

Individuals and Societies / History at Alto Middle Years Program / IB Diploma Program

Introduction

The individuals and societies (IAS) curriculum at Alto is concept-based, rigorous, and engaging. It challenges students to become knowledgeable and think critically about the biggest issues and ideas of the past and present. The modular program of humanities, world history, the history of the Americas, and the history of the United States is designed to foster personal knowledge and inquiry alongside a broad awareness and understanding of competing global interpretations and perspectives.

Middle Years Program

Grade 6 - Individuals and Societies

Major Unit	Statement of Inquiry	Topics / Content
Philosophy Philosophy for children	Our identity is influenced by the choices we make and the perspective we see things from.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Which philosophers have had an influence on the way people think? What is real? Do we have the power to form our own identity or is it shaped by things around us?
History The ancient world	Cultures come up with ways to explain the world based on their location and experiences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mythology and cultural explanations of the beginning of the world and natural phenomena. Ancient China, Greece and India? Artifacts and representations of culture. The role of museums. The decline and fall of the Roman Empire
World cultures Rise and significance of Belief Systems	A system of beliefs has the potential to shape societies and people's identities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Characteristics and beliefs of Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. Origins and development of monotheism in history
Local history and geography Migration to California	Human global interactions help to form a person's culture and identity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Push and pull factors in migration; immigration and emigration; impacts of immigration Historical migration to California: The Gold Rush, Asian and Latino immigration; 'Okies' and the Depression; wartime and post-war migration. Modern migration to/from California.

Grade 7 - Individuals & Societies

Major Unit	Statement of Inquiry	Topics / Content
History Female Leaders: Elizabeth I of England, 1558-1603	Gender identity influences one's power, status and dignity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Rule of Elizabeth I: challenges and successes Debate: the successes and challenges of female leaders.
Geography Natural hazards in the United States	Nations and peoples are confined and defined by the systems and processes occurring in their natural environments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landforms and maps of the United States. Tornadoes; hurricanes; earthquakes; volcanoes. Case studies of natural disasters: Joplin Tornado; Hurricane Katrina; Loma Prieta earthquake; Mt. St. Helens volcanic eruption.
History Imperialism, c.1492-1900	The dynamics of power lead to inequality and the abuse of human rights.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The European conquest and settlement of the Americas. The trans-atlantic slave trade.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Rise and Spread of European Global Imperialism. • The Scramble for Africa
Civics Human rights & social justice: governments and NGOs	The principle of equality is universal.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Universal Declaration of Human Rights • The role of governments in protecting and denying human rights. • The role of NGOs in promoting and protecting human rights.
History Industrialism, c.1750-1900	Innovation leads to changes over time, place and space.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The causes and consequences of the industrial revolution in Europe and North America. • Case studies of the industrial revolution.

Grade 8 - Individuals & Societies (Modern German History and World Studies)

Major Unit	Statement of Inquiry	Topics / Content
History German unification: 1848-1871	The development of national identities and relations with neighbours are in a constant process of transition.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The failure of the revolutions of 1848. • The rise of Prussia and decline of Austria • The role of Otto von Bismarck • The wars of unification, 1864-1871
Global perspectives Current affairs	Perspectives on global and local interactions and affairs evolve through analysis and argument.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International relations, the economy, politics, society and culture, the environment. • Perspective and the mainstream news media. • Civic online reasoning and social media.
Geography Climate change	Environmentally sustainable solutions are necessary because human activities impact the environment in negative ways.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before the Flood: a viewing. • A people's curriculum for the earth: cookie mining; coal mixer; climate trial; Keystone role play. • Interdisciplinary project with chemistry.
Civics Democratic participation	Political perspectives are products of personal analysis and argument, shaped by global, national and local systems and institutions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to form a government • The federal government; separation of powers • Voting; political parties and campaigning. • Policies; checks and balances; federalism; states rights.
History Germany in the 20th century: ideology & conflict	Competition and cooperation are the essential elements of conflict between individuals and societies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Causes, course, consequences and cartoons of World War I • Causes, course, consequences and cartoons of World War II • The Holocaust • Causes, course, consequences and cartoons of the Cold War.

Grade 9 - World History

Major Unit	Statement of Inquiry	Topics / Content
Russia: From tsar to revolution, 1894-1924	Change is caused through long-term developments in space and time, and their relationship with pivotal short-term turning points.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The decline and fall of the Romanov Dynasty; the rise of the Bolsheviks and communism.. • The February and October revolutions in Russia in 1917 • The consequences of the Russian Revolution and the Russian Civil War to 1924.
Japan Part 1: Expansionism and Imperialism, 1904-1941 Japan Part 2: The Atomic Bomb Research Paper and Debate, 1945	The historical record is contradictory and historical evidence is riddled with perspective, demanding that historians be critical.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Causes of Japanese militarism, expansionism and imperialism. • The Manchurian Incident, 1931 • The Second-Sino Japanese War, 1937-1941 • Japan and the USA, 1938-1941 • Debate motion and essay question: 'The dropping of

		the atomic bombs was justified.' How far do you agree with this statement?
Thematic history: Medicine through time.	Human ingenuity leads to progress.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge and beliefs about anatomy and the causes of disease from Ancient to Modern Civilization. • Knowledge and methods of preventing and treating illness and injury from Ancient to Modern Civilization.
India: The Indian Independence Movement, 1919-1947	A powerful sense of identity causes nations to strive for independence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The long-term causes of the Indian independence movement. • The short-term causes of the Indian Independence Movement and the Second World War. • The role of Gandhi, the Indian National Congress, Jinnah and the Muslim League.
Film & History: Depicting human wrongs	Critical literacy of perspectives behind artistic aesthetics and form is essential to understanding the past as depicted on film.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Holocaust, 1942-1945 and <i>The Pianist</i>. • The Cambodian Genocide, 1975-1979 and <i>First They Killed My Father</i>. • The Rwandan Genocide, 1994, and <i>Hotel Rwanda</i>.

Grade 10 - U.S. History

Major Unit	Statement of Inquiry	Topics / Content
Revolutionary America, 1760-1800	Revolution develops as a result of a lack of fairness in a system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Causes of the American Revolution • Civics of US Constitution • Analysis of <i>Hamilton the Musical</i>
The United States Civil War, c.1854-1865	Civilizations, cultures and communities change through a process of conflict.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Causes of the American Civil War. • Course and consequences of the American Civil War.
The Other in the USA, 1865-1919	Systems produce inequality and otherness that require a struggle to overcome.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black Americans and Jim Crow • Native Americans and westwards expansion • Women and the suffrage movement • Immigrants and exclusion • Socialists and the red scare
Boom, Bust & War in the USA, 1919-1945	The sustainability of economic development is linked with global conflict through time, place and space.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Roaring 1920s • The Great Depression in the 1930s • The Second World War and the USA.

IB Diploma Program

Students select either higher level (HL) or standard level (SL) history at Alto. HL and SL students study world history options for an exam paper one (source analysis), an exam paper two (essay writing), and the internal assessment (IA). HL students also study the history of the Americas options for an exam paper three (essay writing).

Grade 11 - World History & History of the Americas

Major Unit	HL/SL	Topics / Content
Authoritarian states: Nazi Germany, 1918-1945	SL/HL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emergence of authoritarian states: Nazi Germany Consolidation and maintenance of power in Nazi Germany, 1933-1945 Aims and results of policies in Nazi Germany, 1933-1945 Authoritarian control and the extent to which it was achieved.
Rights and protests: apartheid South Africa, 1948-1964	SL/HL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nature and characteristics of discrimination in South Africa Protests and action against Apartheid in South Africa The role and significance of key actors/groups in the struggle against apartheid.
Political developments in the United States, 1945-1980	HL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Truman and the Fair Deal; domestic policies of Eisenhower. Kennedy and the New Frontier; Johnson and the Great Society. Nixon's domestic policies; Watergate and possible impeachment; Ford's domestic policies and pardon of Nixon; Carter's domestic policies; changes and internal conflicts within the Democratic and Republican parties in the 1960s and 1970s, and the impact on elections.
The Cold War: Superpower tensions and rivalries, 1943-1991	HL/SL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rivalry, mistrust and accord in the origins, development and end of the Cold War: the USA, the USSR and China. Leaders and Nations during the Cold War: Germany, Vietnam, US, China. Cold War crises: Berlin, Guatemala, Berlin, Cuba, Afghanistan
The Cold War and the Americas, 1945-1981	HL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Truman: containment; McCarthyism. The Korean War and the United States and the Americas Eisenhower and Dulles: New Look policy and The Americas The Vietnam War and the United States and The Americas. United States' foreign policies from Kennedy to Carter Social and cultural impact of the Cold War on the United States.
Political developments and the Cold War in Canada, 1945-1982	HL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political Developments in Canada, 1945-1982: St Laurent; Diefenbaker; Pearson; Trudeau. Political Developments in Quebec: Quiet Revolution; Quebec nationalism Cold War in Canada, 1945-1982: foreign policies and impact at home.

Grade 12 - World History & History of the Americas

Major Unit	HL/SL	Topics / Content
Internal assessment: historical investigation	SL/HL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students at both SL and HL are required to complete a historical investigation into a topic of their choice. The historical investigation is made of up three sections, identification and evaluation of sources, an investigation essay and a TOK-style reflection. The IA is marked out of 25 marks with weighting: 25% SL, 20% HL.
Rights and protests: Civil rights movement in the United States, 1954-1965	SL/HL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nature and characteristics of discrimination in the United States Protests and action against segregation and discrimination in the US. The role and significance of key actors/groups in the struggle against segregation and discrimination in the US.
Civil rights and social movements in the Americas.	HL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indigenous peoples and civil rights in the US and Canada Feminist movements in the US and Canada African Americans and the civil rights movement in the US.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hispanic American movement in the United States • Youth culture and protests of the 1960s and 1970s.
Authoritarian states: communist China, 1934-1976	SL/HL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergence of authoritarian states: communist China • Consolidation and maintenance of power in communist China • Aims and results of policies in communist China • Authoritarian control and the extent to which it was achieved.
Historical perspectives & revision	SL/HL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historiographical review. • Revision for IB Diploma examinations.

IB Diploma history Syllabus [here](#)

Detailed scope and sequences for each grade might vary. Also teachers are encouraged to incorporate current events into the curriculum and adapt their statement of inquiry based on classroom discussions.