

## Review of the Eras Before the First English Settlers to the Americas

Do not memorize this, but you do need to read with attention so you begin:

- To introduce yourself to words used here (and **highlighted**) that are **still** part of our national experience—and that many college-educated people will expect you to recognize.
- To realize **many people since about 1600 paid a great price for you (and me) to have a better chance today**

Eras in Order	Why You Want to Know About This
Roman Republic	<p>The <a href="#">Merriam Webster Online Dictionary</a> defines a <b>republic</b> as “a <b>government</b> in which <b>supreme power</b> resides in a body of citizens entitled to <b>vote</b> and is exercised by <b>elected officers</b> and <b>representatives</b> responsible to them and <b>governing according to law.</b>”</p> <p>The Romans had <b>Senators</b>—a familiar word—and a <b>republic</b>. As its public buildings and terminology in the Constitution reveal, the U.S. was created as a <b>republic</b> with its people <b>electing representatives</b> who wrote the <b>laws</b>.</p>
Roman Empire – The adjective for the era is classical. It is associated with Rome and also with Greece.	<p>Rome had an <b>empire</b> and <b>colonies</b> (words that go together and that you need to recognize because they keep showing up over time) to the late 400s AD when their empire collapsed. Empires relied on <b>servitude</b> (forms of forced labor where the person is forced to work for no pay except survival for another day).</p> <p>They are <b>fine (no guilt at all)</b> and most of the list below stays the same in each era:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• with slavery for those they conquered</li> <li>• with demanding tribute and slaves from those conquered</li> <li>• with war to take riches and raw materials</li> <li>• with <b>colonies</b> (peoples who were not Roman) governed by the Romans to enrich the Romans</li> <li>• with government controlling religion (If the emperor thinks he is a god, the monotheistic religions will have difficulty in accepting they have to worship the emperor. Among the monotheist religions are Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Islam however develops after the Roman Empire is gone.)</li> </ul>
Middle Ages - It is associated with feudalism. The adjective for the period is medieval.	<p>Circa 500 AD to 1300 in the Italian city states and to 1500 in England and northern Europe.</p> <p>They are <b>fine (no guilt at all)</b> and most of the list below stays the same in each era:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• with <b>slavery</b> (those in <b>bondage as forced labor</b> but could be <b>sold anywhere</b>)</li> <li>• with <b>serfdom</b> (those who were landless and in bondage as forced labor and bound to the land and listed like the cattle on the manor)</li> <li>• with levels of nobility who were bound to an upper noble as <i>subjects</i> or <i>vassals</i> (concepts you need to think about)</li> </ul> <p><b>Key concept:</b> Vassal or Subject (a term <b>still</b> in use) <b>Tip:</b> A subject of the king not only owed the king, but the king owed the subject protection. We are still calling ourselves subjects of the king until just before the revolution.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• with <b>land</b> ownership determining power because <b>land meant people had a place to grow food and have animals for food</b></li> <li>• with <b>land</b> being passed down to <b>the 1st born male only</b> (primogeniture) so that the estates remained large (They were not split among the sons.)</li> <li>• with the pope at Rome as the head of the Church and with:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Bishops and other levels</li> <li>○ Two paths: in a parish as a priest or in a monastery as a monk</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Looking ahead: <b>Feudalism is attempted in the Americas by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>Spanish</b> (North, Central, and South America)</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>French</b> (in Canada and the Mississippi Valley)</li> <li>• The <b>Dutch</b> (in New Amsterdam)</li> <li>• The <b>English</b> (in Maryland, the Carolinas, and New York).</li> </ul> <p><b>Pause and think a second.</b> Feudalism’s laws about land ownership and having any power in decisions (voting) will be applied in the new world by the nations above in the late 1500s and early 1600s.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the old world, <b>land</b> was scarce and people were surplus. <b>Tip:</b> In your changing times, you never want to be surplus.</li> <li>• In the new world, it reversed and <b>land</b> was surplus and labor was scarce.</li> </ul> <p>In those <b>early</b> years in the Americas, <b>what that shift meant was more people had a chance.</b></p>
<p>Renaissance - It is associated with rebirth of the classical world (Greek and Roman) and the rise of <b>nation-states</b> and the <b>rise of science.</b></p>	<p>Circa 1300 in the Italian city states and to 1500 in England and northern Europe.</p> <p>The rebirth of the classical world means the rebirth of values of the Roman Empire. What you will have is new <b>nation states</b> (Spain and Portugal initially and later England and France and the Netherlands) rising up and <b>trying to create their own empires.</b> Other traits are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rebirth – science, art, (and the vision of that rebirth is Roman Empire)</li> <li>• Rise of <b>nation-states</b> (with a people that were homogeneous and with a government that was <b>sovereign</b>)</li> <li>• Slow rise of a “middle class” involved in trade in towns and cities</li> </ul>
<p>Protestant Reformation - It is an era of protests against the Roman Catholic Church. It begins with a few new forms of Christianity but results in many new forms.</p>	<p>1500s on with continued splintering by the Protestant faiths through today.</p> <p>Nation states (notice the term) will have not just a national language but a national religion. They will go to war to suppress another nation’s religion or keep their own religion.</p> <p>They are <b>fine (no guilt at all)</b> and most of the list below stays the same in each era:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• with <b>slavery</b> (those in bondage as forced labor but could be sold anywhere) FYI: Slavery will be <b>fine (no guilt at all) for a long time. Example:</b> the British won’t stop slavery in their <b>colonies</b> until the <b>1830s</b>.</li> <li>• with <b>serfdom</b> (those who were landless and in bondage as forced labor and bound to the land and listed like the cattle on the manor)</li> <li>• with servants (those who were <b>landless and officially free</b> but with limited chance of improving their condition—<b>unless they went to the new areas of the Americas</b>)</li> <li>• with levels of nobility or with individuals being born into the status of their fathers</li> <li>• with <b>land</b> ownership determining power because land meant people had a place to grow food and have animals for food – with a few exceptions with the Pilgrims and the Puritans in the new world.</li> <li>• with <b>government controlling religion</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ With Roman Catholics believing the head of the church is the pope at Rome</li> <li>○ With Protestants believing the head of their religion is the king himself (England) or the church group’s leader</li> </ul> </li> </ul>