

**SYLLABUSES  
FOR  
SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

**SYLLABUS  
FOR  
HISTORY  
(FORMS I—V)**

**ONE OF A SERIES OF SYLLABUSES  
RECOMMENDED BY THE  
CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
HONG KONG  
1983**

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## PREAMBLE

This syllabus is one of a series prepared for use in secondary schools by the Curriculum Development Committee, Hong Kong. The Curriculum Development Committee, together with its subject Committees, is widely representative of the local educational community, membership including heads of schools and practising teachers from government and non-government schools, university and college of education lecturers, officers of the Advisory Inspectorate and other educational institutions, such as the Hong Kong Examinations Authority and the Hong Kong Polytechnic.

## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The syllabus aims to build up in pupils a general awareness of mankind's cultural heritage as well as political and socio-economic evolution, so as to enable them to gain a clear understanding of the world in which they live. The scope of what has to be covered is intended to encourage pupils to see history in a broad, global perspective.

While an awareness of what happened in the past is an essential part of the study of history, it should not be seen as the only and ultimate aim of the study of the subject. Indeed, it is beyond the capacity of the human mind to master the vast amount of historical data currently available. In addition, such data are increasing and constantly being revised. The task of the teacher should more properly be focussed on the training of pupils, so that they can be selective in the acquisition of knowledge and can acquire such knowledge independently. Specifically, three skills need to be developed: identifying relationships between events in their time context, providing rational explanations for historical events on the basis of the evidence available, and thinking skeptically and empathetically. In other words, the pupils should be acquiring and practising in an elementary way the skills that a professional historian uses.



## TEACHING STRATEGIES AND TECHNIQUES

Effective teaching is measured, not by how well the teacher performs, but by how much the pupils learn. Good teaching depends as much on the methods used as on the learning needs and intellectual and emotional development of the pupils. The promotion of pupils' interest in the subject through organized activities such as visits to museums and art galleries, quizzes and model-making, for instance, would go a long way to producing the expected learning outcomes.

The following are some suggested strategies for history teaching which may help to realize the teaching objectives of enriching the pupil's knowledge and developing his intellectual skills:

### (1) Picture Study

Pictorial presentation is an important aid in history teaching, considering the stage that the pupils have reached in their intellectual development. This is true for the introduction of new topics, for illustration during instruction, for reinforcement of what has been learnt, as well as for the stimulation of further inquiry after the lesson. Films, filmstrips and slides should provide useful material for encouraging hypothesis formulation, imaginative reconstruction and critical evaluation. Workcards consisting of questions based on maps, photographs or cartoons can be used for group discussion or for individual learning.

### (2) Document Study

The strongest argument for using historical documents (speeches, eye-witness accounts, official reports, letters, etc.) in history teaching is their value in involving the pupils in the skills of analysis and interpretation. In addition, such documents are free of the interpretations of historians. Also, because these materials are more concrete and closer to individual experience, they are usually more appealing to the imagination, and help to bring an air of reality into the classroom.

### (3) Textbook Study

The value of history textbooks as a resource for learning is often overlooked. They are often either ignored altogether and replaced by the teacher's personal notes, or treated as if they are the 'Bible' containing all that the pupils have to learn. In fact, textbooks can be a very useful supplement to teaching, providing material for developing the skills of reference, comprehension, critical analysis, imagination and note-making. Since history textbooks are seldom organized according to any skill sequence as is possible in mathematics or physics textbooks, the teacher's role in guiding pupils to use them properly is particularly important.

### (4) Questioning

Questioning is one of the ways by which teachers present problems to their pupils and guide them towards solutions. In employing this method, teachers should not confine their questions to those requiring guesswork or factual recall, but should extend them to those that require interpretation, extrapolation or evaluation. It is important that the questions asked should be properly sequenced, preferably progressing from the easy to the more challenging. When pupils fail to answer a question correctly, the teacher should help them by falling back on a simpler support question.

### (5) Note-making

Pupils may be required to summarize the main points in a text, or select only those points that are relevant to a specific theme. Alternatively, they may be asked to compare the arguments in different texts, providing headings and sub-headings that will bring out the similarities or differences more clearly. Note-making will involve the pupils in the skills of selection, categorization, comparison, organization and presentation. Even if the notes composed by the pupils turn out to be different from the model which the teacher has in mind, the value of guided note-making in helping to deepen the pupils' understanding of the texts and in contributing to his general intellectual development should not be ignored.

### (6) Simulation

Pupils may be asked to re-enact an historical episode, or debate on an historical issue in terms of the roles of certain historical personalities. This method of teaching is most effective in developing historical understanding as it provides an opportunity for pupils to appreciate the thoughts and feelings of historical figures and to gain an insight into the uniqueness of historical events and the complexity of historical problems.

## TIME ALLOCATION

It is appreciated that the time allocation for any one subject must be considered in relation to the requirements of other subjects in the school curriculum. As far as History is concerned, it is recommended that at least two periods per week should be allocated to the teaching of the subject in Forms I to III. In Forms IV and V, a minimum of 4 periods per week is recommended.

## EVALUATION

Evaluation is an integral part of a curriculum. It should be broadly viewed as feedback in the education process rather than merely a means of determining marks and grades. Such feedback is essential in providing the necessary information for assessing the extent to which the curriculum objectives have been achieved, and whether the teaching strategies employed have produced the expected learning outcomes.

The process of evaluation should aim to measure not only intellectual skills but also attitudes. Oral questioning or written tests constructed in the form of multiple-choice, true-false and matching questions are useful means to measure the amount of knowledge and understanding that the pupil has acquired. The higher levels of intellectual skills (e.g. the ability to identify relationships between events and the ability to provide rational explanations for historical events on the basis of the evidence available) may be tested by essay questions and report or project assignments. With regard to the measuring of attitudes (e.g. critical reasoning and empathetic thinking), which is so often neglected but is no less important, a relatively informal method has to be employed, which would involve continuous assessment based on observation of the pupil's performance in activities such as debates, group discussions and simulation games.



## HISTORY IN JUNIOR SECONDARY FORMS (FORMS I-III)

### SYLLABUS CONTENT

#### Form I: Ancient Times

- (1) Archaeological and written records
- (2) Life in the Stone Age
- (3) Life in the main centres of early civilization
  - (a) the Fertile Crescent
  - (b) the Nile Valley
  - (c) the Indus Valley
  - (d) the Huang He Valley
- (4) Life in Ancient China
- (5) Life in Ancient Greece
- (6) Life in Ancient Rome
- (7) Life in India at the time of Asoka

#### Form II: The Medieval World and the Transition to Modern Times

- (1) The spread of Buddhism and its effects
- (2) The spread of Christianity and its effects
- (3) Life in a medieval village, monastery, castle, town
- (4) The spread of Islam and its effects
- (5) Contact and conflict between East and West
- (6) Renaissance and Reformation
- (7) Great voyages of discovery

#### Form III: Modern Times

- (1) Absolutism and Enlightenment
- (2) The Age of Revolution
- (3) Life in the Age of Machines
- (4) Asia and the coming of the West
- (5) International conflict and co-operation
- (6) Art, science and major intellectual trends in modern times

#### Form I:

### ANCIENT TIMES

#### (1) Archaeological and written records

Teachers could start this topic with a brief introduction of what history is about. Pupils should be given some concept of when the story of Man began. The concept of time could be introduced by means of a time-line showing the main epochs in history. An explanation of why we study history and of the relevance of history to present-day world could be attempted.

Teachers should then proceed to explain the differences between archaeological and written records and their respective values in enabling us to learn about the past. Reference could be made to the archaeological finds in Hong Kong such as those from Lamma Island, as well as to primitive forms of writing such as those on oracle bones and clay tablets.

#### (2) Life in the Stone Age

Teachers should first point out that the Stone Age is a pre-historic period, i.e. a period when no written record could be traced. The special features of life in the Old Stone Age, the Middle Stone Age and the New Stone Age should then be introduced, with emphasis on the differences existing between them. Important aspects such as the discovery and use of fire, the domestication of animals and the development of agriculture should be pointed out and their respective significance in the evolution of Man should be discussed. Examples of early men such as Java Man, Peking Man, Neanderthal Man and Cro-Magnon Man could be cited.

#### (3) Life in the main centres of early civilization

Teachers should first introduce to the pupils the four centres of early civilization, namely, the Fertile Crescent, the Nile Valley, the Indus Valley and the Huang He Valley. This could be followed by an explanation of why early civilizations began in river valleys. Favourable factors related to river valleys, such as the availability of water for irrigation and the ease in transportation, could be discussed.

For each of the four centres of early civilization, the discussion should focus on the main features of life and culture. Aspects such as writings (e.g. hieroglyphics), buildings (e.g. the pyramids) and religions (e.g. Hinduism) could be included for discussion.

#### (4) Life in Ancient China

The focus of this topic should be on China during the Spring and Autumn Period and the Period of the Warring States. Teachers are advised to

highlight the main features of feudalism in China at the time. These could include the system of land tenure, rites and ceremonies, social codes of behaviour, etc.

Teachers should then point out that the period was one of flourishing economic and intellectual activities and lead the pupils in a discussion of the factors contributing to such a phenomenon. A brief introduction of the ideas of Confucius and other philosophers of the time should also be given.

#### **(5) Life in Ancient Greece**

Teachers could first explain the term 'city-states' as applied to ancient Greece. Athens and Sparta could be cited as examples. With regard to life in ancient Greece, aspects such as religious beliefs, literature, economic activities and sports could be emphasized.

The ideas of Greek philosophers (e.g. Aristotle) and scientists (e.g. Archimedes) should be briefly introduced. The achievements of the Greeks in the fields of history, drama, medicine, etc., as well as the influence of Greek culture on the West, should also be discussed.

The wars with the Persians and the conquests of Alexander the Great could be dealt with in story form, and teachers should lead the pupils in a discussion of how Alexander's conquests made possible the spread of Greek culture.

#### **(6) Life in Ancient Rome**

Teachers could approach this topic with a brief introduction of the beginnings of Rome. The story of Romulus and Remus could be narrated to arouse pupils' interest.

The wars with the Carthaginians should be discussed in relation to the expansion of Roman power and influence. The life of Julius Caesar could be briefly introduced, with emphasis placed on his achievements as soldier and ruler.

The extent of the Roman Empire and the life of the Romans in the reign of Augustus Caesar should then be discussed. Aspects such as laws, religion, houses and buildings, costumes, sports and pastimes could be used to illustrate the main features of life at the time.

To round off this topic, teachers could lead the pupils in a discussion of the achievements of the Romans in such fields as laws and architecture as well as the influence of Roman culture on the West.

#### **(7) Life in India at the time of Asoka**

In approaching this topic, teachers could refer back to what the pupils have learned about the Indus Valley civilization. Aspects such as Hinduism and

the caste system could be recapitulated. Reference could also be made to Alexander the Great's conquests in India. The life of Asoka could be introduced in story form. Alternatively, a broad outline of the Mauryan Empire could be given, with focus on the rule of Asoka. Teachers could also discuss the main features of life of the people at the time of Asoka. The efforts of Asoka to improve the living conditions of his people and to promote Buddhism in his empire should be dealt with in some detail. A discussion of why, despite Asoka's efforts, Hinduism rather than Buddhism has remained the predominant religious belief in India could also be attempted.



## THE MEDIEVAL WORLD AND THE TRANSITION TO MODERN TIMES

### (1) The spread of Buddhism and its effects

The focus of discussion should be placed on the spread and effects rather than the teachings of Buddhism. A short introduction of the life of Gautama could provide a useful general background for the study of Buddhism. An understanding of only the very fundamental ideas of Buddhism, e.g. the rebirth of men and the attainment of holiness, would be expected of pupils at this level.

In connection with the spread of Buddhism, the contributions of persons such as Asoka, Hsüan Tsang and Kūkai should be discussed and assessed. Brief reference to Buddhist countries such as Sri Lanka, Thailand and Cambodia, and to Buddhist activities and practices in countries such as China and Japan could serve to illustrate the influence of Buddhism on society and culture in Asia.

### (2) The spread of Christianity and its effects

Teachers could start with an introductory overview of the early years of development of Christianity, with focus on the life of Jesus Christ, the persecution of Christians by the Roman Emperors, the conversion of Emperor Constantine, and the establishment of the Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church.

The meaning of 'Christendom' as applied to medieval Europe should then be explained. The story of Charlemagne in helping to spread the Christian faith would stimulate pupils' imagination and interest. Reference could be made to Charlemagne's battles with the Saxons, the baptism of barbarian tribes and the life of early Christians. Teachers should also discuss the extent to which life in medieval Europe was influenced by the Church.

The split of the Catholic world in the 16th century and the birth of Protestantism should be mentioned. The spread of Christianity to China in the 16th century could then be discussed. The work of Matteo Ricci and Robert Morrison could be quoted as examples of missionary activities in Asia. Teachers should also point out that Christian activities, both Catholic and Protestant, have had an important bearing on life in Hong Kong. The establishment of churches and missionary schools and the celebration of Christian festivals such as Christmas and Easter, could be cited as examples of the influence of Christianity on the local community.

### (3) Life in a medieval village, monastery, castle, town

The aim of this topic is to introduce the main features of life in the Middle Ages. Some basic ideas of feudalism should be introduced. Teachers could explain the social structure of feudal society, e.g. how people were divided into the landed aristocracy and commoners. Pupils should be made aware of the features of the Medieval Period such as emphasis on loyalty, the idea of chivalry and the special role of the Church in preserving learning and helping to maintain some form of order and unity after the fall of the Roman Empire.

Teachers could briefly describe the life of the peasant, the monk, the noble and the burgher, and show how their ways of life differed. The following aspects could be discussed:

*The peasant* – The teacher could point out that the majority of the population worked on land and were tied to their lords for service from generation to generation. A brief description of the obligations of the peasants should be given, e.g. they had to fight for their lords, pay dues or render labour services such as repairing roads and bridges; they grew crops for their lords as a kind of land tax, but were allowed to retain part of their farm products to support their family. The three-field system could be mentioned to show how the land was used at the time.

*The monk* – Teachers could point out the important part played by the Roman Catholic Church in preserving learning and education in the period known as the Dark Ages. Pupils should be made aware that monks were preachers as well as teachers and that their work ranged from copying the Bible to performing manual labour within the monastery. Teachers could also introduce to pupils some of the religious orders of the time such as the Franciscans, the Dominicans and the Augustinians.

*The noble* – In dealing with the life of the nobles, teachers should point out that nobility was hereditary and therefore determined by birth. The roles of the nobles as great land-owners and as lords in a feudal society could be discussed. The stories of knights and tournaments, which were characteristic features of the Medieval Period, could be narrated to stimulate pupils' interest.

*The burgher* – Teachers should point out that these town merchants were denied the privileges enjoyed by the nobles even though they might have accumulated great wealth. It might be useful to introduce to pupils the way in which trade was carried out in medieval times and how goods from different parts of Europe or from outside Europe were bought and sold. Pupils should be made aware that the town merchants were engaged in a variety of trades, such as wine-brewing, shoe-making, candle-making and carpentry, and that they were organized into guilds. A few medieval towns could be cited for illustration.

To round off this topic, teachers could mention some medieval pastimes (e.g. hunting, dancing, banqueting, horse-racing, tournaments) and show how these reflected life at the time.



#### **(4) The spread of Islam and its effects**

A brief introduction of the life of Mohammed in Mecca and later in Medina would help pupils to understand the origin and background of Islam. An explanation of such terms as Allah, the Hegira, the Koran and the Caliphs would be useful. The spread of Islam from the Middle East to India, North Africa and Europe could then be outlined and explained. Episodes such as the Battle of Tours (732 A.D.) could be narrated and pupils should be brought to understand how Spain became a stronghold of the Muslims until Ferdinand of Aragon expelled the Muslims from Europe in the 15th century.

With regard to the effects of the spread of Islam, teachers should first focus their discussion on how the expansion of the Ottoman Empire affected the political, economic and cultural developments of European countries such as Spain. Reference could be made to other Muslim countries such as Iran and Egypt in the Middle East and Pakistan and Indonesia in Asia to show the extent of Muslim influence on politics, society and culture in these countries.

#### **(5) Contact and conflict between East and West**

To begin with, an overview of the causes and a brief description of the Crusades could be given. Teachers are advised to focus on the primary aims of the Crusaders (e.g. to regain the Holy Places from the Muslims) and on the more fascinating Crusades such as those involving Richard the Lion Heart and Saladin.

Through the story of the Crusades, teachers should bring out the economic and social effects which trade and the exchange of ideas between the Crusaders and the Arabs had on Europe. In this connection, the role of Italian city-states (being at the crossroads between East and West) as trade and cultural centres should be discussed.

Another aspect of East-West contact which should be examined is the story of the Polos in China. Teachers could highlight Marco Polo's adventures and discuss the extent to which his book of travels provided an incentive for Europeans to come to the East.

#### **(6) Renaissance and Reformation**

The discussion of this topic could start with an explanation of the meaning of the term 'Renaissance'. Teachers should outline the conditions in Europe on the eve of the Renaissance and discuss the extent to which these conditions prepared the ground for a revival in learning. Aspects such as the decline in the influence of the Church and the increasing secularization of life in Europe could be emphasized.

The factors explaining why the Renaissance started in the Italian city-states should then be discussed. These could include aspects such as the

strong secular tradition in Italy, the great degree of autonomy enjoyed by the Italian city-states, the great number of scholars taking refuge in Italy at the fall of Constantinople in 1453 and the patronage these scholars received from Italian rulers. For illustration, some examples in such fields as art, science and literature could be cited.

In dealing with the Reformation, teachers should point out that the term refers to the religious upheavals of the 16th century. Pupils should be made aware of the forces which helped to bring about the Reformation. The religious struggles between Catholics and Protestants and their theological arguments should be mentioned only briefly. Teachers should focus their discussion on the respective roles played by Martin Luther, John Calvin and Henry VIII in the Reformation as well as the impact which the Reformation had on religion and government.

Reference should also be made to the Catholic Reformation carried out by the Church of Rome. In this connection, the work of the Jesuits could be discussed.

#### **(7) Great voyages of discovery**

In approaching this topic, teachers could point out that at the opening of the 15th century, the Europeans knew little about the world beyond Europe. The factors leading to the voyages of discovery could then be discussed. These should include the desire to find a sea route to the East for the lucrative spice trade, and advances in navigation techniques (e.g. the invention of the mariner's compass). The motives behind Prince Henry the Navigator's sponsoring of the early expeditions (e.g. the desire to expand Portuguese trade) should also be discussed.

The stories of explorers such as Bartholomew Diaz, Vasco da Gama, Christopher Columbus, Ferdinand Magellan and Francis Drake and their voyages could then be outlined to show the difficulties encountered and the achievements made. To round off this topic, teachers could lead the pupils in a discussion of the significance of these explorations and discoveries.



### Form III:

## MODERN TIMES

### (1) Absolutism and Enlightenment

It is hoped that through the study of this topic pupils will understand the major trends of political development in Europe in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries. Such understanding will provide insight into the age of revolution and the modern period.

Before any in-depth discussion of the topic, a brief explanation could be given of how the Holy Roman Empire gave way to nation-states. Reference could be made to the inadequacies of medieval institutions which contributed to the establishment of national governments.

Teachers could then point out that absolutism prevailed in the 17th century with the creation of nation-states, and explain the main characteristics of absolutist rule. France under Louis XIV and England under the Stuart Kings could be selected for illustration: aspects of the reign of Louis XIV such as his domestic policy, foreign wars and their effects could be discussed; the Stuart Kings could be examined in the context of the development of parliamentary government, with emphasis placed on the English Civil War, the Glorious Revolution and the Bill of Rights.

Teachers could then proceed to explain how the Enlightenment posed a challenge to absolutism and why enlightened despotism became a feature of governments in countries such as Prussia and Russia. The ideas of Enlightenment thinkers such as John Locke, Rousseau, Montesquieu and Voltaire could be briefly introduced. Pupils should be made to understand the new concepts of the time such as liberty, equality and natural human rights.

### (2) The Age of Revolution

This topic aims at giving pupils an understanding of the background to the American War of Independence and the French Revolution as well as their respective impact.

In introducing the American War of Independence, teachers should first outline England's economic and political policies towards the American colonies and then discuss how these policies led to grievances among the American colonists. The extent to which the colonists' aspirations for independence could be related to the ideas of the Enlightenment thinkers should also be discussed. The course of the independence war should be introduced only briefly. The discussion should be focussed on the internal and external problems facing the newly independent nation, and the extent to which these problems contributed to the framing of the Constitution of 1787.

With regard to the French Revolution, teachers should discuss the factors leading to its outbreak, such as social and political inequality, the ideas of 18th-century philosophers and the financial difficulties of the French government. The course of the French Revolution should be introduced briefly, with reference being made to incidents such as the Tennis Court Oath, the storming of the Bastille and the Declaration of the Rights of Man. The impact of the French Revolution could be discussed in terms of the Revolutionary Wars and the career of Napoleon Bonaparte. Teachers could also lead the pupils in a discussion of the extent to which the 1830 and 1848 revolutions could be related to the French Revolution.

### (3) Life in the Age of Machines

In this topic, pupils should be brought to see the Industrial Revolution as more than a change in the means of production from that by hand to that by machines. They should also be aware of the other changes associated with this revolution and understand their impact on life then as well as now.

Teachers could start this topic by giving a brief introduction of the ways in which people lived before the Industrial Revolution. The background to the Revolution should be explained briefly. New developments in commerce and agriculture should be briefly discussed and new advances in science and technology (e.g. the invention of the steam engine) should be mentioned. Teachers should also discuss how the factory system revolutionized the traditional means of production, as well as its impact on society and the economy as a whole.

Teachers could then proceed to discuss the effects of the Industrial Revolution such as the emergence of a new class of capital-industrialists and the working class. Teachers could also point out how the misery and squalor in city-slums and the poor working conditions in factories led to discontent, and how workers attempted to improve their lot either through legislative means or trade-unionist and socialist movements. Other aspects related to the Industrial Revolution which could be discussed include the growth of new towns, the increase in population, the improvement in transport and communication, the development of new farming techniques, the advances in science and medicine, the concept and practice of economic interdependence and division of labour, etc.

### (4) Asia and the coming of the West

This topic aims at introducing the historical background of Asia in the 19th and early 20th centuries up to the First World War. The focus should be on how the presence of the West in this period contributed to significant changes in China, Japan, the Indian subcontinent and Southeast Asia rather than on the internal history of each of these countries.



For China, teachers could begin with a brief introduction of the political, social and economic conditions of the country in the early 19th century. China's attitude towards foreigners and the Sino-foreign conflicts leading to the opening of China should be discussed. China's efforts at self-strengthening and the revolutionary movement during the late Qing period should be briefly outlined, and the extent to which these were related to the coming of the West should be discussed. A brief discussion of prominent figures such as Li Hongzhang, Liang Qichao and Sun Yixian would enable pupils to acquire a better understanding of the period under study.

For Japan, teachers could first give a brief introduction of the political, social and economic structure of Tokugawa Japan in the early 19th century. The coming of Perry, the reaction of Japan to foreign intrusion, the signing of treaties with foreign powers, the Meiji Reform, etc. are all relevant topics for discussion. A comparison of the conditions of Japan and China before and after the opening of the two countries should be attempted.

With regard to India, teachers could first outline briefly the activities of the British East India Company in the Indian sub-continent. A discussion of both the positive and negative aspects of British rule should then be attempted. Major events such as the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857 could be discussed in terms of their influence on Indian nationalism in the late 19th century. The social and economic changes brought about by British rule could also be briefly discussed.

The use of a map showing the geopolitics of Southeast Asian countries would help to give pupils an understanding of the activities of the West in the region during the early 19th century. The trading and colonizing activities of the Dutch in Java and Sumatra, the British in Singapore, Burma and Malaya, the French in Indo-China and the Americans in the Philippines should be discussed briefly. In each case, emphasis should be placed on social and economic rather than political development.

### **(5) International conflict and co-operation**

In view of the wide scope covered in this topic, it is suggested that the focus be placed on such major aspects of the 20th century as the two World Wars, the Cold War, the League of Nations and the United Nations.

In connection with the two World Wars, the events and crises leading to their outbreaks should be introduced only briefly. The discussion should be focussed on the political, social and economic background leading to these international conflicts. Teachers should also lead the pupils in a discussion of the extent to which the Second World War could be related to the First World War.

Teachers should briefly explain the rise of Communist Russia, as well as the distinctive features of communist ideology and system, so that the pupils could see the political and ideological aspects of the Cold War between

the capitalist and communist blocs. For illustration, teachers could briefly describe a few incidents of international conflicts (e.g. the Berlin Blockade, the Korean War, The Cuban Crisis and the Vietnam War). The effects and significance of these conflicts should then be discussed.

With regard to international co-operation, teachers could begin with a brief account of the two Hague Conferences. The respective aims and circumstances leading to the formation of the League of Nations and the United Nations, as well as their achievements and failures, should be discussed in some detail. The work and the extent of success of the United Nations in the fields of health, education, refugees, agriculture, etc. should also be discussed.

### **(6) Art, science and major intellectual trends in modern times**

It is hoped that through the study of this topic, pupils will acquire a better understanding of their environment and will appreciate the significant role played by scientists, artists and philosophers in shaping the modern world.

Since it is not possible to examine all the scientific and technological changes that have taken place, or to cover all the major intellectual trends and schools of thought, teachers are advised to select a few of the following sub-topics for illustration:

- medicine, hygiene and nutrition, demographic problems;
- transport and communication, energy crises, pollution problems;
- modern inventions and technological innovations (such as automation and the computer), space research;
- ideas such as Romanticism, Darwinism and Socialism;
- the major schools of painting in modern times;
- the development of classical and modern music.



## HISTORY IN SENIOR SECONDARY FORMS (FORMS IV–V)

### SYLLABUS CONTENT

The scope covers roughly the period 1760–1970. In view of the need to cater for a wide range of interests and of the fact that an average of 4 periods per week/cycle is allocated to the subject, schools may concentrate on either one of the following options but they may also extend the scope of study backward or forward to enable students to acquire a thorough understanding.

(A) 1760–1919 (roughly corresponding to Topics 1–11);

(B) 1815–1970 (roughly corresponding to Topics 4–14).

- (1) The Agrarian Revolution and Industrial Revolution
- (2) The American War of Independence and Constitution
- (3) The French Revolution and Napoleon Bonaparte
- (4) The Congress of Vienna and the Congress System
- (5) The rise of nation-states in Europe
- (6) The development of parliamentary government in Britain
- (7) The opening of China and Japan
- (8) China from the Self-strengthening Movement to the May Fourth Movement
- (9) The rise of Japan as a world power
- (10) The Russian Revolutions
- (11) The First World War
- (12) Developments in major countries during the inter-war period
- (13) The Second World War
- (14) The contemporary world: international conflict and co-operation

#### (1) The Agrarian Revolution and Industrial Revolution

Teachers could start this topic with a brief discussion of the background to what historians refer to as the Agrarian Revolution and the Industrial Revolution, focussing on the social and economic developments in Europe which encouraged scientific and technological innovations in the field of agriculture and industries during the second half of the 18th century. Developments such as increase in population, the abolition of old privileges and monopolies, the accumulation of capital and the demand for raw material and new markets should be included in the discussion.

The technological, economic and social implications of the two Revolutions should then be examined. With regard to the Agrarian Revolution, reference could be made to new trends in agriculture, e.g. new techniques of production and the emergence of large landholdings resulting from the Enclosure Movement. The changes associated with the Industrial Revolution

should include the transformation of the means of production made possible by the invention of new machinery and the growth of the factory system.

Teachers could then discuss the major trends of industrial development and explain how and why the pace of industrial revolution varied with different countries. In particular, the advantages England enjoyed over the other European countries, which enabled her to take the lead, should be examined.

Teachers should then proceed to discuss the social, economic and political impact of these two Revolutions. This should include a discussion of urbanization, the release of rural work force into cities, the change in the political and social function of the traditional aristocracy and landlord class, the changes in living and working conditions, the growth of the middle class and the emergence of the working class, the demand of these two classes for representation in government and the growing role of the state in economic development. The extent to which the Industrial Revolution gave rise to new ideas (e.g. liberalism, socialism and free trade) and was related to overseas expansion, should also be assessed.

#### (2) The American War of Independence and Constitution

In tackling this topic, teachers should first give a brief introduction of the Enlightenment, focussing on its influence upon the American War of Independence. Aspects such as the conditions of the English colonists and England's attitudes and policies towards the thirteen colonies should also be briefly examined.

With regard to the course of the war, a brief outline would be sufficient. The reasons for the French support of the thirteen colonies and for America's success in gaining independence should also be analysed.

Teachers should then proceed to discuss the problems faced by the American government after the Independence War, the need for a new constitution, the process by which the Federal Constitution came into being as well as its basic principles and features. A comparison of the characteristics of the American Federal Constitution with those of the English constitution could be attempted.

Brief studies could be made of prominent figures such as Washington and Jefferson, with emphasis placed on their roles in the independence movement.

Teachers could also briefly discuss the relationship between the American War of Independence and revolutionary movements in the 18th and 19th centuries.

#### (3) The French Revolution and Napoleon Bonaparte

As regards the background to the French Revolution, teachers could start with a discussion of the influence of Enlightenment thinkers such as Voltaire, Montesquieu and Rousseau. The political and economic problems



confronting the Bourbon monarchy, e.g. the social cleavages between the estates, the poor financial position of the government, etc. should be discussed. The effects of the American War of Independence on the French Revolution could also be assessed.

Teachers should then guide their pupils in examining the significance of major events such as the Tennis Court Oath, the fall of the Bastille and the Declaration of the Rights of Man. A brief mention of the Reign of Terror and the rule of the Directory could help to give pupils a better understanding of the various stages of the Revolution. Brief reference could be made to prominent figures such as Mirabeau and Robespierre. To give pupils a clearer picture of the European scene at the time, aspects such as the reactions of the Powers to the French Revolution, the formation of the Coalitions against France and the changes in the international situation, should be discussed.

In assessing the achievements of the Revolution, teachers could discuss aspects such as the collapse of autocratic rule, the abolition of the privileges of the nobility, the spread of liberal and egalitarian ideas, and the strengthening of national consciousness. Important outcomes of the Revolution such as the promotion of education, the liberalization of religious belief and the establishment of uniform institutions, should also be briefly introduced.

With regard to the Napoleonic Era, teachers should first discuss the factors leading to Napoleon Bonaparte's rise to power. His achievements in the fields of education and law and in the settlement of state-church disputes should then be examined. As regards military and foreign affairs, significant developments and events such as the Continental System, the Moscow Campaign and the Battle of Waterloo should be briefly discussed.

To round off the discussion of the topic, teachers could selectively assess the impact of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Era upon France and other European countries.

#### **(4) The Congress of Vienna and the Congress System**

Teachers could start the topic with the legacy of the French Revolution and the effect of Napoleon's rule in Europe. This would introduce to pupils the size and complexity of the problems facing the statesmen at Vienna.

Teachers could then point out the aims and conflicting interests of different countries and the guiding principles adopted. The clashes and compromises of the powers in issues such as those over Saxony and Poland could be used to illustrate the difficulty facing the statesmen and the diplomatic skills required to reach a solution. An assessment of the settlement of Vienna should be attempted.

Teachers could then bring up for discussion how the deliberations of the statesmen at the Congress of Vienna gave rise to what is later known as the Congress System. The immediate circumstances leading to the calling of

each particular congress, the conflicts and divergent viewpoints among the participating countries and their representatives and the suggested solutions to the problems could be examined. The reasons for the breakdown of the Congress System should also be analysed. Teachers could round off the discussion of the topic by exploring its significance as an attempt to promote co-operation among European countries.

#### **(5) The rise of nation-states in Europe**

The study of this topic should focus on the period 1815–1914. Teachers could briefly explain how the political map of Europe came to be what it was in 1815 and show how the territorial settlements gave rise to the discontent of some of the states. This could be followed by a discussion of the spread of liberal and nationalist ideas in Europe after the Congress of Vienna.

The Belgian War of Independence could be discussed to show how the Kingdom of the Netherlands set up by the Congress of Vienna created discontents among the Belgians, who consequently rose against the Dutch and gained their independence with the help of the powers. The teacher could then explain how Italy and Germany came to be united. The unrest and uprisings of 1830 and 1848 could first be discussed. The contributions of important figures such as Mazzini, Garibaldi, Cavour and Bismarck and the role of foreign powers (e.g. France) and other factors such as the Zollverein in Germany and the Carbonari in Italy should be examined. The effects of the two unifications on the balance of power in Europe could also be analysed.

The course of development towards independence of the Balkan states (e.g. Greece, Serbia and Bulgaria) and the roles of the foreign powers involved (e.g. England, Austria and Russia) should be briefly outlined so that pupils become aware of the forces (e.g. nationalism and liberalism) working towards the dismantling of the Ottoman Empire as well as the complexity of international politics in the so called 'Eastern Question'.

#### **(6) The development of parliamentary government in Britain**

Teachers are advised to introduce to pupils the political, social and economic conditions and problems in Britain at the turn of the 19th century. Emphasis should be placed on the failure of the political system to meet the needs of an age that had entered on agrarian and industrial revolutions, the shifting of population to industrial towns, widespread unemployment and general economic dislocation. The extent to which the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars brought about or aggravated these conditions should also be explored.

Teachers should then outline the stages by which the franchise was gradually extended through the Reform Acts, with a view to helping pupils to understand their political, social and economic significance.



Reference should be made to constitutional development in other countries such as France, Germany and the United States of America in order that pupils could acquire a wider perspective of the development of representative government in the same period.

### **(7) The opening of China and Japan**

In approaching this topic, teachers should first introduce the background to the coming of the Westerners to East Asia. An analysis of the motivation of the foreigners who came, especially the traders and missionaries, should be attempted.

The attitude of the Chinese towards Westerners should then be briefly discussed. Pupils should understand how the difference in conception between China and the West concerning diplomacy, jurisdiction and trade contributed to Sino-western conflict and ultimately to China's opening. The relationship between the First Anglo-Chinese War and aspects such as the Cohong system, British efforts to negotiate trading terms and the ending of the monopoly of the East India Company, should therefore be discussed. Teachers should analyse how China was opened to foreign trade after the First Anglo-Chinese War, and the overall effect which the war had on her. The renewal of conflict between China and Britain, which resulted in the Second Anglo-Chinese War, as well as the significance of the treaties signed, should also be examined.

In discussing the opening of Japan, teachers should first introduce Japan's political, social and economic conditions during the late Tokugawa period, the seclusion policy and her early contacts with foreigners. Pupils should be made to understand the reasons for the coming of Commodore Perry as well as Japan's reaction. The significance of the Treaty of Kanagawa (1854) and the Treaty of Edo (1858), in particular the extent to which they led to the downfall of the Tokugawa, should be examined.

Teachers could round off the discussion of this topic with a comparison of the response of China and Japan to the coming of the West.

### **(8) China from the Self-strengthening Movement to the May Fourth Movement**

Teachers could tackle this topic with an introduction of the background to China's desire for self-strengthening. This would involve a discussion of the internal conditions and external problems of China in the mid-19th century. Teachers could then discuss the various reform movements, namely, the self-strengthening Movement, the Hundred Days' Reform and the Late Qing Reform in terms of their objectives, main features and impact on China. The roles of prominent figures such as Li Hongzhang, Kang Youwei and Cixi could be discussed. An analysis of the factors leading to the 1911 Revolution and of its historical significance should then be attempted. The May

Fourth Movement could be discussed in relation to the New Cultural Movement and China's political conditions and foreign relations in the early Republican period. Teachers should highlight the main features of the May Fourth Movement and briefly explain its significance in modern Chinese history. With regard to China's foreign relations during the period, a brief outline should be given, with emphasis placed on how the interaction of China's internal conditions and foreigners' activities in China was related to her changing attitudes towards foreigners and Western culture.

### **(9) The rise of Japan as a world power**

Teachers could approach this topic with a discussion of the significance of the Meiji Restoration, emphasizing the restoration of political power to the emperor and the subsequent modernization programmes. An analysis of the constitutional, economic, social and military changes should be attempted to show the extent to which these changes laid the basis for Japan's rise to world power status.

With regard to how Japan emerged as a world power, teachers should examine the major wars, alliances and conferences in which she was involved, namely, the First Sino-Japanese War, the Anglo-Japanese Alliances, the Russo-Japanese War, the First World War, the Paris Peace Conference and the Washington Conference. In each case, the discussion should focus on the internal and external forces at work and the ways in which Japan succeeded in gaining territories and military and economic strength as well as enhancing her prestige and international status.

### **(10) The Russian Revolutions**

As an introduction to this topic, teachers could point out the main features of the Czarist regime such as the autocratic nature of Czarism and the agrarian nature of the economy. The extent to which the repressive measures and the industrialization of the country in the reigns of Alexander III and Nicholas II undermined the basis of Czarist rule, should then be discussed. The aims of the leading revolutionary parties (such as the Social Democratic Labour Party and the Social Revolutionary Party) and the intellectual background of the revolutionary movement should be introduced.

With regard to the 1905 Revolution, teachers should discuss the effects of the defeat of Russia in the war with Japan. The events leading to the 1905 Revolution could be examined and the role of Nicholas II in the Revolution could be assessed. The effects of Nicholas II's concessions (e.g. the proclamation of the October Manifesto and the calling of the Dumas) should also be examined.

In connection with the 1917 Revolution, the effects of Russia's defeat in the First World War and of the influence of the Czarina and Rasputin should be discussed. The events leading to the outbreak of the February Revolution



could be examined with a view to exploring whether Russia was ready for revolution by 1917. Teachers should then explain why a second revolution broke out in October, 1917 and analyse the reasons for the Bolshevik success. To round off this topic, teachers could discuss the historical significance of the Russian Revolution, e.g. the spread of communism and its effects on international relations.

### **(11) The First World War**

As introduction, teachers could give an overall perspective of the social, economic and political conditions as well as the major intellectual trends in Europe at the turn of the 20th century.

Pupils should be guided to an understanding of how Europe became gradually divided into two armed camps. In this connection, the hostility between France and Germany, the formation of the alliances, the armament race and the scramble for colonies among the powers should be discussed. Reference should also be made to the situation in the Balkans, in which connection aspects such as the decline of the Ottoman Empire, the rise of Balkan nationalism and the conflicting interests between Austria-Hungary and Russia should be discussed.

The immediate events leading to the outbreak of war in 1914, in particular the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand at Sarajevo, should be briefly examined. Teachers could explain how what might have been a localized war between Austria-Hungary and Serbia later developed into a general war. The factors leading the United States to enter the war in 1917 should also be analysed.

With regard to the Paris Peace Conference, the divergent aims and interests of the Big Three as represented by Lloyd George, Clemenceau and Wilson should be analysed, and the extent to which these were related to the final form that the peace treaties took should be discussed.

Teachers could round off the discussion of the topic by examining the political, economic, social and cultural consequences of the War.

### **(12) Developments in major countries during the inter-war period**

Teachers could introduce this topic with a brief description of the international scene by 1919. Emphasis should be placed on the problems confronting both the victors and the defeated in the post-World War One period. This would help pupils to understand the rise of totalitarianism in some of these countries. Teachers could then briefly discuss the main features of totalitarian rule. A comparison of major developments in countries such as Germany, Italy, Britain, France, Russia and the United States should be attempted. Teachers should accordingly highlight aspects such as the rise of Hitler and Mussolini in Germany and Italy respectively, the economic policies of Lenin and Stalin in the U.S.S.R. and the Great Depression in the United States.

In Asia, developments in China and Japan should be discussed. Emphasis could be placed on aspects such as the Northern Expedition and KMT-CCP relations in China and the effect of the rise of Japanese militarism on Japan's overseas expansion.

### **(13) The Second World War**

In tackling this topic, teachers could first examine how and why the attempts at collective security failed in the 1930's. This would include a discussion of the following: the League of Nations, the Locarno Treaties, the Kellogg-Briand Pact and the disarmament conferences. The series of expansionist activities leading up to the Second World War should then be briefly discussed. This would include the activities of Japan, Germany and Italy in Asia, Europe, and Africa respectively. Teachers should also explain how Britain, France, the Soviet Union and the United States reacted to these developments.

Regarding the course of the Second World War, a brief outline should be given. This would include major battles in Europe (e.g. Dunkirk, Stalingrad, the Normandy Landing), Africa (e.g. El Alamein) and the Pacific (e.g. Pearl Harbour, Midway).

War-time diplomacy should be another important aspect to be covered in this topic. Pupils should be made aware of the circumstances leading to the various conferences and the major agreements reached. Teachers should also point out how these agreements affected the outcome of the war and post-war developments. As illustration, the settlement of post-war Germany, Poland and Japan could be examined. This should be extended to a general discussion of the historical significance of the Second World War.

### **(14) The contemporary world: international conflict and co-operation**

Teachers could approach this topic with an introductory overview of the international scene in 1945 so that pupils would become aware of the size and complexity of the problems faced by the nations in the wake of the Second World War.

One major theme in the post-Second World War period that needs to be studied would be the gradual division of the nations into communist and capitalist blocs and the involvement of the two blocs in a 'Cold War'. Pupils should be made aware of how the Second World War helped to bring about this confrontation between communism and capitalism. A brief mention of incidents such as the Greek Civil War (1947) and the subsequent declaration of the Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan (1948), the establishment of the Cominform (1947), the Berlin Blockade (1948-49), the Korean War (1950-53), the Cuban Missile Crisis (1962) and the Vietnam War (1960s) etc., should serve to highlight the main features,

