

# GeoHistoGram and Historical Eras

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**Lesson Overview:** Students will learn how to use the World GeoHistoGram to remember (and organize) geographical and historical facts.

**Essential Questions:**

- How is the World GeoHistoGram organized?
- What information does it display?
- What are the major characteristics of the Eras of World History?

**Objectives:** Students will be able to:

- Identify the elements of the GeoHistoGram
- Explain how the GeoHistoGram organizes knowledge
- Identify historical eras and major events in each

**Subject/ Target Grade:** Social Studies grades 6-12

**Duration:** one class period

**Student Materials:** GeoHistoGram; Marking pens; Historical atlases; Era Worksheet

## Picture Sheet

## GeoHistoGram and Historical Eras PPT

**Note:** Before using the two activities presented in this lesson, view the PowerPoint presentation [GeoHistoGram Explanation](#). The PPT includes the rationale for the GeoHistoGram and explains the basic make-up of the document with several useful suggestions. Each time a student adds something to the diagram it reinforces the knowledge that has already been entered, by providing both a visual review and another set of links to help solidify the memory.

### Michigan Grade Level Content Expectations

- **6/7 – H1.1.1:** Explain why and how historians use eras and periods as constructs to organize and explain human activities over time.
- **6 – G1.1.1:** Describe how geographers use mapping to represent places and natural and human phenomena in the world.
- **7 – G1.1.1:** Explain and use a variety of maps, globes, and web-based geography technology to study the world, including global, interregional, and local scales.

### National Geography Standards

- **Standard 1:** How to use maps and other geographic representations, geospatial technologies, and spatial thinking to understand and communicate information
- **Standard 3:** How to analyze the spatial organization of people, places, and environments on Earth's surface

**Teacher Background:** The GeoHistoGram is a teacher-tested, neurologically sound framework to help students remember geographical and historical facts. The key idea is that the diagram is not the only, or even a preferable way, to present a particular kind of knowledge, but it is a terrific way to organize knowledge. By marking (or even just pointing) to a particular place on the GeoHistoGram as they think about a fact, students encode a general idea of its position relative to other facts, even though they may not remember the precise date and place.

## Procedure:

- 1. Introduction of GHG:** If students have not seen or used the GeoHistoGram, explain the purpose and structure of the poster. **(Slides 3-5)**
- 2. Eras Activity:** Remind the students that social studies in the secondary grades is organized around nine eras of history:
  - Era 1: The Beginnings of Human Society: (10,000BCE to 4,000 BCE)
  - Era 2: Early Civilizations and Cultures: (4,000 BCE to 1,000 BCE)
  - Era 3: Classical Traditions and Major Empires: (1,000 BCE to 300 CE)
  - Era 4: Expanding and Intensified Hemispheric Interactions: (300 CE to 1500 AD)
  - Era 5: The Emergence of the First Global Age: (15<sup>th</sup> through 18<sup>th</sup> Centuries)
  - Era 6: An Age of Global Revolutions: (18<sup>th</sup> century through 1917)
  - Era 7: Global Crisis and Achievement
  - Era 8: The Cold War and its Aftermath: (20<sup>th</sup> Century)
  - Era 9: The Future: (21<sup>st</sup> Century)

**Note:** the Picture Page can be copied for students to cut apart. Optionally, use the PPT and do it as a whole-class activity.

Also remind student that most of their social studies in the middle level will focus on Eras 1 – 3, though it is nice to know where they are headed in their studies and how Eras 4 – 9 tie into other course work and everyday knowledge and experiences.

Point out that the GeoHistoGram has no definite beginning date. The time before Era 1 is labeled Pre-history: Homo sapiens migrate around the world (200,000 BCE to 10,000 BCE).

- Hand out *Era Activity* worksheet, with the list of era names and dates. Begin with Era 1: draw a line across the GeoHistoGram marking where Era 1 ends (4000 BCE) and label it “The Beginnings of Human Society”. **(Slide 7)**
- Check with the entire group before moving on to Era 2. Have students alternate drawing the line to end the era and writing the full title of the era. Continue this process up through Era 6. It gets really crowded towards the top of the GeoHistoGram; stop with Era 6. Display **Slide 8** to help students with the list of eras.

Check the markings for all of the Eras **(Slides 9-10) Optional:** Ask students to discuss Era questions in groups; middle school students will not have the prior knowledge; teacher input will be important here. The last question can be used as a discussion starter.

- 3. Pictures Activity. (Slide 11)** Give groups of students **Era Picture Sheet**. Each picture should be examined and any information known or knowledge guessed by the students should be shared. The group is attempting to determine what the event is, when it occurred, and where in the world the event took place. Students will use their prior knowledge; available resources, such as a textbook or historical atlas; and possibly helpful teacher hints to complete the identification task.
  - As each picture is identified by the students, mark the number of the picture in the appropriate place on the GeoHistoGram which shows when and where the event occurred.
  - After all the pictures are identified (or as many as possible in a reasonable amount of time), each cut-apart picture can be placed on its number already written on the GeoHistoGram.

Show pictures on the Power Point **(Slides 12-20)** and check the placement for all of the pictures. **(Slides 21-22)** Discuss why some pictures may appear in more than one location (Marco Polo) or over a span of time (Great Wall of China).

### **Assessment Options**

- Participation in class discussion
- Answers shared on the Eras Activity questions can be used for assessment.

### **Adaptations/Extensions/Enhancements**

- In addition to the activities in this lesson, other activities are available: [World GeoHistoGram](#)
- Additional topics might include major paintings, sculptures, or musical compositions (especially ones with strong cultural or political implications, such as the Drinking Gourd song or Sibelius' Finlandia), sports, styles of dress or food, significant battles, notable speeches or writings, landmarks in women's rights, scientific discoveries, endangered species, pollution events, etc. In short, the scope of the GeoHistoGram is limited only by your imagination and the topics in your curriculum. Each time a topic is added, the GeoHistoGram helps students see how that topic is related to other topics already covered (such as empires, inventions, or religions)

### **References**

The basic ideas in the project came out of collaborative work done by Dr. Michael Libbee, Dr. David Rutherford, and Dr. Phil Gersmehl, funded by a grant from National Geographic Education Foundation. The World GeoHistoGram and related activities are the result of work by Dr. Phil Gersmehl with cartographic assistance by Carol Gersmehl of the New York Center for Geographic Learning.

## Era Activity

**Directions:** With your partners discuss each item, mark the GeoHistoGram as appropriate and try to write responses to questions.

**Era 1:** The Beginnings of Human Society: (10,000 BCE to 4,000 BCE)

- Name the activity that provides the basis for the development of dense human populations.
- Where did it begin?

**Era 2:** Early Civilizations and Cultures: (4,000 BCE to 1,000 BCE)

- Circle and name three major river valley civilizations.
- Why might river valleys be important early sites?

**Era 3:** Classical Traditions and Major Empires: (1,000 BCE to 300 CE)

- Underline the names of the major empires and civilizations.
- What empire dissolves, marking the end of this era?

**Era 4:** Expanding and Intensified Hemispheric Interactions: (300 CE to 1500 CE)

- What does the title of this era mean?
- What are the significant connections which develop in this era?

**Era 5:** The Emergence of the First Global Age: (15<sup>th</sup> through 18<sup>th</sup> Centuries)

- Name an event often used to mark the beginning of this era.
- Why is this era called the first global age?

**Era 6:** An Age of Global Revolutions: (18<sup>th</sup> Century through 1917)

- Name four revolutions which occur in this era.
- Which revolution has had the most lasting impact?

**Eras 7 and 8:** Global Crisis and Achievement and The Cold War and its Aftermath: (20<sup>th</sup> Century)

- Name the empires which fall and expand in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.
- What events or processes of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century can be called global?

**Era 9:** The Future: (21<sup>st</sup> Century)

- What might the name of the next era be?

## Era Activity

**Directions:** With your partners discuss each item, mark the GeoHistoGram as appropriate and try to write responses to questions.

**Era 1:** The Beginnings of Human Society: (10,000 BCE to 4,000 BCE)

- Name the activity that provides the basis for the development of dense human populations.  
*Agricultural Revolution*
- Where did it begin?  
*Mesopotamia (Fertile Crescent)*

**Era 2:** Early Civilizations and Cultures: (4,000 BCE to 1,000 BCE)

- Circle and name three major river valley civilizations.  
*Indus Valley; Nile River; Tigris-Euphrates*
- Why might river valleys be important early sites?  
*Availability of water; transportation; animal life; fertile, relatively easy to farm soil*

**Era 3:** Classical Traditions and Major Empires: (1,000 BCE to 300 CE)

- Underline the names of the major empires and civilizations.  
*Greece; Persia; Han; Assyria; Rome*
- What empire dissolves, marking the end of this era?  
*Rome*

**Era 4:** Expanding and Intensified Hemispheric Interactions: (300 CE to 1500 CE)

- What does the title of this era mean?  
*Expanding trade routes and movement of people, ideas, and diseases within the Eastern and Western Hemispheres, but not between them*
- What are the significant connections which develop in this era?  
*Silk Road; Inca road system*

**Era 5:** The Emergence of the First Global Age: (15<sup>th</sup> through 18<sup>th</sup> Centuries)

- Name an event often used to mark the beginning of this era.  
*Columbus voyage to the Western Hemisphere and back*
- Why is this era called the first global age?  
*For the first time since the Ice Age, there are significant human connections between the Eastern and Western Hemispheres*

**Era 6:** An Age of Global Revolutions: (18<sup>th</sup> Century through 1917)

- Name four revolutions which occur in this era.  
*American Revolution; French Revolution; Scientific Revolution; Industrial Revolution*
- Which revolution has had the most lasting impact?

**Eras 7 and 8:** Global Crisis and Achievement and The Cold War and its Aftermath: (20<sup>th</sup> Century)

- Name the empires which expand and/or fall in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.  
*US; USSR; Japan; Great Britain*
- What events or processes of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century can be called global?  
*Many*

**Era 9:** The Future: (21<sup>st</sup> Century)

- What might the name of the next era be?