

## Welcome to TAG World Geography!

**Teacher:** Jed Eby  
**Classes:** 2nd, 5th, and 6th  
**Office Hours:** WC208: Tuesday-Friday from 7:35- 8:00 and Tuesday and Thursday 3:35-4:00 or by appointment  
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Welcome to Honors/TAG World Geography! We are looking forward to a productive and exciting year. Honors courses challenge and enrich college-bound students to expand their education beyond the typical program. Honors coursework develops advanced skills and content background to prepare students for college level work in Advanced Placement classes. Success in the Honors course requires student commitment to the expectations of the program. At Highland Park High School we are committed to providing the best possible education for each child, and our efforts are reflected in our students' success. The following information is a list of expectations and course requirements.

### INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS

Goals are based on the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). Below is the TEA website for parents and students.

#### [World Geography TEKS](#)

In addition, these are some areas that we will focus on this year:

- Increase knowledge of advanced geography skills, and better understand the relationship between people and the earth.
- Analyze, synthesize, and manipulate knowledge and skills related to geographic concepts.
- Organize and use information acquired from a variety of sources, including electronic technology.
- Increase content area vocabulary.
- Identify and evaluate different economic and political systems.
- Identify the contributions of many cultural groups.
- Identify social, cultural, and psychological factors that influence human behavior.
- Increase knowledge of personal, social, and civic responsibilities.
- Foster a love for life-long learning.
- Budget time effectively and efficiently.
- Develop successful study skills.
- Commit to a daily academic action plan.

### OVERVIEW

Our activities utilize a wide range of instructional strategies. Geography is no longer just a memorization of "states and capitals;" today's geography students focus on current world issues and develop problem-solving strategies. They explore our world by collecting, organizing, and analyzing data from a wide variety of traditional and electronic sources. Students make predictions, test their generalizations, and present their findings. Knowledge and skills are reinforced through a variety of oral and silent reading, hands-on activities, and research assignments. Students will work both individually and in a variety of groupings. Although there is not a ninth grade STAAR/EOC test for World Geography, these concepts are tested on both the tenth grade AP World History and the eleventh grade STAAR/EOC social studies tests, and students are accountable for this information in order to meet state graduation requirements. Additionally, students will take tests to monitor areas of strength and weakness.

### SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

Reading assignments are ongoing, and are completed outside of class time. Readings consist of traditional text, current events articles, primary resources, and excerpts from fiction. Students are expected to write in a variety of ways. Homework assignments are regularly assigned, and late work is penalized. Research assignments are interwoven throughout the curriculum. Students will be given ample time during class, but are required to finish long-term assignments if they do not use their class time efficiently. Projects count as test grades and must also be turned in on time.

Report cards are issued each nine weeks. Grades are a combination of daily class assignments, homework, quizzes, projects, and tests. Tutoring is offered (see your teachers schedule), and students are encouraged to attend.

***As students are being held accountable to an Honors standard, grades may not be as high as students are accustomed to earning.***

However, increased competence in problem solving and the exposure to higher levels of critical thinking, adds a layer of confidence and pride to the learning process. Parents have the opportunity to monitor their child's grades via Skyward.

Regular class attendance and having the necessary supplies, including an organized binder are keys to success. (Students and parents should use the binder to monitor assignments and progress.) However, the most important thing to bring to class is a positive attitude and an appreciation for learning. In order for each child to be successful, we must work

together. I encourage you to talk with your child about the class and what they are learning. Classroom discipline reflects the procedures of Highland Park High School. Students are accountable for their behavior, and all rules are enforced. Students have a complete listing of all policies in their student handbook. No student is permitted to interfere with the learning environment of the classroom.

Make-up work is the student's responsibility. Work should be picked up the day you return to school (if not before...use Google Classroom). Late work may be accepted until the **end of the unit** for partial credit.

#### **Grading:**

- 60% Major grades (tests, formal essays, projects, presentations)
  - o You need to be ready to take the test on the test day – testing days will be clearly communicated to students with ample time...make preparations accordingly.
- 40% Minor Grades quizzes/progress checks, homework, journals, daily work, participation.
- Be prepared for 10+ grades per nine weeks (2-3 major, 2-3 quiz, 7-9 daily)

#### **Testing Format:**

You will take two tests per grading period. Each test covers a specific unit, and most units consist of content and concepts within our area of focus, or region. For each assessment, you have two opportunities to test: once individually and once within a group. During the group test, you will be allowed the use of hand-written notes. Students will not be allowed the use of phones, smart watches, laptops, or tablets on either portion of the test. We will discuss this in more detail after the first test.

#### **If you are absent for a test:**

1. You need to make-up the test within a reasonable time.
2. If you miss the group re-teaching opportunity, we will either
  - a. try to group you with other students who were absent, or
  - b. give you the opportunity to take the test again (however, individually), but with the use of notes
3. if, after the individual and group tests, a student's grade is still below passing, that student will have an opportunity to retake for up to a 70.

#### **Test Reviews:**

**Students will not be given a written test review.** Instead, unit plans and a **unit overview** will be provided at the beginning of each unit. Students will also be given the opportunity to collaborate and review content taught during the previous weeks and create their own test review based on what was learned. Student generated work will be used for test preparation. Additional test preparation will be provided in the morning or afternoon prior to test day. Students are encouraged to keep up with class notes and class readings so that this collaboration time is utilized well. In addition, please familiarize yourself with MOODLE and Google Classroom – class related content, videos, and notes will be available to all students.

#### **Plagiarism:**

**Please read this statement carefully:**

**Plagiarism is defined as the use, without giving reasonable and appropriate credit to or acknowledging the author or source, of another person's original work, whether such work is made up of code, formulas, ideas, language, research, strategies, writing or other form(s).**

Source: Stanford University Office of Judicial Affairs

This includes any original work from the internet, published books or periodicals, and multimedia sources. This also includes any work done for you or with the inappropriate assistance of others. Plagiarism is an extremely serious offense and will result in a zero grade. **Make sure the work you turn in is your own.** We will spend time in class learning about research methods and source citation. I know Chat GPT is tempting...but let's figure out a way to not take that route.

#### **Tardies:**

According to the school's policy, 3 tardies = 1 unexcused absence.

#### **Absences and late work policy:**

- See the *Kiltie* for school policy on absences and make-up work.
- Work is considered late if it's turned in after I collect it.

**Required Text:** Boehm, Richard. (2015). *World Geography*. New York. McGraw Hill Education. (checking out a book is optional) **\*\*class set provided in classroom; online book and resources are available\*\***

## Student Expectations and requirements for our class- and I say ours because I want you to take ownership of this class.

I expect you to do your best, be on time, be respectful and learn how to succeed. I want this class to be yours so let's make it a safe environment for everyone. You should expect the same thing from me.

- HB1481 prohibits students from using cell phones and other personal communication devices during the school day on school property. This means that students cannot use devices like cell phones, tablets, smartwatches, wireless headphones etc., from the first bell to the last, including during lunch and passing periods. Turn off your devices and put them in your yonder pouches.
- You are only here for 50 minutes, please do not do work from other classes. **It will be taken away and probably torn up.**
- You may have a snack in class if needed, but make sure you do not leave anything behind. Also, we need to be aware of allergies.
- You may **ONLY** use a **reusable** bottle or cup with a lid. **NO WATER BOTTLES** (Nalgene, Tervis, HydroFlask, Yeti ect) Why? We will focus on conservation in this class and the reduction of waste and why it is important. In 2018, landfills received 27 million tons of plastic. This was 18.5 percent of all municipal solid waste found in landfills (source: EPA). One million plastic bottles are bought around the world every minute. As of 2021, more than half a trillion plastic bottles will be sold annually. At best, less than 1/3 of all plastic bottles will be recycled. So by using a reusable water bottle, you could prevent an average of 156 plastic bottles annually. There is no "away"- the trash goes somewhere!
- Bring your binder and something to write with **EVERY** day.
- Listen while others are talking and give them the attention that you would want. As a courtesy, please raise your hand to speak.
- **If your last name starts with an A-M please bring a box of tissue. N-Z please bring colored pencils. The tissue will come in handy when it gets colder and we will use the pencils in class. Thanks for helping with this.**

### FAQs

**Q.** Will you really take up my homework?

**A.** Yes

**Q:** What happens if I'm absent?

**A:** Make sure to get all your make-up work. Check with me or ask a classmate. You'll have the same number of days to make up the work as when you were absent. If you were absent for 2 days you have 2 days to make it up. The responsibility is on you to make it up.

**Q:** What should I do if I have 3 or 4 major tests on the same day?

**A:** This shouldn't happen this year due to the testing days. We will be testing on B days (with Science and LOTE) and you will know well in advance when your test is. If you know you have too much for one day please come and see me at least 4 days before our test. I will work with you.

**Q:** What if I'm absent the day of the test/quiz?

**A:** You can make up the test/quiz only if it's an **EXCUSED** absence. If not, it's a zero. If so:

- If the test is on Wednesday and you are absent on Tuesday, you still take the test on Wednesday.
- If the test is on Wednesday and you are absent on Wednesday, you'll take the test on Thursday.

**Q.** Is there a calendar posted with all the assignments and test dates?

**A.** There is a yearly overview in google classroom. Due to the ebb and flow of change in the world, we will also have some flexing and changing in our calendar. It is your responsibility to write down the daily agenda including upcoming homework assignments and test dates. You will always have adequate time to be prepared for a test or quiz. Google classroom is great because the due date is there for you.

**Q.** Can I use the bathroom during this class?

**A.** Yes, you can use it whenever you want as long as you don't abuse it. No need to ask, just give me a little head nod and go. Also, if you need a break from class, then take one. You won't hurt my feelings.

**Q.** Is this class going to be hard? How do I earn a good grade?

**A.** If you are taking this class because you heard it was easy, think about who told you. Was it a straight A TAG student? Was it someone that took all of the social studies electives they could? Was it the valedictorian? If so, take that with a grain of salt. Some of you *will* struggle.

As students are being held accountable to an honors standard, grades may not be as high as students are accustomed to earning. Regular class attendance and having the necessary supplies, including an *organized* binder are keys to success. (Students and parents should use the binder to monitor assignments and progress.) However, the most important thing to bring to class is a positive attitude and an appreciation for learning. In order for each student to be successful, we must work together.

**It is my hope that this class is a class that you will remember 20 years from now. Not because of me, but because of what we do here, what we learn here, what we discover here, and how you are treated here. I want this to be a class that is safe and inviting, a class where you are not afraid or ashamed to speak your mind. Let's start building that culture today.**

**Student/Parental unit Contract**

Please show the attached syllabus, containing important information regarding classroom procedures and expectations, to a parent or guardian. **You will acknowledge that you have both read this in a google form located in google classroom.**

**I have read and understand the course description and class management plan.**

_____	_____ (type name to the left as signature)
Date	Student Signature
_____	_____ (type name to the left as signature)
Date	Parent/Parental unit Signature