

Dear Parents and Students: Welcome to the Blue Ridge Virginia Governor's School! We hope you will find BRVGS to be challenging, inspiring and enjoyable.

*Because we have a great deal of information to go through in your first year of BRVGS, we require that students do summer work **before the start of the school year.***

Please do not put this off until the last minute. You will find time management important in BRVGS and should work to get assignments done well ahead of deadlines.

Instructions for accessing the work are below on this page.

This work should be turned in to your class teacher on the first day of school.

All responses should be in your own words, handwritten on paper, and any resources used should be cited.

If you have received this work by mail, all linked materials will be included in your packet.

If you have questions about this work, or if you do not have computer or internet access, please contact BRVGS Director Wanda Elliott at welliott@brvgs.k12.va.us

PART 1 - Thinking Like a Historian

- A. Your first summer reading assignment is an article by Sam Wineburg, called "[Thinking Like a Historian](#)"
- B. Once you have read the article, answer the questions below in your own words:
1. What is the difference between Kevin's perception of "what history is" and the perception of the author of this article?
 2. What does a "persuasive opinion" in history need, in order to be valid?
 3. What kinds of questions do historians need to ask in a "historical approach"?
 4. What 6 things should students do to "think historically"? Provide a BRIEF explanation for each.
 5. Why is it important for students (and teachers!) to learn to "think like a historian"?
- C. Next you will need to define some important terms for history. You can use online resources or a dictionary - **but do not copy!** These definitions should be written in your own words, as much as possible and the source must be cited.
1. Chronology
 2. Source
 3. Primary Source
 4. Secondary Source

5. Artifact
 6. Evidence
 7. Questions
 8. Fact
 9. Opinion
 10. Hypothesis (theory)
 11. Bias
 12. Interpretation
 13. Causation
 14. Generalization
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Part 2 - Guns, Germs, and Steel

Your main reading for the summer is an excerpt from a book called [Guns, Germs and Steel, by Jared Diamond](#) (52 pages, approx 11.5 MB). This book tells the story of why civilizations and cultures developed differently in different places. While it is not an easy book, it is a very good start to understand how history is studied. You will find links to the Introduction and first two chapters, as well as to your study guide, below. Please answer all of the questions from your study guide. **These must be done before the first day of the school year, and will be graded for completion.**

Prologue: Yali's Question

1. What is "Yali's question" and how does the author rephrase it?
2. What are the objections to the question?
3. What does the author think of racial arguments?
4. Who does he think is smarter "modern stone age" people or industrial people?
5. What do IQ tests measure?
6. What 2 reasons might make New Guineans more intelligent than Europeans?
7. What does the author think of the climate argument?
8. What is a one sentence explanation of the book
9. What does the author hope to convince you, the reader, that history is not?

Chapter 1: Up to the Starting Line

10. What were the names of proto-humans? What important information can you find about each of them using other sources? (Write about a paragraph on each)
11. Study figure 1.1 - Where did humans originate?

12. According to the author, what changes did The Great Leap bring?
13. What two big 1sts happened in New Guinea/Australia?
14. What two disadvantages did the Dodo, Moas, and giants of Australia have? How might this affect the humans who took over the land?

15. What happened in the Americas around 11,000 BC?
16. What evidence is there of pre-clovis sites? Is it convincing? Why?
17. What does the author mean by head start? Which continent do you think had an advantage in 11,000BC? Why?

Chapter 2: A Natural Experiment of History

18. How does the author explain the defeat of the Moriori?
19. Why did they evolve differently in 800 years? How did this affect the defeat of the Moriori? (Make sure you look at both the Moriori and the Maori)

20. What is population density? How different was this number in Polynesia?
21. What kinds of powers did the chiefs of Hawaii and Tonga have?
22. Which groups had more stuff? Why?
23. What caused Human societies to differ?

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Good luck with this, and have a great summer!
