

An Introduction to Historical Thinking & The Rise of the West

Summary

This unit introduces some of the core concepts that we will be exploring throughout the course. Namely, why did a small, poor region of the world, Western Europe, become the most powerful region of the world for roughly 500 years? We will also examine how professional historians look at and study the discipline of history.

Essential Questions

1. What allowed Western Europe to become so powerful starting in the 16th century?
2. How is historical significance defined?

Learning Goals

1. Explain the difference between the past and history.
2. Provide a working definition for historical significance.
3. Identify and explain historical significance from a painting.

Documents

1. Niall Ferguson TED Talk
2. Vermeer's *The Soldier and the Laughing Girl*
3. Mr. Culhane's Evidence Chest