

# Welcome to Global History I-H

## - Summer Reading Assignment -

2026-2027 School Year

Grade 9

### Course Description

This course focuses on the common strands of history from the first advanced human civilizations to the Age of Discovery. Students will practice the skills of the historian while exploring the past through a variety of lenses. The major emphasis of the course will be on how civilizations around the globe developed in both similar and different ways.

### Essential Questions that Provide Structure for our Course

EQ 1: What are the commonalities in the origins of the earliest advanced human civilizations?

EQ 2: In what ways does the natural landscape both enable and inhibit human success?

EQ 3: How do historical artifacts shape historian's understanding of the past?

### Interdisciplinary Connections

As connections and common assignments with the English 9H course will be at the heart of this course, students taking Global History I-H must also enroll in English 9H. Successful completion of this summer reading assignment is a *prerequisite* for enrollment in the course. This course meets the graduation requirement for Social Studies 9.

### Meet your History Teacher:

## Mrs. Messina

Hi there! I am a history teacher in the Social Studies Department here at *Housatonic Valley Regional High School*. I will be teaching your Global History course next year and am looking forward to having you in class. In addition to loving my job, I enjoy traveling whenever I can. Whether I am traveling abroad with my husband, exploring our beautiful National Parks, or doing day trips near home, you can often find me visiting historical sites and taking in the incredible outdoors. Here at school you might find me out in the barn, spending quality time with the many four-legged residents that bring both learning and joy to our campus. I hope you, too, are getting outside this summer and taking advantage of all the natural beauty the Northwest Corner of Connecticut has to offer. In between your

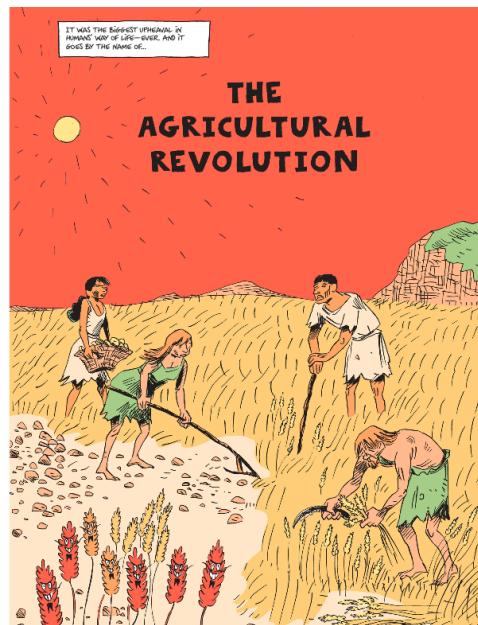
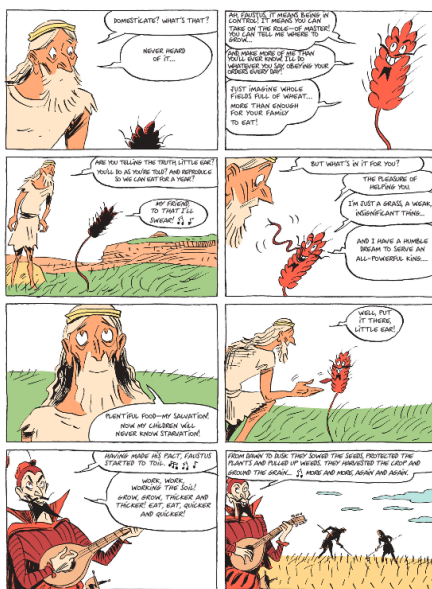
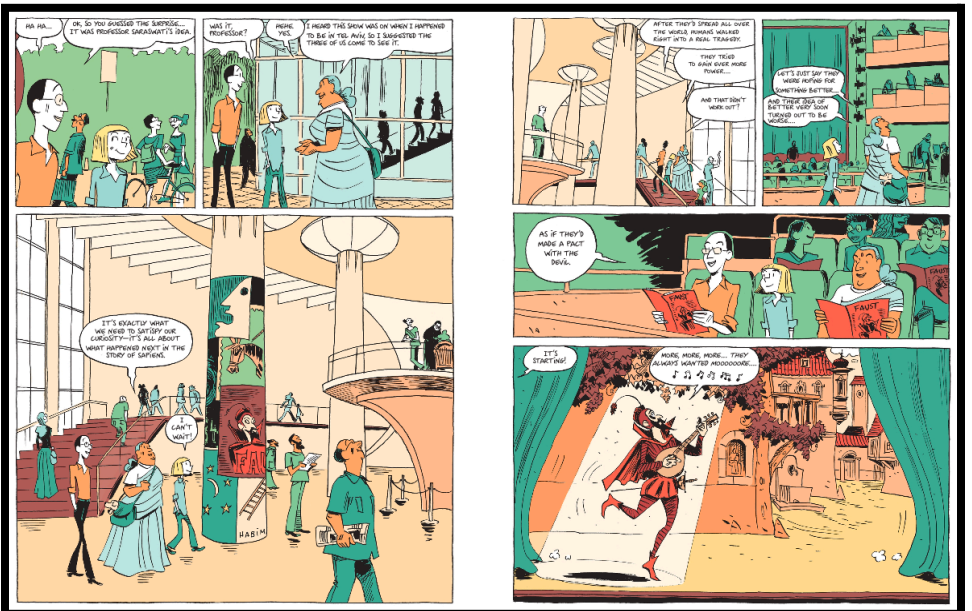
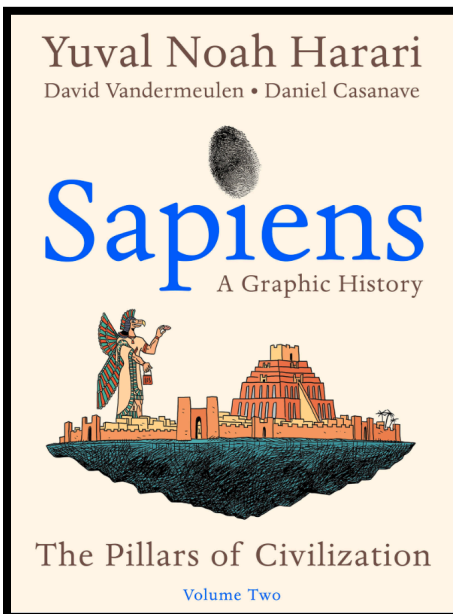


outdoor adventures and spending quality time with family and friends, I am also asking you to do some reading to prepare yourself for the themes of our upcoming Global History course.

*I hope you have a great summer and I look forward to seeing you soon!*

Mrs. Messina

## Your Summer Reading Text:



This Summer you will be reading a portion of **Yuval Noah Harari's A Graphic History, Volume 2: The Pillars of Civilization** (2021).

Harari asks, *"What if humanity's major woes—war, plague, famine and inequality—originated 12,000 years ago, when Homo sapiens converted from nomads to settlers, in pursuit of the fantasy of productivity and efficiency? What if by seeking to control plants and animals, humans ended up being controlled by kings, priests, and ...bureaucracy?"*

Harari's text explores the nuances of a crucial chapter in the development of advanced human civilization: **the Agricultural Revolution**. This text will introduce you to the major themes that will guide our course.

## How to Get a Copy:

Please visit the Main Office at HVRHS (be sure to call ahead to ensure that Cindy Fuller will be in her office) to sign out a copy of the text and receive a paper copy of this assignment. Phone: (860) 824-5123.

Alternatively, you may borrow a copy of the text from your local library or purchase it from a local bookstore or online source.

 [House of Books](#) (Kent)

 [Oblong Books](#) (Millerton)

 [Lakeville Books & Stationary](#) (Lakeville)

 [Amazon](#)

## Meet the Author:


# Noah Yuval Harari



Harari is an Israeli historian and author who has written numerous award-winning books, including *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind* (2011), *Homo Deus: A Brief History of Tomorrow* (2015), and *21 Lessons for the 21st Century* (2018) as well as two graphic novels, based on his bestselling *Sapiens*, released in 2021. You will read a portion of one of these graphic novels this Summer.

### Critical Acclaim:

The award-winning book, which summarizes the history of Homo sapiens since man started talking some 70,000 years ago, is 'interesting and provocative.' Former U.S. President Barack Obama told CNN. "It's a sweeping history of the human race, from 40,000 feet," Obama said. "It talks about some core things that have allowed us to build this extraordinary civilization that we take for granted."

**Want to See a Quick Preview? Click here:**  ['Sapiens: A Graphic History - Volume 2 - Official Trailer](#)

Curious about what Harari has been working on of late? *Nexus: A Brief History of Information Networks from the Stone Age to AI* (2024). Learn more here: ['NEXUS' by Yuval Noah Harari](#)

## Your Summer Reading Assignment:

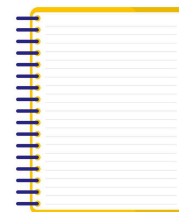
 Please read pages 6-161

 While you read, have a notebook out (an *actual* notebook → not your laptop!)

In your notebook, please do the following:

### 1. Keep a running list of vocabulary terms.

- These could be content-specific vocabulary terms (like “domesticate” on page 15) or sophisticated language you have not encountered before (such as “primitive” or “prosperous” on page 30).



- For example, on page 13 I see the word “idyllic” → I would add that to my term list. On page 14 I see the word “Faust” → I might also add that to my list of terms. Please expect to have *at least 50 terms* on your list by the time you are done reading! Expect to encounter *a lot* of unfamiliar terminology → that’s all part of reading a new text.
- Don’t forget to record the page number along with the term.

**2. Determine at least 4 “big ideas” from the text.** (Hint: return to our EQs listed on page 1)

- A “big” idea is overarching.
- A “big” idea is thematic.
- A “big” idea can be supported by “smaller” pieces of evidence.

**3. Identify at least 3 pieces of evidence to support each of your 4 “big ideas.”**

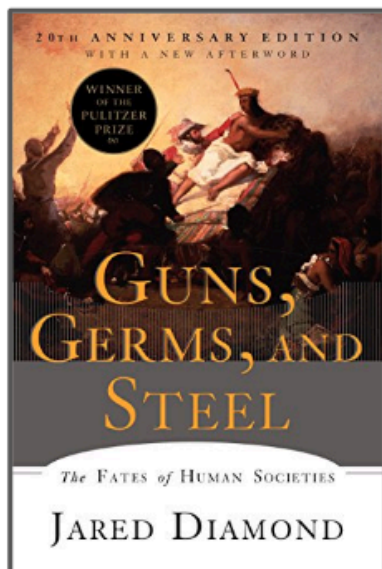
- Record the evidence. Don’t forget the page number!
- Be prepared to explain the connection between the “big idea” and the evidence (in your own words!) when you start school. We will be writing about this subject during our 1st unit.

## Looking Ahead (plus *optional* summer reading)

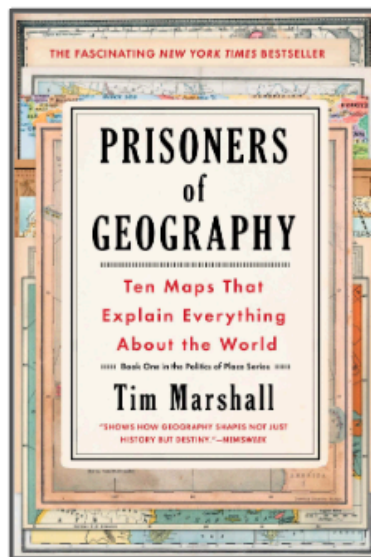
Upon our return to school you will also read excerpts from Jared Diamond’s *Guns, Germs, and Steel* as well as excerpts from Tim Marshall’s *Prisoners of Geography*. Part of our work in the first unit of our course will involve corroborating the theses of these three authors.

**Please note:** these other two texts are ***not required*** reading for over the summer, but you may want to preview either (or both) by borrowing a copy from your local library.

*Optional*



*Optional*



*Required*

