The great Mughal ruler **Akbar** practiced religious tolerance towards India’s Hindu majority; he even married a Hindu princess. Trade and agriculture flourished; India exported millions of yards of inexpensive cotton cloth that clothed much of Europe.

A much-admired art style emerged from the blending of Hindu and Islamic artistic traditions. Mughal architecture reached its zenith with the **Taj Mahal**, a tomb built by a Mughal ruler to honor his beloved wife who died in childbirth. It is considered by many to be the most beautiful building in the world.

In the early 1700s, a Mughal ruler extended his empire over most of southern Asia, but the constant warfare so weakened the empire that India once again fragmented into regional states. The breakdown of Mughal authority gave Britain an opportunity to extend its commercial interests in India. In the mid-1700s, forces from the British East India Company defeated armies of the French and Dutch trading companies. Britain then fought Indian armies to take control of the Bengal region in northeastern India. The ancient and legendary land of India was fast becoming a colony of the British Empire.

124. **Gunpowder Empires**

After the Chinese invented gunpowder, firearms began to play a major role in world history. Gunpowder weapons helped new rulers take control in Tokugawa Japan, Mughal India, the steppes of Russia, and elsewhere. With the help of gunpowder weapons, European nations created huge trading empires.

The Portuguese were probably first to place cannons on ocean-going ships. Europeans had acquired much of their sailing technology from the East including the compass, astrolabe, rudder, and lateen sails for sailing into the wind. The Europeans added their own improvements including better cannons and faster ships that were built strong enough to withstand the recoil of cannon fire without being shaken apart. With shipboard cannons, Europeans pushed into the waters of Asia and Africa and came to dominate the world’s oceans. Kings in Europe always had to be ready to adopt the latest in weapons technology to survive the endless conflicts among Europe’s competing powers. In the next century, the 1800s, Europe’s advanced weaponry would extend Western European dominance from the oceans to the land.

Unit 9 - The 1800s: Industrialism and Imperialism

LOCATIONS: Japan, Cuba, Philippines, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Puerto Rico

125. Industrial Revolution

Midway through the modern era, people learned how to make machines move by burning fuels. The first of these machines was the steam engine that burned coal to heat water that made steam that pushed a piston that turned a wheel. Goods that had always been made by hand in homes and shops were replaced by goods made in large quantities at lower cost by machines in factories. Humans had never gone faster than horses could carry them, but now steam-powered trains and ships moved people and goods faster and cheaper than ever before. This technological revolution began in England's textile (cloth) mills in the late 1700s and spread to other Western nations during the 1800s. These new technologies would soon change how people lived, and they would determine who ruled the world.

The Industrial Revolution affected society in both positive and negative ways. Factories could produce goods more cheaply than hand labor, so people could buy more goods and enjoy a higher **standard of living** than before. But, factories put many craftspeople out of work. Factories required large numbers of workers, which caused huge migrations of people from the countryside to the cities where they worked long hours for low wages while living in crowded and unsanitary conditions. Even small children worked as many as 16 hours a day becoming so tired they fell into machinery and were crippled or killed.

126. socialism

In 50 years, the English manufacturing city of Liverpool grew from 80,000 to 375,000 people. Cities could not cope with the huge influx of workers coming to work in the factories of the Industrial Revolution. A dozen people might be crowded together in one small room in a run-down apartment building called a **tenement**. Due to a lack of sewage facilities, filth was everywhere, and infectious disease killed one child in four before the age of five. The Industrial Revolution was making a few people very wealthy, but countless others were poor and living under miserable conditions.

Not surprisingly, many working-class people were attracted to the ideas of socialism, an economic philosophy that called for a more even distribution of wealth. Socialism proclaimed, "From each according to his ability, to each according to his need." Under socialism, major businesses would be owned by the public, not by a few wealthy men. Socialism was basically the opposite of Adam Smith's capitalism.

127. Impressionism

The Industrial Revolution brought many technological marvels such as antiseptics to kill bacteria in hospitals, vaccinations to prevent disease, the telegraph, telephone, light bulb, automobile, airplane, and the camera. The camera had a big impact on the art world in the late 1800s. Since the camera could reproduce scenes from life more accurately than any artist could, artists needed to find a new mission. Rather than trying to accurately reproduce reality, artists began to paint their "impressions" of what they saw. Painters like Monet and Renoir worked quickly using short, choppy brushstrokes to form vibrant mosaics of color. Art changed radically as artists became freer to put their own ideas and feelings into their works.

Impressionism marked the beginning of modern art. In architecture, the industrial age was symbolized by the **Eiffel Tower**, built in Paris in 1889 to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the French Revolution. At nearly 1,000 feet tall, it was an impressive demonstration of the steel and iron construction techniques of the Industrial Revolution, and it was a model for the steel-skeleton skyscrapers to come.

128. conservative versus liberal

Following the Napoleonic Wars, Europe was ready for a period of calm. Leaders representing the "Great Powers" of Europe met in Vienna to hammer out an agreement meant to undo changes brought about by the French Revolution and Napoleon and to maintain a lasting peace by restoring a **balance of power** among European nations. They sought to prevent any nation from becoming stronger than the others as France had done under Napoleon. Delegates to the Congress of Vienna were members of the **aristocracy** (upper class), who wanted a return to the old order in which monarchs and the upper class controlled a stable society. People who resist change and try to preserve traditional ways are called conservatives. Society's "haves" tend to be conservative because they wish to preserve the system that worked well for them.

Although conservatives were in control in 1815, many common people still believed in Enlightenment ideas. People who support new methods for improving society are called liberals. Because society's "have-nots" desire change, they tend to be liberal. Liberals are said to be on the political "left," while conservatives are on the political "right." (In the United States the Republican Party is considered more conservative than, and to the right of, the more liberal Democratic Party.) Although the Congress of Vienna succeeded in preventing an outbreak of general warfare in Europe for a century, liberal revolts erupted repeatedly as people continued to seek the Enlightenment goals of freedom and equality.

129. **nationalism**

Nationalism is a deep devotion to one's country that places it above all others. It begins with the desire of people who share a common culture to have their own nation free from outside control. In the early 1800s, much of Europe was still divided into small kingdoms often ruled by foreigners. Inspired by nationalism and Enlightenment ideas of freedom, people hungered to belong to their own nations.

In the mid-1800s, most of Italy was ruled by the Austrian and Spanish royal families. There was only one Italian-born monarch, King Victor Emmanuel II of Sardinia. **Unification** of Italy began here. The king had a clever **prime minister** named Cavour who helped to unite northern Italy. A popular revolutionary general, Giuseppe Garibaldi, raised an army of a thousand volunteers who brought southern Italy into the Italian union. In 1861, Italy became a nation, and Victor Emmanuel was proclaimed king.

In 1850, Germany was made up of 39 small countries. One of the largest and most powerful was the eastern kingdom of Prussia. Prussia's brilliant prime minister, Otto von Bismark, believed Germany's unification would not be achieved through democratic means, "but by blood and iron." Using a step-by-step approach, Bismark started and won three separate wars against Denmark, Austria, and France, each war bringing him closer to his goal of a greater Germany. By 1870, Germany was unified, and Prussia's king was crowned as **kaiser** (emperor) over all of Germany. (A prime minister serves as the head of a country's government. In today's world, prime ministers have powers similar to American presidents.)

130. **social Darwinism**

In the early 1800s, nationalism was associated with positive ideas like freedom from foreign control. The last half of the century, however, saw the emergence of a darker side of nationalism that glorified war and military conquest. This extreme form of nationalism was supported by **racism**, a belief that one's own race or culture is superior to others. Racism, in turn, was supported by social Darwinism.

Charles Darwin was an English scientist who had a huge impact on Western thought when he developed a theory of evolution based on the idea of "**natural selection**." His theory proposed that an animal species may change over time as the best-adapted members survive and the less successful members die out. Social Darwinists took Darwin's theory and used it to justify the racist belief that the world's more technologically advanced white races were fittest and intended by nature to dominate "lesser" races.

The idea of "survival of the fittest" was also adopted by rich industrialists who believed their wealth proved they were superior examples of the human species. Therefore, it was perfectly acceptable for them to enjoy their vast riches while keeping their inferior workers living in poverty.

131. **imperialism**

Before the 1800s, Western nations did business in Africa and Asia within existing trade and political networks. After the Industrial Revolution, Western powers used their superior weapons and powerful iron warships to conquer much of the world, especially lands in Africa and Asia. In 1800, Western powers controlled 35 percent of the world's land surface; by 1914, they controlled 84 percent. When a nation dominates or controls another land physically, economically, or politically, it is called imperialism. Western imperialism placed millions of black and brown people under the control of white people.

Imperialism was encouraged by nationalism; European nations wanted to increase their power and pride by adding new colonies. Imperialism was also supported by racist attitudes like social Darwinism. Europeans claimed to be doing "backward" people a favor by conquering their lands and bringing them Western advancements. But the most important force behind imperialism was money. The Industrial Revolution changed Europe from a consumer of manufactured goods to a producer, and Europe's factories needed places to sell their products. One Englishman said, "There are 40 million naked people [in Africa], and the cotton spinners of Manchester are waiting to clothe them." Colonies provided Europe's factories with new markets for manufactured goods, *and* cheap raw materials to feed Europe's machines.

132. **India**

From their base in Bengal, the British steadily gained control of India's warring regional states until Britain was master of India. India had the biggest population of any British colony, and it supplied troops to enforce British rule elsewhere in the empire. Soldiers at this time had to bite off the ends of rifle cartridges to load their rifles. When beef fat was used to seal cartridges, Indian troops rebelled because cows are sacred to Hindus. The rebellion quickly spread to other areas of Indian society. After crushing the uprising, the British government took direct control of India from the British East India Company.

India was the "jewel in the crown" of Britain's colonial empire that also included Canada, Australia, and big chunks of Africa. This was the **Victorian Age** of Queen Victoria when Britain was at the height of its power. It was said, "The sun never sets on the British Empire." Britain brought advancements to India including a postal service, telegraph, good roads, and a railroad network. But British control also harmed Indians. For example, the spinning of cotton in Indian homes had long been a source of income for peasants until they were put out of work by inexpensive cotton cloth imported from England's textile mills.

133. **Australia**

Australia is the only country that is also a continent. Like the Americas, Australia was settled twice: the first time by hunter-gatherers called **Aborigines** who arrived by boat from Southeast Asia some 50,000 years ago; the second time by Europeans. The Dutch spotted Australia first, but found it a barren land and lost interest. British explorer James Cook found more promising land in southern Australia and claimed the continent for Britain. The British first used Australia as a prison colony; Australia's first European settlers were convicts. After gold was found in the mid-1800s, European immigration to Australia boomed. The native Aborigines experienced the usual pattern of decline after contact with Western diseases and weapons.

Southeast of Australia lie the islands of **New Zealand**, where the British subdued native tribes of hunter-gatherers called the Maori. (MOW-ree) New Zealand was added to the British Empire in 1840. The British took control of **Canada** from the French in 1763. Many French-speaking Canadians remain, primarily in the province of Quebec. Canada is the second-largest country in size after Russia, but most of its people live within 100 miles of its border with the United States. Despite their far-flung locations, the former British colonies of Australia, New Zealand, and Canada are considered part of the Western world.

134. **Opium War**

In 1800, China was a manufacturing powerhouse, producing one-quarter of the world's goods. It was the wealthiest country on earth. But there was a problem. The British liked their tea, and Britain was sending huge amounts of silver to China in payment for tea and other products. The Chinese, however, had little interest in British goods. This trade imbalance was draining silver from Britain. What to do?

Britain decided to deal drugs. Britain found that Bengal was ideal for growing opium, a highly addictive narcotic. Britain grew opium in India, shipped it to China, and received silver in payment. Although opium use was illegal in China, large segments of the Chinese population became addicted, especially the poor. Alarmed that the opium trade was ruining China's society and economy, the Qing emperor pleaded with the British to stop. When they didn't, he ordered the opium trade shut down. After a Qing official seized and destroyed opium from British warehouses, Britain declared war in 1839. With their superior ships and weapons, and with their bombardment of Chinese ports, the British won an easy victory.

Britain forced China to pay the costs of the war and to open new ports to Western ships. China's defeat was humiliating; not only were foreign "barbarians" dictating terms to China and occupying Chinese territory, the war showed how far behind China's technology had fallen. The Qing Empire continued to weaken through the 1800s. It was shaken by major uprisings, and defeated in a war with Japan in 1894. A final uprising in 1911 ended the Qing dynasty, and with it over 2,000 years of rule by Chinese dynasties dating back to the First Emperor in 221 BC. The last Chinese emperor was an 8-year-old boy.

135. **Meiji Restoration** (MAY-gee)

In Japan of the early 1800s, the Tokugawa Shogunate was still trying to preserve Japan's cultural traditions through measures such as banning firearms and maintaining isolation from foreigners. But there was a problem. The Americans, like the British, believed in free trade even when a country didn't want to trade. In 1853, a squadron of American warships arrived in Japan and threatened bombardment unless Japan opened trade with the United States. At gunpoint, the shogunate agreed. In the political unrest that followed, members of the samurai class armed themselves with surplus weapons from the American Civil War and overthrew the Tokugawa Shogunate. Japan's feudal system with its shogun and regional warlords was replaced by a modern centralized government that granted equal rights to Japanese citizens.

Although the Japanese emperor had long been mainly a ceremonial figure, the samurai restored power to a new emperor named Meiji. Devotion to the god-like emperor became central to Japanese nationalism. The Meiji government sent officials to the West to learn about constitutional governments and new technologies. With help from Western advisers, Japan joined the Industrial Revolution, building railroads, factories, and a modern navy. For the first time, Japan was stronger than its big neighbor China.

136. **Crimean War**

In 1854 Britain and France went to war with Russia to stop Russia from gobbling up more territory in the weak Ottoman Empire. Although the war was fought on Russia's doorstep in the Crimea, the more distant Western powers won with better railways, weapons, and navies. The war was a rude awakening for the Russians. The tsar responded by freeing the serfs and giving them land and some education. He hoped these reforms would increase farm and factory production and generate income to help modernize Russia.

At the time of the Crimean War, more soldiers died from infection and disease than from bullets. Britain sent **Florence Nightingale** to the Crimea to improve conditions in military hospitals where she managed to reduce death rates from 45 to 5 percent. In the process, she invented modern nursing. This war also saw reporters use the telegraph for the first time to send home news reports from the front. And this war was the setting for Tennyson's famed poem about a soldier's duty, *The Charge of the Light Brigade*: "...Their's not to reason why, Their's but to do and die: Into the valley of Death rode the six hundred."

137. the Scramble for Africa

By the 1870s, the African slave trade was over, and Africans continued to rule Africa. Europeans controlled only a few port areas. The Ashanti kingdom, for example, was a prosperous trade center on the coast of West Africa, and the powerful Zulu king in southern Africa had an army of 40,000 warriors. But Africa was too tempting for the Europeans to resist. The king of Belgium told a friend, "I mean to miss no chance to get my share of this magnificent African cake." European powers met at a conference in Berlin in 1884 and divided the continent among themselves. The Africans were not invited to attend.

Then the imperialist powers set about the task of defeating African rulers. The Ashanti, Zulus, and others fought back, but in the end spears were no match for guns. In one battle a British force armed with repeating rifles, artillery, and machine guns lost only 48 soldiers while killing more than 10,000 African warriors. Still, conquering the Africans wasn't always easy, and sometimes it took years. In Ethiopia, the Italian army faced African soldiers armed with modern weapons, and Ethiopia kept its independence.

Seven European powers carved Africa into countries with boundaries that often bore little relationship to the cultural groups living there. Europeans took resources from Africa including rubber, gold, and diamonds and crops including cotton and peanuts. Some colonial governments were harsher than others, but everywhere European whites controlled African blacks. European domination stopped the natural development of Africa in its tracks, nearly destroying African culture in the process.

138. Mexico

After achieving independence from Spain in 1821, Mexico was briefly a monarchy and then a republic. Mexico's new constitution guaranteed basic rights to Mexican citizens, but it did little to end inequality in Mexican society. A small group of white, upper class **elites** continued to exercise political and economic control over millions of poor peasants and indigenous people. In 1846, the United States went to war with Mexico and took about half of Mexico's territory, a large region extending from Texas to California and north to Wyoming. In the last quarter of the century, Mexico's economy grew as the nation began to industrialize, but little of the new wealth reached Mexico's rural and urban poor.

Much of Latin America followed a similar pattern. After liberal revolts brought independence from Spain, a white upper class maintained control of society much as it had done under Spanish colonial rule. Conservative strongmen came to power to protect upper-class privilege. Liberals might propose reforms, and the poor might revolt, but little would change. In the late 1800s new wealth came to Latin America from increased trade and industrialization, but it was the elites who benefited. Most people continued to work the land as poor peasants. Latin America was a land of very few "haves" and many "have nots."

139. Spanish-American War

During the 1800s, the United States followed the European pattern of industrialism and imperialism. The U.S. expanded its territory to the Pacific by conquering Native American nations and Mexican armies. Then, in 1898, the U.S. extended its empire overseas. At this time, Cuba and Puerto Rico were the last Spanish colonies left in the Americas, and the U.S. was sympathetic to Cuban rebels fighting for independence. When the U.S. showed its concern by sending the battleship *Maine* to visit Cuba, the ship blew up in Havana harbor killing 266 American sailors. The U.S. immediately blamed Spain for the explosion—probably mistakenly. With newspaper headlines screaming, "Remember the *Maine*!" the U.S. declared war on Spain.

In a war lasting only four months, the modern American navy easily destroyed two older Spanish fleets. Theodore Roosevelt and his band of "Rough Riders" became heroes after newspapers reported their daring cavalry charge at San Juan Hill in Cuba. With its victory in this "splendid little war," the U.S. acquired Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines from Spain, and Spain lost its standing as a great power. In the same year, the U.S. took control of Hawaii. America was now a power in the Pacific. Five years later, Theodore Roosevelt was President of the United States, and he declared the U.S. would take control of any Latin American country that didn't run its government the way the U.S. wanted it to. This attitude toward Latin America created resentment against the United States that persists to this day.

140. Westernization

In the 1800s, nations of the non-Western world had to figure out how to deal with a harsh reality: the Western powers were industrialized, wealthy, powerful, and aggressive. Isolation wasn't effective as the Chinese and Japanese discovered. Fighting back didn't work either as Native Americans and Zulus learned. Many believed the only way to deal with the West was to become more like the West, in other words, to modernize and industrialize. We saw this occur in Russia, Japan, Latin America, and elsewhere.

Education was one route to Westernization. Bright young people from the colonies studied at European schools and often adopted Western ideas and values. But when non-Western nations tried to industrialize, they faced huge obstacles. Because the Western countries were first to industrialize, they already knew how to produce quality goods efficiently; they already had large urban work forces, and they already controlled world markets. It was difficult for late industrializers to break into the international economic system.

Unit 10 - 1900-1950: World at War

LOCATIONS: The Balkans, Hungary, Poland, Southeast Asia, Hawaii, Normandy, Scandinavia

141. the 20th Century

Perhaps the biggest change of the 20th century was change itself. In the year 1900, there were no airplanes, televisions, or computers. There were only 50 nations in the world, and only a handful were democracies. A century later, population had tripled. Humans were exploring outer space and surfing the Internet. Empires had dissolved, the world had 180 nations, and most claimed to be democracies. It's been said that more change occurred during the 20th century than in the previous 19 centuries combined.

At the beginning of the 20th century, Europe was at the height of its power, controlling most of the land surface of the earth. The French had built the Suez Canal in Egypt linking Europe to Asia, and Europe's powerful navies patrolled the oceans. Europeans believed in social Darwinism and the superiority of the "white race." They considered their society to be the greatest achievement of civilization and a model for all other peoples to follow. A major chapter in the story of the 20th century is how Europe destroyed its own dominance of the modern world. This gloomy tale begins with World War I.

142. World War I

At the dawn of the 20th century, Europe's competing nations were as quarrelsome as ever. Nationalism and imperialism increased tensions and conflict among the Great Powers of Europe as they competed for military power and colonial possessions. European countries strengthened their armies and navies and formed alliances so they would have friends in case of war. These **entangling alliances** meant that a quarrel between any two nations could drag more countries into the conflict. Europe was a powder keg waiting to explode.

The spark that ignited World War I came from the **Balkans**, a region of many cultures and ethnic groups north of Greece that included the nation of Serbia. In August 1914, a young Serbian nationalist, hoping to trigger an uprising of Serbs living in Austria, assassinated Archduke Francis Ferdinand, the heir to the throne of Austria-Hungary. Austria blamed Serbia for the attack and declared war on Serbia.

Serbia's friend Russia declared war on Austria, and the system of entangling alliances kicked in trapping Europe in an unstoppable chain of events. Six weeks after the assassination, much of Europe was at war. The alliance led by Russia, France, and Britain, was known as the **Allies**; the alliance of Austria-Hungary, Germany and the Turkish Ottoman Empire was called the **Central Powers**. With enemies on both sides, the Central Powers had to fight a war on two fronts. The fighting in Belgium and France was the Western Front; the war in Russia was the Eastern Front. Patriotic young men from both sides eagerly enlisted for the fight. They expected it to be all over by Christmas.

143. trench warfare

War had always been a battle of men. The Industrial Revolution turned war into a battle of machines. Five new technologies changed the nature of warfare: the airplane, the tank, the submarine, poison gas, and the machine gun. Of these, the machine gun was the most devastating. At the beginning of the war, generals familiar with an earlier style of combat hurled heroic cavalry and infantry charges against the enemy, but horses and human bodies offered little resistance to machine gun bullets.

As the first winter of the war approached, soldiers on the Western Front began digging hundreds of miles of muddy, rat-infested trenches where they tried to hide from machine guns and exploding artillery shells. Between the trenches lay a "**no man's land**" of barbed wire, shattered trees, shell craters, and rotting corpses. When ordered to attack, soldiers climbed out of their trenches, ran across no man's land toward the enemy trenches, and were mowed down like fields of wheat by machine gun, rifle, and artillery fire. In just one engagement, the Battle of the Somme in northern France, 1,100,000 soldiers died. Young men were being slaughtered by the hundreds of thousands, and neither side was gaining ground.

144. the Lusitania

President **Woodrow Wilson** tried to keep the United States out of the war, but it became increasingly difficult. In 1915, a German submarine sank the British passenger liner *Lusitania*, which was carrying weapons, as well as passengers, from the United States to England. Of the 1200 people killed in the attack, 128 were Americans, mostly women and children. The sinking turned American public opinion against Germany. Economic interests also pushed America toward war. American banks had made large loans to the Allies, and if the Allies lost the war, these loans might never be repaid. When it looked like the Allies might be defeated, President Wilson took the United States to war.

The United States declared war in 1917 "to make the world safe for democracy" in the words of President Wilson. With a million fresh American troops arriving in France, the Allies soon defeated the Central Powers. When the fighting stopped at 11:00 o'clock on the 11th day of the 11th month, soldiers from both sides came out of their trenches and cheered. November 11th is now observed as Veteran's Day in the U.S.

145. Treaty of Versailles

The **Great War**, as it was called, changed the political landscape of Europe. Gone were the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the long-decaying Turkish Ottoman Empire. Their lands were broken up into smaller nations. Russia lost its tsar, and Germany's Kaiser was replaced by a new German republic. The war nearly wiped-out an entire generation of young men in Europe. Almost 30 million people were killed or wounded during the Great War, and over a million civilians died as a result of the fighting.

The peace treaty ending the war between the Allies and Germany was signed at the palace of Versailles in June of 1919. Against the wishes of President Wilson, the treaty punished Germany for the war by taking away its overseas possessions and strictly limiting Germany's army and navy. Worse for the Germans, they were forced to make large payments, or **reparations**, to the Allies for war damages.

The treaty also established the **League of Nations**, an assembly of sixty countries that agreed to work together for world peace. The League was the idea of President Wilson who hoped the Great War would be "the war to end all wars." The United States Senate, however, refused to approve the treaty largely because many in America wanted no more foreign entanglements, an attitude called **isolationism**.

146. crisis of meaning

The huge numbers of both military and civilian casualties made World War I the first **total war**. When it was over, people had difficulty making sense of the war. What was the point when the results were weak economies, unemployment, and the destruction of a generation? Historian Pamela Radcliff calls this a "crisis of meaning." How could Europeans continue to consider themselves the smartest, most advanced culture in the world when Europe had nearly committed suicide? Colonial peoples wondered what gave Europeans the right to control others if they couldn't control themselves.

People began to see a link between technology and destruction; some questioned if modern technology was such a good thing after all. This crisis of meaning was reflected in Dada and surrealist art movements that attacked basic Western values that went back to the Enlightenment, ideas like progress and the value of human reason. **Sigmund Freud**, the father of psychology, probed the unconscious mind and found a "human instinct [for] aggression and self-destruction." Freud questioned which side of human nature would win out in the end: the beast-like, emotional, irrational side or the side of reason.

147. communism

The German philosopher **Karl Marx** invented modern socialism in the 1800s as a reaction to the working-class poverty of the Industrial Revolution. His slogan was, "Workers of the world unite!" Marx predicted that workers in the industrialized nations would one day rise up and overthrow capitalism.

In the early 1900s, Russia was not yet an industrial nation; most of its people were poor peasants working the land. Nonetheless, a group of Russian socialists led by Vladimir **Lenin** thought Russia was ready for a socialist revolution. Their chance came with World War I. The war didn't go well for Russia. The army was poorly led, poorly fed, and poorly equipped, and eventually it fell apart. When soldiers were ordered to shoot women textile workers rioting for food, the soldiers opened fire on their own officers instead. As rioting spread in Russia, Nicholas II was forced to step down as tsar in 1917.

Into this power vacuum stepped Lenin's well-organized political party, the **Bolsheviks**. Promising peace for soldiers, land for peasants, and better conditions for workers, the Bolsheviks took control of Russia in October 1917 and removed Russia from the war. The term "communism" has come to mean an extreme form of socialism that blends Marx's economic philosophy with Lenin's ideas about socialist revolution.

Struggling to hold the Bolshevik (or Russian) Revolution together, Lenin executed thousands of Russians suspected of opposing communism. Among those killed were the tsar and his family. The communists banned other political parties, took over banks and industries, and set up a secret police. The Russian Empire was renamed the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, or the **Soviet Union** for short.

148. social reform laws

Workers in the industrial nations did not rise up in revolution as Marx predicted; they found other ways to improve their circumstances. Finding strength in numbers, workers formed **labor unions** and called strikes that shut down factories until owners agreed to better pay and working conditions. When all men got the right to vote (universal male suffrage) by the early 1900s, politicians had to listen to ordinary people. Governments responded by passing social reform laws to improve the lives of workers.

Germany adopted laws that insured workers against accidents and sickness, limited working hours, and provided old-age benefits. British Parliament stopped the employment of children under age nine, and required them to attend free elementary schools. Britain was first to adopt a workweek of 5-1/2 days, giving workers more leisure time to attend theaters, play sports, and ride their newly invented bicycles.

Since the mid-1800s, women in Britain and America had been agitating for equal rights with men. In 1872, for example, suffragists led by **Susan B. Anthony** were arrested for illegally voting in a U.S. presidential election. By 1939 women in the U.S. and 31 other countries had won the right to vote.

149. **the Great Depression**

The situation for workers worsened again in the 1930s due to a worldwide economic downturn called the Great Depression. Several factors led to the Depression including damage done to European economies by World War I and the U.S. stock market crash of 1929. Businesses closed, farms stopped producing, and banks failed. People lost their jobs and their life savings, and they went hungry.

The Great Depression contributed to the post-war crisis of meaning. Millions of men had died in the trenches of a senseless war, and now it made no sense that millions of strong, healthy men couldn't find jobs to feed their families. The old capitalist system didn't seem to be working anymore; some thought it was about to collapse. Many people, Americans included, looked for a newer approach that would give workers a better break. Some looked to the Soviet Union where communism promised a more equal society. Others looked to Italy and Germany where strong, nationalistic leaders promised a better future.

150. **fascism**

In Italy, a powerful political leader emerged who pledged to end Italy's economic problems and restore Italy to greatness. He was Benito **Mussolini**, leader of the fascists, a political movement that opposed communism and democracy, but favored violence and war and promoted nationalism and obedience to the state. After taking power, Mussolini modernized Italian agriculture and improved the economy. To strengthen his control over Italy, he made himself dictator, took over the news media, and set up a secret police.

Germany too was looking for a strong leader to end its economic problems. Half of the country's labor force was out of work, and **inflation** got so bad at one point that it took bags of money to buy a loaf of bread. An inspiring public speaker named Adolf **Hitler** rose to the leadership of a fascist political party called the **Nazis**. Hitler told Germans they must reclaim their lost territories and build a new empire in Europe. His nationalist ideas took hold in a Germany that felt humiliated by the Treaty of Versailles. With crowds wildly cheering Hitler in huge parades and rallies, the Nazi party grew in popularity until it won enough votes in national elections to make Hitler the new German leader.

Hitler quickly moved to revive the Germany economy. In just five years, unemployment fell from six million to almost nothing, and the German standard of living rose. Encouraged by anti-communist businessmen, the German parliament voted to turn over absolute power to Hitler. Thus, Hitler used Germany's democracy to end Germany's democracy. Hitler used his absolute power to ban all political parties except the Nazis and to set up a secret police. His enemies were killed, tortured, or imprisoned.

151. **mass culture**

Before the industrial era, people usually experienced their culture alone or in small gatherings. They might read a book or play music with friends. This changed when the Industrial Revolution began to manufacture culture as well as goods. By the late 1800s, mass-produced newspapers were a major cultural force as thousands of people read the same stories at the same time. Mass culture swelled in the early 20th century as the public flocked to buy movie tickets, radios, and music recordings. Sports teams formed leagues that competed nationally. Such shared experiences helped to create mass national cultures.

Some critics were concerned that people were becoming spectators rather than participants by purchasing cultural experiences instead of making their own. Other critics warned that mass culture could be used to control the public by appealing to emotion rather than reason. This fear was realized in Nazi Germany where the state took control of radio stations and the film industry, and the government learned to skillfully use **propaganda** to manipulate the public through emotional appeals to nationalism and racism. (Propaganda is a systematic effort, usually by government, to spread ideas or beliefs.) In Nazi Germany, individual thought was overwhelmed by propaganda and mass public opinion.

152. **totalitarian government**

For the first time, mass culture made it possible to reach everyone with the same message and to rally entire nations behind a cause. Hitler and Mussolini rallied the masses of Germany and Italy behind fascist nationalism. The Soviet Union mobilized its masses to support "the worker's revolution."

After Lenin died in 1924, **Joseph Stalin** took control of the Soviet Union. He convinced Russians it was their duty to industrialize quickly. Stalin also confiscated peasants' farms and combined them into large state-run collective farms. In the process, some ten million peasants died or went to prison camps.

Although communists and fascists had different political philosophies, they used similar methods. Both systems were led by strong, god-like dictators who symbolized the state. Citizens were expected to sacrifice their individuality to the will of the state, and many people were happy to give up personal freedom for a sense of belonging to a great cause. Both systems eliminated dissent; anyone disagreeing with the government could expect a terrifying visit from the secret police. Because these societies took nearly total control over peoples' lives, they are termed "totalitarian." Unlike liberal democracies where the state is seen as the servant of the people, the people in totalitarian societies are seen as servants of the state. **Authoritarian** states are similar, but the term implies somewhat less control by government.

153. Spanish Civil War

The years between World War I and World War II were a difficult time for democracies all over Europe as they were challenged by socialism on the left and fascism on the right. Not only were republics overthrown in Italy and Germany, most of the democracies of eastern and central Europe also fell during this period. Shortly before the outbreak of World War II, fascists led by Francisco Franco tried to overthrow the elected republican government in Spain. Volunteers from many countries including the United States (the Abraham Lincoln Brigade) went to fight in Spain on the side of the Spanish Republic.

The fascists, however, were supported by Mussolini and Hitler. Hitler used the opportunity to test his modern German air force, the **Luftwaffe**, against human targets. A disturbing painting by **Pablo Picasso** portrays the bombing of defenseless civilians in the Spanish town of **Guernica** where 1600 residents were killed by German bombers during three hours of terror. The attack horrified the world, but it was only a preview of massive terror bombing raids against civilians to come during World War II. After three years of fighting, the fascists succeeded in defeating Spain's republican government. Spain remained under Franco's fascist rule until 1975 when Franco died, and democracy was reestablished in Spain.

154. the Nanking Massacre

Back in the mid-1800s, the U.S. Navy forced Japan to open its doors to foreign trade. Shortly thereafter, America was distracted by its Civil War, and the U.S. left Japan alone for several years. This gave the Meiji government time to figure out how to respond to the threat of Western power. Japan had a long tradition of borrowing from other cultures, especially China, so it is not surprising that Japan chose to borrow industrialism from the West. With an educated urban work force, Japan's industrial revolution proceeded rapidly. By the early 1900s, Japan had a modern industrial economy.

In 1905, Japan became the first Asian country to defeat a European power when it overcame Russia in the Russo-Japanese War. Victory gave Japan economic control in parts of Korea and the Manchuria region of China; Japan was now becoming an imperialist power, and the U.S. began to see Japan as a possible rival in the Pacific. Extreme nationalists came to power in Japan saying that foreign conquest was the only way Japan could get the resources it needed. Japan invaded Manchuria and Southeast Asia, claiming to be liberating Asia from Western imperialism. When Japanese armies took the Chinese capital of Nanking in 1937, they burned the city and massacred between 100,000 and 300,000 Chinese. In what came to be called "The Rape of Nanking," Japanese soldiers brutally raped some 20,000 Chinese women, then killed them or left them to die.

155. appeasement

Meanwhile in Europe, Hitler promised Germans he would destroy the Treaty of Versailles, and he began by rebuilding the German army in violation of the treaty. Britain and France complained but did nothing to stop him. In 1936, in violation of the treaty, Hitler sent troops into the Rhineland region on the German-French border. It was a risky move, but Hitler calculated that nobody would stop him, and he was right. Hitler then brought Germany and Austria together in a union also forbidden by the treaty.

England and France were following a policy of appeasement, which means they were giving in to Hitler's demands to avoid conflict and the possibility of another terrible war. As the world watched, Hitler's army grew stronger, and each success made Hitler bolder. Next, he took the German-speaking Sudetenland region in Czechoslovakia, and six months later he conquered the whole country.

In 1939, when Hitler's armies invaded Poland, France and England finally declared war on Germany, and World War II was underway in Europe. The alliance of France and England (later joined by Russia and the U.S.) was called the **Allies**. Germany, Italy (and later Japan) were the **Axis** powers. Many historians consider World War II to be a continuation of World War I because the two sides were similar in both wars, and German resentment of the Treaty of Versailles set the stage for the rise of Hitler.

156. blitzkrieg

To overcome the stalemate of trench warfare, Hitler's military planners developed a new battle tactic called blitzkrieg or "lightning war." Blitzkrieg meant attacking quickly with a strong force of concentrated troops supported by artillery, tanks, and air power. Hitler's powerful German military used the blitzkrieg to quickly overrun Poland and five more European countries. It took the Germans only seven weeks to circle around a French defensive barrier and conquer the strong nation of France.

With France defeated, Hitler ordered massive bombing attacks against targets in England in preparation for a planned invasion. German bombs pounded London for 57 straight nights. These were dark days for the British people; Prime Minister **Winston Churchill** told his country, "I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears, and sweat." British fighter pilots battled the Luftwaffe in the skies over England, aided by radar that could spot enemy planes approaching the English coast. The Luftwaffe destroyed large areas of British cities, but German aircraft losses became so great that Hitler had to abandon his plan to invade England. Churchill praised British airmen by saying, "Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few." In winning the **Battle of Britain**, the British dealt Hitler his first major defeat of the war.

157. World War II

The United States was still at peace. Although America was officially neutral in the war, the U.S. sent so much war material to the European Allies that war production helped pull America out of the Depression. In the Pacific, only one barrier stood in the way of complete Japanese control of Asia: the U.S. Navy's Pacific fleet based at **Pearl Harbor**, Hawaii. The United States insisted that Japan withdraw from the territories it conquered in China and Southeast Asia, and the U.S. imposed an **embargo** that stopped the shipment of key resources to Japan, a move the Japanese considered virtually an act of war.

On December 7, 1941, the quiet of a Sunday morning at Pearl Harbor was shattered when carrier-based Japanese warplanes launched a surprise attack on the U.S. fleet. In just 30 minutes, American naval power in the Pacific was crippled. Despite the successful attack, the Japanese commander warned, "I fear we have awakened a sleeping giant." The next day, President **Franklin Roosevelt** went before Congress and declared, "December 7th is a date which will live in infamy." The U.S. and Britain declared war on Japan. Germany and Italy declared war on the U.S. Now the war in Europe was linked to the war in the Pacific creating a truly global world war. America immediately switched to a war footing.

Factories began operating 24-hours a day, seven days a week. Chrysler stopped making cars and started making tanks. As American men were called away to fight, American women went to work in war plants making everything from socks to ships. U.S. war production soon equaled that of Japan, Italy, and Germany combined. The Pacific Fleet recovered sufficiently from the attack at Pearl Harbor to defeat the Japanese Navy in carrier sea battles in the Coral Sea and at Midway. These victories gave the United States naval supremacy in the Pacific for the remainder of the war. The giant was awake.

158. the Holocaust

Hitler's empire in Europe stretched from Scandinavia to North Africa, from the Atlantic Ocean to Russia. People in lands conquered by the Nazis were expected to serve the German "master race." "Inferior" people such as Russians and Gypsies were to be enslaved or eliminated. Many teachers and other educated people disappeared. But the Nazis reserved their harshest treatment for the Jews.

Hitler's plan for the Jews was called the "Final Solution," which meant complete extermination of the Jewish people. All over Europe Jews were arrested and sent to concentration camps where they were forced to work or were systematically executed. Hitler diverted so many resources from fighting the war to killing Jews that his mass murder operation eventually contributed to Germany's defeat. Of Europe's eight million Jews, the Nazis succeeded in killing six million, an event that came to be known as the Holocaust. When the world learned about the full extent of Hitler's homicidal madness, the word **genocide** was invented to describe the intentional and systematic destruction of an entire racial or cultural group.

159. Hitler's invasion of Russia

Hitler was about to make his biggest mistake of the war, the same mistake made by Napoleon over a century earlier. When Hitler couldn't conquer England, he invaded Russia, which brought the Soviet Union into the war on the side of the Allies. As the Russians retreated, they adopted the same scorched-earth policy used by the tsar's soldiers against Napoleon. The turning point in the Russian fighting, and in World War II, came in 1943 at the **Battle of Stalingrad**, where the Soviets captured an entire German army. The Soviets began to push the Germans back, and from then on Germany started losing the war. The Russians, however, paid a terrible price in World War II, suffering an incredible 23 million dead.

From airfields in England, British and American bombers pounded Germany, wiping out entire cities and killing hundreds of thousands of German civilians. In 1944, the Allies launched the massive **Normandy Invasion** of France, trapping the Nazis between Allied forces approaching from the west and Russian soldiers closing in from the east. With Russian troops only a few blocks from his underground bunker in Berlin, Adolf Hitler committed suicide in April 1945. Germany surrendered one week later.

160. Hiroshima

Fierce fighting continued in the Pacific. American troops fought and won savage battles against determined Japanese forces trying desperately to hold strategic islands. American bombers began to strike inside Japan, pulverizing Japanese cities. Japan was on the verge of collapse, but it refused to surrender.

Meanwhile, American scientists had perfected the atomic bomb. Hoping to avoid a costly invasion of the Japanese home islands, President **Harry Truman** ordered the atomic bomb used against Japan. The first bomb destroyed the city of Hiroshima where 200,000 people died. Three days later, a second bomb produced similar results in Nagasaki. The next day, Japan asked to end the war. Controversy still surrounds the use of atomic weapons against Japan. Critics say a demonstration of the awesome power of the bomb might have convinced Japan to surrender without using this terrible new weapon against people.

Again, the nature of warfare had changed. Genocide and massive aerial bombing raids had made civilians, not soldiers, the primary targets of war. Of the 50 million people killed in World War II, an estimated two-thirds were civilians. The atomic bomb meant that a future world war might kill everyone.

Unit 11 - 1950 to the present: Cold War and the Space Age

LOCATIONS: Eastern Europe, Berlin, Pakistan, Taiwan, Korea, Vietnam, Afghanistan

161. independence movements

Although the 20th century saw human nature at its worst, humans also made great strides during the century. Discoveries in the fields of health and medicine increased life expectancy, and the standard of living rose for people in much of the world. And, following World War II, colonialism came to an end.

Pre-war European imperialism was based on the racist belief that the white Western nations were superior to all other cultures, which gave Europeans the right to conquer and control other peoples. After the horrors of Hitler and the Nazis, this kind of racist thinking was no longer acceptable, and the Western powers let their colonies slip away. Some colonies had to fight for independence while others won their freedom peacefully. Fifteen years after World War II, most former European colonies had gained independence.

162. Gandhi

The wave of post-war independence movements began with India, where Indians had been struggling for independence from British rule for decades under the leadership of British-trained lawyer Mohandas Gandhi. Gandhi preached nonviolence; he and his followers were willing to accept pain in their fight for independence, but they were unwilling to inflict it. Adopting a tactic called **civil disobedience**, they disobeyed unfair British laws, endured police beatings, and went to prison. Gandhi shamed Britain by showing the world that Britain's democratic government was denying democracy to Indians.

Gandhi's independence movement gained widespread popular support shortly after World War I due to the **Amritsar massacre** when British troops opened fire on a peaceful gathering of unarmed Indians. The soldiers kept firing until they ran out of ammunition. Some 400 Indian men, women, and children died in the hail of gunfire, and 1200 were wounded. Following World War II, Britain finally granted India its independence, and India was divided into two nations: mostly Hindu India and mostly Muslim Pakistan.

India burst the dam of colonialism, unleashing a flood of independence movements that freed African and Asian nations in the 1950s and 60s. Gandhi's nonviolent approach was adopted by others including American civil rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr. and Aung San Suu Kyi in Myanmar. India established a democratic, capitalist system that granted Indians personal freedoms and improved the economy. India became the world's largest democracy, but economic growth did not reach the nation's poor. A huge gap remains between India's prosperous, educated upper classes and millions of poor, illiterate peasants who still live near starvation.

163. People's Republic of China

After China's last dynasty, the Qing dynasty, fell in 1911, China plunged into four decades of turmoil. Following World War II, two Chinese armies fought for control of China. The winners were the Chinese communists, led by **Mao Zedong**, who established the People's Republic of China in 1949. The losers fled to the island of **Taiwan** off the coast of China where they set up an anti-communist government that still exists.

Unlike India's independence movement, which was led by European-trained elites, the communist takeover in China was a peasant revolution. It became a model for peasant revolutions in other places like Vietnam and Cuba. Mao's government made some huge mistakes; an estimated 30 to 50 million Chinese died from starvation when the communists mismanaged the process of setting up large collective farms. But in the end, the communists improved China's agricultural and industrial production.

After Mao's death in 1976, China's leaders opened the economy to capitalist-style, free-market competition. Since then, China's economy has grown rapidly, but China remains an authoritarian state that restricts the rights of its people. Nonetheless, the communist government's promise of equality has resulted in better nutrition, education, and medical care than in India.

164. the Cold War

By fighting two terrible wars in the first half of the 20th Century, the great powers of Europe ended their own dominance of the modern world. At the end of the Second World War, two new "superpowers" emerged as the world's strongest nations: the capitalist United States and the communist Soviet Union.

The Soviets angered and frightened the West when they took control of eight Eastern European countries on the Soviet border with Europe. The Soviets wanted a protective barrier in case another Western nation invaded Russia as Hitler had done in the 20th Century and Napoleon had done in the 19th. The Soviet Union and its "satellites" came to be known as the Eastern bloc or the Soviet bloc.

The U. S. responded to the Soviet takeover of Eastern Europe with the **Marshall Plan**, a program that sent billions of dollars in American aid to Western Europe to rebuild economies crippled by war and to strengthen them against communism. This was the beginning of an intense 45-year struggle between the Western capitalist democracies and the totalitarian states of the communist Soviet bloc. It was called the Cold War because the conflict did not turn into a hot, shooting war between the superpowers.

165. **Berlin**

At the end of World War II, the Allies divided defeated Germany into two countries, capitalist West Germany and communist East Germany. Although the German capital of Berlin lay deep inside East Germany, it too was divided. West Berlin was a small island of capitalism surrounded by communist East Germany. In 1948, Soviet leader Joseph Stalin tried to force the Allies out of Berlin by blocking all roads and railways into the city. U.S. President Harry Truman faced a tough decision: should he send tanks to break through the blockade knowing this could trigger World War III, or should he abandon West Berlin?

Truman chose a third course, the **Berlin Airlift**. Within days, American and British cargo planes were landing in Berlin every few minutes around the clock supplying the needs of the city of two million people. Nearly a year went by before Stalin gave in and ended the blockade. Prompted by the Berlin blockade and fears of Eastern bloc military power, the United States and Western European countries formed a military alliance called the **North Atlantic Treaty Organization**, or **NATO**.

The Marshall Plan helped Western Europe return to economic prosperity by the 1950s; now West Germans could own refrigerators and even buy cars. Many Europeans were grateful to the U.S. for coming to their rescue in two world wars and for helping to rebuild their war-torn countries. In much of the world, America stood for liberty and generosity. Conditions were not as good under communism. In 1961, communist officials erected a wall dividing East from West Berlin to prevent East Germans from leaving for a better life in the West. The **Berlin Wall** became the most prominent symbol of the Cold War.

166. **containment**

Communists were now in control of the Soviet Union, China, and Eastern Europe. More people were living under communism than capitalism. The West was genuinely afraid of communist world domination and the downfall of capitalism and democracy. Western leaders feared that if another country fell to communism, more might topple like a row of dominoes: this was called the “domino theory.” The U.S. set out to do everything in its power to stop the further spread of communism, a policy called containment.

The containment policy got its first big test in 1950 when communist North Korea, backed by the Soviets, invaded South Korea, which was backed by the U.S. This was also the first big test for the **United Nations**, an assembly of world nations formed at the end of World War II to promote world peace and cooperation. With the Soviet Union absent during the vote, the United Nations approved a U.S. resolution to send troops (mostly American) to repel the North Korean invaders. Reluctantly, China was drawn into the war in support of North Korea. After three years of bloody combat, the **Korean War** ended with North and South Korea occupying much the same territory they held when it began.

167. **Vietnam War**

Before World War II, Vietnam was a French colony. During the war, Vietnamese communists fought Japanese invaders and rescued downed American flyers. After the war, the Vietnamese fought France for independence and won despite American support for France. Although the communists were fighting for freedom from foreign control, U.S. leaders saw Vietnam as a “domino” that must not be allowed to fall to communism. The U.S. set up an anti-communist government in south Vietnam and sent thousands of American military advisers to support it. When it looked like the American-backed government was about to fall in 1965, President Lyndon **Johnson** took the U.S. to war. Three years later, a half million American troops were in Vietnam, and U.S. warplanes were dropping more bombs than fell during World War II.

Although the two sides were in the same conflict, they were fighting different wars. The U.S. believed it was fighting the spread of international communism; the Vietnamese believed they were fighting for freedom from an imperialist power just as they had fought the Japanese and French. The U.S. found itself bogged down in a **guerrilla war** with no front lines and few large battles; the enemy would attack and disappear. As the fighting dragged on year after year, and the U.S. death toll mounted, American public opinion turned against the war. With no end in sight, the U.S. withdrew from Vietnam in 1973. A small, poor, rural country had defeated the most powerful nation in the world, and no more dominos fell.

168. **proxy wars**

Although the United States and the Soviet Union never fought each other directly, they supported opposing sides in armed conflicts around the world. Local wars like Korea and Vietnam turned into substitutes, or “proxies,” for the superpower death-struggle between communism and capitalism. The U.S. backed anti-communist forces everywhere, even dictatorships that overthrew democratically elected governments. Critics of U.S. policy accused America of betraying its democratic principles, but defenders of U.S. foreign policy argued that communism was so evil it had to be opposed by all means possible.

The Soviets had their own “Vietnam” experience in a proxy war in Afghanistan where Soviet troops were sent to fight anti-communist Muslim guerrillas supported by the U.S. The Muslim fighters, who included Osama bin Laden, won with help from shoulder-fired anti-aircraft missiles supplied by the United States. Again, guerrilla fighters from a small, poor country had defeated an invading superpower.

169. **nuclear arms race**

The United States was the only nation to possess atomic weapons at the end of World War II, but the Soviets soon developed their own atomic bomb. Cold War competition turned into a race to build the most deadly weapons of mass destruction. In 1952, the U.S. detonated the first hydrogen bomb with a thousand times the power of the bomb dropped on Hiroshima. A year later, the Soviets had the H-Bomb. Both countries developed long-range missiles that could fly across the Earth to deliver nuclear warheads on enemy cities. The superpowers placed nuclear missiles on submarines that could escape detection, lie in wait off the enemy's coast, and wipe out large cities in minutes. The U.S. and the Soviets developed the capacity to destroy each other many times over and to turn the Earth into a dead wasteland.

The U.S. placed some of its missiles in Turkey on the Soviet Union's border. The Soviets placed missiles in Cuba, only 90 miles from Florida. During the **Cuban Missile Crisis** of 1962, the super-powers narrowly avoided World War III when they agreed to remove their missiles from both Cuba and Turkey. Fear of a nuclear holocaust hung over the earth; finally, some weapons had become too terrible to use.

170. **Space Age**

The United States and the Soviet Union carried their Cold War rivalry into outer space, competing in a space race closely tied to the arms race; it was long-range missile technology that made space flight possible. The Space Age began in October of 1957 when the Soviets launched **Sputnik**, the first man-made satellite, into Earth orbit. America was caught off-guard and rushed to develop its own space program, which, after many failures, launched satellites into orbit. Then in 1961, the Soviets sent the first man into space. America followed with manned space missions. In 1969, the U.S. overtook Russia in the space race when American astronaut Neil Armstrong became the first human to set foot on the moon, an event that future historians may view as a major turning point in history.

Something unexpected happened when humans left the Earth, and we got our first good look at our home planet. It was a stunning sight! In contrast to all the dead, lifeless worlds visible in the heavens, Earth was a lovely blue sphere floating in space with white clouds swirling over pinkish continents. In all the dark, lonely, vastness of space, we could see only one water-covered world teeming with life. We realized how unusual and precious our planet is. This new view of Earth might represent the most profound shift in human perspective since the great voyages of discovery, and it came at a time when that beautiful blue sphere was being threatened with nuclear and environmental devastation by one of its own species.

171. **modern art**

After modern art began with Impressionism in the late 1800s, it took off in many directions. Most modern art doesn't look much like the real world, which can make it difficult for people to understand and appreciate. The two main categories of modern art are representational and abstract. Representational art portrays recognizable objects expressed through the artist's personal vision. Abstract art makes no attempt to portray the real world at all, reducing art to its fundamental elements of line, shape, color, and texture.

Reflecting its time in history, much modern art (and literature) has expressed anxiety resulting from two world wars, the threat of nuclear annihilation, and the loss of individuality in mass culture. Pablo Picasso used both representational and abstract styles to convey his horror at the bombing of civilians at Guernica during the Spanish Civil War. Picasso's broken and disturbing images suggest a chaotic world in which principles of morality and decency have been shattered, and civilization is reduced to rubble.

At the middle of the 20th Century, art moved toward the abstract, and art could be big and playful. Claus Oldenburg, for example, created huge vinyl hamburgers and a 45-foot steel clothespin. Christo hung a gigantic orange curtain between two Colorado mountains. Many scholars believe the foremost art form of our age is motion pictures, which combine visual images with elements of literature, music, and theater.

172. **collapse of the Soviet Union**

In 1985, a new and younger leader, Mikhail **Gorbachev**, came to power in the Soviet Union. He believed that progress in his huge nation depended on making fundamental changes to the Soviet system. Communism sounded great in theory, but it wasn't working very well in practice because people had little incentive to work hard or improve their products. Gorbachev called for a more open, democratic government and economic reforms that looked a lot like capitalism. He also signed treaties with the U.S. limiting nuclear weapons, and he surprised the world by giving up Soviet control over the satellite countries of Eastern Europe.

In a wave of rebellion, most countries of the Eastern bloc threw off their communist governments in 1989, and Germans happily smashed the Berlin Wall to pieces. Back in the Soviet Union, forces unleashed by Gorbachev's reforms were spinning out of his control: regions of the Soviet Union itself were breaking away and setting up independent republics. In 1991, the Soviet Union ceased to exist, replaced by 15 new capitalist nations, the largest of which is Russia. Life got worse for many, and several of the republics are still struggling to develop working democracies and healthy economies. The collapse of the Soviet Union meant the Cold War was over, and there was only one remaining superpower, the United States.

Unit 12 - Current Issues: A Changing World Order

LOCATIONS: Israel, Palestine, Egypt, Guatemala, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Sudan, Serbia

173. **new world order**

At the dawn of the 21st century, the Cold War was over; democracy and capitalism had won. There was no longer a balance of power in the world; America was alone at the top. President George Bush, Sr. said there was a “new world order,” and it looked promising. But all too soon, Cold War fears were replaced by new ones like terrorism and global warming.

Another new fear is starting to haunt Western nations: the possibility of losing their dominant position in the world that began with the age of European imperialism. Today when the West looks east, it sees a new reality. Where the West once saw colonies, it now sees nations like Japan, China, and India growing steadily stronger, perhaps strong enough to challenge the dominance of the West.

One major fear left over from the Cold War is the spread of nuclear weapons, termed “nuclear proliferation.” Nine countries are known to have, or believed to have, nuclear weapons. Although the United States has been unwilling to give up its large nuclear arsenal, the U.S. has told other nations, particularly North Korea and Iran, that they are not permitted to have nuclear weapons. The U.S. has not objected to nuclear weapons in the hands of its friends such as Israel, Britain, France, and India. The nine nuclear nations are Russia (which has the most), the U.S., Britain, France, China, India, Pakistan, Israel, and North Korea.

174. **China**

China is again a superpower as it was for centuries before the age of European imperialism. With the world’s largest population, labor force, and consumer markets, China’s economy has boomed since China opened its markets to capitalist-style competition in the 1980s. Meanwhile, China’s one-party communist government continues to deny Chinese citizens basic human rights such as freedom of the press and religion. China shows that a nation does not need a democratic government to have a successful capitalist economy.

Relations between the United States and the People’s Republic of China have always been difficult due to their differing political systems, friction over the future of Taiwan, and perhaps because China still resents being pushed around by Western powers during the age of imperialism. Nonetheless, the Chinese and American economies are closely linked. China sells billions of dollars in goods to the United States annually, while the U.S. government has accumulated billions of dollars in debt to China. American officials aren’t sure whether to consider China a friendly trading partner or a future threat as China’s economy and military grow, and the U.S. and China compete throughout the world for resources and influence.

175. **globalism**

The world is being drawn together as never before by international trade, communications, and mass media, a phenomenon termed globalism. Major industries now do business in what amounts to a single global trading market. The labor market has gone global too as Western companies try to save money and increase profits by **outsourcing** work to lower-paid foreign workers. Many people believe globalism is a good thing—that when countries trade and communicate with one another, they are less likely to go to war. In Europe, for example, nations that were bitter enemies during two world wars are now partners in the European Economic Union, which has adopted a common currency called the euro.

Other observers have concerns about globalism. Some say it has made rich people richer at the expense of ordinary workers, and others claim that the wealthy industrialized nations of the world are controlling the global economy, consuming the world’s resources, polluting the Earth, and leaving little behind for the poorer countries, a global case of the “haves” versus the “have-nots.”

176. **Africa**

Africa is the world’s poorest continent. Unstable governments have slowed Africa’s economic progress because foreign businesses have been reluctant to invest their money where conditions are not secure.

During the Scramble for Africa in the late 1800s, the great powers of Europe carved Africa into artificial new countries that included people of various ethnic groups. When these countries gained independence in the mid-1900s, they had not existed long enough for national feeling to overcome ethnic divisions. Africa’s newly independent nations had little or no experience in self-government, yet they had to contend with tough problems like ethnic conflict, poverty, and corruption. Most governments failed.

Ethnic violence remains a problem; it led to genocides in Rwanda and in western Sudan, and it can cause famine by disrupting farming and food distribution. If these troubles weren’t enough, Africa has the world’s worst epidemic of AIDS, which burdens African economies with high medical costs and the loss of workers. Still, there are positive signs in Africa. White rule ended in South Africa in 1994 when **Nelson Mandela** was elected President in free and open elections, and other authoritarian states have been replaced by more democratic governments. African countries are also making progress in fighting the plague of AIDS.

177. **Third World economic development**

The world's poorest countries are termed **developing nations** or the Third World. Most are in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, and most are former colonies. Many of these countries are still struggling to find economic models that will work for them. Three basic models have been tried.

Early capitalist economies such as those in Great Britain and the United States developed with little government control. Governments allowed the free market forces of Adam Smith's "invisible hand" to control economic development. In the Third World, India adopted this laissez faire capitalist model.

The Soviet Union and China did the opposite. Communist governments completely controlled their nations' economies. Government owned the factories, and government decided who would produce what products at what price. Such **command economies** did not prove successful over the long term.

Japan chose a middle ground. Authoritarian Japanese governments adopted capitalism, but they directed the economy by promoting some industries and discouraging others. After World War II, Japan rebuilt its shattered economy by developing industries like textiles that depended on large numbers of unskilled workers. As the skills and wages of Japanese workers grew, textile jobs moved to countries where labor costs were lower, and Japan went into heavy manufacturing, making products like motorcycles and cars. Next, Japan moved into high-tech industries such as electronics and computers. Japan's successful strategy became the development model for other Asian countries including South Korea, Taiwan, and later China.

178. **Latin America**

Western nations long dominated the economies of Latin American countries. Latin America followed the classic colonial pattern of exporting food and raw materials in exchange for manufactured goods. These arrangements benefited the white elites who controlled business and government in Latin America but made up less than two percent of the population. Poor, indigenous people received little. The lack of a sizable middle class might help to explain why Latin American economic progress lagged behind that of the U.S. and Canada. Since the late 1990s, however, Latin America has experienced its greatest period of political stability and economic growth since gaining independence in the early 1800s. And its middle class has been growing.

During the Cold War, when local political movements tried to improve conditions for Latin America's poor, the U.S. often labeled these moves as communist threats. In the early 1950s, Guatemala had a democratic government that took unused land from the giant American-owned United Fruit Company and gave the land to peasants. In response, the U.S. arranged the overthrow of Guatemala's government. In the unrest that followed, some 200,000 Guatemalans were killed, many of them poor Mayan Indians.

The United States went on to sponsor the overthrow of governments in several more Latin American countries and acquired a reputation for supporting wealthy elites and military dictators while opposing better living conditions for the poor. In recent years, anti-American leaders have come to power in several Latin American countries, promising to use their nations' resources to help the poor. One was President Hugo Chavez of Venezuela who complained, "The U.S. government sees itself as the owner of the world."

179. **ethnic cleansing**

Ethnic conflict has been around a long time, but in 1999 the world recognized a new type of ethnic violence when Serbia was accused of "ethnic cleansing" in the Serbian province of **Kosovo**. Christian Serbs were brutally forcing Muslims out of Serbia, killing many Muslims in the process.

At the urging of American President Bill Clinton, NATO approved U.S. air strikes against Serbian forces that stopped the ethnic cleansing in Kosovo. Did the U.S. have the right to interfere in the internal affairs of Serbia? Does the world have a moral responsibility to stop atrocities like genocide or ethnic cleansing? Who should decide when war will be waged to enforce morality? Should it be international organizations like the United Nations or NATO or individual countries like the U.S. or Russia?

180. **the Arab-Israeli conflict**

When the Ottoman Empire dissolved after World War I, Britain took control of much of the Middle East and encouraged Jews to immigrate to their ancient homeland in **Palestine**, an Arab region at the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea. After World War II, Britain left the region, and Jews seized over two-thirds of Palestine to form their new nation of **Israel**. Neighboring Arab countries did not accept Israel's right to these lands and tried to destroy the new Jewish state in a series of wars that stretched from the 1940s to the 1970s. Israel won the wars and took control of all of Palestine. Israel continues to extend Jewish settlements into Palestinian territory, dismaying those Palestinians who want to reach a permanent peace agreement with Israel.

Arab bitterness has also been directed at the U.S. for playing a key role in establishing the nation of Israel and for strongly supporting Israel since. America faces a difficult balancing act in the Middle East—trying to support democratic and Jewish Israel while staying friendly with authoritarian Arab governments that dislike Israel but support U.S. interests in other ways. Meanwhile, a history of Western imperialism and interventions in the Middle East contribute to Arab resentment against Western nations. Young men and women have been willing to kill and be killed in terrorist attacks aimed at Israel and the West.

181. **Iran**

In 1951, the government in Iran voted to take control of its oil industry from the British. In response, the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (spy agency) secretly organized the overthrow of Iran's democratically chosen leader and replaced him with a monarch, the shah. For 25 years, the shah supplied the U.S. with Iranian oil and a base of operations in the Middle East.

But the shah's harsh dictatorship angered many Iranians, and his efforts to Westernize Iran were seen as threats to Muslim culture. Popular uprisings ended in a revolution that overthrew the shah in 1979. The shah was replaced by a radical Muslim government that despised the U.S. for its long-time support of the shah. When the shah arrived in the U.S. for medical treatment, Iranians feared the U.S. might try to return the shah to power again. Demanding that the shah be turned over to Iran, a group of young Iranian revolutionaries stormed the U.S. embassy in Iran and took 52 Americans hostage for over a year.

The leader of neighboring Iraq, Saddam Hussein, took advantage of the hostage crisis to attack Iran. The U.S. supported Iraq's invasion of Iran, but when Hussein invaded neighboring Kuwait a decade later, the U.S. crushed Iraq in the **Persian Gulf War**. America still has a difficult relationship with Iran; the U.S. has accused Iran of making nuclear weapons, but Iran says it only wants to make peaceful nuclear power. In 2015, Iran agreed to limit its nuclear program in return for the lifting of international sanctions imposed on Iran that were crippling the country's economy.

182. **terrorism**

The Islamic revolution against the shah in Iran marked the emergence of a new political force, **Islamic fundamentalism**. Fundamentalists tend to believe that people should adopt basic religious values and that religion should influence government policies. Fundamentalists are often intolerant of other religions. Christian fundamentalism grew in the United States during the same period.

Muslim extremists used Islamic fundamentalism to justify violent acts including the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, that killed some 3,000 people at the World Trade Center in New York City and the Pentagon in Washington D.C. After the attacks, President George W. Bush declared a "war on terrorism," and launched an invasion of Afghanistan, home of **al Qaeda**, the terrorist organization behind the 9/11 attacks. Nearly 10 years later, the U.S. found and killed al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden.

While the U.S. war on terrorism was aimed largely at Muslim extremists, terrorism may take other forms as well. In 1995, homegrown American anti-government terrorists killed 168 people with a truck bomb at the federal building in Oklahoma City. The term terrorism usually refers to attacks against civilians not conducted by a government. When governments attack civilians, they usually call it war or maintaining order.

183. **Iraq**

In 2003, the United States invaded Iraq and overthrew the government of President Saddam Hussein. The Bush administration was following a new policy called **preemptive war**, which means the U.S. may attack a country that has done nothing to threaten or harm America if U.S. leaders feel the country might want to harm America in the future.

President Bush said Iraq had weapons of mass destruction that threatened the U.S., and he indicated that Hussein was involved in the 9/11 terrorist attacks. When it later became clear that that neither was true, the Bush administration said the war was still necessary to bring democracy to Iraq. Critics of the war said the U.S. was more interested in control of Middle Eastern oil supplies.

The United Nations, NATO, and most countries did not support the U.S. invasion. It damaged American relations with important allies like Germany and France, and it turned worldwide Muslim opinion against the United States. The war also triggered terrible ethnic violence in Iraq; it cost far more in American lives and money than expected, and it led to the rise of the so-called Islamic State or ISIS, which continues to sponsor terrorist attacks in Europe, the U.S., and elsewhere. As happened earlier in Vietnam, Latin America, and Iran, U.S. intervention in Iraq brought unintended consequences that harmed American interests.

184. **The Arab Spring**

The Middle East has undergone a century of war and conflict. In the spring of 2011, young people in the Arab world led the way in seeking a better future. First in the north African country of Tunisia, then in Egypt, young people took to the streets in peaceful protests aimed at replacing authoritarian rulers with governments that would give citizens greater freedom and economic opportunity. The protests grew until the leaders of both countries were forced to leave office. These "Arab Spring" protests spread to nearby countries including Libya and Syria where some rulers promised greater freedoms to their people, and some rulers killed protesters in the streets.

The Arab Spring left the political situation in the Middle East more unstable than before. Egypt is now under authoritarian military rule. ISIS militants gained footholds in Libya and Syria. Syria is in the midst of a brutal civil war that has sent countless refugees fleeing to Europe. Tunisia, where the Arab Spring began, still hopes to develop a more open and democratic society.

185. **biotechnology**

Biotechnology is a term for technologies that can change how plant or animal life functions. Advancements in science are taking biotech into new and unfamiliar territory that poses difficult ethical questions for the future of our species.

Genetic engineering is the field of biotechnology that deals with genes that determine our physical makeup—whether we are tall or short, have brown eyes or blue, and if we are susceptible to diseases such as Alzheimer's. One day it may be possible to develop gene-based treatments for nearly every disease, allowing people to live longer and healthier lives. But the same technology could make it possible to alter genes to achieve desired effects such as greater beauty, athletic ability, or intelligence. Will people be tempted to alter their children in this way, and would it be morally acceptable to do so? Would this amount to humans trying to play God? If such technologies are developed, would it be possible to prevent people from using them?

186. **capitalism**

Although capitalism looked like it had failed during the Great Depression, it survived, and most countries today have capitalist economic systems. To prevent another depression, governments tightened regulation of businesses, banks, and the stock market. Western governments also embraced the economic theories of **John Maynard Keynes**, who offered an updated version of capitalism.

Unlike Adam Smith, Keynes said government *should* interfere in the economy. Keynes believed government could stabilize the economy by raising or lowering taxes and government spending. Depressions could be avoided, he said, by increasing government spending, which would create more jobs and increase demand for goods, which would stimulate production. In 2008, the U.S. government used Keynesian methods to prevent a bad economic **recession** from turning into a depression. Keynes also advised governments to save for bad times when times are good—something the U.S. government has failed to do.

Keynes believed governments would be wise to ease the harshest aspects of capitalism by providing citizens with a “safety net” of programs like Social Security and Medicare to meet basic needs.

In today's global capitalist economy, money flows to countries where wages are lower, which has the effect of gradually leveling incomes across nations. Workers in China are making more money than in the past, while American workers are earning less. Meanwhile, within the U.S., the middle class is shrinking as the income gap grows wider between America's wealthiest citizens and everyone else.

187. **democracy**

Although most countries in the world claim to be democracies, true democracy is not easy to achieve or maintain. Democracy appears to work best in societies with traditions of open expression, which might help to explain why democracy has struggled in the republics of the former Soviet Union.

One of the greatest threats facing American democracy today is the huge sums of money needed to win election campaigns. Because politicians need to raise so much money, they are tempted to make decisions that favor big campaign contributors over the interests of ordinary American citizens. In the early days of America's democracy, Thomas Jefferson warned citizens to be vigilant about their government. He said, “The people are the ultimate guardians of their own liberty.” Jefferson believed the study of history could help give American citizens the knowledge they need to think for themselves and protect their democracy.

A democratic system is effective only if government is being watched by a free and active press and by citizens with a realistic understanding of the world. In America's democracy, citizens can have a big impact. It wasn't government that started the civil rights movement or stopped the Vietnam War. It was the people.

188. **the environment**

Our last issue may be the biggest. If humans destroy the earth's environment, nothing else matters. Our environment is a complex system of interactions between the atmosphere, weather, chemical compounds, and human activity. Humans appear to be altering this balance through overpopulation and pollution. Most scientists agree that human activity is contributing to **global warming**, which is changing the earth's climate, melting polar ice, raising ocean levels, and causing the extinction of many of earth's species.

Although the United States is one of the world's top two polluting nations, it has lagged behind other advanced industrial nation in efforts to curb the production of **greenhouse gasses**. These are pollutants such as carbon dioxide from cars and power plants that collect in the atmosphere where they can trap the sun's heat like the glass of a greenhouse. U.S. leaders have been concerned that limiting greenhouse gasses could hurt American businesses. Others say that America can help both the planet and the U.S. economy by developing new “green” technologies to reduce energy consumption and pollution.

What will historians write about America 50 years from now? Will they say the United States was unable to adjust to new realities and declined like other superpowers of the past? Or is America exceptional, and future historians will say the U.S. maintained its creativity and kept pace with a changing world? Stay tuned.