Course notes

International Baccalaureate · IB Diploma · History · HL

IB history first assessment 2017; 2028 course recorded separately

School selects one of five prescribed subjects (both cases), two of twelve world-history topics; HL selects one region with three sections. No selection is silently implied. Future 2028 focused/thematic studies are a different course.

SL: source Paper 1 60 min 30%, essay Paper 2 90 min 45%, investigation 25%. HL: Paper 1 60 min 20%, Paper 2 90 min 25%, regional Paper 3 150 min 35%, investigation 20%.

Prescribed subject/P1 · Historical sources and contextual evaluation

A source's value depends on the inquiry question. Origin, purpose and content can explain what it reveals and what it cannot establish.

Source comparison identifies a precise agreement or difference, then supports it with evidence from both.

> ■ **Checked example**
>
> A contemporary announcement can show the official explanation offered to an audience. A private letter can show one person's response.
> Neither alone establishes the event's impact on everyone; compare with independent evidence and context.

■ Limits and practice

Do not write primary sources are reliable as a universal rule.

Use the actual prescribed case studies, dates and actors selected by the school; this skills lesson is not case-study coverage.

What can an official announcement establish most directly?

Answer: The public explanation offered by its issuing authority.

World history topics/P2 · Causation, change and comparative essays

A cause helps explain why an outcome occurred; a trigger may explain why it occurred at that moment.

Compare the mechanisms and relative significance of factors, using precise evidence and a counterargument.

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■ Checked example

Organize a paragraph around one factor, then compare its operation in two relevant cases. Explain why the factor mattered differently.
End with a qualified judgement that answers the question, rather than declaring every factor equally important.

■ Limits and practice

Do not confuse a consequence with a cause or assume the earliest event was the most important.

A classroom hypothetical is not evidence for the selected historical topic; replace it with verified case detail.

What makes a causal paragraph analytical?

Answer: It explains how a factor produced an outcome and evaluates its importance.

Historical investigation · Inquiry, evidence and methodological reflection

A focused question names the subject, period and issue to investigate.

The investigation must distinguish source evaluation, the argument and reflection on methods used by historians.

■ Checked example

Begin with a small source inventory: what exists, who produced it and which groups are absent. Revise the question if evidence cannot support it.
Track citations while drafting and reflect on a real difficulty, such as unequal survival of records.

■ Limits and practice

Do not replace historical reflection with a diary of your effort.

The full guide governs IA section limits and criteria; school supervision verifies sources and independent authorship.

Which reflection concerns historical method?

Answer: Explain how uneven survival of records limits the groups whose experiences can be reconstructed.

HL regional depth/P3 · Regional arguments and historiography

Historiography examines how interpretations of the past are constructed and debated.

HL regional essays need detailed evidence, chronology and a sustained evaluative ar-

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gument within the selected sections.

> ■ **Checked example**
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> Compare each historian's evidence, scope and causal explanation. Identify what each explains well and a difficulty raised by the other.
> Use the comparison to refine your own judgement about the question.

■ Limits and practice

Do not use a historian's name as a substitute for an argument.

The 2028 course changes regional selection and assessment; these 2017 Paper 3 requirements cannot be carried across unchanged.

What should follow a historian's interpretation in an essay?

Answer: Analysis of its evidence, explanation and limitations for the question.

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