

Option One: *Guns, Germs and Steel* Journal

You will be reading *Guns, Germs, and Steel* by Jared Diamond. This book is available in paperback at major bookstores and online, as well as at branches of the St. Cloud Public Library and SCSU library.

You **must** read the following chapters of the book:

Prologue: Yali's Question

1: Up to the Starting Line

2: A Natural Experiment of History

4: Farmer Power

6: To Farm or Not to Farm

9: Zebras, Unhappy Marriages, and the Anna Karenina Principle

10: Spacious Skies and Tilted Axes

11: Lethal Gift of Livestock

12: Blueprints and Borrowed Letters

13: Necessity's Mother

Choose one chapter from 15 -19 to read as well.

Epilogue: The Future of Human History as Science

Feel free to read additional chapters in the book, but you are not required to do summaries for those extra chapters.

Written Reflections

- Reflections must be typed, and neatly organized.

I. Pre-reading Assignment

- Before reading the book, record your answers to the following questions:

1. What is your definition of world history?
2. What interests you about studying world history? What does not?
3. Reflect on your study of the early world last year. What themes were most prominent?

II. Reading Assignment

- The concept of AP World History is to focus on the big ideas, concepts, themes, and trends of history. To get your mind thinking in this direction, as you read *Guns, Germs, and Steel* you will create a written and illustrated summary of the "Big Ideas" in your journal.

Format for Big Ideas

- For each assigned chapter, including the prologue and epilogue, summarize AND illustrate the big ideas. One page in the journal per chapter is sufficient. **Make sure the words are exclusively your own. Any evidence of plagiarism will result in a grade of ZERO for this project and removal from the course for academic dishonesty.**
- Focus on the big ideas and don't get bogged down in the science, unless you are interested in that aspect of it. One way to practice getting the main idea is to orally explain the main idea to someone after you have read the chapter. If you have made it easy for them to understand, then you have successfully identified the main idea.
- You can use your own artwork or a collage-type method for the visual representation of the chapter.

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III. Post-reading Assignment

After reading the book, answer the following questions in your journal.

1. What question is Jared Diamond trying to answer?
2. What is his thesis?
3. Is he successful in supporting his thesis? Why or why not? To what extent? Are particular chapters stronger than others? Are any chapters particularly problematic?
4. Do you agree with his theory? Why or why not?
5. What would be Diamond's definition of world history?
6. How has Diamond's book affected your thinking about world history?
7. Is *Guns, Germs, and Steel* the best title for this book? What title would you give to this book? Explain.
8. Would you recommend this book? To whom? Why or why not?
9. Share any other reactions, thoughts, or questions you have.