

Contemporary Controversies & News Events

As we've discussed, one of the most compelling reasons to study history is that it better enables us to understand the world in which we live. To establish a framework for our historical studies this year it therefore makes good sense to familiarize ourselves with the most significant political, economic, and social developments unfolding today. Working in a group of 3 you will investigate and research a noteworthy international or national current event, write an individual "briefing paper" on the topic, and deliver a collaborative group presentation educating your peers about the issue. Please follow these steps.

1. **Research Teams** consisting of 3 or 4 members will be assigned from each rotation.
2. **Current Event Topics** will be identified through a class brainstorming process, and specific topics selected by lottery from the student-generated list.
3. **Articles & Briefing Papers.** Each team member will identify 1 or more substantial news articles from reputable news sources (see reverse side). Each student must select a distinct article; there can be no duplication within the team. The article(s) should be approximately 1000 words in length. Students will annotate the news article(s) and write a 1½ to 2 page typewritten "briefing paper" which addresses the following:
 - What is most essential to understand about this event?
 - Who are the most important people and organizations involved?
 - What are the key facts, concepts, and developments?
 - What ideas are most noteworthy, surprising, or interesting?
 - What questions do you have about the issue?
 - Why is this event important for modern global citizens? Students of history?
 - What solutions (if any) have been proposed regarding this situation?
 - What are your overall thoughts, impressions, and reactions to the topic?

4. **Group Presentation.** Research teams will collaborate to create a 4 to 5 minute group presentation regarding your topic. Presentations should utilize 5 Google slides in addition to a separate title slide. Exercise care in designing your slides so that they are not text-heavy, yet use images and text to engage the audience.

Presentations should address the same bullet-pointed questions explored in your briefing papers. In addition, a final slide should pose 1 or 2 thought-provoking questions inspired by your topic. All Team members must contribute equivalently in the creation and delivery of the presentation.

Project Schedule and Deadlines:

Topic Selection & Research Work Time: Tuesday, 8/27

Briefing Papers Due/Presentation Work Time: Thursday, 8/29

Presentation Work Time: Tuesday, 9/3

Presentations Due: Thursday, 9/5

**** Please note that additional work outside the classroom will be required to produce a high-quality presentation.**

Reputable News Sources

The New York Times

The Washington Post

The Wall Street Journal

The Christian Science Monitor

The Economist

The Los Angeles Times

The Sacramento Bee