AP World History

Stay Focused on the Big Picture

**Instructions: print this page and bring to class on the first day.**

When reading the textbook and notes, stay focused on big picture concepts, including the following:

**Period 1: Technological and Environmental Transformations, to 600 BCE**

**1. Stay focused on the Big Picture!**

A. What are civilizations all about?

What makes a civilization a civilization in the first place?

Focus on the development of cities, formal institutions

(including political, economic, and religious), different social levels and

occupations, the use of technology, the arts, methods of communication, and

transportation.

B. How does change occur within a society?

When change occurs, what caused it?

Sometimes a society changed because it was exposed to a different way of

doing things when it interacted with another culture (cultural diffusion).

Other times a society changed because its members invented something new.

Always pay attention to WHY things changed in a particular society or

civilization.

C. How are people impacted by, and how do they impact, geography and climate?

Focus on the interaction between people and nature.

Geography and climate help to explain WHERE people live and build cities,

WHY people suddenly move from one place to another, and HOW they defend

themselves against attack. Also, HOW people used technology to impact their

surroundings.

**Instructions: Print this page and bring to class before discussing Period 2.**

**Period 2: Organization and Reorganization of Human Societies,**

**c. 600 BCE to 600 CE**

**When taking and studying these notes, keep the following in mind:**

**1. Stay focused on the Big Picture!**

**A.** Do cultural areas, as opposed to states or empires, better represent history?

Cultural areas are those that share a common culture, and don’t necessarily

respect geographical limitations.

States, like city-states and nation-states

(countries), and empires, have political boundaries, even if those boundaries

aren’t entirely agreed upon.

B. How does change occur within societies?

As you review all the information in this chapter, you’ll notice a lot of talk

about trading, migrations, and invasions.

Pay attention to why people move around so much in the first place and the

impact of these moves.

Furthermore, don’t forget that sometimes change occurs within a society

because of internal developments, not external

influences. Pay attention to that, too.

C. How similar were the economic and trading practices that developed across

cultures?

Pay attention to monetary systems, trade routes, and trade practices.

How did they link up?

D. How does the environment impact human decision making?

Pay attention to the way states respond to environmental changes.

Do they move or send out raiding parties?

Are they able to respond quickly and successfully to environmental changes?