

PREFACE

A Stroll Through Humanity, an Examination of Self.

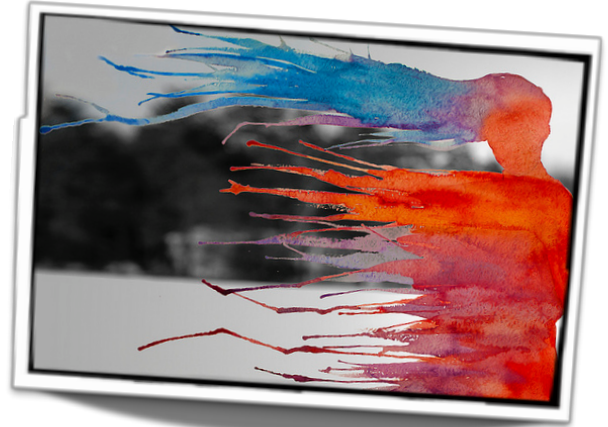
Introduction

What do you know about yourself? How would you describe “you”? Where would you begin? Would it be with your physical features and gender? Your personality? Your height? Hair? Eye color? Length of toe nails? The size of the mole on your elbow?

What would be next on the list? Would it be your place of birth? Your current place of residence? Or would you reach back to your genealogy, ethnicity and the location of your ancestry? What about what you eat? Or *how* you eat? The music you listen to or movies you watch? The clothes you wear or what you put on your feet? The way you get from one place to the next? The words you speak? The prayers you pray (or don’t pray)? Your aspirations for the future...?

The answers to these questions begin to explore what it means to be human. Many aspects of the human experience are the same: we are born, we live, and we die (sorry to spoil the ending). We generally have two arms, two hands, ten fingers, two legs, two feet, ten toes, two eyes, two ears, one mouth, one nose. We have similar needs: to eat, to sleep, to love & be loved, to have offspring, to work, to play, to be secure emotionally & physically. But, as one looks at *HOW* we live, there are a million variations. One man lives in a mansion complex, another lives in an animal skin hut. One woman will only drink water from purified source that has been bottled. Another woman will long for a drink of clean, unpolluted water... and never live to see her wish fulfilled. One child will ride to school in a minivan. Another will hope one day to have shoes, but will only dream of school....

In this way, a human being is like a gem with many facets. Gems can be gazed at from afar or studied under a microscope. They can be sorted into similar groupings, based on an array of different characteristics. Or they can be individually inspected. Gems can be placed in various streams of light and looked at through a variety of lenses to see radiant sparkles and shimmers of light no one had witnessed before. So too is the study of humanity, as is done in Modern Global Studies: it is a complex study of individuals and groups, similar patterns and stark differences. Each unit switches the lens through which humanity is viewed, bringing forth different characteristics and launching new discussions. All centralized on the single focus: *What does it mean to be human?*



A Transition Course

Modern Global Studies (MGS) is mirrored after the AP Human Geography curriculum and is designed to transition students from being honors students to being AP/College students. MGS gradually builds students up to college level requirements for reading, note taking, writing, thinking, testing, and time management.

MGS is built to teach the skills and impart the tools needed to grow to become successful at the higher levels of education. Many students have never been introduced to college level material nor have they been pushed to produce college quality academic work. Subsequently, this textbook has been written to be a tool that assists in this transition. Skill Builder sections address how the brain works, how to read non-fiction, take notes like a college student, and how to manage time wisely. The structure of each chapter encourages critical thinking, builds study skills, and improves writing quality. All these tools have been put in place to take you from where you are and move you to where you want to be... if you are willing to put forth the effort.

The textbook is designed to lay the conceptual foundation for the course by introducing key vocabulary, theories, and ideas, along with relevant case studies. The readings are broken up into sections throughout each unit and are paired with relevant videos, external data sources, maps, and infographics. Application exercises at intervals within the readings reinforce key concepts and require students to synthesize and apply the information (*NOTE: The pictures and maps are extremely important, and should be analyzed thoroughly*). This synthesis of information continually brings a Unit’s key ideas into the real world, applying the concepts to the most current available data. Each aspect of the course is vital to success and cannot be neglected.

COURSE OVERVIEW

Units and Topics

Each unit introduces topics by laying a foundation of vocabulary words, mental frameworks, and essential ideas. Each idea is then explored from three different scales: global, regional, and local which allows for an analysis and examination of a topic across the world in broad, sweeping trends. It will also allow the variations and complexities of a topic to appear as it gets applied individually and to small groupings of people.



UNIT 0: Skill Builders

Skill Builders: Pacing, Time Management, Scheduling, Lifestyle, Writing Non-Fiction, Learning Styles, How to Read & Take Notes
Unit 0 is an introduction to the skills required to take MGS. These skills are applicable to any class, but are introduced and reviewed to apply directly to the needs of this course.

UNIT 1: Spatial Reasoning

Skill Builders: Four Level Analysis, ESPN Analysis, Mental Maps
An examination of different ways to discuss people living across the “space” called earth. How people and objects are displayed/visualized across earth? How can they be organized and analyzed? How do people and objects move through across earth?

UNIT 2: Development & Gender

Skill Builders: Creating Presentations, [AP Skill] FRQ Writing, [AP Skill] Rostow & Development, [AP Skill] The Impact of Tourism
What does it mean to live “The Good Life?” How do places improve upon the quality of their current life? How do places around the world treat women? What impact do those decisions have upon a place’s quality of life?

Unit 3: Population & Migration

Skill Builders: [AP Skill] Pyramids and Change, [AP Skill] Migration
Learning to analyze the 7 Billion humans living on the planet. Where do they live? How did they get there? Why do they live there? Where are they moving to?

Unit 4: Culture, Language, & Religion

Skill Builders:
Unit 4 speaks to HOW people live where they live: Housing choices, music, word usage & dialect, clothing, transportation... There is also an examination of the religions of the world: core elements of the major faiths, where the faiths are practiced, and the impacts to those regions.

Unit 5: Political Geography

Skill Builders:
Organization of the world and its regions. Who “owns” which parts of the world? How do they claim ownership? What are the impacts of the different ways countries rule over their people and their territory?

Unit 6: Agriculture

Skill Builders:
Humans need food. Unit 6 examines how people around the world get the food that they eat, along with the impacts of the different options (economic impact, social impact, environmental impact...)

Unit 7: Industrialization & Service Economies

Skill Builders:
Humanity is now globally connected. Unit 7 looks at the processes of how objects and how people provide/receive services.

Unit 8: Urbanization

Skill Builders:
The most uniquely human entity on the planet is the city. Unit 8 explores these expressions of humanity, examining how people live together in close proximity. How are cities laid out? How do cities grow and shrink?

The Next Step

This course is best viewed as a journey. Every journey has a beginning and a destination. The beginning begins is here. It begins now. It begins with you.

Approach this journey with an open mind, being willing to look through different perspectives. The journey will have its awe-inspiring, mind blowing moments that alter your view of the world. The journey will have rough patches, where it will be a struggle to take the next step. Along the way be looking for the connections, seeking to identify the patterns, and constantly applying the information to new examples. Have the courage to approach what you don't know and do not be afraid to be wrong.

For true learning and growth happens when you find the end of yourself...
and take the next step.