

This year's summer reading for World History Honors '08-09 is J. H. Plumb's highly regarded book, *The Italian Renaissance*. (Try to get the most recent edition.) This will be the first of two book reviews you will write for this class. (The other will take place during Winter vacation.) A 100 point test will be administered on the first day of the fall semester to test your knowledge. During your summer holiday you will read Plumb's book and write a **four-page** review. (Double-spaced and typed; please use "times new roman 12" font) Please base your review on the outline given below, but **DO NOT** write the review in outline form.

Please Note: Plumb's book is written as popular history (for adults). It is the assumption of this class that you are an advance reader (grade 13 and above), enjoy writing expository compositions, enjoy reading history and enjoy the English language. If that's not "you," you need to change to another World History class.

Please model your paper using the MLA format. The four-page review is due on the first day of class, during the Fall '08 semester. Papers must be turned in on time. **I do not accept late work.**
Book Reviews:

Content: In general, book reviews (unlike "book reports") should be both (A) Descriptive and (B) Analytical.

A. Description usually includes the following:

1. Listing of the author or editor, complete title, translator (if any), publisher, place of Publication, date of publication, and number of pages.
2. Some description of the author, his/her qualifications, or special interests, former works or experience, occupation, and any circumstance which may affect his out look-nationality, organizational affiliations, and so on, unless discussed in analysis.
3. Some description, condensed into two or three paragraphs, of the outline content of the book.
 - (a.) How much attention is paid to this or that phase or period of a man's life, or a history?
 - (b.) Is the approach institutional, chronological, biographical, documentary, polemic or other?
 - (c.) How much ground is covered? (What is covered?)
 - (d.) A brief summary. **Do not re-tell the story.**
 - (e.) Specific stories illustrating the tenor or flow of the text.
4. Some information on the following:
 - (a.) Length, organization, sequence.
 - (b.) Style

B. Analysis should answer some of the following questions:

1. Is the book important? Why or why not? (note: This book has been in print since it was published in the 60s..... it is considered a "modern classic" in the field of popular history.)
2. What question does it answer or fail to answer, raise or fail to raise?
3. Does the book offer new information, or a fresh approach and interpretation?
4. Does the author show prejudice or does he/she plead a special view? Does this mar the book? (Note: in an important sense, it need not mar the work to enhance its values.)
5. Are certain available sources of information used well or ignored? Is the book creditable?
6. How does the work compare with (a) similar work; (b) current opinion, (c) "official" view, etc? (You may have to hit the local library to answer this one.)
7. Does the author fulfill his promise, or expectation?

C. Conclusions may include consideration of some of the following points:

1. Is the book valuable- and to whom?
2. Does it have current or more permanent interest?